



Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice

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Cynthia Brann, Commissioner
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August 12, 2019

Marisa Lago, Chair
City Planning Commission
120 Broadway
New York, NY 10271

RE: Height/square footage, commitment to funding DOC programming, therapeutic housing feasibility study, Chung Pak, 126th Street parking in Queens, HPD’s commitment to housing RFP at Bronx site

Dear Chair Lago:

Thank you for inviting the applicant team¹ for the proposed New York City Borough-Based Jails System to testify at the City Planning Commission’s public hearing on July 10, 2019. We are writing with follow-up information requested by the Commissioners and the Department of City Planning during and after the hearing.

1. Height/square footage of proposed facilities

At the City Planning Commission’s July 10th public hearing, the applicant team for the proposed New York City Borough-Based Jails System stated that we would return with information on the proposed height and square footage of the proposed facilities.

As a result of the passage of historic state bail reform legislation earlier this year, a significant portion of pre-trial defendants will no longer be eligible for bail or detention as of January 1, 2020. This change, which will decrease the number of people in city custody, builds upon the City’s progress over the past several years in reducing the jail population. The City now projects a future jail population of 4,000 and proposes to build a jail system that number, which requires 4,600 beds using an inefficiency rate of 15%. While the bed count has been reduced by twenty percent in each facility as a result of bail reform, there is not a commensurate reduction in the square footage of programming both due to the fixed size of some services regardless of population (i.e., kitchen area, laundry facilities).

¹ The applicant team includes the Department of Correction (DOC); Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ); Department of Housing, Preservation and Development (HPD); and Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS).



In addition, there has been a comparatively larger reduction in square footage at the Queens facility as a result of removing the centralized medical annex (approximately 100,000 gross square feet (GSF)) and decentralizing some of the medical services within each facility. This was in response to neighborhood concerns in Queens.

The reduction in population due to bail reform and the removal of the centralized medical annex from Queens has allowed for a reduction in the maximum zoning floor area (ZFA) and floor area ratio (FAR). The population drop of 1,000 people in custody on any given day (average daily population) system-wide results in approximately 60,000 - 100,000 GSF reduction of cell and dayroom area per borough. The varying reduction in GSF is due to the different site configurations on the four sites. In certain boroughs, parts of floors were eliminated, in other boroughs the housing units became smaller, or both. Trimming the bulk of the building allows space for further sculpting of a more thoughtful composition of the building mass, to respond appropriately to the respective urban contexts of each facility.

Below please find a table that shows the height, FAR and square footage in the Draft Scope of Work (DSOW), Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), by borough.

Borough	DSOW Height	DSOW FAR	DSOW Square Footage	DEIS Height	DEIS FAR	DEIS Square Footage	FEIS Height	FEIS FAR	FEIS Square Footage
The Bronx	275'	8.56	1,500,000 SF	245'	7.41	1,270,000 SF	245'	6.87	1,170,000 SF
Brooklyn	430'	20.12	1,400,000 SF	395'	17.95	1,190,000 SF	395'	16.36	1,120,000 SF
Manhattan	*495'	*13.72	1,350,000 SF*	450'	12.95	1,270,000 SF	450'	12.58	1,210,000 SF
Queens	310'	5.56	1,907,800 SF	270'	4.41	1,460,800 SF	270'	4.25	1,330,800 SF

*Manhattan site was changed following DSOW from 80 Centre Street to 124/125 White Street

Finally, an overarching challenge is maintaining a balance between minimizing height and maintaining flexibility for context-appropriate massings. The FEIS retains the current heights of the maximum envelopes in the DEIS to allow for design flexibility at future stages of the project. Additionally, the proposal incorporates the setbacks recommended by DCP to integrate more articulation in the massing to mitigate bulk of the respective borough facility.

2. Administration’s commitment to funding adequate programming at DOC moving forward

This administration has significantly increased DOC’s programming budget, from \$11.3 million in FY2014 to \$17.8 million in FY2016, \$38.9 million in FY2017, \$38.1 million in FY2018, and \$38.1 million in FY2019. The City is committed to providing adequate funding for the programming planned for these facilities.



3. Update on the therapeutic housing feasibility study

The City will have therapeutic housing units in the proposed facilities and continues to explore ways to appropriately divert people with behavioral health needs. Under the current plan, all four jails would provide medical, substance use, and mental health services operated by Correctional Health Services (CHS), including a healthcare clinic and therapeutic housing for people in detention with mental health, substance use, and/or certain medical conditions. We believe the majority of issues will be treated at these on-site, borough-based medical services.

In the proposed facilities, people would be assigned to therapeutic housing units based on a clinical assessment made by CHS. The units accommodate a range of medical and behavioral health conditions that require enhanced observation and treatment. The therapeutic units would be smaller (maximum size is 24 beds compared to 32 beds for general population housing units), and designed as single floor, non-mezzanine units with additional support space for health and service providers.

Additionally, the City is actively studying whether there is a more appropriate environment to house and serve a sub-population of people with complex medical, mental health and substance use issues. This includes exploring using space in or adjacent to hospitals to house individuals with these needs. The City has hired Lothrop LLC as the vendor for a feasibility study, which is ongoing.

4. Will Chung Pak return to the retail space in the new Manhattan proposed facility?

The City is currently working with Chung Pak to plan for the needs of the small businesses currently located on the ground floor of the Manhattan Detention Center. With respect to the proposed facility, the intention is to continue to maintain a leasing arrangement with Chung Pak throughout construction and in the new facilities with a focus on ensuring that Chung Pak is able to continue to serve in its mission as a Local Development Corporation. However, the details of that arrangement are subject to continued discussion with the community at large to ensure that the future community facility space is programmed to meet the needs of the community.

5. Update on diagonal parking on 126th Street in Queens

DOT has been consulted and provided feedback about the project at least weekly throughout the environmental review and ULURP processes and are aware of the diagonal parking on 126th Street. While the hardscape information is shown for illustrative purposes, DOT plans to maintain on-street parking on 126th Street in the future if the proposed project is approved and would work with the design-builder to review and approve a pavement marking plan.

6. HPD's commitment to the RFP for the housing on the Bronx site

The current plan provides for both the proposed housing and jail to be available for use by 2026. Construction of the affordable housing on the Bronx site would likely begin around 2024. This timing allows for both the relocation of the tow pound and the necessary construction staging coordination spaces for both sites.



Thank you for your attention to this application. We look forward to discussing these topics during the post-hearing follow up review session on August 12, 2019.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz Glazer".

Liz Glazer, Director
Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cynthia Brann".

Cynthia Brann, Commissioner
NYC Department of Correction