



#buildCOMMUNITIES

PLATFORM 2.0

FEBRUARY 2020

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Vision.....	3
Process	4
Public Health	7
Housing.....	13
Employment & Economic Development.....	17
Education & Schools	20
Community Programs & Services	23
Conflict Transformation & Alternative Accountability.....	26
Structure of Investments.....	29
Endnotes	32

Vision

For the members of JustLeadershipUSA and our partners, our demand to #CLOSErikers and has always been deeply tied to a vision for using funds that will be saved by decarceration to make long-overdue investments to build communities. We reject the reliance on a race- and poverty-based system of policing and punishment that characterizes the current failed approach to ‘safety’ on a city, state, and national level. We know that true safety is fostered in well-resourced communities, and that New York City is undoubtedly capable of providing that support to our communities. New York City is often hailed, by the Mayor and others, as services- and resource-rich. It is true that resources exist, but the struggles of too many New Yorkers show us clearly that enormous gaps remain. Certainly, services and resources at the community level have never been funded at the levels that law enforcement agencies are (and long have been).

Here, we have drawn on the work and vision of over 60 partners and advisors from more than 30 partner organizations and groups, along with more than 200 individuals representing families and communities worst impacted by incarceration. Our conversations about these investments started with thinking about the money that will be saved by closing Rikers -- over \$1 billion per year, as estimated by the [Lippman Commission](#). However, we quickly recognized that it is not only the Department of Corrections that is over-resourced, but all elements of law enforcement, including the New York City Police Department, the New York City Department of Probation, and our courts. Our City pumps over \$14 billion dollars² annually into these agencies and charges them with solving problems they will never be equipped to address. In doing so, our City applies law enforcement solutions to problems of public health, poverty, and inequality. It hasn’t worked, and it will never work.

We are proud and excited to present this updated #buildCOMMUNITIES platform as a roadmap for New York City to make a bold shift from the status quo to a city that lives our values of equity and justice by acknowledging the vast resources that decades of mass incarceration have extracted from Black, Brown, and poor communities, and starting *today* to address that legacy by investing in all of the things that we know work to create *true* safety.

Process

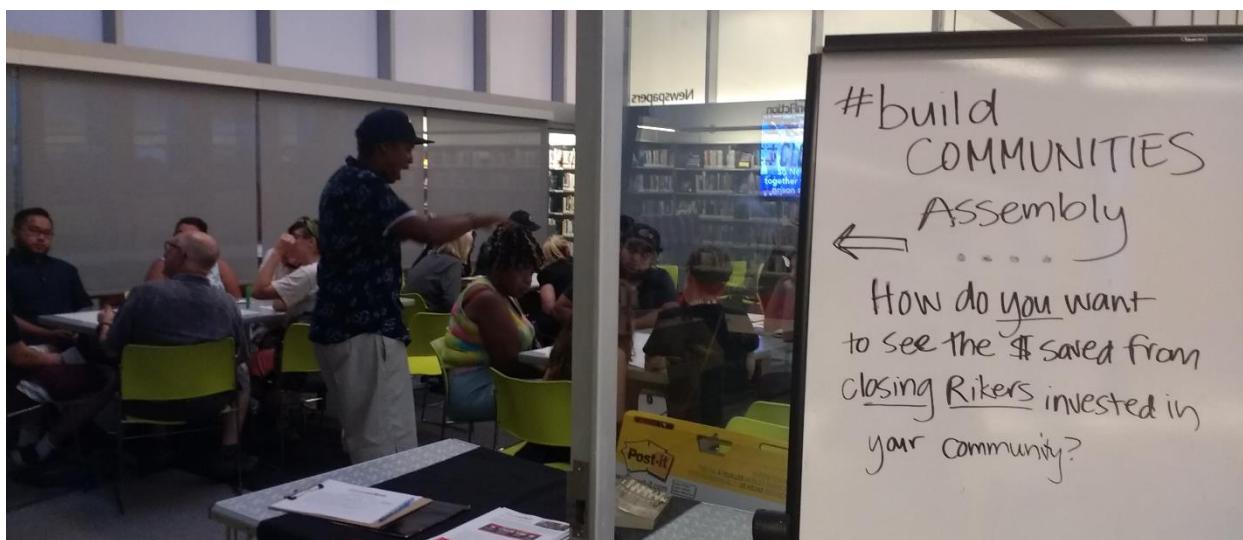
This platform was built by a collaboration of directly impacted people and communities, as well as a range of partner organizations and advisors. We are grateful to all of them for their invaluable contributions to this vision.

- From June to July 2018, over 50 members of more than 30 partner organizations (formal and informal) met in eight issue-based subcommittees (*Employment & Economic Development; Housing; Mental Health & Counseling; Substance Use; Conflict Mediation & Alternative Accountability; Education & Schools; Youth, Family & Recreational Services; Health, Wellness & Environmental Justice*). Other organizations and individuals offered insights through follow-up conversations. These partners and advisors include:
 - Arab American Association of New York
 - Bronx Defenders*
 - Brooklyn Movement Center
 - Brotherhood/Sister Sol*
 - Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services
 - Center for Educational Equity
 - Center for Health Equity, New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene
 - Center for Justice at Columbia University
 - Children's Defense Fund
 - College and Community Fellowship
 - Community Access
 - Community Service Society of New York
 - Community Voices Heard
 - Cooperative Economic Alliance of New York City
 - Corporation for Supportive Housing
 - CUNY School of Public Health
 - Dignity in Schools Campaign
 - DriveChange*
 - Drug Policy Alliance
 - Dyslexia Plus Task Force
 - Getting Out and Staying Out
 - Grand Street Settlement
 - Harm Reduction Coalition*
 - John Jay College, From Punishment to Public Health*
 - Legal Action Center
 - Legal Aid Society, Prisoners Rights Project
 - Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts of New York
 - Neighbors in Action*
 - New Economy Project
 - New York Academy of Medicine
 - New York City Employment and Training Coalition
 - New York City Environmental Justice Alliance

- New York City Network of Worker Cooperatives
- New York Harm Reduction Educators
- New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, Disability Justice Program
- New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, Environmental Justice Program*
- New Yorkers for Parks
- Open Society Foundations
- Safe Horizon
- St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction
- Supportive Housing Network of New York
- United Community Centers
- Urban Justice Center Mental Health Project*
- VOCAL-NY
- West Side Commons*

*Indicates an organization that convened a subcommittee

- From June to August 2018, 210 individuals joined in assemblies in eight communities most impacted by mass incarceration (*Bed-Stuy/Crown Heights, Stapleton, Jamaica, Brownsville / East New York, Hunts Point, Mott Haven, Tremont, Harlem*). Partners who hosted these assemblies include:
 - Brooklyn Movement Center
 - East Harlem Health Action Center
 - Grand Street Settlement, Unity Plaza Community Center
 - Mott Haven Reformed Church
 - Neighborhood Benches
 - New York Public Library, Stapleton Branch
 - The Point CDC



#buildCOMMUNITIES Assembly at Stapleton Library, Staten Island. July 2018.

- JLUSA's membership of formerly incarcerated people and their loved ones have for years amplified the need for community reinvestment. They weighed in formally and informally with their ideas and vision throughout this process.

- In Fall 2018, a working group convened to review all of the input gathered through this process, and synthesize it into a set of clear and urgent demands for reinvestment from the City government. This working group and set of co-authors includes:
 - Ashley Viruet, The West Side Commons
 - Darren Mack, JLUSA and #CLOSErikers launching member
 - Halimah Washington, JLUSA member
 - Marco Barrios, JLUSA member
 - Marsha Jean-Charles, Brotherhood/Sister Sol
 - Megan French-Marcelin, JLUSA
 - Monica Novoa, JLUSA
 - Rosa Jaffe, Urban Justice Center Mental Health Project
 - Sarita Daftary-Steel, JLUSA
 - Shana Russell, Humanities Action Lab at Rutgers University
 - Theresa Sweeney, JLUSA and #CLOSErikers launching member
 - Vidal Guzman, JLUSA and #CLOSErikers launching member

In the winter of 2019/2020, we updated this platform through follow-up conversations with the above contributors. In the following pages, we outline our vision and demands for investments in the areas of Public Health, Housing, Employment & Economic Development, Education & Schools, Community Programs & Services, and Conflict Transformation & Alternative Accountability, as well as ways in which the Structure of Investments must be transformed.

Illustrations by Crystal Clarity



Public Health

Invest in the well-being of our communities to address ill health exacerbated by systemic racism, poverty, discrimination, criminalization, and gentrification.

Our bloated criminal punishment system reflects a historical and continuing lack of investment in the health and well-being of people and communities. While our public health system and institutions are starved for resources, incarceration is used to ‘treat’ mental and behavioral health needs, substance dependency, physical health needs, and violence. Punitive responses will never address the root causes of these issues. Punitive responses are not even effective in ‘managing’ or ‘containing’ these problems, as interaction with our dehumanizing criminal punishment system leads to further deterioration of mental and physical health.

Demands

1. Provide free, quality, community-based mental health services that are preventative and responsive to mental health crises. Services should be provided both in brick-and-mortar centers (like community trauma or healing centers), and in ways that proactively reach the community through canvassing, training, and meeting people where they are at. Mental health treatment and services must be provided outside of the carceral system, should engage peers (people with lived experience) and local community members in paid roles, and should prioritize non-mandated and non-coercive approaches.³
 - a. Expand site-based treatment
 - i. Build the two diversion centers already planned, and provide additional funding for a minimum of two centers in each borough.
 - ii. Sustain funding for peer-run mental health [Crisis Respite Centers](#),⁴ and create two more
 - Eight Crisis Respite Centers⁵ currently serve New York City, with a total capacity for 64 people.
 - Queens and Manhattan each need at least one more Crisis Respite Center. The Queens respite center should be in Jamaica, well-served by transportation. The Manhattan respite center should be in an area of upper Manhattan well-served by public transportation.
 - Each center must be ADA compliant. Only one existing center is.
 - The referral process for Crisis Respite Centers should be changed to remove barriers to access. Anyone, including a family member, peer, program staff, therapist, doctor, should be able to refer a person who would like to utilize a respite center. The Crisis Respite Center will then do its intake as normal.
 - iii. Create five Mental Health Urgent Care clinics
 - Open one mental health urgent care stand-alone clinic in each borough. While these clinics exist for those with private insurance,⁶ there is currently no public option.
 - Clinics should offer 24 hour, walk-in, mental and behavioral health services.
 - Clinics should be staffed at any given time by a psychiatrist, a nurse, a therapist, and a couple of peers.
 - The City should convene a group of Health and Hospitals Corporation staff, mental health advocates, and people with lived experience to develop specific plans for the urgent care centers.
 - iv. Create four more Support and Connection Centers (previously called Health Diversion Centers) with expanded eligibility
 - After many delays, two Support and Connection Centers (with a total of 40-50 beds, serving up to 2,400 people per year)⁷ will open in February 2020 While New York City is just starting to develop these centers, they have been

an important part of the mental health and crisis management landscape in Los Angeles for a long time.

- The City should create four more diversion centers in the short term - with centers sited in the precincts that log the highest numbers of mental health calls for people in crisis.⁸
 - The current guidelines give police discretion over who is brought to a diversion center, and allow them to exclude people whose behavior could be grounds for a felony charge.
 - Police discretion should be minimized, given the well-documented patterns of racial bias⁹ in policing. These biases, and police discretion, could lead to Black and Brown people being perceived as more threatening and less deserving of diversion.
 - Eligibility should not exclude people who could be charged with a felony, but should rather be based on an observation of symptoms of mental distress, with criteria informed by peer specialist and mental health professionals.
 - If Emergency Medical Services (EMS) arrives on the scene, they should transport people to diversion centers rather than police, if this does not delay transportation to a diversion center.
 - Staffing for these centers should ensure that there are peer specialists on staff during every shift (twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week).
 - This would require an investment of approximately \$20 million annually (\$5 million per center x 4 centers).
- v. The City can utilize existing, vacant Department of Health buildings, or invest in existing community-based organizations, to develop the above-mentioned centers.
- vi. Expand field-based treatment
- Fund more mobile, intensive case management, modeled on Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams,¹⁰ with expanded eligibility.
 - Eligibility should include those currently eligible for ACT and people with substance use disorders, personality disorders, cognitive and developmental disabilities, and history of severe trauma.
 - With the flexibility of City (rather than State funding) clients can also keep their ACT team assignment even if they are incarcerated or unreachable for a period of more than 90 days.
 - The City should fund at least 10 additional teams with capacity to serve 680 people. This expanded capacity could address the current waiting list (approximately 500) and some of the additional demand that would come from expanded eligibility.
 - This would require an investment of \$10.5 million (\$1,055,000 per team x 10 teams), plus additional funds to build capacity at the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to manage a larger number of teams.
 - Continue support for Intensive Mobile Treatment (IMT) teams.¹¹
 - IMT teams have been very effective in meeting the needs of clients who are often hardest to reach, including people who live in unstable housing or are unsheltered.
 - Address recruitment and retention challenges among field-based treatment teams
 - Fund pathways for workforce development, with a focus on recruiting more people of color and people with lived experience.

- Assess salaries and increase compensation (and total budget per team) to ensure salaries competitive enough to attract and retain skilled people.
 - Offer resources for self-care, including addressing vicarious trauma, burnout, and workplace environment
- vii. Expand investment in [Mobile Crisis Teams](#)¹² to a level sufficient to enable them to replace the police as first-responders to calls involving mental health crises, as recommended by the Mayor's Behavioral Health Task Force and the Office of the Public Advocate.¹³
- Expand effective housing options for people with mental health concerns and other supportive housing needs [see 'Housing' section for more detail].
- Support and expand prosocial programs like clubhouses with supportive employment, which do not require individuals to be in active recovery.¹⁴
- Further invest in harm reduction.
 - a. Fully fund the implementation of Local Law 225 to provide naloxone training to shelter staff and residents.
 - b. Pass and fully fund Intro 1190 to provide Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) in shelters.
 - c. Fund mobile medical teams to provide MAT to people living on the streets.
 - d. Establish at least one safer injection site in each borough, and limit law enforcement interaction around them. Pilot sites are currently planned in Brooklyn, Manhattan, and two in the Bronx, and should be expanded in the future, building on lessons from these sites.
 - e. Continue and expand support for community education campaigns to de-stigmatize substance use, people who use substances, treatment, and harm reduction services. Include education across a spectrum of safer use, managed use, and abstinence. Also include education on the details of the [911 Good Samaritan Law](#).¹⁵
 - f. Create funding streams to promote focus groups and one-on-one interviews with participants/clients of harm reduction and treatment programs (and other people who use drugs), to learn what they need in order to avoid law enforcement interaction and build trust with community members and providers.
 - g. Create funding streams specific to harm reduction programs, including funding that allows for the hiring and professional development of directly impacted people.
 - h. Expand funding to harm reduction services including health hubs, drop-in and on-demand treatment services, and low-barrier community healthcare clinics that prioritize non-mandated and non-coercive approaches.
 - i. Expand, improve, and destigmatize methadone clinics and reduce law enforcement interaction around them. Support initiatives that help methadone clinics to be seen as clinical providers, such as including them in referral networks and health-resource directories, and dedicate funding for additional services at methadone clinics, including drop-in space for clients
- 5. Invest in workforce development to appropriately staff all supportive or treatment facilities, including recruiting Black and Brown leaders in the healthcare industry.
 - a. Negotiate with payers (State Medicaid and insurance companies) to reimburse for the work of community health workers and peers at a higher rate.
 - b. Support initiatives to provide Black and Brown leaders with the necessary education and training to attain leadership positions in the healthcare industry.
- 6. Provide access to low- or no-cost healthcare at a community level, offering a holistic range of services including mental health, sexual health, dental health, wellness (including mindfulness and mediation), and preventative services.

- a. Expand [Neighborhood Health Action Centers](#),¹⁶ including the three pending (in Central Harlem, Morrisania, and Bedford-Stuyvesant), and establish one each in Queens and Staten Island as well.
 - b. Expand school-based wellness centers.
 - c. Invest in mobile health clinics, and more and improved hospitals throughout the City.
7. Remove and address environmental burdens.
- a. Pass the package of Renewable Rikers bills (Intros 1591, 1592, and 1593) that would transfer Rikers Island to the Department of Environmental Protection and initiate studies on how best to use the island for green infrastructure. Re-use of Rikers could include the following projects:
 - i. Redesign the water treatment system so the South Bronx plant can be relocated on Rikers Island.
 - ii. Build a large anaerobic digester to work in tandem with a water treatment plant, expanding the City's capacity to process organic waste without burdening any community. No other waste-to-energy facility should be sited at Rikers Island other than the anaerobic digester.
 - iii. Build a marine transfer station at Rikers, and modernize Hunts Point Marine Transfer Station, so barges can bring organic waste directly from Hunts Point market, and from other municipal marine transfer stations, to Rikers Island without use of trucks.
 - iv. Expand existing composting on Rikers Island.
 - v. Build a solar farm on Rikers Island.
 - vi. Where land in the South Bronx is made available by closing The Boat and relocating its water treatment plant, invest in developing this land as parks or green space that adds to physical activity opportunities and overall wellness.
 - vii. In all living wage green jobs created by these initiatives, prioritize hiring residents of communities most impacted by mass incarceration and most excluded from employment.
8. Improve access to fresh food, water, and health promoting resources.
- a. Further invest in community gardens by halting all sales of gardens for private development, expanding supports available through the New York City Parks Department's [Green Thumb Program](#)¹⁷ (infrastructure, supplies, and technical assistance), and establishing a land trust to purchase land for active gardens that are operating on privately owned land.
 - b. Expand economic assistance and incentive programs for bodegas and family owned stores to offer healthier options, such as establishing a subsidized delivery service to help small stores source healthier options.

What's Working

[**The Arab American Association of New York's Mental Health Services**](#)¹⁸ program is operated in collaboration with Connections to Care (C2C) Program. C2C, part of [ThriveNYC](#),¹⁹ partners with community-based organizations to provide culturally and linguistically sensitive mental health services. All AAANY staff are trained on Mental Health First Aid, Screening, Motivational Interviewing and Psychoeducation, and paired with trained mental health providers at NYU Lutheran to address mental health needs beyond the capacity of staff.

Intensive Mobile Treatment (IMT) teams were established in New York City in 2015 as part of the [NYC Safe Initiative](#).²⁰ This form of field-based treatment is designed to serve adults with recent and frequent contact with the mental health, substance use, criminal legal, and homeless services systems. The teams are designed to be mobile, flexible and interdisciplinary -- to proactively reach people where they are at, with the flexibility to meet their needs. Staffing for each team includes a Program Director, 2 Peer Counselors, 3 Behavioral Health Specialists, a Registered Nurse, a Psychiatrist, and a Program Administrator. Each team serves 27 clients - a lower ratio of clients to staff than Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams. Because IMT teams use City funds and have more generous budgets for clients services, they are not reliant on Medicaid billing. One IMT provider described a client who told them what he really needed was a bicycle. They were able to buy him one, and saw that his mental health and stability improved. New York City currently has seven IMT teams, and committed in October 2019 to adding four more.²¹

[**VOCAL-NY's Care Coordination**](#) services connect people who use drugs to health and wellness services that they need and deserve. They offer referrals to trustworthy, respectful providers for services: HIV, STI and hepatitis C testing and treatment, housing placement and assistance, insurance enrollment, food pantries and soup kitchens, drug treatment including methadone and suboxone, medical services, mental health services, and legal services. By providing caring, individualized support from a team of people with training and lived experience (including staff, social workers, peers, and partners in medical institutions) VOCAL has helped many people lead more stable lives and avoid contact with the criminal legal system. It has meant that they have the ability to accompany people to court and advocate for programs that would actually benefit them; to walk people through the process of applying for NYC's housing lottery; and when someone is taken into Department of Corrections custody, to contact Correctional Health Services and advocate for them. With more funding, they could expand their team to ensure that case managers work with no more than 30 clients, and to bring on team members who specialize in helping people access specific services.



Housing

Invest in safe, stable, and dignified housing as a human right for all New Yorkers.

Stable housing is a critical pillar of a stable life, yet in New York City, it is increasingly out of reach. Discrimination and skyrocketing housing costs have combined to make it nearly impossible to find housing in the private market, while lack of investment and oversight at all levels of government have made subsidized or regulated housing increasingly hard to secure and to live in comfortably. Worse yet, the working class people of color who endured decades of disinvestment, abandonment, and extraction of human and financial resources through mass criminalization and incarceration, are now being priced out of their neighborhoods as inequitable development projects accelerate across the City. This has produced the worst homelessness crisis since the Great Depression. In addition to being dehumanizing, homelessness is incredibly expensive for the individuals subject to it, and for our City, with extensive NYPD resources devoted to criminalizing homeless.²² We must commit to making the kinds of proactive investments in *true* affordable housing that will enable all New Yorkers to find stable homes and stay in them.

Demands

1. Create, preserve, and maintain true affordable housing.
 - a. Invest at least \$1 billion in crucial improvements in NYCHA, including fixing elevators and lighting, upgrading heating equipment, and addressing lead contamination. These investments must be matched by additional State and Federal investments.
 - b. Double the number of permanent affordable housing units set aside for homeless New Yorkers in the Mayor's [Housing New York 2.0 Plan](#),²³ from 15,000 to 30,000, with 24,000 of these units created through new construction. This plan set forth by the House Our Future NY campaign²⁴ will require the City to build roughly 2,500 new units of homeless housing each year between now and 2026.
 - c. Expand construction of housing which is not owned by for-profit entities, and without restrictions that exclude people with prior convictions.
 - i. Renew and increase funding for the [Community Land Trust Citywide Budget Initiative](#),²⁵ to provide start-up funding to a group of organizations to establish and manage community land trusts.
 - ii. Create a housing trust fund with a dedicated revenue stream to support the creation and preservation of permanently affordable housing for the lowest income New Yorkers. This fund could be supported by a dedicated revenue stream generated by increasing the property taxes on vacant and luxury properties.
 - d. Develop programs to restore vacant properties to active uses that contribute to the supply of affordable housing for low-income New Yorkers, as called for in the [Housing Not Warehousing Act](#).²⁶
 - e. Every development, new or renovated, regardless of subsidies, should have a portion of low-income housing available. Affordability levels should reflect the Area Median Income of the neighborhood in which the buildings exist (not the City as a whole or the NY metro area). [Intro 1211](#)²⁷ passed by the City Council in December 2019, will require developers who receive City financial assistance for new construction of housing development projects to set aside for homeless individuals and families at least 15 percent of dwelling units offered for rent in each housing development project. Development projects that do not receive City subsidies should also be required to include affordable units.
 - f. Barriers to housing for people with records must be removed.
 - . New York City must pass a Fair Chance Housing Act, similar to what Seattle has implemented²⁸. Questions regarding prior convictions should be removed from Housing Connect applications, and HPD's *Marketing Handbook: Policies and Procedures for Resident*

Selection and Occupancy, Section C4b (page 28) must be amended to remove “Criminal history” as a justifiable cause for rejecting an application.

- i. NYCHA policies should be amended to ensure that less people are excluded from public housing, and to expand eligibility for the NYCHA Family Reentry Program²⁹ for people who have been previously excluded. Speaker Corey Johnson’s report, [Our Homelessness Crisis: The Case for Change](#), outlines a number of ways to reform NYCHA’s exclusion and reentry policies.³⁰
2. Expand and improve services that help people to stay in their homes, such as representation in housing court, rental assistance and arrears programs, and programs to help property owners make repairs & prevent foreclosure
3. For people with mental and behavioral health needs, substance dependencies, personality disorders, cognitive and developmental disabilities, and history of severe trauma, prioritize long-term Supportive Housing
 - a. Develop all Supportive Housing using a Housing First approach to quickly and successfully connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment, or service participation requirements.
 - b. To accelerate the development of units under the [15/15 Supportive Housing Initiative](#)³¹
 - i. Improve flexibility of funding to allow providers to apply for either congregate or scattered site development
 - ii. Conduct a thorough survey of available and underutilized public land, in order to allocate more public land for supportive housing development
 - iii. The City should amend NYC 15/15 to allow people who are homeless who have been incarcerated for 90 days or more to be eligible for these units (assuming they meet other NYC 15/15 eligibility requirements). Currently, the initiative only targets people who meet the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s definition of chronically homeless, thereby disqualifying those incarcerated for 90 days or more.³²
 - c. Fund at least 1,000 [Justice-Involved Supportive Housing Units](#).^{33 34} For this funding to be most effective, the City should standardize services and operations funding for all JISH contracts, and increase funding levels for scatter-site housing, or provide for central-site housing, as the current vouchers are insufficient to find housing in the private market.
 - d. Continue to expand housing options for runaway and abandoned youth, by continuing the development of the 1,700 supportive housing units for youth through the 15/15 Supportive Housing Initiative.
 - e. Increase funding rates across all supportive housing programs to match fair market rents.³⁵
 - f. Allocate increased funding to expand training for staff to use harm reduction, trauma-informed and motivational interviewing approaches in supportive housing residences, so that providers do not screen out higher-needs individuals in the interview stage, and also increase oversight of the interview and screening process for supportive housing clients.
 - g. Allocate increased funding to attract and retain staff in supportive housing residences.
 - h. Provide funding and training for 24-hour crisis-response staff at supportive housing sites to prevent unnecessary calls to 911 and involvement of police. We must invest in facilities with the capacity to serve clients refusing to take medication and actively demonstrating aggressive and violent behaviors.
 - i. Include childcare and income support as part of supportive housing arrangements.

What's Working

Through their [integrated housing model, Community Access³⁶](#) provides permanent supportive housing that mixes families with low income and people with mental health concerns. The model they pioneered brings together different populations, including individuals with psychiatric disabilities, families with low income, veterans, and youth aging out of foster care. The supportive services provided, like counseling, and a range of wellness resources - such as urban farming, exercise and cooking classes, discounted bike-share, and pet adoption - are available to all residents of the building. Community Access currently has units in 21 buildings, with three more in development. Together, there will be 1,732 total tenants; of that 1,140 are tenants with a mental health diagnosis. Eventually, seven properties will have a mix of singles and families, including all the properties currently in their development pipeline. The buildings operate on a Housing First model, and do not require that applicants meet requirements like being substance-free, or taking medications. Their oldest integrated housing project, in the East Village, provides an example of personal and community stability. Of the original 28 families that moved in in 1993, 17 are still there. Community Access maintains a robust tenant advisory group that advises senior staff and creates tenant-led initiatives.

The [Mutual Housing Association of New York \(MHANY\)³⁷](#) program began as a response to the organizing of squatters who occupied vacant, city-owned sites in the East New York neighborhood of Brooklyn, where the community was confronting an epidemic of landlord abandonment, withdrawal of city services, and illegal evictions by landlords. The Department of Housing Preservation and Development created the program to dispossess abandoned buildings and turn illegal squatters into legal homesteaders. Through negotiations with the squatter population, the city created a separate entity called MHANY and sold the properties to it. MHANY retained land titles to existing sites, and had the legal right to transfer ownership to homesteaders that had worked on the rehabilitation of buildings they occupied. Under HPD rules, homesteaders that chose to sell their property received a limited portion of the resale price. To encourage long-term affordability, MHANY has the first option to purchase the unit and then resell it to a household on the waiting list at a restricted sale price. In addition to the vacant buildings, HPD provided technical assistance, permanent financing, and a portion of construction financing to MHANY cooperatives.



Employment & Economic Development

Invest in programs that support people to achieve economic independence and stability, especially for the people who have been most excluded from opportunities to generate income and build wealth.

In neighborhoods subject to racist policing practices and mass criminalization, vast numbers of people are unemployed, underemployed, and not in the workforce at all. Research has shown that at least 27 percent of formerly incarcerated people are persistently unemployed as a result of structural barriers such as occupational licensing restrictions as well as pervasive racial discrimination. Where Black and brown communities are concerned, levels of unemployment for people with criminal convictions is closer to 40 percent. Communities ravaged by mass criminalization are the same communities that continue to suffer not just from higher rates of unemployment, but lack of access to apprenticeships, employment with meaningful benefits, and wages that ensure the capacity to not simply live check-to-check but build stability within their family and community. Where racial wealth gaps persist and are in many places growing, communities are now subject to further disinvestment and displacement. To maintain and build healthy communities, neighborhoods that have historically been most marginalized from the economy must have pathways into living wage employment and entrepreneurship with real opportunity for mobility.

1. Help New Yorkers to enter skilled trades and living wage, sustainable employment through paid workforce development, including but not limited to training for new roles as mental health workers, credible messengers and other roles needed to expand critical social services and reduce reliance on the criminal justice system; and training for jobs in tech, in healthcare, and green jobs that could be created on Rikers [see Public Health recommendations].
 - a. Implement and fully fund Career Pathways [keep the endnote and link] for all New Yorkers, with added funding focused on increasing both the number and depth of programs, and support providers whose programs are holistic, targeted, and community-responsive.
 - i. This includes the expansion of bridge program funding to \$60 million by expanding programs within DYCD and CUNY, and initiating new ones via HRA, EDC, and WKDEV to enable more New Yorkers with basic skills deficits to access job training programs and career opportunities. Bridge programs provide sector-specific preparation for job training programs along with support to address barriers are preventing individuals from accessing training programs or postsecondary education (such as insufficient math, literacy or English language skills; lack of a required credential or license).
 - b. Embed workforce training into all economic development initiatives, and ensure that investments in the city's growth sectors create equitable career pathways for all New Yorkers. Economic development initiatives such as those supported and managed by the Economic Development Corporation should include workforce training as a funded component, and detail how private sector partners will proactively connect local residents to trainings and the jobs created by the initiative.
 - c. Streamline oversight of the workforce system
 - d. Make tax credits to new industries contingent on offering set-asides of at least 15% for members of the local community.
 - e. Set aside a portion of all City jobs for people with barriers to employment like a prior conviction, unstable housing, or attendance at underperforming schools.
 - f. Provide funding to cover fees for occupational licenses.
 - g. Provide all workplaces with resource guides and posters to help employees connect to services they may need to be consistent in their jobs, like reduced-price MetroCards, free mental and physical health services, applications for HousingConnect, and more.

2. Establish a Universal Summer Internships and Youth Jobs program,³⁹ to expand summer job opportunities to accommodate all young people who want to work, while improving the structure and effectiveness of the program.
3. Expand support for small businesses, focused on historically excluded people and communities in particular.
 - a. Increase funding for the Worker Cooperative Business Development Initiative to \$5.04 million. Provide specific funding for a targeted approach to support formerly incarcerated people to start and join cooperatives.
 - b. Support small businesses by paying 30% of their employment taxes.
 - c. Help people with barriers to employment to attain business permits and licensing, including providing workshops and grants for associated fees.

What's Working

The [**Worker Cooperative Business Development Initiative**](#),⁴⁰ established with support from City Council in 2014, offers innovative ways to address economic and social inequality in New York City. Worker cooperatives are businesses that are run and operated by the people who work in them (worker-owners). Worker cooperatives allow New Yorkers to build businesses together, therefore allowing all the workers to gain access to upward mobility and better working conditions. The initiative funds a network of more than a dozen organizations to help New Yorkers to start cooperatives, to grow and sustain existing cooperatives, to convert existing businesses to cooperatives, to access financing support, and to navigate their legal needs. This initiative, supported with \$10 million from the City Council over the last six years, has helped to triple the number of jobs in cooperatively owned businesses, many of them owned by women of color.

[**GOSOWorks**](#),⁴¹ is a program of Getting Out and Staying Out, and helps young men with a history or risk of justice-system involvement to connect to meaningful employment, while also assessing the individuals' capacities and strengths, and addressing their developmental needs and emotional well-being. GOSOWorks has established partnerships with a number of businesses and institutions, which benefit not only GOSOWorks participants, but also their families and their communities. They also can greatly benefit employer partners. Because GOSO prepares participants well for the workplace, provides them with continued support after they are employed, and encourages them to continue to pursue their education and training, they become outstanding employees, ready to grow with the challenges of the job. GOSOWorks' staffing solutions free, but our Internship-to-Employment (I2E) program can subsidize participants' employment for up to 240 hours. GOSOWorks currently partner with a range of employers including restaurants and bakeries, like Ovenly, Maman, Dos Toros, and The Ravioli Store; non-profits like CAMBA, Hour Children, and The Horticultural Society of New York; and businesses like Intersection, ERH Contracting, and ABC Worldwide Stone.



Education & Schools

Invest in education and schools as spaces for students, families, and the broader community to access education for success and for liberation, to connect to the resources they need, and as places where transformative and restorative justice is taught and practiced.

One of the most direct ways to reinvest in our communities is to reinvest in our schools and in education. Only in so doing may we restore to directly impacted neighborhoods and families the preparation, supports, and access needed to secure their futures. History has shown that both educational achievement and college completion are critical to ending cycles of oppression negatively impacting our communities. Rather than expecting marginalized students to successfully navigate a biased education system and cheering the few that miraculously do, we must make schools places where *all* youth learn in their varied ways *and* get the supports they need to thrive. In doing so, we have the opportunity to change the primary institution of socialization - our schools. Failure to reinvest in education and schools is a choice to continue to harm those directly impacted by criminalization, incarceration, and dehumanization.

Demands

1. Implement and resource transformative and restorative justice initiatives to replace punitive justice, with a focus on processes informed by students.
 - a. As called for by the Dignity in Schools Campaign (DSC-NY), invest in the City's commitment to restorative justice by \$30 million directly to schools to build their own school climate initiatives, to hire people in roles such as peacebuilders, mental health and healing support staff, youth advocates, and restorative justice coordinators.⁴²
 - b. DSC-NY additionally demands a school-centered approach to restorative justice; a restorative justice accountability commission; a halt to the implementation of 300 new *Youth Coordination Officers*, and an elimination of the \$20 increase to school policing.
2. Enhance structural supports and connections to key services.
 - a. Increase the ratio of social workers to students to at least 1:250, while assessing ways to provide a higher ratio in schools with large high-needs populations such as students with disabilities, homeless students, or English Language Learners.⁴³
 - b. Increase staffing ratios for therapists, career advisors, mentors, resource liaisons, health services, and attorneys.
3. Revamp school curriculum.
 - a. Implement culturally responsive curriculum (culture and gender affirming, Rites of Passage), and recruit and train teachers who can relate to and address needs of students. This could be achieved with a \$60 million initial investment.⁴⁴
 - b. Expand and improve curriculum to support preparation for meaningful and living wage careers including trades education, access to technology and tech careers, and college preparation. The city should invest \$15 million to support existing Student Success Centers, to establish these centers in 40 new high school campuses and to implement year-round College Bridge programs.⁴⁵
 - c. Integrate more non-traditional education, including out-of-classroom learning experiences up through high school.
4. Draw on City resources (in addition to State reforms) to make equitable resources available to all NYC schools.
 - a. Provide essential school supplies for all students.
 - b. Renovate school buildings to be structures that are welcoming and nurturing.
 - c. Increase the number of teachers in classrooms and create smaller classroom sizes.
5. Support additional enrichment programming.
 - a. Allocate increased funding to support extended hours programming including access to libraries and librarians; arts programming; financial literacy; sports; and student-led programs in which youth support each other to avoid and manage risk and conflict.
6. Expand investments to provide free, public, quality higher education at CUNY
 - b. Work with the state to allocate the \$812 million needed to make CUNY free for all students.⁴⁶
 - c. Work with the state to make ASAP (Accelerated Study in Associate Programs) and ACE (Accelerate Complete Engage) available to all CUNY students.⁴⁷

7. Make reparative investments for justice-impacted youth and families.
 - a. Ensure what is provided for students in schools is also provided for youth who are incarcerated or out-of-school.
 - b. Fund scholarships for children of incarcerated parents.
8. Create more opportunities for students and families to have a meaningful voice in their schools.

What's Working

Since 2014, [**Middle School 50 in Williamsburg**](#)⁴⁸ has been partnered with a community-based organization, El Puente, through the Community Schools program. One focus of their work has been establishing a school climate more oriented towards restorative justice, and less reliant on punishment. Partly supported by a grant from the Office of Community Schools, they've been able to add more counselors to their school team, including a group of peer counselors who are implementing restorative practices to create a safe school environment on their own terms. They've also held professional development sessions with all staff around implicit bias and culturally relevant teaching, trained all Community Schools staff to act as counselors, and worked school-wide to use counseling as a first step in response in conflict and challenging behaviors. In the process, they've reduced suspensions by more than 60%.

In 2015, NYC made an investment of \$23 million in new funding for [**Arts Education in schools**](#), which is now baselined in the City budget.⁴⁹ Funds were allocated to hire 120 new arts teachers at middle and high schools that are underserved, improve arts facilities across the City, and foster partnerships with some of the City's cultural institutions. The investment has increased access to arts education for thousands of students with new classes and activities in music, dance, visual arts and theater. Further funding could expand the program reach for a greater portion of NYC's 1.1 million public school students.



Community Programs & Services

Support and expand resources that all of NYC's diverse residents can access in their communities to relax, learn, thrive, and lead.

In order to best support individuals and their communities, investments must be made in accessible, wrap-around services that fulfill the needs and hopes of the specific community where those programs and services take place. Services should focus on the health and well-being of all community members inclusive of age, race, sexuality, gender, ability, education, employment status, immigration status, and other factors that are often used to exclude people, intentionally or unintentionally. To support the people in our City who have been most marginalized, not just to survive but also to thrive, we have to consider the type of investments that can improve quality of life, bring people together, and bring them joy. Investing in New Yorkers' ability to live their fullest lives and in the leadership of residents to build community together, we can support safety and stability in our neighborhoods.

Demands

1. Invest in community-led community centers, recreational parks, and community spaces with accessible facilities for the entire community, and especially those 18-26 years old.
 - a. Provide funding for community-driven research projects to assess local neighborhood needs and strengths and for the development of neighborhood specific community centers.
 - b. Utilize and re-develop vacant or underutilized buildings for community uses.
 - c. Help non-profits to buy their own buildings and support incubators sites for the development of new non-profits.
 - d. Expand hours, diversity and quantity of programming, and locations of Parks and Recreation Centers, including expanding service in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens to establish at least one center per 125,000 residents.⁵⁰
 - e. Expand and improve parks with facilities for young children, working public bathrooms, and upgraded sports facilities.
 - f. Add staffing for maintenance and operations of parks across the City as advocated by the [Play Fair Coalition](#).⁵¹
 - g. Create more spaces for mentoring and peer mentoring.
 - h. Support positive events to help people connect with their neighbors out in the community (block parties, street festivals, etc).
2. Make public transportation accessible to everyone.
 - a. Fully fund the [Fair Fares](#)⁵² reduced price Metrocard program, including single-ride and pay-as-you-go fares, and implement [fare capping](#).⁵³
 - b. Make all student metrocards unlimited, so that students can participate in after school activities beyond the current timeframe (8pm) and beyond one additional ride a day. Students who live near their schools should also get metrocards so they can participate in programming in other neighborhoods.
3. Support universal child care that works for working families.
 - a. Expand afternoon hours beyond the existing Universal Pre-K and 3-K programs.
 - b. Provide support for parents who seek training and parenting resources. These trainings should be available outside of the Agency for Child Services, in supportive, non-coercive settings such as Head Start, UPK/3-K programs, and WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) programs.
4. Invest in public libraries to expand educational and recreational services.
 - a. Continue and build upon the \$33 million in additional operating funding for New York City's public libraries that was included in the FY2020 budget. Further funding can more adequately fund six-day service and programs in NYC's three library systems, and increase capital funding for urgent facility maintenance.
 - b. Expand services like ESL classes, computer skills training, TASC (formerly GED) preparation, and career counseling.
 - c. Offer expanded free resources through libraries, like meeting space and printing.
 - d. Expand the diversity of library offerings, including programs and materials in multiple languages, increasingly representative of NYC communities.
 - e. Invest in learning centers focused on activism & social justice.
5. Establish creative spaces & cultural hubs in communities for all creative disciplines.
 - a. Increase funding to expand creative spaces & cultural hubs that are accessible to the entire community, and support and sustain community institutions that serve as creative

- spaces & cultural hubs, such as libraries, schools, museums, small businesses, and community organizations.
- 6. Invest in youth leadership training, Rites of Passage/identity development (inclusive of LGBTQ and gender non-conforming youth) and other non-traditional programs that support youth to have a voice in community institutions.
 - a. For these programs to be most effective, they cannot be subject to the requirements of the Department of Youth and Community Development's current COMPASS programs,⁵⁴ which allocate a maximum cost-per-participant that is insufficient for running quality programs.
- 7. Expand access to City agencies, legal services, and civic engagement in neighborhood based facilities.
- 8. Increasing funding allocations to several of the City Council's NYC Initiatives, including Digital Inclusion, Anti-Poverty Funding, Young Women's Initiative, and Anti-Violence Youth Programs.

What's Working

Inclusive Services at Brooklyn Public Library⁵⁵ (BPL) provides unique programs for children and teens with and without disabilities. Fostering an inclusive environment, the libraries open their doors to all children, parents, caregivers and educators. Dedicated equipment makes the library experience accessible to children with different abilities. Cube chairs, mats for floor play, positioning cushions, and adaptive toys, are available. Inclusive Services is located in five barrier-free libraries in Brooklyn, and with further funding, could be expanded to more of the BPL's 60 branches.

The Brotherhood/Sister Sol's Rites of Passage Program⁵⁶ (ROP) is designed to empower youth through discovery and discussion of history, culture, social justice and the political forces surrounding them. In partnership with secondary schools and within the community, The Brotherhood/Sister Sol (BroSis) develops chapters, each consisting of 10 to 18 youth members and two adult Chapter Leaders. The Chapter Leaders facilitate weekly sessions and serve as mentors, supporters, confidantes, counselors, teachers, and more. They build trusting relationships and offer guidance to the chapter members as they face the challenges of young adulthood.

During the intensive four- to six-year ROP process, members learn to think critically and act ethically through workshops, cultural excursions, community service opportunities, retreats, college trips, and in engaging in the multitude of other programming at BroSis. Each chapter develops a Mission Statement and collectively defines what it means to be a sister/brother, woman/man and leader. Members also create individual Oaths of Dedication—personal testimonies to how they will live their lives with which they create pathways through which to live their lives on their own terms. The BroSis curriculum for all programming is structured around twelve curriculum focus issues, incorporating topics such as Pan African and Latinx History, Dismantling Sexism and Misogyny, LGBTQ Justice, Environmental Justice, Political Education, Sexual Education & Responsibility, and Educational Achievement and more.

The impacts of this collective work are clear. In NYC the general high school graduation rate is 70%; while research has found that the graduation rate of Black and Latino boys is 34%. Over 40% of Black men between the ages of 18-65 in New York City are unemployed. 90% of BroSis alumni have graduated from high school, 95% either graduated from high school or earned their GED and 95% are working full time or enrolled in college. Harlem's teen-aged pregnancy rate is 15% – but BroSis members have a rate of less than 2%.



Conflict Transformation & Alternative Accountability

Support communities to manage conflict so that it does not escalate to harm, and when harm has happened, to intervene with models that focus on restoration rather than punishment.

We can and must do much more to prevent the kinds of conflict and harm that we *can* prevent through investments in all of the areas we have named above. We must also recognize that conflict and harm will still occur, and we must develop models for responding that do not rely on violence and punishment (which continue the cycle of trauma and harm), but rather on interventions that aim to address and make amends for the harm that was caused, involving all parties in creating a solution. While these interventions may be a more compassionate way to deal with people who have caused harm, the main reason to pursue them is because they work. We need to invest in all levels of alternative programs - diversion, alternatives to incarceration, violence interruption, mediation, and restorative justice. The existing system of punishment - with the deprivation it relies on, and the trauma it fosters - has not made us safer.

Demands

1. Invest in the capacity of communities to respond to conflict, prevent violence and harm, and to address and heal from it in sustainable ways.
 - a. Support or develop community mediation, trauma and healing centers in all of the neighborhoods most impacted by mass incarceration, with a particular attention to needs of youth, use of arts-based therapy, and engagement of peers in providing programming. Integrate within these centers restorative justice initiatives. To be truly safe community spaces, these centers must have no affiliation with the police.
 - b. Create paid opportunities for community members to learn and apply skills related to social-emotional support and civic engagement, such as conflict de-escalation techniques for themselves, their family and their neighbors.
 - c. Increase programming for trauma-informed healing work for those who have been violent or have been affected by violence.
 - d. Increase funding for the [Anti-Gun Violence Youth Employment Program⁵⁷](#) and increase support for mentorship of young people.
2. Invest in the capacity of government agencies and workers to better respond to harm and violence, and promote healing.
 - a. Provide trainings for government workers and government funded programs in trauma-informed care.
 - b. Train employees throughout the ranks of government agencies in restorative justice philosophies and practices. This work requires a paradigm shift, so training is important at all levels of government.
3. Expand investment in diversion and alternatives to incarceration (ATI).⁵⁸
 - a. Sufficiently expand investment in diversion and ATI programs to create enough alternatives to replace all City sentences (sentences of less than 1 year).
 - b. Include programs for those with domestic violence charges, focused on addressing root causes of intimate partner violence.
 - c. Prioritize programs which use a trauma-informed approach and are proven to provide those involved not just with an alternative sentence, but with skills and resources to lead more stable lives.
4. Support alternative models of responding to community violence and fostering safety
 - a. Expand funding for violence interruption programming⁵⁹ to include civic engagement, mobilization, political education, and creation of youth public health workers. Each site should receive at least 1.5 million for services, not including the cost of space.
 - b. To be trusted and effective in their communities, these programs must have no affiliation with the police.

What's Working

The Women's Prison Association's JusticeHome⁶⁰ is a trauma-informed, gender-responsive, community and home-based alternative to incarceration program for women of all experiences. It is designed for women who have been charged with a felony and are facing a minimum of six months' incarceration, and aims to support them so they can stay in their communities rather than serve time in jail or prison. The JusticeHome team works with participants to enhance stability and overall well-being by addressing specific needs that may have contributed to criminal justice involvement. JusticeHome strongly believes in honoring each participant's resilience, strengths, and voice. The program team works collaboratively with every participant to create an individualized change plan to help identify needs and achieve goals. The programs have led to increased stability for approximately 100 women and their families, and costs much less than incarceration, at \$10k-\$20K per participant per year. In the lifetime of the program, 90% of graduates have remained free of future involvement with the legal system. The program is currently in the process of expanding to also serve women with misdemeanor charges.

Make It Happen⁶¹ (MIH) is a program of Neighbors in Action, and is part a program funded by the Office of Victims of Crime and run in partnership with the Center for Court Innovation's Domestic Violence department. Its mission is to give young men between the ages of 16 and 24 who have experienced violence, the tools necessary to overcome traumatic experiences, and enable them to succeed in spite of those experiences. Make It Happen is a trauma-informed and culturally competent program that provides mentorship, intensive case management, clinical interventions and supportive workshops. Participants are challenged to think about how their definition of manhood is intertwined in trauma and gender roles. Through group workshops and client-driven individual sessions, people are able to recognize and process their own trauma. Make It Happen also works to engage traditional victim service providers on the needs of male crime victims, with the goal of making victim services compensation available to young men of color who have been victims of crime. Since the program's inception in 2012, Make It Happen has served close to 400 young men in and around Brooklyn. Within the past two years, MIH has developed a peer mentor program called CHAMPS (Community Healers And Mentors for Personal Success). To date, Make It Happen has 16 CHAMPS that provide informal supportive services to middle school students. Participants have said that the program helps them to better understand and express their feelings.

Release the Grip,⁶² a program of Bronx Connect, operates as part of New York City's Crisis Management System, in the 44th Precinct. Release the Grip has built its strength from those in the community who are already working for change. Community members employed as violence interrupters are credible messengers - people who have experienced violence, and incarceration - who then trained to intervene in conflict before gun violence happens. They create partnerships with informal community leaders, and provide young people in therapeutic services (including helping the community mourn those lost to gun violence and seek healing), employment readiness, and leadership training. As a result of their work, the 44th Precinct experienced a 52% drop in shootings from 2015 to 2017, with no homicides in their catchment area.



Structure of Investments

Restructure the methods by which funds are distributed in order to better support grassroots groups and avoid replicating systems of oppression.

Grassroots groups constitute the social fabric of local communities in NYC. They know best how to meet the needs of people who the City and larger organizations are often less effective in reaching, and they reflect the culture and ideals of the neighborhoods they work in and with. Yet the mechanisms of City investment have for decades put these groups at a disadvantage. Future investments must be made in a way that recognizes and supports the brilliance of these groups, reflects a belief in the knowledge and wisdom that communities and residents have about their own needs and solutions, and demonstrates commitment to meet people where they are at.

Demands

1. Establish a staffed and funded oversight committee or committee to decentralize funding decisions, improve inclusion in City services, address structural racism in City agencies, and improve accountability. The committee(s) would be tasked to
 - a. Oversee how justice reinvestment funds are spent.
 - b. Ensure that funds better reach grassroots organizations and community leaders, including through organizations led by and accountable to the people they exist to serve: Black and brown people, women, NYCHA residents, youth, elderly, non-native English speakers, the differently-abled, mental health recipients, people who use drugs, and LGBTQ people.
 - c. Advise the City on the structure of Request for Proposals to remove potential barriers for grassroots organizations.
 - d. Support small organizations to build capacity.
 - e. Assess the City's administrative costs taken from State funds to identify opportunities to direct more resources to the groups delivering programming.
 - f. Institute real enforceable consequences to deter City agencies from late payment of contracts that strain small organizations and harm communities.
 - g. Develop a plan for all executive and leadership-level staff at City agencies and publicly funded social service agencies to participate in anti-racism and racial justice training.
 - h. Recommend ways to make City agencies more flexible in the way they provide services, for example, offering video appointments.
 - i. The mandate of the [commission to make recommendations on reinvestments](#) in communities impacted by Rikers Island⁶³ should be interpreted to include all of the above considerations.
2. Improve flexibility and effectiveness of funding.
 - a. Funding structures should support quality not quantity. Cost per participant models must be completely revamped to account for the full cost of providing quality services, and with consideration for what types or program structures best serve communities and the specific people & groups organizations serve.
 - b. Eliminate the delays in payment for City contracts faced by many non-profits that serve the most marginalized New Yorkers, and institute real enforceable consequences to deter City agencies from late payment of contracts that strain small organizations and harm communities. Assign a specific timeframe to each City agency with a role in contract oversight for their contract review work, and create a public-facing tracking system to allow vendors to monitor the progress of their contract through each stage of the contract process.⁶⁴
 - c. Provide sufficient funding and technical assistance to help grantees implement language justice principles and effectively serve undocumented people.
 - d. Establish mechanisms for groups without 501c3 status to apply for and receive funds.
3. Prioritize directing funds and services to the people and communities that have been most criminalized, most marginalized and most divested from, under their leadership and direction.
4. Make [reparations](#)⁶⁵ to entire impacted communities, in addition to individuals. Work to document and address the legacy of Rikers Island, such as the [Rikers Public Memory Project](#),⁶⁶ should also be encouraged and supported.

What's Working

[**Participatory Budgeting**](#)⁶⁷ is a democratic process in which community members directly decide how to spend part of a public budget. It's based on the idea that the people who live in a community best know its needs. Through Participatory Budgeting in NYC (PBNYC), community members directly decide how to spend at least \$1,000,000 of the public budget in participating Council Districts (currently, 32 districts). Community members can propose and vote on projects like improvements to schools, parks, libraries, public housing, and other public or community spaces. After ideas are submitted, community volunteers, called Budget Delegates, work to turn ideas into real proposals for a ballot, with input from city agencies. Through a public vote, residents then decide which proposals to fund. People can vote for projects if they live in the district and are at least 11 years old or are in 6th Grade (immigration status is not considered). There's a PBNYC Citywide Committee — made up of individuals, community organizations, and Council Members — which helps guide the process and supports PB across the city. The Committee proposes rules for the process each year, which are formalized into a Rule Book adopted by the City Council. For the time being, PBNYC only deals with capital money, and a fairly limited portion of the total City budget.

The [**Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition**](#)⁶⁸ (CCJRC) has made major strides in securing investments for the communities that have been most criminalized, and also charting a new path for how those investments will be made to best support those communities and their own leaders and institutions. In 2013, the tragic murder of Tom Clements, the executive director of the Colorado Department of Corrections, represented a crucial turning point. Executive Director Clements had come to Colorado from Missouri to implement a reform agenda in corrections policy. Colorado leadership and legislators initially contemplated reactive and punitive measures to reduce the likelihood of a similar tragedy, but CCJRC and several community reentry organizations saw an opportunity to continue the reform work started by Executive Director Clements. CCJRC worked to highlight the importance and impact of community-led public safety strategies and to ensure budget priorities aligned. Since 2014, CCJRC has passed three bills that will invest over \$50m in communities for new community-led, community-centric safety strategies. Furthermore, each grant program is being run by an intermediary – not a government agency. The Latino Coalition for Community Leadership, two community foundations, and two Community Development Financial Institutions are managing the various grant programs created through these investments. Through this model, Colorado's justice reinvestment strategy has prioritized using existing infrastructure in the communities and driving the money much deeper into community ownership.

Endnotes

1. A More Just NYC. *A More Just New York City: Closing the Chapter on Rikers* (October 2019). p. 7. Available at
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b6de4731aef1de914f43628/t/5da60eb59dac4376675bfe93/1571163845478/AMJNYC+-+Closing+the+Chapter+on+Rikers+%28Oct.+2019%29.pdf>
2. The City of New York, *Adopted Budget Fiscal Year 2020: Department of Correction Agency Expense Budget Summary* (June 2019) Available at <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/erc6-19.pdf>. Expenses related to DOC are as follows: expense (wages) - \$1,359,323,467 ; fringes - \$681,035,781; pension fund contributions - \$500,944,602; debt service - \$168,967,737. Expenses related to NYPD are as follows: expense (wages) - \$5,606,475,364 ; fringes - \$2,272,826,103; pension fund contributions - \$2,712,317,469; debt service - \$210,702,234. Expenses included related to Department of Probation are as follows: expense (wages) - \$121,645,970; fringes - \$32,143,434; pension fund contributions - \$12,047,951. Expenses included related to DA's offices are as follows: expense (wages) - \$422,433,361; fringes - \$108,199,897; pension fund contributions - \$58,225,998
3. Kaye, Kerwin. Rehabilitating the 'drugs lifestyle': Criminal justice, social control, and the cultivation of agency
4. Thrive NYC. Accessed February 2020. <https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/crisis-services/crisis-respite/>
5. Thrive NYCI. Accessed February 2020. 2020[https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/find-services/?q=crisis%20respite&f\[0\]=specialPopulations&f\[1\]=insurancesAccepted&f\[2\]=ageGroup&f\[3\]=county&hPP=10&idx=nycwell_prod&p=0](https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/find-services/?q=crisis%20respite&f[0]=specialPopulations&f[1]=insurancesAccepted&f[2]=ageGroup&f[3]=county&hPP=10&idx=nycwell_prod&p=0)
6. Mindful Urgent Care. Accessed February 2020. <https://www.mindfulurgentcare.com>
7. City of New York. *De Blasio Administration Announces Locations of Two Planned City Health Diversion Centers.* (December 2018). <https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/586-18/de-blasio-administration-locations-two-planned-city-health-diversion-centers>
8. In Brooklyn, a diversion center should be located in East New York or Brownsville, to serve the 75th and 73rd precincts (with the 1st and 7th highest numbers of EDP calls in 2018). In Queens, a diversion center should be located in Southeast Queens, to serve the 105th and 103rd precincts (with the 12th and 16th highest numbers of EDP calls in 2018). In the Bronx, an additional diversion center should be developed in the South Bronx, to serve the 44th, 40th, 42nd, and 43rd precincts (with the 2nd, 3rd, 8th, and 14th highest numbers of EDP calls in 2018). In Manhattan, an additional diversion center should be developed between Midtown and Lower Manhattan, to serve the 14th and 13th precincts (with the 5th and 11th highest numbers of EDP calls in 2018)
9. Gothamist, *Nearly 2,000 Complaints of NYPD Racial Profiling Since 2014 - and the Department Found Nothing Wrong.*(June 2019) Available at <https://gothamist.com/news/nearly-2000-complaints-of-nypd-racial-profiling-since-2014mdashand-the-department-found-nothing-wrong>
10. New York State Office of Mental Health. Accessed February 2020. <https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/act/>
11. New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Accessed February 2020. <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/acco/2017/intensive-mobile-treatment-concept-paper.pdf>
12. New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Accessed February 2020. <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/crisis-emergency-services-mobile-crisis-teams.page>
13. Public Advocate for the City of New York. *Improving New York City's Responses to Individuals in Mental Health Crisis* (September 2019) <https://files.constantcontact.com/1c58f85b001/dcc7850e-e0b0-48e7-8736-892da5687a72.pdf>
14. One such program is Howie the Harp (HTH), a peer-run program that trains people with mental health recovery experience to work in Human Services. Since 1995, HTH has been led by people of color who ensure that cultural competence is maintained among staff and participants. Accessed February 2020. <https://www.communityaccess.org/our-work/educationjobreadiness/howie-the-harp>
15. New York State Department of Health. Accessed February 2020. https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/general/opioid_overdose_prevention/good_samaritan_law.htm
16. New York City Department of Health. Accessed February 2020. <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/neighborhood-health/neighborhood-health-action-centers.page>
17. New York City Department of Parks and Recreation. Accessed February 2020. <https://greenthumb.nycgovparks.org>

18. Arab American Association of New York. Accessed February 2020.
<http://www.arabamerican.org/mental-health-services/>
19. City of New York. Accessed February 2020. <https://thrivenyc.cityofnewyork.us>
20. City of New York. *Mayor de Blasio Announces “NYC Safe,” An Evidence-Driven Public Safety and Public Health Program That Will Help Prevent Violence.* (August 2015). <https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/540-15/mayor-de-blasio-nyc-safe-evidence-driven-public-safety-public-health-program>
21. Office of the Mayor of the City of New York. *Borough-Based Jail Plan Points of Agreement.* (October 2019). p. 8. Available at http://council.nyc.gov/data/wp-content/uploads/sites/73/2019/10/BBJ_Points_of_Agreement_Rikers.pdf
22. National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty. *Serving and Protecting?: Survey Results of Homeless New Yorkers’ Experience With Law Enforcement.* (November 2018). Available at <https://nlchp.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/serveandprotect2018.pdf>
23. City of New York. *Housing New York 2.0.* (2017) Available at <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdfs/about/housing-new-york-2-0.pdf>
24. Coalition for the Homeless. *Moment of Truth: Bringing Production of Affordable Housing for Homeless Households in de Blasio’s Housing Plan to Scale.* (January 2018). Available at https://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/MomentofTruth_WhitePaper_Jan2018.pdf
25. New Economy Project. *NYC Takes Bold Action to Address the Affordable Housing Crisis By Supporting Community Land Trusts.* (June 2019). Available at <https://www.neweconomynyc.org/2019/06/nyc-takes-bold-action-to-address-the-affordable-housing-crisis-by-supporting-community-land-trusts/>
26. Picture the Homeless. *A Victory Ten Years in the Making: We Passed the Housing Not Warehousing Act.* (December 2017). Available at <http://picturethehomeless.org/victory-ten-years-making-passed-housing-not-warehousing-act/>
27. New York City Council. Accessed February 2020.
<https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3713966&GUID=2A26D80A-5759-445D-A16B-B0F370CA0D32&Options=&Search=>
28. Seattle Office for City Rights. Accessed February 2020. <https://www.seattle.gov/civilrights/civil-rights/fair-housing/fair-chance-housing>
29. Funding for this program was expanded as part of the Borough-Based Jail Plan Points of Agreement. Office of the Mayor of the City of New York. *Borough-Based Jail Plan Points of Agreement.* (October 2019). p. 5. Available at http://council.nyc.gov/data/wp-content/uploads/sites/73/2019/10/BBJ_Points_of_Agreement_Rikers.pdf
30. <http://council.nyc.gov/data/wp-content/uploads/sites/73/2020/01/FINAL-PAPER.pdf>. P. 88
31. New York City Human Resources Administration. Accessed February 2020.
<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/15-15-initiative.page>
32. HUD chronicity exclusions force all individuals returning to the community from jail or in-patient hospital stays of more than 90 days to wait another 12 months in the shelter system until they are eligible for the higher level of services available through supportive housing.
<https://www.hudexchange.info/faqs/2753/with-regard-to-the-final-rule-on-the-definition-of-chronically-homeless/>
33. New York City Department of Health. *Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice, Department of Health Announce Successful Rollout of “Justice-involved Supportive Housing” Program Stabilizing Individuals Who Frequently Cycle Through Jail and Shelter.* Accessed February 2020. Available at <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/about/press/pr2017/justice-involved-supportive-housing.page>
34. The City has currently committed funding for 500 units (120 existing, and 380 committed through the Points of Agreement on closing Rikers). Office of the Mayor of the City of New York. *Borough-Based Jail Plan Points of Agreement.* (October 2019). p. 5. Available at http://council.nyc.gov/data/wp-content/uploads/sites/73/2019/10/BBJ_Points_of_Agreement_Rikers.pdf
35. Rates for scatter-site supportive housing units were increased as part of the Borough-Based Jail Plan Points of Agreement (p. 5). Speaker Johnson’s report, *Our Homelessness Crisis*, also recommends a number of ways rates must be increased for supportive housing.
36. Community Access. Accessed February 2020. <https://www.communityaccess.org/our-work/housing>
37. NYU Furman Center, Directory of NYC Housing Programs. Available at <http://furmancenter.org/coredata/directory/entry/mutual-housing-association-of-new-york>
38. City of New York. NYC Career Pathways. Accessed February 2020.
<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/careerpathways/index.page>
39. As recommended by the Community Services Society’s report, *Extending the High School Year through Universal Summer Jobs for New York City Youth.*(February 2016). <http://lghhttp.58547.nexcesscdn.net/803F44A/images/nycss/images/uploads/pubs/Summer%20jobs%20web%203.pdf>
40. City of New York. NYC Department of Small Business Services. Accessed February 2020.
<https://www1.nyc.gov/nycbusiness/article/worker-cooperatives>

41. Getting Out and Staying Out. Accessed February 2020. <https://www.gosonyc.org/goso-works/>
42. <http://dignityinschools.org>
43. As called for by the Urban Youth Collaborative in their report, *The \$746 Million a Year School-to-Prison Pipeline*
44. Ibid
45. Free CUNY. *Make CUNY Free Again: The Cases for a Free CUNY*, Accessed February 2020. <http://www.free-cuny.org/the-case-for-a-free-cuny/>
46. CUNY Rising Alliance. *Fund CUNY ASAP*. Accessed February 2020. <https://cunyrisingalliance.org/fund-cuny-asap>
47. El Puente. Accessed February 2020. <https://elpuente.us/m-s-50-el-puente-community-school>
48. New York City Department of Education. Arts In Schools Report 2018-2019. Available at <https://infohub.nyced.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/arts-in-schools-report-18-19.pdf>
49. City of New York. State of the City 2020. Accessed February 2020. <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/home/downloads/pdf/office-of-the-mayor/2020/Youth-Centers.pdf>
50. New Yorkers for Parks. Accessed February 2020. <http://www.ny4p.org/what-we-do/play-fair>
51. Community Service Society of New York. *Fair Fares*. Accessed February 2020. <https://www.cssny.org/campaigns/entry/transit4all>
52. Transit Center. *A New Way to Ride*. (February 2018) Available at <https://transitcenter.org/new-way-ride/>
53. Department of Youth and Community Development. Comprehensive After School System of New York City (COMPASS). Accessed February 2020.
54. Brooklyn Public Library. Accessed February 2020. <https://www.bklynlibrary.org/inclusive-services>
55. The Brotherhood/Sister Sol. Accessed February 2020. <https://brotherhood-sistersol.org/programs/rites-of-passage-program/>
56. New York City Office to Prevent Gun Violence. *Crisis Management System*. Accessed February 2020. <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/peacenyc/interventions/crisis-management.page>
57. The Lippman Commission recommended an additional \$260 million annual investment in diversion and ATI programs. The Borough-Based Jail Plan points of agreement increased ATI funding by \$30.6 million, with additional funding for other diversion efforts.
58. City of New York, Young Men's Initiative. *Program Summary: Cure Violence*. Available at http://www.nyc.gov/html/ymi/downloads/pdf/cure_violence.pdf
59. Women's Prison Association. Accessed February 2020. <http://www.wpaonline.org/services/alternative-to-incarceration>
60. Neighbors in Action. Accessed February 2020. <http://neighborsinaction.org/makeithappen/>
61. Bronx Connect. Accessed February 2020. <https://bronxconnect.org/programs/>
62. Established in October 2019 by City Council legislation, Intro 1759-A. Available at <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4146411&GUID=7CFA7B7C-1203-4CFA-B180-BF9B41961CD2&Options=IDIText&Search=1759>
63. Following the recommendations of City Comptroller Scott Stringer's report, *Running Late: An Analysis of NYC Agency Contracts*. (May 2018) Available at <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/running-late-an-analysis-of-nyc-agency-contracts/>
64. International Center for Transitional Justice. Accessed February 2020. <https://www.ictj.org/our-work/transitional-justice-issues/reparations>
65. Rikers Public Memory Project. Accessed February 2020. <https://rikersmemoryproject.org>
66. New York City Council. Participatory Budgeting. Accessed February 2020. <https://council.nyc.gov/pb/>
67. Urban Institute. *Investing Justice Resources to Address Community Needs: Lessons Learned from Colorado's Work and Gain Education and Employment Skills (WAGEES) Program*. (February 2018). Available at https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/96341/investing_justice_resources_to_address_community_needs.pdf

#buildCOMMUNITIES

closerikers.org

jlusa.org