COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Remote location using Microsoft® Teams
Monday, June 7, 2021
9:30 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN, CHAIR
COUNCILMAN BOBBY HENON, VICE-CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB
COUNCILWOMAN JAMIE GAUTHIER
COUNCILWOMAN HELEN GYM
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA

BILLS: 210475, 210476, 210477, 210508

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COUNCILMAN GREEN: Good morning. Today is Monday, June 27th. This is the Committee on Finance. I understand that state law currently requires that the following announcement be made at the beginning of every remote public hearing as follows: Due to the current public health emergency, City Council Committees are currently meeting remotely. We're using Microsoft Teams to make these remote hearings possible.

Instructions for how the public may view and offer public testimony at public hearings of Council Committees are included in the public meeting notices that are published in the Daily News, Philadelphia Inquirer and Legal Intelligencer prior to the hearings and can also be found on PHLCouncil.com. I now note that the hour has come.

Mr. Iannuzzi, will you please call the roll to take attendance. Members that are in attendance, please indicate that you are present when your name is called. Also, please say a few brief words when responding so that your image will be displayed on screen when you speak.

THE CLERK: Councilmember Allan Domb.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Good morning, Mr. Chair and colleagues. I'm present.

THE CLERK: Councilmember Helen Gym.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Council colleagues. I am also present.

THE CLERK: Councilmember Curtis Jones, Jr.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Good morning, Mr. Chair, colleagues and viewing public. I'm present.

THE CLERK: Councilmember Mark Squilla.

COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Good morning, Mr. Chair. I'm present.

THE CLERK: Councilmember Cindy Bass.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good

morning, everyone. I am present. Thank you.

THE CLERK: Chair Derek Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Good morning. Thank you, Mr. Iannuzzi. I want to say a quorum of the Committee is present, and this hearing is now called to order. This is the public hearing of the Committee on Finance regarding Bill Nos. 210508, 210476, 210477 and 210475.

Mr. Iannuzzi, will you please read the titles of the aforementioned bills.

THE CLERK: Bill No. 210508, authorizing the City Treasurer on behalf of the City to enter into a provider agreement with Citizens Bank of Pennsylvania for provision for payroll banking services to the City, under certain terms or conditions.

Bill No. 210476, approving the amendment of the Fiscal Year 2021 Capital Budget, providing for expenditures for the capital purposes of Philadelphia Gas Works, including the supplying of funds in connection therewith, subject to certain constraints and conditions and acknowledging the receipt of the Revised Forecast of Capital Budgets for Fiscal Years 2022 through 2026 as amended.

Bill No. 210477, approving the Fiscal Year 2022 Capital Budget, providing for expenditures for the capital purposes of the Philadelphia Gas Works, including the supplying of funds in connection therewith subject to certain constraints and conditions, acknowledging receipt of the Revised Forecast of Capital Budgets for Fiscal Years 2023 through 2027.

Bill No. 210475, authorizing the Director of Planning and Development on the behalf of the City, to file applications with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development for a Community Development Block Grant, et cetera, all under certain terms and conditions.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,

Mr. Iannuzzi.

Before we begin to hear testimony from the witnesses that we have here for today, everyone who has been invited to this public meeting to testify should be aware that this hearing is being recorded. Because the hearing is public, participants and viewers have no reasonable expectation of privacy. And by continuing to be in the meeting, you are consenting to being recorded.

Additionally and prior to recognizing any members of this Committee for any opening comments or questions they have for witnesses, I will note for the record at this time that we will use the chat feature available in Microsoft Teams to allow Members to signify that they wish to be recognized. In order to comply with the Sunshine Act, the chat feature must only be used by members of Council for this purpose.

With that, Mr. Iannuzzi,

will you please call the first witness we have to testify this morning regarding Bill No. 210508.

THE CLERK: Jackie Dunn, City Treasurer.

CITY TREASURER DUNN: Good morning.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Good morning, City Treasurer Dunn. Please state your name for the record and then proceed with your testimony.

CITY TREASURER DUNN: Sure. Good morning, Chair Green and members of the Committee. I am Jacqueline Dunn, City Treasurer. And with me this morning, Natalia Dominguez Buckley, First Deputy City Treasurer; Raymond Hale, Deputy City Treasurer for Banking and Investments and members from Citizens Bank. I'm here today to testify in favor of Bill 210508. Bill 210508, an accompanying annual statement fair lending plan and community reinvestment goal would provide authorization to the City Treasurer's

Office on behalf of the City to enter into an agreement with Citizens Bank for the provision of payroll banking services for an initial term from July 1, 2021 expiring June 30, 2022, under certain terms and conditions.

In June 2006, the City enacted legislation that required the City Treasurer's Office to implement a request for proposal process, seeking proposals to qualified institutions to provide banking services for accounts related to payroll disbursements that include payments to employees, payroll deductions and payroll taxes. The legislation also requires that no contract with a proposed recipient of payroll banking services may be executed until it has been approved by City Council with an ordinance.

In 2021, the City Treasurer's Office issued a payroll banking services RFP, which resulted in Citizens Bank ranking as the most qualified institution. Citizens has served as the

City's payroll depository since July 2017 when City Council approved an initial contract. With Council's approval, City Treasurer's Office is requesting to again engage Citizens Bank as the payroll depository for an initial term of one year.

The Administration respectfully recommends the adoption of this ordinance and requests that the Committee give this bill favorable recommendation and further that the Committee recommends the rules of Council to be suspended so as to permit first reading of the bill at the next session of Council. Thank you for consideration and the opportunity to testify and we are happy to answer any questions that you may have.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Ms. Dunn, if you could maybe give a little background for members of the Committee. I know there was a fact sheet provided to accompany your written and spoken testimony, but I know there was a process, an RFP process, and Citizens Bank was selected, and if you can maybe give a little more context. Because I know from my understanding, that Citizens Bank has only be the payroll entity for the City for a shorter period of time compared to other institutions. And if you can give a little context to the RFP process and how they were selected.

CITY TREASURER DUNN: Sure. You're correct, Chair, that Citizens Bank has served as the City's payroll depository and also handles pension payroll services since 2007, except for the past four years, and we're again recommending that they be considered for an initial one-year term with the option for three one-year renewals up to a four-year period as permitted by the code. And our office in conjunction with the One Philly team as well as the Finance Department issued an RFP. We received responses from six of the City's depositories. We interviewed two institutions, and we ultimately recommended Citizens Bank to again serve as the payroll depository for a number of factors.

Number one, as the current incumbent, we have a very strong working relationship and they provide superior payroll services. Our team is able to reach them any time day or night. Very competitive pricing, overall knowledge of the City's needs, and team members that are involved in the payroll process, very strong controls against financial losses, overall industry expertise, and then finally, their commitment to the City and the City's priorities as well as through the Community Reinvestment Act. And for those reasons, we recommend them again for a one-year term with up to three one-year renewals.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Ms. Dunn. And from my recollection, there was another depository that had provided payroll services for the City.

But based on the fact that you stated these competitive pricing that Citizens Bank provided in their RFP response, their commitment to the City of Philadelphia which is based and evidenced by their branch locations throughout the City of Philadelphia as well as commitment regarding the Community Reinvestment Act and goals and measures regarding lending other matters, would you say those are the things that led to the City's selection of Citizens Bank -- well, reselection of Citizens Bank from a prior depository entity?

CITY TREASURER DUNN: Yes, absolutely. And thank you for also noting the branch distribution network. I think that was certainly a strong factor in our decision process.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you. I would like to acknowledge the presence or attendance of Councilmembers Jamie Gauthier as well as Maria Quinones-Sanchez.

At this moment, I would like to open the floor for any questions from members of Council for this witness.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is Councilwoman Bass. I have a question.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. I'd like to recognize Councilmember Cindy Bass --

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Can you hear me?

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes. Please proceed.

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Councilmember Bass, we heard you for a moment. Are you able to come back in to ask your question?

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is Councilwoman Bass. Can you hear me?

COUNCILMAN GREEN: We can hear you now. Please proceed.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you very much. To Ms. Dunn, I just have a couple of questions. The first is that I'm assuming that as with the rest of the Administration that the Treasurer's Office is working and making these decisions when looking through a racial equity lens, that's a common factor or common phrase that we hear from the Administration in terms of how they make decisions, how they prioritize their priorities, I guess how they are focusing on trying to right some of the wrongs of the past. So I'm wondering if the City Treasurer's Office is operating under the same guise?

CITY TREASURER DUNN: Thank you for the question, Councilmember Bass. I think it's particularly important as we look to our banking services, and the short answer is yes. Through the selection process, we want to make sure we have a diverse committee that's reviewing proposals and considering the responses we received back from authorized depositories all the way through reviewing the submissions that our depositories provided annually and the payroll basis quarterly regarding their commitments to the City, their lending practices across a number of type of loans, and then we have periodic relationship management meetings.

And in those meetings, what we've started to do and this began under previous City Treasurer Johnson, had invited the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion team as well as Commerce Department into those meetings so that we have a broader lens and make sure that the depository really fully understand the City's commitments and priorities. And I think Philadelphia in particular has really been an early innovator. We have one of the earliest lending studies of any city in the country so that other people look to us as an example in terms of what data we should be asking for from our banking institutions so that we can track progress over time and make sure that they're carrying out through their own business models the values that the City holds.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: So my next question is I'm glad to hear that we have such a commitment in the Treasurer's Office. However, I have some concern, because I don't know if you are aware that Citizens Bank is closing its branch on North 22nd Street. Are you familiar with North 22nd Street, Ms. Dunn?

CITY TREASURER DUNN: Citizens Bank does provide us with notices of any branch closures, and they are here today so I can ask them to speak to that. I think one of the reasons in particular that we also selected them is because they're one of the few institutions that is also opening up new physical branches in an age where people are really moving online, particularly in Hunting Park, for example. And so, I certainly understand your concern. But I do think that they are trying to continue to make investments in areas that have -- I'm sorry, there's an audio delay. But I think they are also working to try and make investments in areas that are underserved by the banking community. And I can --

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I just -- I'm sorry. I don't mean to interrupt you. Are they planning to open a branch in Hunting Park? Did I hear you say that or --

CITY TREASURER DUNN: That's my understanding. And I can ask Kim Little and Dianna Geist who are our relationship managers to also add some context.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. I would like to hear more about that because -- well, the first thing is that if you're saying they're opening a branch on Hunting Park Avenue which runs through many neighborhoods from Allegheny to Nicetown and Tioga to the actual Hunting Park neighborhood, then I'd like to get some information.

But specifically, what I'm

speaking about is the closure of the branch on North 22nd Street. Are you familiar with the branch on North 22nd Street, Ms. Dunn?

CITY TREASURER DUNN: I'm sure not as well as you are.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. I only ask because if you know that stretch of 22nd Street, it's quite challenged. It's been struggling for a long time. The residents are unlikely to have the same level of access and Internet savvy than in other parts of the City. And so, I have some deep concerns that we would make a decision like this knowing that Citizens would leave the residents of this neighborhood essentially unable to bank in their community.

I do want to say that we did have Dan Fitzpatrick out, the President of Citizens Bank on a tour on 22nd Street recently with the President of Allegheny West Foundation, Ron Hinton, and we talked to him about how devastating that branch closure would be to the entire community. And it's funny because as we stood in front of this closed bank, people kept coming up to try to go in the bank, they were using the ATM, so clearly this was an anchor on this very much struggling commercial corridor.

So I have some grave concern about this closure and the fact that it's not connected to or somehow a part of the decision-making that led us to make this decision to bring Citizens back in as a depository. So I don't know if you have any additional comments or if you wanted to have Citizens Bank respond here.

I also know that when Mr. Fitzpatrick came out, he did say that they were going to do other services. I'm not sure exactly what other services they will be, but one of the things he said is oh, well, we're going to work with the merchants along this corridor to help them strengthen their business. And my thought is that -- and I said this to him, a lot of the merchants on the corridor, actually probably about 90 percent of the merchants on the corridor don't look like the community in which they serve and don't spend money into that community, so those dollars are not going to be reinvested back into the community other than from a sales perspective of selling you a product, taking my profit, going out to some place else and recycling those dollars there. So I'd like some answers or some information, insight from the Administration.

CITY TREASURER DUNN: Sure. We appreciate you voicing that concern. We will certainly respond in more detail. I do think that one of the things that we considered was that Citizens with 45 branches in the City was more than any payroll depository that is approved and then also applied. And so, we work with them to do the best we can to provide services and options for our employees and thereafter citizens, but we will certainly get back to you on your concerns regarding that branch closure.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. Mr. Chairman, I am going to ask that until we get more concrete or definite information, that if we can potentially hold this legislation until we're able to come to some sort of understanding as to how we arrived, how we're looking at things through a racial equity lens in a neighborhood that is 99 percent, I would say, African-Americans that's struggling, that's really at the point where it can change one direction or another. I'm going to ask that we make a decision to pause on moving forward until we get more information about the impact and the commitment to Citizens Bank among all citizens in Philadelphia.

So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Councilmember Bass. I just wanted to -- and we'll revisit your comments in a few moments once we get through other parts of the testimony.

I want to acknowledge Councilmember Bobby Henon as being present as well as Councilmember David Oh also being present. Councilmember Curtis Jones, I would like to recognize you for a comment.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I just want to thank Member Bass for her continued commitment to North 22nd Street's commercial corridor. That is not in my District. It is two blocks east of my District, but a lot of constituents of mine shop there. Secondly, in another life that was one of our commercial corridors for the Philadelphia Commercial Development Corporation. So places like Tommy's Men Shop, Holt's Eyeglass place, African American-owned, were the lifeblood of that community. So I support the Member's questions as to if we're closing a branch, what services will replace it. So Dobbins is right near there, and financial literacy courses could come to play, people managing now limited incomes, financial planning again could come to play, and learning how to bank online could be technical assistance that would be useful.

So if we are as a municipality supporting this banking institution, I think it's important that we continue to demonstrate support for neighborhoods like North 22nd Street. So thank you, Member Bass, for staying laserly-focused on that corridor, which means a lot to me as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Councilmember Jones.

And I want to acknowledge, I think, Ms. Dunn you said there were two representatives from Citizens Bank that are here. I'd like to have them talk to that issue. And I want to thank Councilmember Bass for bringing up the issue. I am someone that's known that commercial corridor for a very, very long time when I was Assistant Branch Manager at Meridian Bank at Broad and Glenwood.

Tommy's Men Shop was one of our customers as well as a lot of constituents and businesses on 22nd Street as well as other organizations and churches in that area like Deliverance and others, who would often come to Meridian Bank, especially on a Monday like today to do their church deposits from a robust weekend activity. So I'm familiar with that corridor in a very strong way, and want to make sure that we acknowledge the concerns being raised by Councilmember Bass.

So if the representatives from Citizens Bank that are able to come on that are here, I do understand there are a few. I'm not sure which is the appropriate part of this business to testify. And as they're preparing to testify, Ms. Dunn, can you give some perspective, specifically what this legislation does in reference to the employees for the City of Philadelphia?

CITY TREASURER DUNN: Sure. While Citizens is coming online, this bill allows us to issue employee paychecks for all City employees to provide to pay payroll taxes as well, effective starting in July. So the current contract for those services expires at the end of this month.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And if I remember correctly, and that's why I asked the question earlier, there was another institution that had been previously having this role for some time; am I correct in my perspective?

CITY TREASURER DUNN: We've used several different banks over time. The previous provider was Wells Fargo.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you. Is there a representative from Citizens that can come on to speak to this issue?

MS. GEIST: Good --

CITY TREASURER DUNN: I --

MS. GEIST: I'm sorry, Jackie.

Good morning, Councilmembers. This is Dianna Geist. I am Vice-president --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Ms. Geist, if you can just make sure you state your name for the record and your position so our stenographer could hear. I know you said it a moment ago, but just say it again for the stenographer, and then proceed with your commentary.

MS. GEIST: Absolutely. Good morning. My name is Dianna Geist, and I am the Vice-president of Government Banking for Citizens Bank. And I have along with me Kim Little, who is also Senior Vice-president with Citizens Bank and who has had primary relationship with the City for the last four years, and also have Sharana Worsley on the phone. Sharana is with Citizens Bank. She is the Community Reinvestment Officer and would like to speak specifically to Councilmember Bass regarding the closure of 22nd and Indiana.

MS. WORSLEY: Thank you,

Dianna. This is Sharana Worsley. Are you able to hear me?

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes.

MS. WORSLEY: Okay. Good morning. Sharana Worsley, I'm Vice-president, Community Development Market Manager for Eastern PA, New Jersey, Delaware and also the CRA Officer for the region. As Jacqueline mentioned, we are number one in terms of supporting CRA locations with branches throughout the City, and we do believe that our commitment to historically underbanked neighborhoods and communities in the City of Philadelphia is greater than any other bank.

As was mentioned when other banks are closing locations, we are opening several locations. The one that was referenced in Hunting Park is actually 3929 North 5th Street. We have partnered with one of our longstanding partners Esperanza in terms of opening up that particular branch.

We've also opened up a new

branch at 5703 Germantown Avenue. We're opening up another location, 1835 Market Street in just a few weeks. A new branch is also going to be located at 248 Market Street, Fishtown on Frankford Avenue, and then we're also working to renovate six branches that will be completed by the end of the year throughout the City of Philadelphia.

Specifically, in North Philadelphia we have reinvested in our branch network with those two branches that I mentioned. We also met a number of times, actually met with Allegheny West last week to begin talking about the financial education literacy that we proposed last year for just the businesses but the adults in the community as well as the youth that are participating in their summer youth programs. We are actually starting that, and I want to say they gave us a date of July. We're actually going to be virtual as well as in person --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Excuse me.

MS. WORSLEY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I believe Councilmember Bass had a point of information.

MS. WORSLEY: Okay.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just wanted to state for the record that the branches that were mentioned are nowhere near the branch that is closing. They're very distinct, very different neighborhoods and not at all in the same neighborhood nearby, close by, in walking distance. Most of these branches are a considerable distance away via driving or public transportation from the branch on North 22nd Street, so I just wanted to state that for the record.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Ms. Worsley, please continue if you have additional commentary.

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I'm not --

MS. GEIST: Sharana, are you

on?

(No response.)

MS. GEIST: If I can interject here, this is again Dianna Geist with Citizens Bank. Sharana may be having difficulties there, but I do want to address Councilmember Bass' statement regarding the opening of the Hunting Park branch. With the closure of 22nd and Indiana, there are still two nearby branches located at 1025 West Lehigh Avenue and 1502 North Broad Street.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Mr. Chairman, I just want to state for the record that these branches -- Philadelphia is a city where you can say this is within a mile or this is within five miles and it may not seem like a long way away. But in Philadelphia, the branch on Broad Street is a considerable difference. The other branch which was mentioned, these branches are not nearby. So I just want to make sure that we're absolutely clear on that, and they serve a completely different population.

So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you. Ms. Geist or Ms. Worsley, does that conclude your testimony for this morning?

MS. WORSLEY: Sure. Sorry, Councilmember Green, I was actually kicked off the Microsoft Teams so I had to dial back in by phone, so my apologies. But I just want to reinforce with regard to the 22nd Street location that we are still committed to that community. We have proposed how we can still help the members of that community continue with their banking needs by partnering with local community organizations as well as providing financial literacy, which we are beginning in just over two weeks with the youth program and then also models that will begin with Dobbins once the school year begins as well.

We are working on the commercial corridor training for the businesses as well as working with adults in several other programs throughout that community as well, so all of those things were brought up when we met with Councilmember Cindy Bass, Ron Hinton, members of the Commerce Department as well as two leaders from our team here at Citizens just to sort of reinforce our commitment not only from a physical presence (inaudible) and education, which has been (inaudible) by other banks within the City of Philadelphia.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Ms. Worsley, for that testimony.

Is there any additional testimony from representatives from Citizens or any additional questions from members of Council?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Hearing none, when we come to the public meeting portion of this hearing, we will address some of the concerns raised by Councilmember Bass.

At this point, I would like to have Mr. Iannuzzi read the witnesses, state the names for the witnesses for the next panel or the next bills.

THE CLERK: John Zuk, Senior Vice-president of Gas Management PGW.

MR. ZUK: Good morning, Councilman. Would you like me to start my testimony, sir?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: I believe the Chairman is frozen. And I would like you to state your name for the record and begin your testimony.

MR. ZUK: Okay. Thank you. Good day, Chair Green and members of City Council Committee of Finance. My name is John C. Zuk, and I'm Senior Vice-president of Gas Management Philadelphia Gas Works. I'm appearing today on behalf of PGW in support of Bill 210476, which would approve an amendment to Fiscal Year 2021 Capital Budget for PGW.

The Fiscal 2021 Capital Budget

was approved in an amount totaling $213,368,000. With the ordinance approval of this budget, spend was authorized for the period from September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2022. The spending authorization provided for in the approved budget primarily supports a program plan to replace existing plants and facilities to ensure that PGW continues to operate its assets at a high standard of safety and reliability.

Additionally, fund is also approved to improve efficiencies and increase revenues through new load additions, which will allow PGW to minimize future rate increases for our customers. In monitoring the implementation of PGW's capital program, compliance issues were identified that need to be addressed. There are seven projects approved in previous capital budgets where project completion timeline will exceed the approved lifespan. To remedy this situation, PGW requests that the FY21 Capital Budget be amended to reflect preauthorization for these previously approved projects. Total combined spending for the original authorization and the reauthorization will not be greater than the original authorization.

City Council approval is required since PGW nor its Commission have authority to extend the project expansion. We respectfully request that the City Council to report out this bill with a favorable recommendation together with a suspension of the rules so it may permit first reading at the next Council session. Thank you.

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes. Thank you, Councilmember Jones, for stepping in as I had some technical challenges.

A couple of questions that I have, and this is part of both the FY21 and also FY22. Can you provide some perspective on the building consolidation initiative and what our current status is?

MR. ZUK: We're currently still on North Operations Center still negotiating a lease with NorthPoint Industries, and we currently have gone out for bid for several vendors for the 800 building for what's called the restacking. We've had four vendors to do the HVAC, the plumbing, the electrical and then general contractor.

We just went out recently and sent out an RFP and -- excuse me, for best value for the furniture. And we're happy to report that that RFP, RFQ went out and we have a minority participation of 100 percent by a woman minority-owned business, so we're happy about that. This operation center, we're continuing to develop plans for the design of the building.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Also, I believe you're also joined by Erica Patterson, who also can provide some additional perspective on our diversity goals not only for FY21, but also FY22 from a capital budget perspective.

MR. ZUK: That is correct.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Ms. Patterson, if she can come on.

MS. McCLENDON: Chair Green, this is Gemela McClendon. I know Ms. Patterson may just be dialing in. She didn't have the dial-in number. We just received it. So if you can give her a few moments.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: No problem. I'd also like to recognize Gemela McClendon, Esq., Chair of the Gas Commission.

So with that, why don't we go to two questions. I see Councilmember Sanchez first and then Councilmember Henon, and we'll go in that order.

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I actually was going to ask about what was PGW's kind of updated Equity and Inclusion Plan. So I guess we'll have to wait for our next guest to come on. So that was my question. So if you want to -- I'll wait until they present. The other thing I wanted to ask when they address it, what has been their ability to kind of debundle some of these contracts, and some of their work and some of their infrastructure work is so complex. So I'll wait until the person joins us.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, Mr. Zuk, if you can talk from that perspective from your experience, and then we'll have Ms. Patterson, who serves in that role for PGW to also provide that additional information.

MR. ZUK: Over the last several months, we used a best value for RFQs, which is thus to promote an increased minority participation across the board. So with that instance on that question is we've come out with this and if we're not happy with where the participation is, we went back out to the vendors and asked them for the participation even further, and that's allowed us to increase minority participation from 15 to 20, 25 percent up to 30 percent. So the use of that new tool will help us going forward.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Zuk. Best values legislation that this body passed years ago, which allows us to look at multiple options from a procurement perspective and not just the lowest responsible bidder, and it's been moving through various departments. As Chair of the Gas Commission, we've also been having this type of engagement with PGW to bring best value to organizations so that way they can look at other factors other than lowest responsible bidders for projects, which has the ability to diversify the contracting that PGW is doing, and I think the fact that they're moving forward with best value provides that opportunity not only in capital budget but going forward as an institution.

With that --

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: Mr. Chair, can I ask, in light of this and congratulations on using it, I know it's been a discussion piece in the toolbox we don't always use at the City level, so what are the new articulated goals for PGW as a company moving forward?

MS. McCLENDON: Councilwoman Sanchez, Ms. Patterson is on the line now, so she can begin to answer the more detailed questions.

COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you. Ms. Patterson, you can just state your name for the record and proceed with your testimony.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes. Good morning, everyone. My name is Dr. Erica Patterson, I am the Director of Contracts Management and Supply and Diversity in the Supply Chain Department at Philadelphia Gas Works. And thank you everyone for being patient as I dialed in. I appreciate your time.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you. And, Dr. Patterson, not sure if you've heard all of the questions. But I initially asked questions on what PGW has been doing in reference to the diversity and equity spend. Councilwoman Sanchez also asked questions in reference to the racial equity lens that has been a part of a lot of the conversation that we've had in City Council during our budget hearing process.

I know PGW documents information from an actual spend perspective different than the City based more on projections and goals. So if you can provide some perspective on not only best value as John Zuk provided a little bit regarding the FY21 and FY22 capital budget, but other initiatives that you and your shop have been doing in order to advance these issues and goals with PGW.

DR. PATTERSON: Absolutely.

Thank you everyone for your questions and comments. To follow up to John Zuk's comments as it relates to the Building Consolidation Project, I'll start there and then end up with an overview that will answer everyone else's question.

As it relates to the Building Restacking Project, as John mentioned we're very excited to award our furniture installation as part of that Building Consolidation Restacking Project to a WB -- 100 percent MBE and WBE company. Prior to that, we had the Building Consolidation Project where we actually did debundle that project, and we participated in putting out for best value RFPs that related to HVAC, architectural, plumbing and electrical. We were able to achieve within that procurement process of best value, where we awarded to 100 percent MBE-owned businesses.

I definitely can say that having best value part of our new procurement practices has allowed us to increase not only our minority participation, but also our responses to the best value where we can create opportunities for small endeavors and local businesses in Philadelphia.

Due to the simple fact that PGW is specialized in a certain degree, but for the most part we are taking a deeper look at how we can debundle our projects and break them out to ensure small endeavors and local businesses have opportunity. And by doing so, we've been four months into our procurement rules and now pretty much following the mantra of the City of Philadelphia, where we now have best value. Our procurement dollar amounts threshold have been increased. We now have electronic bidding.

So we're definitely streamlining and automating a lot of our processes in order to have small endeavors, businesses not only have a seat at the table, but also have an opportunity to have a piece of the pie as well. As it relates to our metrics from a DBE standpoint, our corporate goals, our corporate metrics is 22 percent.

And, Councilman Green, as you mentioned, we do report on an actual versus contract value, what the City does. So for the last couple three months just to kind of give you some history of where we are with that 22 percent, at the end of April of this year, of 2021, we are at 21.96 percent.

Prior to that, we were at 23.20 percent for March. And then for February -- I'm sorry, I'm getting some feedback. I don't know if everyone is on mute.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Will -- thank you. Please proceed, Dr. Patterson.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes. Thank you very much. And for February, we did 23.96 percent. Also, PGW is tracking our local business entities. So we definitely have metrics for that where we're tracking those businesses that we do business with who are locally headquartered in the City of Philadelphia as well. Since we have launched ProcureWare as of March of last year, as you know with the novel coronavirus of the pandemic, it definitely allowed PGW from an electronic or automated process to actually streamline where we post all of our procurement opportunities as it relates to professional and nonprofessional services.

We have been basically putting our foot to the pedal and actually driving that initiative so that we can get and reach out to as many small endeavor businesses and local businesses to register to our procurement opportunities. A lot of our outreach is done either by sourcing, done by corporate communication, outreach and also vendor business-to-business networking or vendor-to-vendor meet-and-greets that we meet with smaller number of businesses to kind of bring them up-to-date and aware of how they can do business with PGW going forward. I will stop there.

From a, I'll just say, budget standpoint, our analysis was more of an aggressive analysis where we wanted to kind of take a step back as I mentioned before to take a look at all of the DBE potential opportunity for capital and operating budgets for Fiscal '21 and '22. As you know, the building consolidation was a huge one and that's already awarded. But next in line for the Fiscal '22 for operating and capital, we were able to pretty much forecast our DBE opportunity a little over the high end because of how we are performing currently with our contract awards and contract opportunities. I'll stop there to entertain any additional questions or comments. Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: Mr. Chair, finally -- first, congratulations in using best values and understanding the importance of the debundling aspect to building and growing our Philadelphia-based businesses. Can you speak to me real quickly how you're managing the payment piece?

As we all know, part of the challenge of these growing businesses is our ability to pay folks on time. And on time, I mean less than 180 days and not put them out of business. Can you speak to how you improve those systems and where you are around best practices with that?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes, that's a great question. And I can answer maybe 75 percent of that question from a procurement standpoint. But for us what we've done is, especially since the pandemic has rushed upon us, we have now -- the vendors now have automatic where they can do electronic payment for invoices, so we're Net 30 on majority of all of our projects. And I don't have the metrics to share with you because I'm not in the Accounting Department.

However, the same outreach that we've done with our vendors for ProcureWare is the same outreach we have done with our vendors to let them know that we're now accepting electronic payment. What we've done especially for the small businesses, because sometimes that can present a challenge, our Accounting Department does a very good job in working with them closely and directly to make sure that they have all the necessary resources and tools that we can provide them to make sure that they have a seamless process or journey as they do sign up for electronic payment. So from my perspective, it seems to be going well.

What we do with a lot of the information that relates to electronic payment, we include them in our postings. We also include them in the award, so that the communication is out there that we're doing electronic invoicing at this moment. And I think because of the world, the virtual world that we live in, it's very beneficial to PGW and the vendors as well. So I hope that answers your question.

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: Yes, it does. Thank you, Ms. Paterson.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you --

DR. PATTERSON: And, Mr. Chair -- I'm sorry. Mr. Chair, I would just like to share with City Council that PGW last year won partner of the year to the Women's Business Enterprise National Council for all of our work and commitment to supplying diversity and pushing the needle a little bit for doing business with women-owned businesses. We're looking to do the same with minority-owned businesses as we move forward with our current initiatives. Thank you very much.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you. Thank you, Councilmember Sanchez, for your questions.

I just have one last question for Dr. Patterson, and then we'll go to Councilmember Henon. Prior to the change of procurement guidelines at PGW, and I know we went through a process working with the Gas Commission as well as your office and entire PGW organization, there was outreach that occurred on behalf of PGW because I think for many business owners, especially M/WBE business owners, thought they could not do business with PGW. So my understanding is PGW did an outreach initiative to really get a better perspective on type of business opportunities that PGW provide.

Dr. Patterson, can you provide a little background about that? And then after your answer, we'll go to Councilmember Henon.

DR. PATTERSON: Absolutely. So some of the things that we put into place within the last two years to kind of drive that initiative and to really let vendors know who we are, how to do business with us and for us to get to know who they are and what capabilities they can provide in response to some of our procurement opportunities, we put in place meet-and-greets, and those meet-and-greets come from a strategic sourcing perspective.

That strategic sourcing perspective with the meet-and-greets allows us to sit down and continue the conversation after we have -- we've met these vendors at business-to-business networking events from a supply chain perspective and also from a supplier diversity perspective as well. We wanted to carry or continue that conversation in a more private setting. Before the pandemic hit, it was in person where we would meet these vendors and pretty much prequalify them not only from a financial standpoint, but prequalify them from a capability standpoint and what products and services they can offer PGW.

And at that time, we would also include our internal client department. So representatives from our internal client departments would be part of that meeting as well. Because smaller member businesses, they want to know who is the key people to talk to. And outside the supply chain, my thought process is to include the internal client department so that they are aware of who the vendors are, the smaller member vendors are as well that will be potentially responding to their procurement opportunity. So that's one of the things that we put in place, the meet-and-greets between the certified minority -- small, diverse minority women, veteran, disabled or LGBTQ vendor type where they can learn how to do business with PGW.

Another resource or initiative that we implemented was we participate in a lot of business-to-business events. I know you've heard me say that several times. Some of the yearly events that we participate of course is in MED Week where we host this past year, we hosted our first virtual event where we did how-to-do-business with PGW, and that was to basically introduce the ProcureWare platform.

We've also done yearly how-to do workshops with the WeBank and hopefully this year we're looking to do similar type of events with Eastern Minority Supplier Development Council. Also, we do small pop-up events where we present or we participate such as an information table or matchmaking events with the Chambers of Commerce or also through national affiliates such as Eastern Minority Supplier Development Council and also WeBank East as well.

Something else that we initiated this past year is now we do virtual vendor spotlights. So on a quarterly basis, we just started to -- it's more so for us to introduce MBEs to our clients department. So either we've met new MBEs within the last year or two or we haven't done business with them and they're looking to do business with us or they're actually vendors who are certified MBEs that hadn't been awarded the contract, but they want to learn a little bit more about PGW, so that platform or that vendor spotlight allows us to kind of put them on a virtual stage for them to kind of share with us what they do and what they can offer to PGW. And it has been very well-attended from a virtual standpoint. It gives the full picture, that vendor to potential client departments within PGW.

So, Councilman Green, I hope I answered your question. Those are some of the initiatives that we put in place. It's normally business as usual for us when it comes to meeting new and diverse vendors. So if anyone on the Council has any vendors that may or are looking to do business with PGW, I'm more than welcome to work with them. You can have them reach out to me, and I'll definitely make sure that they meet PGW and meet who the Supply Chain Department team is and learn how to do business with them.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Dr. Patterson.

Councilmember Henon.

COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and appreciate you conducting this hearing to talk about many of these things.

On the lines of PGW on their capital budget, I'm not sure, John, are you the person to ask on the capital projects and budget over the past three years?

MR. ZUK: Yes.

COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay. Great. So I'm just going to try to ask some of these questions in more of a macro sense over the past three years. So in 2019, the FY2019 approved authorized capital budget, what was that for PGW?

MR. ZUK: Sorry to say I don't have numbers in front of me.

COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay. Do you have '21? We're amending it today for '22; is that correct?

MR. ZUK: Yes. So these are extending several projects that we could not finish in the time frame, so we're asking for that extension for another year so we can get that approval. The '21 capital budget was for $213,368,000.

COUNCILMAN HENON: And if you're asking for an extension, is that an extension for time because of the pandemic and trying to proceed with projects were a little bit difficult and they were all scheduled or are you asking for an extension because you need more resources to do more work?

MR. ZUK: No. It was allocated previously. It would not go up. We were looking for more time because of the pandemic.

COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay. So of that 213, what has been completed and spent?

MR. ZUK: So we're looking

at -- what we want approval is about $3.3 million of me going forward and work done in the gas process area, information services, and we have where it says other which is 52,000, so that adds about $3.3 million. The rest of the budget will be spent.

COUNCILMAN HENON: I understand. Of the 213, what has been spent? So how far are you behind on your capital authorizations and bill?

MR. ZUK: The only thing we're behind would be about the 3.3 million.

COUNCILMAN HENON: So you spent in the 2021 capital budget $213,000,000 of work has been performed?

MR. ZUK: Not 100 percent. We've not done the complete year yet. So once we complete the year, we feel we'll have it all spent except for that 3.3 million.

COUNCILMAN HENON: So you're on the City's --

MR. ZUK: Correct, we're on track to spend.

COUNCILMAN HENON: And that was a bond? Was that a bond that was authorized?

MR. ZUK: I would say part bond and partial it was internal capital.

COUNCILMAN HENON: And in proposed FY22, are you looking to go to market again?

MR. ZUK: For our next budget, yes, the same thing. Partially bond and partial cash on hand.

COUNCILMAN HENON: And what was approved for the FY2022 capital budget?

MR. ZUK: I'm sorry. That's the resolution that we've come up with. That will be our next one, 210477. We didn't get an approval yet.

COUNCILMAN HENON: Oh, okay. And what is your estimated approval? Are you --

MR. ZUK: It's about $147,409,000.

COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay. With all of the new construction that is going on in the City even throughout the pandemic and over the several years, I know PGW has really focused in and you've been doing a wonderful job at it on new business. One, how did the FY21 budget during the pandemic affect the new business and are we still trying to attract new commercial customers and new business opportunities with PGW in two areas, one in LNG or CNG and the other with new customers that are coming and building in the City of Philadelphia from a commercial standpoint?

MR. ZUK: So first, the pandemic did have an impact on new business and everything got delayed. Going forward in the '22 budget, we're looking for about $20 million in new load additions. It's incorporated in that 147 million. That 16,000 for our distribution -- I'm sorry, 16 million for our distribution for our FSD. That's for services made and also meters and regulators. So we do feel that going into the '22 budget that we will be able to spend more, go above and beyond where we were last year with the new business.

To answer your question about LNG and CNG, yes, at CNG I know over the last year AAA opened up their CNG facility, and the City also opened a facility out in South Philly on the properties. And then on the LNG site, we're continuing to try to sell the excess LNG we have through other markets. But again, we only can make that determination on the LNG until the winter goes through and we have access to LNG and prepared for the following winter and we can sell with that. But we only produce LNG for (inaudible). Once we realize we don't need it, then we can go back and sell it, and that's been successful, yes.

COUNCILMAN HENON: And you see a growth going in obviously with $20 million. How much growth is that from FY2019 I'm going to say? Because I'm going to -- obviously, there's going to be a curve, a little downside in '21.

MR. ZUK: Yeah, I do not know that number offhand.

COUNCILMAN HENON: When we come back, these are some of the overall macro questions that I want to ask because I want to make sure that we're discussing the growth of our homegrown product that we have here, which is tied to end-users and new business.

For example, are we getting new customers in the commercial market with all the new warehouse distributions that are coming on in line here with the City of Philadelphia? Because that is the fastest growing market, that's job creators. And are we having -- well, obviously we have the opportunity. Are we being successful in that market? So that is one of the other questions.

MR. ZUK: And yes, I'll speak to that. Yes, to your point there's a lot more warehousing in the City of Philadelphia, but also residential is still booming, so there's large projects for residential that are starting to expand and starting to get built. So, yes, we are seeing growth in both of those areas.

COUNCILMAN HENON: And lastly, Mr. Chair, sorry for monopolizing any time.

John, a few years ago there were some approved projects for the Richmond plant with some new business tied to new business opportunities with an additional LNG processor and some other type of, I guess, environmentally friendly -- I'm not going to say it was a bio, but it was some sort of internal loop that was extremely friendly for the environment that was feeding some of our processing on the Richmond plant. Is that still in line or has that been put on hold?

MR. ZUK: That's been put on hold, yes.

COUNCILMAN HENON: And that's been put on hold for about three years now?

MR. ZUK: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay. Thank you for your time here, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it. Thank you.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Councilmember Henon.

I just want to state for the record before we ask if there's any additional questions for members of Council for this panel, that PGW currently is going through a diversification study. This study was funded by the American Cities Climate Change challenge. We're in the process of hopefully having that study completed some time in June.

I also will be introducing a resolution for hearings on that study to provide additional opportunity for members of Council and the public to provide some additional information or receive information regarding that study. The Gas Commission did have a town hall meeting back in May to allow members of the public to weigh in as our consulting team was working on finalizing that study. But we will be having a hearing so members of Council could have some additional information regarding that study when it's completed, and we look forward to having that in the future.

One last question I have for Mr. Zuk: For today's hearing, the items that are on the calendar for today's hearing are just capital items based on these two bills and does not include operating expenditures, correct?

MR. ZUK: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Zuk.

Are there any additional questions for members of Council for this panel?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Seeing none, thank you, Dr. Patterson and Mr. Zuk, for your testimony.

I'd now like to have Mr. Iannuzzi call the witness for our next panel.

THE CLERK: Melissa Long, Director of DHCD.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Ms. Long, just please state your name and title for the record for our stenographer.

MS. LONG: Okay. Yes. I'm Melissa Long, Deputy Director for the Division -- I mean, Director for Division of Housing and Community Development.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Please proceed with your testimony.

MS. LONG: Okay. Good morning, Councilmember Green and other members of the Finance Committee and members of City Council. As I previously stated, I'm Melissa Long of DHCD. I'm presenting testimony on behalf of the Administration on Bill No. 210475, which permits the City to apply for the federal Community Block Grant, Home Investment Partnership, Emergency Solutions Grant, housing opportunities for persons with AIDS and for state funds from the Department of Community and Economic Development. I'm also joined today by Anne Fadullon, Director of the Division of Planning and Development; Dave Thomas, President and CEO of the Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation and Karen Fegley, Deputy Director for Commerce.

The bill refers to Exhibit A, which is the City's Annual Action Plan for 2021, '22, the required funding application to HUD. This lays out our strategies to meet our goals to preserve and create affordable homeowner and rental housing opportunities, reduce homelessness and expand special needs housing opportunities, foster open access to all community and housing resources and programs, address the education, economic and income needs of people and neighborhoods, strengthen community assets, manage vacant land to improve quality of life and from a fair housing and access to opportunities for all Philadelphians (inaudible).

COUNCILMAN JONES: Hello?

Mr. Chair?

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes, Councilmember Jones. I believe that Ms. Long has frozen. I thought I had frozen again, but I realize that that was not me. So thank you again, Councilmember Jones, for pitching in. We'll see if we can get Ms. Long back.

Is there anyone else here from the Department of Housing Community Development that can testify? I know we do have Mr. Thomas and Ms. Fegley or --

MS. FADULLON: Good morning, Mr. Green. I am looking to see if I -- this is Anne Fadullon, Director of Planning and Development.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I forgot. Anne, you are here as well.

MS. FADULLON: Yup, and I'm trying to look for her testimony.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I think Ms. Long left and will try to come back in, in a few moments. Why don't we do this, since we're waiting for Ms. Long, Ms. Fadullon, if you can kind of give an overview from your perspective of what you see as the broad categories and broad goals of this year's Consolidated Plan, especially considering the context of the challenges we had last year with reduction of funding because of the pandemic, but also the fact that we received additional dollars to the American Rescue Plan.

MS. FADULLON: I have pulled up the testimony, so I will take over. I'm going to assume the first paragraph was through. It says, our Annual Action Plan 2021 through '22 details our plan for spending funds from four primary federal sources as well as the state's Department of Community and Economic Development and the Housing Trust Fund.

As detailed in the Action Plan, the City anticipates receiving 45.4 million in CDBG funding and a home program allocation of $11.6 million. Annual Action Plan goals and strategic actions were designed to meet Philadelphia's high priority housing community development needs. These goals are to preserve and create affordable homeowner and rental housing opportunities to reduce homelessness and expand special needs housing opportunities, foster open access to all housing and community resources and programs to address the education, economic and income needs of people in neighborhoods to strengthen community assets and management that lands them through quality of life, and to promote fair housing and access to opportunities for all Philadelphians.

We are very grateful that the CARES Act kept thousands of renters in their homes during the depth of the pandemic, and we are grateful for the $100 million we will receive as part of the American Recovery Plan, which will stabilize housing for thousands more as we emerge from the pandemic.

But let's be clear, these were stop-gap solutions. Our housing crisis existed before COVID and it still exists today. So while our Annual Action Plan makes strategic investments to address our housing needs, only a comprehensive and sustained commitment to housing infrastructure will begin to turn the tide after decades of neglect.

With that said, nearly half of our funding will go to put people in housing and keep people in the housing they already have. This includes production and preservation of rental housing, foreclosure and eviction prevention programs, rental assistance, home repair programs such as Basic Systems and the Heater Hotline program. It also includes programs to prevent homelessness and expand housing for people with special needs.

These programs include rental assistance through the Emergency Solutions Grant, HOME and HOPWA programs, the Adaptive Modifications Program, the Development of Financing for Homeless and Special Needs Housing. We will continue to invest in organizations and programs that benefit residents in their communities. These include our housing counseling agencies, our Neighborhood Advisory Committees and our Neighborhood Energy Centers.

We were able to provide over 1.5 million in CARES Act funding to increase the capacity of these agencies to assist tenants facing eviction. We also support the quality of life in our neighborhoods and job opportunities by funding local organizations to maintain vacant land. Vibrant commercial corridors are important elements of healthy communities. Accordingly, we invest significant resources in community economic development. This Consolidated Plan includes funding for business loan programs, business development grants, corridor management support, building improvements support.

The coming year will continue to be challenged and we are committed to meet that challenge to the best of our ability. You saw that commitment when last year DPD and PHDC developed and stood up Eviction Diversion and the Emergency Rental Assistance Program that help 16,000 tenant families remain in their homes. That effort continues to be supported by community organizations and other City agencies who help us spread the word about these programs.

The legal services, housing counseling agencies and mediators who help tenants apply for assistance and work out agreements with their landlords. I am proud of the creativity and dedication our people and our partners have shown as we respond to this crisis. Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony for the City to receive funding from HUD.

The City is required to submit an approved Annual Action Plan to HUD no later than August 15, 2021 to permit expeditious transmittal of the Annual Action Plan to HUD. Suspension of the rules to permit first reading at the next Council session is requested. My colleagues will be happy to answer any questions that you or other members of Council may have. Thank you.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Ms. Fadullon, for stepping in for Ms. Long. In looking at the testimony, it provides information regarding the amount of CDBG funding and home funding. But could you provide the total amounts of dollars that will be part of the Consolidated Plan for this upcoming Comp Plan year as well as I believe you stated that through the American Rescue Plan that Department of Housing Community Development is to receive $100 million. I just want to confirm that as well.

MS. FADULLON: Okay. Let me work on that. Give me a minute to track down the budget. Sorry about the delay.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Let me restate. I do see that in the testimony here, that you stated that the Department of Housing Community

Development will receive $100 million through the American Rescue Plan. And the question that I had is, is that separate and distinct from the Consolidated Plan?

MS. FADULLON: So that is distinct dollars separate from our annual CDBG, HOME and HOPWA allocations and ESG. So those are over and above our normal dollars. So just to be clear, we received application of a little over I want to say around 11.7 million in CDBG CV, which is COVID-related CDBG dollars that came through the prior Administration. And through this Administration through the CARES Act, we received -- the Recovery Act, we received an additional approximately $100 million that was predominantly targeted towards rental assistance.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: The reason I ask the question about the distinction of the funds, as someone who used to represent what was City Office of Community Development HUD guidelines can be very interesting in reference to how they're interpreted. I know the Treasurer provided guidelines on the expenditure on the American Rescue Plan dollars, but considering that you have CDBG CV dollars under the previous Administration under CARES and now you have the American Rescue Plan, do those Rescue Plan dollars have to follow the traditional HUD CDBG guidelines or do they just follow the Treasury guidelines and you have a much more flexible way of spending those dollars?

MS. FADULLON: Right, the $100 million is Treasury guideline. It's not the CDBG dollars, so yes, they are more flexible. The CDBG CV regulations unfortunately are not nearly as flexible, but the 100 million is more flexible. However, again I just want to emphasize that they were given through the Treasurer really to provide rental assistance. So although there's some more flexibility, they were provided for a specific purpose.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And to drill down a little bit on that, there used to be HUD, Council interpretation that even if the City used, for example, General Fund dollars, if staff that was funded by CDBG dollars were used to implement or provide those dollars, then those General Fund dollars can be considered that have to be CDBG-eligible.

So I guess my question is for those dollars coming through the American Rescue Plan although it's coming from Treasury using Treasury guidelines, has there been flexibility from the HUD perspective, that even we're using CDBG-funded staff, are we still going to have the flexibility to use those dollars based on the Treasury guidelines and not the CDBG guidelines?

MS. FADULLON: So if staff are to be paid utilizing CDBG dollars, no, we must meet the CDBG guidelines in order for those staff expenses to be eligible under CDBG. I will note that with the Recovery Plan dollars, that there was some administrative -- there is a percentage of those funds that can be used for the administration of those programs so we do have staff that is being funded through those Treasury dollars as opposed to CDBG dollars.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Thank you for that clarification.

Also, I do note we do have questions from Councilmembers Gym, Sanchez and Jones in reference to this panel. But I also wanted to ask, and Ms. Long stated in the beginning of her testimony and you continued as well, we have a very significant affordable housing challenge in the City. We need to develop a number of units in that regard. But also, this provides an opportunity to diversify those who are doing this type of development work.

And my understanding is Mr. Dave Thomas is the head of PHDC, having been working in that perspective as well as working along with the other initiative, Accelerator Fund, I wanted to have Mr. Thomas come on to testify to provide some additional context on how we're providing opportunities in communities of color, specifically African-American developers and Hispanic developers who are looking to address this affordable housing challenge that we have, but at the same point using these dollars as a way to grow economic development and opportunities in the City of Philadelphia.

MR. THOMAS: Good morning, Councilman, Councilpersons --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Good morning.

MR. THOMAS: Councilman Green, you wanted to understand a little bit more about the minority pilot program that I'm trying to get started?

COUNCILMAN GREEN: If you can provide some more information on that and also the Accelerator Fund.

MR. THOMAS: They are two different things. But a couple things, the Minority Pilot Program that we're trying to initiate, which we're looking to push out by July, beginning of the fiscal period, is to facilitate and foster growth in the minority development field. What we're trying to facilitate is opportunities for specifically in mind Black and Brown developers, which have been, if you will, disenfranchised for quite some time. Certainly, there's been a challenge to get these folks involved in development in Philadelphia. And quite honestly, in my respects I think they represent Philadelphia more so than anything else and we have to figure out a way to get these folks involved in development.

So the concept behind that is to create opportunities for developers looking at like an 8(a) program, if you're familiar with the federal government program to set aside for disadvantaged businesses, it's a similar concept. Nothing is going to be given out. Folks will have to compete obviously. But the idea is to create an opportunity where they compete in a smaller pond, in a smaller setting where they're competing against one another, learning the process, learning the aspects between development, ground up in particular because we have a lot of vacant land, and we have less vacant structures. So we're trying to get people to actually grow a little further than what they've been.

The RFP will be issued to identify prospective mentees, and another RFP will be issued to identify prospective mentors. Collectively, what we're trying to do is put together a full ecosystem to some degree. I'm looking for minority developers. But I'm not only stopping at the minority developers, I'm looking for the contractors and the workers to also fulfill some of the objectives that we're trying to reach here, because we have a lot of apprentice programs where we're trying to teach young folks how to make a living, but they don't necessarily lead to opportunities and jobs. So what we're trying to do is create this opportunity that will also foster that opportunity for that cohort as well.

And you mentioned the Accelerator Fund. The Accelerator Fund is a separate entity that we've created to try to again fill the gap on the capital stack. A lot of our developers, Black and Brown in particular, again although the Accelerator Fund is not only for Black and Brown developers, it's for minority developers as well as a lot of the development activity we need to facilitate to get our numbers in the housing action plan, but we are trying to put a special interest on Black and Brown developers and trying to create an opportunity to open up capital resources that traditionally have been a challenge for those folks to receive.

So again, we're working with quite a few partners, Black Squirrel which is a CDFI as well, Brandywine which expressed interest is possibly providing resources for that Accelerator Fund as well as some other financial institutions that we've been meeting with on a regular basis.

Ideally, our goal is to raise $100 million. I believe last I talked on the Board, I think we have about 10 to 20 committed or potentially committed thus far. So again, the goal is to create not only an opportunity for Black and Brown developers -- and truth be told, the biggest challenge that we have is creating the opportunity to utilize the land to support our efforts and our endeavors here because I have a challenge where we're going to teach people educationally, but no one is going to be interested in trying to get a certificate without an opportunity at the end of the day of actually doing the work and getting paid.

So the goal is not only educational, it also is supposedly set up and designed to create an opportunity for people to actually work and get the experience necessary to facilitate growth in their business opportunities and endeavors. I hope that was helpful. It looks like I lost some people.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Thomas, for that overview. I appreciate that affirmation. My last question before Councilwoman Gym, in reference to both the Neighborhood Preservation Initiative from the Council President as well as the construction tax and how that can be used to foster some of the goals of both the work that you said, Mr. Thomas, as well as you and Ms. Fadullon?

MR. THOMAS: I'm sorry. I missed that. State it again. I'm sorry.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Can everyone hear me?

MR. THOMAS: I can hear you.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. So my question was the perspective of the

Neighborhood Preservation Initiative as well as the construction tax and how that initiative will be part of this Action Plan or the Consolidated Plan, my understanding is there will be a program statement as part of that, and also how does that intertwine with the work of the Consolidated Plan and the work that both of you are doing?

MS. FADULLON: Yes. For the Neighborhood Preservation Initiative, we will have to come back in the fall and amend the plan, the Consolidated Plan, to include the program statement and the budget for those funds per -- it's an interesting little twist, right. We're going to do it because per the ordinance for the construction impact tax, it says that we need to do that.

However, as this body knows, the impact tax doesn't go into effect until January 2022. So even though we will not be utilizing those dollars initially and in agreement between Council and the Administration to pay the debt service on the bond issuance, the first year's debt service will be paid with Housing Trust Fund dollars, we will regardless come back in the fall to amend when the budget has been -- program statement has been determined for the NPI initiative to amend the Consolidated Plan. And then going forward so when we come back this time next year, that program statement and budget will be included in the Action Plan.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you. Councilmember Gym.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and thank you for asking the questions about NPI and the bond proceeds. I appreciate that.

So first of all, I want to thank Anne and if your whole team are on, obviously I want to thank Melissa and the whole DHCD department for your tremendous work around the Eviction Diversion Program. It's been an amazing partnership. As you know, recently the

New York Times editorial highlighted Philadelphia's Eviction Diversion Program as "elegant." So I appreciate that, Anne, and I hope you appreciate that too. I don't know that I would describe some of the early work particularly as being elegant, but certainly --

MS. FADULLON: I was going to say obviously they did not know how the --

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: I know. But, look, from one year out, they wrote what we maybe hoped would happen, which is that it is and remains a model for the nation, and that actually the eviction moratorium that we initially proposed through Council was necessary in order to get us to think about the other options.

And this other option means that as the eviction moratorium expires, we don't have panic and fear like a number of other cities do that things will go off the rails again, but I think that has a lot to do with your work. I really hope your team just is able to really be hugely appreciative of all the work that went in the housing counselors, Greg and his team. I think we have the most efficient Rent Assist program in the country, clearly the best Diversion program and the numbers speak for itself.

A City that once did 20,000 evictions a year held it to under 5,000. A Penn Med study showed that we prevented 53,000 additional COVID cases from happening, and we've distributed the money faster, more efficiently and with less restrictions than any other municipality in this Commonwealth.

I just want to stay thanks, and to ask if you can provide a brief explanation as to what resources are allocated for the eviction diversion and prevention work as part of the Annual Action Plan? And in particular, if you can speak a little bit even beyond diversion but into some of the legal support and whether we're able to kind of figure out a way forward on finding the funding for legal representation Right to Counsel, the Philadelphia Eviction Project as well?

MS. FADULLON: So I think we may have Melissa back on; is that accurate?

MS. LONG: Yes, I'm back.

MS. FADULLON: Do you happen to have that eviction diversion budget or that information --

MS. LONG: I do.

MS. FADULLON: Great. Thank you.

MS. LONG: Sorry, everybody. I had a whole house meltdown here on the Internet connection, so I really appreciate your patience. So I can tell you it's roughly around a total of $4 million. We currently provide CLS with 333,000. PLA and TURN, we're providing PLA -- and this is over two years, so this is this year and next year, these same amounts are allocated, what we have currently and what we plan for next fiscal year. We're roughly funding PLA 623,000; additional support to them of 160,000 next year. We also are funding TURN because they also do a rental assistance hotline that was stood up during the PEPP program, 306,000 next fiscal year.

And we are funding housing counseling agencies at 2.1 million a year for two years. Good Shepherd, 410,000 this year and next year; and our NACs, over 525,000 this year and next year.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: For the Good Shepherd, is that on top of the housing counselors of 2.1 million?

MS. LONG: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: In addition?

MS. LONG: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So we're trying to -- again, glad to hear all of this. What I'm trying to understand is we are trying to resolve our final City budget and we hope to get to the finish line, but we expect and as many of our housing counselors, and I'm so glad that we're investing in them because they've been fantastic, not only on the eviction prevention work, but also on tangled titled issues, on mortgage foreclosure and other types of emergency situations as the courts start to reopen.

How, like, the -- this does not cover the gap around the legal issues that we're looking at, which was a requested $2.1 million for PEPP and 1.1 million for the Right to Counsel; is that correct?

MS. LONG: Yes, and I can speak to that. So I, Kathleen Grady, amazingly awesome, we have been meeting over the last several weeks, and Eva and Anne, and working how to coordinate and leverage both programs and using -- as you may know that MDO issued an RFP for PEPP partners this year and we're working to that RFP process. And we're also looking to where we do have some more availability in CARES Act funding and did receive a request from CLS for additional funds for legal services, so I'm working very closely with Kathleen on how we can leverage those resources. I don't think it's going to take care of their gap, but we are working together to try to make that part of the budget as whole as possible.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Do you know whether we're able to use a portion of the rent, the area around -- has there been consideration about using some portion of the rent assistance funds on the administrative level to provide legal and housing counseling services?

MS. LONG: We're looking into that. There's a certain percentage. That is a line item in the NPI budget as well. But knowing that, we definitely want to get this started underway July 1st, so we're leaving no stone unturned.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Do you know when you expect to have an answer?

MS. LONG: Hopeful in the upcoming weeks. It's June 7th. So once we do, we can definitely share that with you and the Council, yup.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you. Thank you so much. And I'm glad that it's under consideration. I think it will make a big difference so I really appreciate that. This obviously means a lot to a lot of people, and hopefully it will also be a pathway to stability as people try to seek more stable housing, and at some point, hopefully moving into homeownership is a pathway, so thank you. I appreciate it.

MS. LONG: Can I add one quick point too because I also want to point out the CARES Act funding and any support from the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, we might be able to get through next fiscal year which would be a great thing, but then when those funds go away, we are still tied. It's very frustrating. Our CDBG funds were subject to that public services cap. So over this next year, we are really going to have to work on getting a long-term sustainable source to operate both of these programs. I just wanted to make that point.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. Thank you. One last question I had is about understanding some of the targeted business recovery and support that could be put into the Action Plan. Both the Committee Chair and myself feel very strongly about the importance of targeted supports for business and particularly around growth, incubation, support for commercial corridors and in particular a specific focus on local and small businesses in the City.

Can you highlight any information in the plan regarding increased resources for economic recovery for those areas?

MS. LONG: Karen, do you want to respond to that?

MS. FEGLEY: Sure. Hi, everyone. Karen Fegley, Deputy Commerce Director. So thank you for your support on that. We are continuing using CDBG, and we have been able to increase because of the CDBG CARES dollars in some of those areas that you talked about. We were able to provide some additional funds to the recipients of our corridor management contracts, recognizing that they needed to increase some technology and different things so that they can do more outreach, especially during the pandemic. So we've really -- they've stepped it up and we want to support them in that.

We also were able to increase funds to our business technical assistance providers, and we put a strong emphasis on one-on-one support as well as on support for bookkeeping, taxes and e-commerce. Honestly, those were all needs we all recognized prepandemic, and that just highlighted it even more as the relief programs came out and all that, you all know the story. So we were able to do that. We're going to continue to do that.

Additionally, you mentioned

targeting and we've figured out over the past number of years we really are targeting our resources as much as possible to local business owners, to Black and Brown business owners using definitions such as federally, historically, disadvantaged business owners to be able to make sure that our resources are really going towards equitable and impactful development.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Understood. Obviously, we have concerns that the current Commerce Department budget for grants out to businesses is a mere $1 million. And so, myself and others will be pushing hard to significant expansion in that area. And hopefully, one of the things that we want to emphasize is that if there's targeting of the top 10 zip codes that are most impacted by gun violence, I believe as many others believe a vibrant corridors, some economic mobility and movement, local hiring can be an important counter to communities that are being devastated by violence.

And so, affirmative strong visionary work around small and local businesses is something that I continue to prioritize. And hopefully, we can continue to work together as you involve the Action Plan. I also know just as an aside, and I'm sure you have this, also fully aware of it, but there is really a need to support entrepreneurship and networking incubation and business technology support. So I know that you're invested, but it's one of the areas that we hear very frequently.

We can only chase big businesses, lure them in here, kind of reinforce existing economic structures. At the end of the day, it's really critical for us to kind of create a new environment for a new ecosystem and a real invested growth in Black business, small business, immigrant businesses, that are not going to replicate, but could actually bring us in a different direction, and we will need that energy and creativity in order to modernize our City. And so, look forward to that partnership. Thank you.

If I have time, just one other quick question for the homeless count. The Annual Plan mentioned that an updated 2021 point-in-time count of Philadelphia's homeless population was to be completed by mid-May. Are there any updated figures regarding homelessness in Philadelphia?

We've been working closely with a number of youth organizations and groups who are deeply concerned about the undercount on youth in particular, mostly because they're not necessarily counted as part of street homelessness, but maybe considered couch-surfing, no permanent address, but replicating many of the same kinds of consequences that street homelessness can be. And if you are seeing any shifts regarding homelessness or need to account for new variables in the homeless count, are those accounted for within the Action

Plan?

MS. LONG: I need to reach out to my colleagues Liz Hersh and Roberta at the Office of Homeless Services and can definitely provide you a follow-up response.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you so much, Melissa. Thank you again for your tremendous work, and it's just wonderful to see your work being celebrated as a true national model because it was created in crisis, because there was no funding when we initially started this and it was chaotic and uncertain.

And I think the belief and faith that people had that this was the right thing to do and the professionalism and commitment of yourself and your team made it what it is today, which is truly a national model. So thank you very much everybody.

And thank you, Mr. Chair.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Councilmember Gym.

Let's recognize Councilmember Sanchez, and then Councilmember Jones for questions.

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

To Anne and Melissa, I want to take a macro look at what we're doing, particularly as it relates to this portfolio but the impacts on the other portfolios. What, if any, discussions has the Administration had internally as it looked at the housing space and the housing crisis around re-alignment? And can you speak to as you are inspecting our model, what are the models that have led to more effectiveness and then which are the models that we've been talking about for the last decade we need to be moving away from so that we can scale up some of our stuff? So what has been the discussion?

MS. FADULLON: Yes. So I think, Councilwoman, that there's been not just discussion about that, but we've actually seen implementation. We came out -- again, a lot of this incorporation with City Council, Philly First Home which was a drastic uptick in our down payment assistance, hugely successful to the point that we ran out of dollars, and we're working with Council to take some of the potentially Neighborhood Preservation Initiative money and reconstitute that.

Also, expansion of our small landlord programs, we had a working capital program and what we found out is that our loan -- I should say capital improvement loan program, what we found out is that they really need access to working capital, so we adjusted and we switched, and we stood up that program, and then also added some additional dollars.

I think we've already talked a lot about eviction diversion, standing up a whole rental assist program. I just want to take a minute because I know we've also talked about that, to just give a little perspective in there.

Over the last year, we stood up a program that's larger in magnitude than our Section 8 program, and we had a year to do that, right, so that was like a huge, just a huge thing.

But I do think we've got to look at some other models that we've also been talking about. Some of the things that -- the adjustments we're making in the mixed income housing bonus, the voluntary side about how can we maybe provide some additional support to make those units more affordable to get even to deeper levels of income, so how do we look at either ways that we could maybe provide some additional assistance on the homeownership side, not getting into the capital step because we know what happens there, but to provide deeper affordability on the homeownership side.

I think we also want to look at that on the rental side as well so that we're not just always talking about tax credit project for rental housing.

Because although that's great, we know a couple of things. One, that often times those rents may still be too high for our households to afford, but also it takes a very long time.

And so, one of the things that just came out of the study that was done on National Occurring Affordable Housing with ULI is this idea about maybe buying some longer-term affordability. And so, I think we're looking at that. I think we're very open to trying different models. But over the last few years, probably stood up an Accelerator Fund. I think we set up four or five or six different things, but we still want to continue to try to be as creative and innovative as possible, knowing that with these additional resources, we need to have more creative ways about thinking what we're doing and not necessarily just doing more of the same.

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: So thank you for that. If you could submit to the Chair, I think it's really important as we're going to make some tough discussions, and again we appreciate all of the work that's been done, the housing counseling, everybody. I think this has been a very challenging year.

Those of us who come from this space have always known the people who do this work have the greatest heart, right, so we weren't surprised at their ability to pivot and do this work. But we're at a stage where we can't continue to just kind of piecemeal around the corners of this. And what I'm looking for and I haven't seen yet is a deeper dive into how do we do a robust preservation program, right, how do we move away from just having new build, right, but how do we go incentivize.

As you know, with the McPherson pilot that we've been working on I think shows up some promise. But I don't see any more money or emphasis on trying to do stuff like the McPherson pilot, and I know we're still a little bit gun-shy about a Shallow Rent Program in the private market, right. I know we effectively rolled out the ones with our CDC partners, which is great. So where are we on those? Because we know that giving people money keeps them in their home.

MS. FADULLON: Yeah. And I think those are the things that we're talking about and we want to have conversations with Council over the summer as we flush out the program statement for the Neighborhood Preservation Initiative and then also that budget, right. And those are exactly the types of conversations we want to be having, is how do we do things maybe differently and fully utilize the private sector, but also how do we do things that also allow some creativity from our CDC partners as well. And again, we are very open and I think we want to also think strategically about how do we leverage these dollars, are there other folks we should be approaching saying, hey, the City is doing this bond issuance of $100 million, should we be approaching philanthropy or the state or the feds about how can we partner with you to do some other things to further leverage these dollars.

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: So what are the conversations with the state? We saw them close their budget gap on some of these dollars, right. And then we saw them go through $1 billion deficit to a $3 billion surplus. What, if any, conversations at the state level have we been having to again continue to incentivize some of these programs that have proven better scale-up and create opportunity?

MS. FADULLON: Yeah. I don't think it's no surprise to anybody that conversations with the state are not always the easiest conversations. That being said, I do think we've had some good interaction with Robin Weissmann at PHFA. She seems to be open to trying some different things. I would say she's very interested in particular in mixed income projects and how do we facilitate those, how do we get creative about putting something like that together. With her National House Trust Fund, she's filling gaps and tax credit projects. I think we still got some issues there because of the exorbitant increase in materials cost. We want to make sure that the projects that are having close to being ready to go can actually go. I think Robin is open to those things. And we've had some very -- and I just say we've had some good initial conversations at the federal level. I think we need to pursue those.

We've talked to Secretary Fudge and her undersecretaries, I think they're interested in doing things differently. We continue to work with our federal lobbyists to push forward flexible dollars coming out of the feds. I think part of the problem is we come up with very creative solutions at the local level, but it doesn't work with any of the dollars that we get provided, which again I think is why it's so critical that local government has stood up and said, we need to provide some local dollars because those are our most flexible dollars.

And if we can get that kind of cooperation from the state, but particularly the federal government, I think there'd be a lot of solutions open to us that we all want to implement, but unfortunately some of the rules with the money don't allow us to do that.

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: So as it relates, and I know that Melissa said she will get some information around the homeless population in particular in the City of Philadelphia, all of us believe that all of the great work that was done around eviction diversion prevents homelessness. What, if any, additional investments from that increased budget are we going to see in some of those areas that prevent homelessness?

MS. FADULLON: Again, unfortunately I don't think we are joined by any of our colleagues from the Office of Homeless Services. However, they are getting this additional $42 million in some way, shape or form that's based on the home formula. We have been having conversations with HUD. They told us they won't have any regulations around those dollars until the fall. So until we see those regulations, I think it's going to be difficult to provide some specifics around those dollars, but we hope to work in cooperation with them, because I think we all realize particularly some of the solutions that have been systematized, right, are not maybe the most effective one.

I think we want to figure out how do we have more permanent housing, do we take a closer look at transitional housing which to some extent has gone a little bit by the wayside. I think those are some of the things we wanted to get to, and we know we need to -- if we really want to end homelessness, well, that means a permanent housing unit, right. So we've got to figure out how do we get to more permanent housing units for that population.

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: Yeah. Again, those conversations have been ongoing for a long time and I'm very, very frustrated that we're not further along in looking again at models that will lead to deeper affordability. All this stuff we know we need, and we just can't continue to feed a system because we have legacy contracts with people, people need to evolve. And we keep saying we're not going back to normal because normal wasn't fair. But I don't see enough of this in this normal presentation.

I see us talking about it, talking about it, talking about it, but no one is willing to say, look, we can't continue to do this at $58,000, right. It shouldn't take three years to move a family to permanency. We can actually buy them a house, and maybe we should. So --

MS. FADULLON: And those are exactly the things we're looking at. That's why I said buying affordability and do we have some dollars where we can buy a unit. I think one of the things we continue to struggle with in the conversations we've had with HUD is once you get that unit, you have to operate that unit. And when you got people with close to no income, how you operate that unit becomes very important. And I think that's an issue that we definitely need to bring our creativity to the table when we talk about how do we provide for the long-term operations of those units.

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: And then finally, you know how frustrated I am with the Land Bank and its inability to get to the disposition process. I'm going to assume all these budgets are going to be restored, because I've been in Council for 13 years and fighting for the same thing is just not acceptable anymore, so I'm assuming that you guys are going to come back with a proposal that includes full funding.

But my concern is what are we going to do different to be able to maximize the disposition? Where are we with that? Because as you know, I have hundreds in the queue and --

MS. FADULLON: Yeah. And I think some of that has been capacity. Honestly, over the last couple of years due to COVID and some other things, we've been operating at very bare bones. So I think we have to get up to capacity, we have to ensure that we're providing folks what they need to be successful. But then I do think we have to break down that process and see where things are working, where they're not working, and we have to be proactive about where do we see development potential, those kinds of things and starting to push more of those things out there and be proactive as opposed to reactive.

I know we worked a lot with your office, particularly on some of this. There are things with getting in touch with folks in order to get their documentation in and getting settlements scheduled. We've been talking with the NACs around helping us with some of the notary issues, but I think we've got to start looking at all of those requirements and figure out why is there a requirement and is there a justifiable reason for that. And if there's not, figuring out how we can adjust it to make sure that it's as easy as possible for the user.

And I know we've looked at our applications and things like that because it's still a pretty substantial package, but some of those things are required, all of the disclosure statements and all that kind of stuff. But, yes, we will continue to work. I'll just say we're starting to see more and more dispositions on the board agenda, which is a good thing. It's not where we want to be and we have to continue to make improvements.

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: I would subscribe that a 25-page document for a side lot for someone who's been caring for it for many years and been responsible than us could be revised. I think that this is an issue of buckets. I think we -- if you hear the biggest complaints from folks on the ground, people have been waiting, they've kept those properties clean.

We all know how much money they save the City because we've not had to take care of them, and making them sign off their first born is not necessary, these mortgages and all this stuff. I subscribe to you that we could really streamline that and be more willing to work with people who did the work we didn't do and we failed to do in those neighborhoods and stop looking at this as though those folks don't deserve the equity that they built themselves.

I subscribe to you that the policies reflect that these people -- first of all, that it's not their tax dollars and they don't have to sweat equity in these properties, so I think that's an important piece. I think people get frustrated because they see us move for big developers. They don't see us move for neighborhoods.

Again, don't want to go back to where we were before because it wasn't fair, it wasn't equitable. But valuing people through equity in neighborhoods and allowing them to earn some of the equity that they're investing is a huge message to send at this time because they're entitled to that work. So I look forward to continuing to work with you as it relates to that.

And then finally -- Mr. Chair, thank you for the indulgence -- I want to go back to the Commerce Department with business supports, and I'm happy to see that we are investing in those commercial corridors and those businesses. I asked this before, and I don't know if -- and at that particular time, a Commerce Director wasn't around. What in our business technical assistance space are we doing for contractors and minority contractors to do some of the work that David Thomas and others talked to so that we're also building business development and technical assistance, whether you're a contractor or a small business provider? Where are we as it relates to small contractors?

MS. FEGLEY: So a lot of that technical assistance is being -- some of it is being provided through the Rebuild program, which I don't have enough details to speak on today. But we are also through our -- Commerce's technical assistance program that CDBG funded, we do provide funding to the Enterprise

Center, who runs a contractor consortium and provides some of that technical assistance.

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: What are we doing differently with our ethnic Chambers of Commerce to get them to help us build some of that capacity? What are we doing differently this year?

MS. FEGLEY: I know there's a lot of collaboration that's happening now that I'm not familiar with. I don't believe it used to happen in the past. And so, the Asian and the Hispanic and African-American Chambers are working together, which is pretty cool, to sort of leverage each other's resources and create programming and that sort of thing. And we're working closely with them to inform I know our efforts around economic opportunity and reaching our goals for the City, but also just economic opportunity in general for growing businesses.

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: How much do we invest in those Chambers right now?

MS. FEGLEY: I don't have the number off the top my head. I can get that to you.

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: Okay. I would subscribe to you that this always becomes a capacity issue, right, when people have capacity around predictability. I think again, if we don't want to go back to the old normal that wasn't fair, wasn't just, I think same in doing some of those things, I think there's a lot of value in those spaces that we haven't always leveraged and we want to treat them like partners and good partners, those conversations need to happen.

I'm happy that you're going to more one-on-one mentorship. I think that's the way to go. I think COVID has taught us that workshops are not enough, that people really do need that kind of one-on-one mentor to move them to the next level, and that takes investment. And so, I want to make sure that before we finish this budget process, there's a commitment that's different than what we've done in the past. And again, I want to applaud the Chambers. The Greater Chamber, I know they're looking with all the different efforts. But I think as a City, we need to also send that message that that business sector is important to us.

And then finally, as it relates to the arts and culture community around that space, what, if any, technical assistance work is the Commerce looking to do differently this year to support that constituency?

MS. FEGLEY: So that has always been -- that constituency has the same access to any of our business resources and programs. We definitely look to support them when there's a crossover, like if they're opening on a commercial corridor, right, then we're trying to give them as many resources as possible. We did sort of compare notes and make sure that the relief programs, that we provided some tips to the Arts and Culture Relief Program to make sure that that was going to target the organizations and businesses that needed it the most.

And just on a small scale, we're doing a couple of things. We have a little project right now that's supported by the National League of Cities and working with the Village for Arts and Humanities. They are working -- it's called Informal Entrepreneurs, so they're working with a collective of Black artists. And through some funding of ours and the Urban league and the National League of Cities, we're doing a program to try to formalize these businesses, formalize these Black artists who are making money into legit businesses. This is small scale stuff, but it's all replicable and we can build on it. So we are also trying to reach out, one of our staff in our Business Attraction Development Unit is focused on the creative economy businesses, so the makers, you know, that space.

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you for that. And as it relates to the tax policy, what part of the tax policy proposal that the Mayor put forth was discussed with Commerce?

MS. FEGLEY: I believe the whole thing was discussed with the Commerce Director. I'm not prepared today to speak to any specifics.

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: Okay. Well, thank you. As we debate this, we all know that the $100,000 exemption has been really pivotal and key on some of this work. I was just wondering as we talk about the recovery efforts, if we had to make choices, where do we make choices to make sure that we're incentivizing and being very focused on Black and Brown businesses. So thank you very much, Karen. Thank you, Anne.

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for the

indulgence. You can move on.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Councilmember Sanchez.

We'll now call on Councilmember Jones for a question. And after Councilmember Jones, we will then go to the next panel unless there are other questions from Members for this panel.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Anne, you know I like you. But I got to tell you, I love Dave Thomas and Greg Heller. I like you, but I really do love --

MS. FADULLON: That's all right. That's all right.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Because they have been very useful in dealing with my District as a District Councilperson. And the reason why we have District Councilpeople is to give perspective from the lens of the geography they represent. So in the 4th District, I'm never going to see as much new construction as in the 5th District or the 2nd District, Kenyatta or President Clarke. But where I live, the space we occupy is in preservation.

PHDC, I'll start there. We used to have before Dave got on board, senior citizens, 80, 90 years old waiting on lists for three years. Now, I hope they live forever and we pray that they do, but to wait three years to fix a leaky roof often was cruel and unusual. And to Dave's credit, he worked with us to reduce that list significantly. And so, as we look at increases in budget, I want to make sure that major systems repair is there.

I love new affordable units, but I'm never going to keep up with the pace of demand. As soon as we build an affordable unit, it is already a waiting list for people to get in. So I almost feel at times like there's a Tsunami of gentrification coming. We're running in the right direction, but often not fast enough. And so, that's number one.

From the macro view, I have

places like Brith Sholom that have outlived their original HUD deal. And because of the rent caps, don't keep up with maintenance and are kicking it down the road. And if I were a conspiracy theorist, I think they do so, so that we order them to close so that they can renovate, so that they can gentrify and sell at market rate their apartments, which we cannot allow to happen.

So having said those two things, where are we in assisting multi-unit structures like that to preserve with 200 units there, Pavilion. We've already seen what has happened at the Penn Wynne. How do we address that in upcoming budgets? And then on the micro onesies, twosies, I need preservation dollars to take that one vacant property on a block that serves as a cancer. It's where crimes happen. It's where illegal drug operations happen. It is where raccoons and possums nest. And but for that one property, I'd have a stable block. So those two, the macro, big units, multi-unit preservation and the micro onesies, twosies, how are we reinforcing our ability to address those problems?

MS. FADULLON: So let me take a stab at that. So I think a couple of things with the Basic System Repair Program, again as you know due to actions of City Council, there was a bond issuance for $60 million more into that program. Dave and his team did an unbelievable job getting that money out the door and spent in three years and really helped to deal with that backlog and those time issues that you were talking about. Those dollars are spent. So now what we're looking to do is with again some of that Neighborhood Preservation money provide some additional dollars to the Basic System Repair Program.

There's dollars in this Action Plan that are federal dollars that are still going to those programs. As we know as with so many of our programs, right, the need is greater than the resources. So hopefully through Neighborhood Preservation Initiative, we can put some more resources into things like Basic System Repair and Adaptive Modification programs.

In reference to the onesies, twosies, some of that depends on who owns those structures, right. If they are vacant and they're tax delinquent and there's dollars provided through the Land Bank to do acquisition to sheriff's sale, we may be able to acquire those properties and figure out how to get them back into active use. So --

COUNCILMAN JONES: Anne. Anne. Anne --

MS. FADULLON: While the property is privately owned, it's difficult for us to treat those --

COUNCILMAN JONES: Ms. Fadullon, I understand we have $0 for acquisition as we --

MS. FADULLON: That is correct. That is correct.

COUNCILMAN JONES: And --

MS. FADULLON: As was stated during my General Fund testimony, I am actively advocating and I am trying to get dollars in there, but that's where we are right now, which again sort of takes one of our tools out of the toolbox which is an issue when it's a private owner.

I think some of these conversations need to be had with the Department of L&I as well. And if it's a private owner, I think they have some limited ability to do a clean-and-seal type of thing and lien the property. But again, it all comes down to a resource issue. And I don't want it to be in an issue where I'm allocating resources for another department. That's not my role.

And I think frankly, we'll continue to work with you on this, but those issues just get bigger on those big multi-family buildings when we don't have a landlord that's willing to be cooperative and work with us. What permission would it take for us to get on to a private property, you know. A 200-unit building, let's say the whole heating system needs to be repaired. That could be a very, very expensive repair job identifying the resources. Let's say we were able to get access, identifying the resources to be able to do those repairs upfront is an issue.

And I think again, those are things we want to try to continue to think through because we know those issues are going to get worse before we get better. In reference to the Wynne property, I believe that was actually a low-income housing tax credit project where they raised the rent, and they are able to raise the rent. And then we know, like we said, even tax credit units often times folks can't afford them, which is why even prior to COVID we were rolling out a Shallow Rent Program, and the initial units we targeted were existing tax credit units.

We are trying to identify dollars that would allow us to continue to sort of allow that gap to be filled.

I will just say even with the Neighborhood Preservation Initiative and the additional CARES Act dollars we got and the American Recovery Plan, these housing issues have been underfunded for decades, decades, decades. And even with these additional funds, it allows us to do some additional things, but it won't allow us to address all the issues. And so, we want to continue to work with you on them, but we are not going to be able to resolve all of our housing issues even with these dollars, but that doesn't mean we won't try as hard as we can to do just that every day.

COUNCILMAN JONES: For the 200-unit property, if we close that building, that will be 200 homeless people, if --

MS. FADULLON: I understand.

COUNCILMAN JONES: -- not more.

Because many of them aren't just the only resident. They have significant others in those units. And if your numbers for these shelters are as you've presented, for a $20,000 heater, we're going to spend that and then some for one unit of homelessness. And so, we really have to figure that out.

And it's not just in my District, Mr. Chairman. There are many older deals that have come of age where they're under water by way of maintenance and rent, and this is going to hit us in the pocket now or later. And I think an ounce of prevention, get in there fix that heating unit, the sprinkler system, lien the property so that eventually if they sell it, we can get our money back, but we are preventing an overload in our shelter system.

On the onesies and twosies on blocks, we are seeing in my District people walking up and down the street knocking on doors, looking at vacant properties that are stranded, and then they're sending mail, Chairman, to those properties to prove they live there so that they can eventually take site control on those properties. And some of these people are flatfooted hustlers from the community, but others of them are a little more organized by way of investment companies that are trying to seek out these basement-bargain properties, turning my community, my District from homeownership to rental. And God knows I supported the moratoriums on eviction, but I'd far rather have new families moving into affordable housing to own through a lease-to-purchase program similar to what they do in Cleveland not only on rehabbed properties, but on new construction.

We have got to take this opportunity while the sun is shining from the federal government. We got two years of Biden's House and Senate majority. We're not guaranteed that afterwards. So we need to come up with immediate programs that can address this or if we don't get -- and I know I'm on my soapbox, I'm going stop, Mr. Chairman. But if we don't get housing dollars for our acquisition programs, we will be Seattle. The way you not become Seattle is to own public land to develop affordable housing. That's the tried-and-true methodology. So we have to put some money in the Land Bank. We have to put some money in L&I to do remediation. And finally, we have to figure out a lease-to-own program for young startup families. That's my opinion.

And if we're doing a housing plan to HUD, I want to see those in that plan. I want to see how we are not just scratching our head and saying we need more money, but how that money can be spent to avoid the Tsunami that is here. It's not coming. It is here. Developers do safaris in neighborhoods to find good investment deals.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Councilmember Jones. That is an excellent segue to my last question.

I don't see any other questions for this panel, but my last question for Ms. Fadullon: And I know, Ms. Fadullon, we've had this conversation regarding some of the various things that Councilmember Jones talked about, how to provide additional dollars, especially for those multi-housing tax credit projects that are expiring. We've discussed for some time the issue of right of first refusal to allow those projects to stay affordable.

I gave you some perspective on my work prior to joining this body, when I was the Board President of Center in the Park and the challenges that we had, but the opportunity we have had as a right of first refusal for Maple Village because we made sure that that was in the actual contract, but a number of nonprofits do not have that opportunity.

I know the concern that's been raised is if we move forward with that type of conversation, where are the dollars to provide the ability for nonprofit organizations to acquire a project after the low tax credit allocation has expired in order to keep those projects affordable in our City, and that touches on a lot of the things that Councilmember Jones talked about.

And so, in that regard tomorrow at 1 o'clock, the Law and Government hearing will be having a hearing regarding my legislation regarding the Housing Trust Fund to make sure we have additional allocation to the Housing Trust Fund. And, Ms. Fadullon, will you be testifying tomorrow at 1 o'clock?

MS. FADULLON: So a couple of things. One is one of the things that we want to talk with Council about as far as NPI and that program statement is potentially some sort of acquisition pool for preservation deals like the right of first refusal, and is there an acquisition pool that we can put together utilizing some of those dollars.

My second question actually is a little bit back to you because I got two times for the Law and Government hearing tomorrow. I've got 1 o'clock and I've got 2:30, so if that can be clarified. And then third, I am not the person from the Administration testifying on the Housing Trust Fund. That will be the Finance Department.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Fadullon. Although I'm not the Chair of that Committee, my understanding is that Committee hearing is tomorrow at 1 o'clock p.m., but we will clarify if it is scheduled to start at 1:00 p.m., but we'll provide clarity on that, if need be.

MS. FADULLON: Appreciate it. Thank you.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: But on the Council calendar, it's scheduled to start tomorrow at 1 o'clock p.m. based on the Council calendar.

MS. FADULLON: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Ms. Fadullon, Ms. Long, Ms. Thomas, Ms. Fegley, for your testimony regarding the Consolidated Plan for this upcoming Comp plan year.

We will now go into the final panel. And with that, we will hear from the following witnesses. I would like to have the Clerk Mr. Iannuzzi read the name of the first witness to testify. Please state your name for the record and then proceed with your testimony.

THE CLERK: For Panel 4, we have Nora Lichtash, Executive Director of WCRP; Kenneth Bigos, Executive Director from the Affordable Housing Centers of Pennsylvania; Andrew Frishkoff, Executive Director of LISC; and Rick Sauer, Executive Director of PACDC.

MS. LICHTASH: Should I go ahead?

THE CLERK: Yes, please.

MS. LICHTASH: So I really appreciate the questions that Councilmembers have been asking about creating and preserving affordability. That's exactly what we're hearing on the ground, and the answers to that have to do with acquisition of property and land, money for development to ensure that we can develop it affordably and money for operations to keep it affordable as we operate.

I'm Nora Lichtash, and I work for the Women's Community Revitalization Project, also known as WCRP. I anticipate deeply affordable housing and also builds people power and leadership, especially among low-income women. The average income of a family that leases from WCRP initially is less than $15,000 a year and sometimes well less. And what we know from city-wide data is that more than 1 in 4 families in our City earns $15,000 or less.

And so, when we talk about 30 percent of area median, 30 percent of area median is $28,980. So we're talking about folks who earn like about less than 20 percent of area median. It's a lot of folks. And we appreciate that everyone in our City should be fairly served with our resources, but these are the families that have been hurt most by the pandemic.

We just completed a development in East Germantown this spring in Councilmember Bass' District and there were more than 800 families that applied for 35 homes. I talk a lot about how many people need it, and every single one of those families deserved it. And homes that start out as rental, those homes start out as rental, and then will become homeownership opportunities.

The first family to move in was Brittany Smith and her daughter Melani who's 5, and Brittany and Melani had to move six times in five years. And one of those moves was to a women's shelter in order to find a place to live that they could afford. In our City, 1 out of every 2 renters and 1 out of every 3 homeowners is cost-burdened. Meaning, once they pay all their bills for housing, there isn't enough left for their other bills.

So at WCRP our leaders look for opportunities to work with Councilmembers in the creation of new resources and then decisions of how to fairly spend the money we have, and I'm here on behalf of our leaders to thank Councilmembers for your work in stopping the Mayor from cutting the General Fund contribution to the Housing Trust Fund in Fiscal '21. So thank you for passing with a veto approve majority the 1 percent construction impact tax that will fund the Neighborhood Preservation Initiative. And hopefully, in the future someone from WCRP will be back to thank you for passing the Housing Trust Fund mandatory annual appropriation. But most importantly, today I'm asking you as you vote on our City's housing budget to prioritize deeply affordable housing development to meet the needs of families like Brittany's.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Ms. Lichtash.

We'll now go with our next witness which I believe is Kenneth Bigos, and then we'll go with Andrew Frishkoff and Rick Sauer, in that order.

MR. BIGOS: Yes. Thank you, Chairman Green. So good morning, and thank you for allowing me and all the members of the Finance -- members of the Finance Committee to present my testimony today. So my name is Ken Bigos. I'm the Executive Director of the Affordable Housing Centers of Pennsylvania. We're a DHD housing counseling organization, and we're representative of the newly created Housing Counseling Action Committee.

My testimony is to highlight the valuable work of the housing counseling community. The community performs to the residents of Philadelphia and the need for additional financial support from the City of Philadelphia beyond the current funding allocation from the Consolidated Plan.

The next few years is going to be very consequential for many Philadelphians as the federal eviction and foreclosure moratoriums will soon be lifted and housing counselors will have to be serving as first responders, diagnosing their crisis, identifying treatment and administering care to avoid displacement and restore the household to a health and financial housing situation.

The volume of work will be daunting. When the eviction lifts, the number of cases needed to go through the Philadelphia's successful Eviction Mediation program will most likely increase, and I really appreciate the questions that were raised by Council to the previous panel. The Mortgage Bankers Association identified the rate of delinquency for FHA mortgages is currently higher compared to any point during the Great Recession.

This loan product is done for first-time homebuyers. This product is commonly utilized by particularly Black and Brown homeownership, as noticed by my organization during the Philly First Home Rent Program. And most of these clients also did not utilize the forbearance programs that were very much available. They're stuck in a financial paralysis, hoping this problem will just go away on its own.

Addressing this problem will require a whole hands-on-deck approach. At the same time, the Philly First Home grant will be making a triumphant return thanks to City Council's aspiring vision for the Neighborhood Preservation Initiative. The current supply of housing counselors will not be enough to address the housing demands that I just identified. Therefore, the Housing Counseling Action Committee recently sent each member of City Council and the Mayor a letter that was signed by 16 high-performing community-based organizations advocating for an appropriation of $1 million from the City of Philadelphia's FY22 budget to address the upcoming crisis.

The impact of housing counseling services has consistently served as a wise investment for the City of Philadelphia. Based on our organization's performance last year, the cost from resources, talking about the City of Philadelphia, was approximately $130 per client.

I wish to end my testimony with a story that highlights the impact of my work of housing counseling and to highlight how eviction and foreclosure for mediation should not be a do-it-yourself project. Please meet Virginia. She was a client of AHCOPA assisted earlier this year. She lives in the West Oak Lane neighborhood near the Ogontz library. She's owned her home for 25 years, raised her children and built a legacy rooted in her house.

When the pandemic hit, she was furloughed and she lost her job as a behavioral health specialist. A few months later, she fell ill, tested positive for COVID. She was in the hospital for three months and on a ventilator. Through the grace of God, she recovered and spent a month and a half relearning how to walk and talk.

She eventually felt well enough to return to work. By this time, the mortgage became delinquent, obviously through no fault of her own. She attempted to address her mortgage situation on her own, but a solution could not be reached. The counselor helped her with assisting access to reset the mortgage through the Housing Trust Fund that would not have been available to her if she tried this assistance on her own.

There will be many people similar to Virginia in this situation. And luckily, help is coming through the American Rescue Plan. There is the

Homeowner Assistance Fund to help provide people to reinstate the mortgage. There is the Phase 4 Rental Assistance Program that helps tenants re-establish their payments. These tools are the water that can help put out the fires that the housing counselors will be serving as the firefighters, and are the best agents to help them put that out. So with that, I thank you for your attention for allowing me to present my testimony today.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Bigos.

The next witness to testify is Andrew Frishkoff, and then we have Rick Sauer.

MR. FRISHKOFF: Great. Thank you very much for the opportunity today. My name is Andrew Frishkoff. I'm the Director of LISC Philadelphia. Chairman Green, members of the Committee, other members of City Council, I appreciate your efforts to champion the needs of our residents, small businesses and our community-based organizations. And I want to thank the Division of Housing and Community Development, Planning and Development and the Commerce Department for their continued support of Philadelphia residents, local businesses and neighborhoods. I submitted written testimony. I will keep my comments here brief.

Philadelphia's residents, business owners and communities have suffered through health and economic impacts of COVID-19. Residents and business owners have relied on CDCs, CDFIs, business support organizations and other nonprofits to survive this pandemic. Now that we are turning the corner, we need to make multi-year investments in affordable homes, small businesses and commercial corridors to pave a road towards economic recovery, and we need to reinvest in the nonprofits and play the roles in feeding, healing, housing and sustaining the residents of Philadelphia.

Nora and Ken have done a tremendous job in the work that they and their organizations do over the past number of years, but also today in highlighting the individual stories, people's lives who are directly affected both by the pandemic, by the structural issues of race, poverty and economic inopportunity, but again, also the important work that their organizations are doing.

So I want to highlight my testimony here, the importance of ensuring that we provide support to nonprofit organizations like Women's Community Revitalization Project, Affordable Housing Centers of Pennsylvania and others who have been doing that work so hard with relatively few resources. We need to make sure that we have sufficient funds for their capacity, for their staffing, for their programs so they can continue to be the lifelines for residents who are working to survive through the pandemic and now to recover and achieve their own economic opportunity.

In addition, I want to highlight things that members of City Council can do beyond their advocacy within the Action Plan, also in terms of the General Fund budget and supporting items that can be in tandem with federal funds essential to providing support for our residents, for our small businesses and for our community-based organizations.

We need to restore funding for the Philadelphia Land Bank; new General Fund support in addition to CDBG and our home support for housing counseling programs; new funding for capacity-building for CDCs and community-based nonprofits to hire, retain and train staff who have been responding to the impact of the pandemic on homeowners, tenants and small businesses; increased funding for Commerce's Storefront Improvement, Businesses Security Camera and InStore programs; increased funding for the PHL Taking Care of Business program for keeping our corridors clean; and new funding of at least $1 million for commercial corridor managers to supplement CDBG funding so they can assist small businesses and strengthen neighborhood corridors; and the new funding of at least $1 million to supplement CDBG funding for technical assistance to small businesses to help them recover from impact of the pandemic.

Again, my written comments extend further on the necessity of providing support for preservation on both subsidized affordable housing and naturally occurring affordable housing, for equitable development and for commercial corridors. I thank you for the opportunity to share these comments in the hearing.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Frishkoff.

We'll next hear from Rick Sauer. I will also acknowledge that Carrie Rathman is also here and we will give her an opportunity to testify after Mr. Sauer.

MR. SAUER: Thank you, Chairman. Good afternoon and thanks for the opportunity to testify on the City's proposed Consolidated Plan. My name is Rick Sauer and I'm the Executive Director of the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations.

I want to start likewise by thanking both City Council as well as the Commerce Department and the City's housing agencies for really stepping up during these challenging times and for their support of PACDC and our members working to address these challenges throughout the neighborhoods. It's really critical that we all try to row together in the same direction to advance an equitable recovery.

We certainly believe that it's essential for the City to do everything it can right now to support proven effective affordable housing in neighborhood economic development programs that will keep both renters and homeowners in their homes, while also expanding affordable housing opportunities for additional families and strengthening small businesses and neighborhood commercial corridors across the City. And we know this work is more critical than ever given the impact of COVID-19, especially on lower-income communities of color.

I did want to briefly reference the Neighborhood Preservation Initiative bond issue, the planned $400 million investment in affordable housing, commercial corridor revitalization, small businesses and neighborhood infrastructure is really, really critical at this time. However, these funds need to be additive given the magnitude of the challenges we currently face and should not be used to replace commitments from the General Fund for housing community development programs.

It is our understanding, I think as Anne articulated earlier, that the City plans to float I think the first $100 million in bonds this fall, and that interested stakeholders will have an opportunity to weigh in on the planned use of these funds, including through the process of substantially amending the Consolidated Plan that we're discussing here at this hearing.

And given the enormous housing needs Philadelphia residents face, that both as Andy pointed out, that Nora and Ken articulated and several Councilmembers articulated earlier during the hearing, and the fact that we have $1.4 billion in federal COVID relief funds that the City is receiving this year and next, it's disappointing that the Housing Trust Fund new column in the City's FY22 Consolidated Plan totals only $6.86 million, which represents over a $13 million cut from the $20 million appropriated in FY21, as part of the five-year commitment between the Mayor and City Council to allocate General Fund revenues to the Housing Trust Fund.

We urge City Council first to restore the General Fund support for the Housing Trust Fund for this upcoming fiscal year, FY22, to the promised $20 million figure. And second, we support passage of the bill and resolution just introduced by Councilman Green and other members to put on the ballot for voters to approve the mandatory annual appropriation of Housing Trust Fund starting the following fiscal year in FY23. We think both are important to restore the funding for next fiscal year, but then to ensure we have that ongoing dedicated funding source going forward.

In addition, as Ken articulated given the expected increase and foreclosures and evictions potentially once the moratoriums, we are fully supportive of the additional $1 million ask for housing counseling agencies to help renters and homeowners stay in their home and help first-time homebuyers get the opportunity to buy their home and build wealth.

Two other quick things, neighborhood economic development, we do know that the City's small businesses and commercial corridors were particularly hit hard by COVID. We believe its strong funding for commercial corridor programs is absolutely vital to help small businesses recover and keep corridors clean, safe and attractive. And that's why as Andy articulated, we support restoring funding for key programs that assist small businesses and strengthen commercial corridors, whether that's for the cleaning programs, the security camera programs, storefront improvements, et cetera, and the additional assistance asked to support small businesses directly and corridor managers.

And finally, around the capacity building assistance, we would like to see increased funding put towards building the capacity of nonprofits to really play the key role in keeping people housed, help businesses survive and other critical services. $500,000 commitment will support the staff to make sure they receive adequate training and technical assistance as they have to respond to these crises.

Just for example, we launched a new onboarding program this past year for commercial corridor managers that were coming onto CDC staff, and it really helped them to sort of receive the training and coaching needed to build their skills quickly and strengthen their peer networks so they can be more successful with their work.

So we think focusing on affordable housing, neighborhood economic development and building the capacity of nonprofits is really critical to successfully advancing an equitable recovery. Thanks for the opportunity to testify.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Sauer.

We'll next hear from Carrie Rathman. And then we have a question from Councilmember Oh.

MS. RATHMAN: Thank you so much, Councilman Green. I really appreciate you all sneaking me in. I'm Carrie Rathman, Director of Strategic Partnerships at Habitat for Community Philadelphia, where we are driven by the vision that everyone needs a safe and decent place to live, and that homeownership also offers the path to accumulating generational wealth.

So low-income families and individuals partner with us to build or improve the places that they call home. And thus, they pay an affordable mortgage or payment for that work. We work with families making 30 to 60 percent area median income currently on our homeownership projects, and for repairs we serve those making less than -- up to 80 percent area median income. And surveys across both Habitat homebuyers across our network and here in Philadelphia show improved educational outcomes for children, better financial health and parents who are more able to be financial secure to meet their family's needs, so I think that speaks to the fundamental nature of housing and how critical it is and the benefits that it reap.

But we are committed to bringing justice to the communities in which we work, and we work to remove the historic barriers that have long suppressed Black and Brown homeownership and depressed wealth generation. We know that stable and affordable homeownership increases opportunities for families today and for generations to come, and it has impacts on the individuals we serve, the families that we serve and also whole communities.

And we applaud the Administration and Council for considering racial inequities during these budget negotiations and during testimony in the Comp plan, and we hope that Habitat's testimony will be considered in both the context of this Annual Plan, but also consideration of the hopefully additive NPI Fund.

So we've seen firsthand throughout the pandemic the devastation that it's caused, but yet Habitat has continued to work tirelessly towards our vision by continuing our repair programs and our new homeownership program. Tomorrow we finish 20 new beautiful homes. This is one of them, green homes in Sharswood. And by June 30th, we'll complete over 60 comprehensive home stabilization projects that we were able to sort of live through during the pandemic. So I'm heartened to see in the proposed Action Plan it includes still money, 500,000 for the Targeted Housing Preservation efforts, the THPP program. Thank you, because these dollars ensure that the deficiencies that Habitat sees in many of the homes that we work in due to deferred maintenance get addressed.

Through our home repairs, we've consistently brought more than $4 to each THPP dollar that the City has invested in these homes. So I hope that this investment speaks for itself and its ability to leverage, not to mention the secondary benefits that all of these homeowners get in terms of security and opportunity that you gain from stable and safe housing.

We hope you will also consider further allocation for broader preservation work through the NPI fund. But we are also frustrated at Habitat that for probably since 2008, there's no home funding or allocation to support homeownership production. We hope you will consider this gap when allocating the NPI resources and other resources that are hopefully coming down the pike for the Housing Trust Fund.

Affordable homeownership provides houses for families and individuals today, but it helps them more importantly build equity and wealth over time. Our home-building brings pocket equity to families as they retain limited income for other basic needs and savings on the day-to-day, but their own home also builds equity as the asset appreciates, and it helps families build credit and finance education, which we're seeing across the board from our homeowners.

Owning and maintaining a home means the heirs can continue to build on the legacy. We believe it's a way to ensure that poverty is reduced over time and homeownership provides stability in the neighborhoods where they live and invest. Habitat traditionally serves Black and Brown communities because they've been the ones systematically blocked from homeownership and the most public disinvestment.

On average, Black households started the COVID crisis with higher housing cost burdens, lower accumulated savings and fewer assets that could be liquidated to provide a cushion, but our homes do provide that cushion and helps remediate sort of all of these deficiencies.

We buffer families. We create stability. We support health because the environments are healthy and we're providing a financial cushion in addition to the legacy benefits over time. Our repair work also preserves homes, safety and health for those who already own their home. So we call on you to consider direct allocation to support homeownership production through these resources listed in the Action Plan and through the NPI allocation. We think that overlooking homeownership production is shortsighted. We also urge considerable investment again in further NPI efforts.

So in summary, just to drive it

home, we hope you'll consider the production of affordable homeownership in the suite of strategies that these public dollars will fund. We want to ensure that NPI investments are in addition to and do not replace previous funding committed from the City's General Fund for affordable housing and that this includes delineated funds for ownership production subsidies as well as preservation. And we hope that you'll prioritize the allocation of funding to nonprofit organizations, who demonstrated a long-term commitment to rebuilding communities, racial equity and addressing the needs of the City's low-income residents.

So I thank you all today. I thank, Councilman Green, for your proposal that's coming up tomorrow, and thank DHCD and all of my partners here on this call for all the work that they do.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Ms. Rathman.

We'll hear from Councilmember Oh with a question. And then after Councilman Oh, we'll hear from Will Gonzalez from Ceiba, who I believe is our last witness to testify on this panel.

COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very much, Chairman.

I just have a question for this panel. I am so curious because I do appreciate your support of Councilmember Green's Charter change bill tomorrow. My question is in March of 2018, I introduced a Charter change bill that would put $50 million annually from the General Fund into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, and it was not supported in general by the housing community. Can you explain why that is?

MR. SAUER: This is Rick Sauer from PACDC. We have consistently supported expanded funding for affordable housing, including the Housing Trust Fund from a variety of initiatives. I would gladly support a

$50 million level versus a $26 million level if that's the inclination of City Council to do so. We know the significance of the demand on the limited resources that we have out there. I think we need to do as much as we can right now, but we are fully supportive of additional appropriations to the Housing Trust Fund from a variety of mechanisms proposed over the years.

COUNCILMAN OH: I do appreciate that. That was the initial reaction I got when I introduced the bill. And then I was told that it was not going to be supported. Not specifically by you, Rick Sauer, but in general I think there were something about the competing issues or something. But I'm just very curious as to what is the difference from your community.

MR. SAUER: I can't speak to what other people --

COUNCILMAN OH: If you can't speak, don't bother speaking. There's other people on the panel.

MR. SAUER: Okay.

MR. FRISHKOFF: I can speak, Councilmember. From LISC's perspective, my recollection is LISC did not have a position on the bill at the time, so I would have to look and see what other considerations there would have been. But I don't have anything here that says that we were opposed or that coalitions we were involved with were opposed to the bill at that time. So I couldn't tell you what the difference is now other than we have been now for the last two years an active coalition, particularly with PACDC and others on a joint platform of affordable housing and community economic development.

COUNCILMAN OH: Well, let me ask Nora Lichtash. Do you recall?

MS. LICHTASH: Yeah. We were -- so my organization the Women's Community Revitalization Project is a member of the Philadelphia Coalition for Affordable Communities, and I do recall that we were in the middle of the

Development Without Displacement campaign, which was encouraging the construction impact tax or housing impact tax.

And so, we were interested in what you were talking, but we were also in the middle of a campaign which our whole 70-member coalition had endorsed towards trying to pass the construction impact tax, so I think that's what occurred on our end.

COUNCILMAN OH: Okay. That construction impact tax is not in effect. So at this point, you are moving ahead with support for the bill to provide additional funds to the Housing Trust Fund, your 70-person member organization?

MS. LICHTASH: We are. We really appreciate your efforts, Councilmember Oh, and we really appreciate the idea. I think it's a great idea.

COUNCILMAN OH: It's so strange, but thank you very much. Thank you.

Thank you, Chairman.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Councilmember Oh.

At this point, we will hear testimony from Will Gonzalez from Ceiba. I believe that is the last person to testify on this panel. If there are any additional members of the public that would like to testify on any of these bills, please signify.

With that, we will hear from Mr. Gonzalez.

MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you for giving Ceiba the opportunity to testify today on City Council Bill 210475, the Consolidated Plan by the Division of Housing and Community Development. We want to start by thanking the Department of Planning and Development and DHCD for the investments they have made so far in helping Latinx community-based organizations serve, the poorest income group in the nation's poorest large city.

Please note, however, that much work remains to make the most of the plan to leverage Latinx nonprofits to help the City's investments and affordable housing development. Ceiba's Latinx Affordable Development Collective can help the City do that. The Collective includes some of the best CDCs in the City, Asociacíon Puertorriqueños en Marcha; the Hispanic Association of Contractors and Entrepreneurs, which is HACE; the Norris Square Community Alliance and Esperanza.

We respectfully request that the City use the resources of the Consolidated Plan and beyond to support four Latino CDCs to meaningfully increase the production of affordable housing. We have a unique opportunity to do that in Eastern North Philadelphia thanks to a collective agreement with the Philadelphia Housing Authority.

That agreement transfers 240 properties to the four Latino CDCs in the area. The properties are located in one of the most rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods of Eastern North Philadelphia. The LEDC, Ceiba, looks forward to continuing the dialogue with the City on this important matter. Time is of the essence in addressing this challenge, because Philadelphia has the fourth highest level of Hispanic displacement and number of neighborhoods gentrified in the country according to a 2019 report from the National Community Reinvestment Coalition.

Gentrification and cultural displacement in American cities is horrible in Phila -- Philadelphia is a horrible example of what's going on. Sadly, the COVID-19 pandemic is making this challenge to secure affordable housing in a (inaudible) and it will exacerbate further no matter what type of mass vaccination successes we have.

We also want to echo the call to strengthen the City's housing counseling capacity. We have a tale of two cities. We have low- to moderate-income families blessed with possibly buying their first home through the revamped Philly First Home grant. Yet at the same time, we have many families facing foreclosure, eviction, urgent home repairs.

Housing counselors are the frontline workers, housing first responders and we need to do more to increase their capacity, yet increase their number. Without more housing counselors, we'll face a bottleneck in helping low- to moderate-income families' access to help that is available for them to stay housed.

We also respectfully request to further clear the strategy to address the Latinx homeless paradox in Philadelphia. The paradox refers to the discrepancy between homeless services provided to Hispanics relative to the community's representation among the City's poor, and that paradox was very well-articulated in an October 2019 report by Professor Dennis Culhane at the University of Pennsylvania. We are encouraged by the enhanced communication between the Department of Planning and Development and the Office of Homeless Services.

And to echo what Ms. Fadullon said, we encourage them to continue to be creative in figuring out how to maximize that relationship because sometimes people are stuck in some definitions of what homelessness is and not. At the same time, we encourage and request for equity and inclusion to maximize the accounting, the data-gathering of the old adage, measure twice to act correctly once. Thank you again for the opportunity. We look forward to working with you on these important issues.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Gonzalez.

Are there any additional witnesses to testify?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Are there

any additional questions from members of City Council?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Seeing and hearing none, this concludes -- I'm sorry. I just want to make sure I have my information correctly. I want to thank the panels and witnesses for their participation today. We value your perspective. I now invite all panels of witnesses to please disconnect from the meeting before we go into our public meeting. We will now pause the proceedings briefly as multiple participants will leave the hearing.

This concludes the public hearing of this Finance Committee. We will now go into a public meeting to consider the action to be taken on the bills before the Committee today.

At this point, I'd like to have Mr. Iannuzzi please call the roll to take attendance. Members that are in attendance, please indicate that you are present when your name is called and say a few brief words responding -- in your response, excuse me, so that your image will be displayed on screen when you speak.

THE CLERK: Councilmember Cindy Bass.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good afternoon. I am present.

THE CLERK: Councilmember Allan Domb.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Good afternoon. I am present.

THE CLERK: Councilmember Helen Gym.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Present.

THE CLERK: Councilmember Bobby Henon.

COUNCILMAN HENON: I am present.

THE CLERK: Councilmember Curtis Jones, Jr.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Present.

THE CLERK: Councilmember David Oh.

COUNCILMAN OH: Present.

THE CLERK: Councilmember Maria Quinones-Sanchez.

COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ: Present.

THE CLERK: Councilmember Mark Squilla.

(No response.)

THE CLERK: And, Chair Derek Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I am present. Thank you, Mr. Iannuzzi, for reading the Members and taking attendance for the Members who are present here.

We will now convene the public meeting. I want to thank everyone for their participation. It's been an engaged conversation on a number of important issues in reference to the City of Philadelphia. I want to thank all the members of Council who are here and all the witnesses for your participation and your engagement this morning and now this afternoon.

At this point, I would like to

recognize Councilmember Henon for a motion on an amendment to Bill No. 210508.

COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I offer an amendment to Bill No. 210508. A copy of the amendment has been circulated to all members of the Committee. And I move that the amendment to Bill No. 210508 be approved.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Second.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: It has been proved and properly seconded.

All those in favor of the amendment will signify by saying aye.

(Aye.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: The motion carries and the amendment to Bill No. 210508 has been approved.

Before we call up this bill as amended for vote out of Committee, one, I would like to state that a number of issues have been raised in reference to this issue by Councilmember Bass. In that regard, although the goal is to move this bill out of Committee, I will stay in contact with Councilmember Bass in her conversation with Citizens Bank to address the issues that she's raised, especially for her constituents on the 22nd Street corridor.

And with that, I would like to announce Councilmember Bass for a statement at this time.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really appreciate your support.

And I want to ask my colleagues that we really take a deep-dive look at this agreement that we are signing ourselves into. I think Citizens Bank overall has been a decent partner here in the City of Philadelphia. However, I have a great amount of concern about the fact that we will be closing the branch in one of the most underserved neighborhoods in Philadelphia.

And I get so tired of saying underserved, underserved. I want to serve people. We all want to serve people. We want to make sure that they get served, that they get quality of service that they are certainly entitled to as residents of Philadelphia and as citizens. And so, we just ask Citizens Bank to reconsider their closure of this branch.

And I ask that my District colleagues, specifically Councilman Jones and Councilwoman Quinones-Sanchez, really look at the idea that if they close North 22nd Street today, they'll be closing 52nd Street tomorrow, Councilman Jones, and Councilwoman Sanchez, they'll be closing 5th Street some time in the future.

These are branches that we know are in rougher communities. They're in tough neighborhoods. And so, we need for Citizens Bank to stand by as we work to rebuild. Don't pull out. Don't pull away. Don't go away, but to stand with us. And we can't continue to say that Black and Brown lives matter, that we look at things through a racial equity lens and then we are pulling out one of our most challenged communities at the same time and still making those statements.

We in City Council have an obligation. We have an opportunity to really do something about these things that we care about. This is our opportunity to say wait a minute, we can't reward a depository that's moving services out of one of our most vulnerable communities in the City of Philadelphia. So I'm really asking that my colleagues really take a look at what is being proposed here.

We'll be offering an amendment moving forward that we think is more appropriate, sort of like a wait-and-see amendment that will guarantee payroll services continue, but at the same time that we're not making any sort of significant commitment to quite frankly someone who's not making a significant commitment to our most underserved community. So we're asking that folks would make that commitment today.

And as this is voted out of Committee at the request of Councilman Green because I was going to ask the Committee to hold this particular piece of legislation, Chairman, I would acquiesce to your consideration that we move this out and have the conversation with the full body of Council, but this issue is not going to be going away or swept under the rug.

This is something that we really have to look at in a significant way if we really say that Black and Brown lives matter and that we care about racial equity and a racial lens. Then we have to look at what we are doing here and make sure that we're serving the people of one of our most vulnerable communities.

And so with that, Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your support and my colleagues. Thank you.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,

Councilmember Bass. And before this bill gets brought up to the full body of Council, we will make sure that you have that conversation and ongoing conversations with Citizens Bank to resolve these issues. It's my perspective that Citizens is opening branches throughout the City, but we've got to make sure that those existing neighborhoods and communities that relied upon services and receive services and the commitment for those services to be offered on an ongoing basis even though this bill also deals with the fact that we will be providing payroll services for all of the employees of the City of Philadelphia.

So with that, I will now call on --

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Mr. Chairman, can I just say one last thing?

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And that is, earlier it was mentioned that the previous depository was Wells Fargo. And as you may recall, we had some heated vigorous discussions about Wells Fargo's commitment. And I can honestly say that Wells has really stepped up significantly. There's still a lot more work to be done, I think, on their part. But I have to note that there has been an increase in the services provided by Wells Fargo.

And so, we as Council have to use our platforms and speak up and out on behalf of our constituents who are asking for us to do so. It makes a difference. I believe the business community hears us when we speak and we have to speak now.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Councilmember Bass. That's why advocacy is important to make a change to get things done.

And at this point, I would like to recognize Councilmember Henon for a motion on Bill No. 210508 as amended.

COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I move that Bill No. 210508 as amended be reported from this Committee with a favorable recommendation and further move that the rules of Council be suspended as to permit the first reading of this bill at our next session of Council.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Second.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: It has been moved and properly seconded, seconded by Councilmember Jones, that Bill No. 210508 as amended be reported from this Committee with a favorable recommendation and further move that the rules of Council be suspended to permit first reading of this bill at the next session of Council.

All those in favor of the motion will signify by saying aye.

(Aye.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Those opposed?

(No Response.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: The ayes have it and the motion carries.

The next matter, Chair recognizes Councilmember Henon for a motion on Bill No. 210476.

COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I move that Bill No. 210476 be reported from this Committee with a favorable recommendation and move that the rules of Council be suspended as to permit the first reading of this bill at our next session of Council.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Second.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: It has been moved and properly seconded, seconded by Councilmember Jones, that Bill No. 210476 be reported from this Committee with a favorable recommendation and further move that the rules of Council be suspended to permit first reading of this bill at the next session of Council.

All those in favor of the motion will signify by saying aye.

(Aye.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Those opposed?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: The motion carries.

The Chair recognizes Councilmember Henon for a motion on Bill No. 210477.

COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I move that Bill No. 210477 be reported from this Committee with a favorable recommendation and further move that the rules of Council be suspended to permit the first reading of this bill at our next session of Council.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Second.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Councilmember Henon. It has been and properly seconded, and it was seconded by Councilmember Jones, that Bill No. 210477 be reported from this Committee with a favorable recommendation and further move that the rules of Council be suspended to permit first reading of this bill at the next session of Council.

All those in favor of the motion will signify by saying aye.

(Aye.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Those opposed?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: The motion carries.

I would also like to recognize Councilmember Henon for a motion on the amendment to Bill No. 210475.

COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I offer an amendment to Bill No. 210475. A copy of the amendment has been circulated to all members of the Committee. I move that the amendment of Bill No. 210475 be approved.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: All the --

COUNCILMAN JONES: Second.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: It has been

properly seconded by Councilmember Jones, and that the amendment to Bill No. 210475 be approved.

All those in favor of the motion will signify by saying aye.

(Aye.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Those opposed?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: The motion carries.

I now recognize Councilmember Henon once again.

COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I move that Bill No. 210475 as amended be reported from this Committee with a favorable recommendation. I further move that the rules of Council be suspended to permit the first reading of this bill at our next session of Council.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Second.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: It has been moved and properly seconded, seconded by

Councilmember Jones, that Bill No. 210475 as amended be reported from this Committee with a favorable recommendation and further move that the rules of Council be suspended to permit first reading of this bill at the next session of Council.

All those in favor of the motion will signify by saying aye.

(Aye.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Those opposed?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: The motion carries.

This concludes the business before the Finance Committee today. I want to thank all of my colleagues of Council and members of this Committee for your attendance and participation. I want to thank the Administration and all the witnesses for your engagement on the critical issues before the Finance Committee this morning and now this afternoon. Thank you and have a great day.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

(Committee on Finance concluded at 12:38 p.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence noted are contained fully and accurately in the stenographic notes taken by me in the foregoing matter, and this is a correct transcript of the same.

____
TANEHA C. CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

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