

New York Housing Conference  
247 West 37th Street, 4th Floor  
New York, NY 10018

January 27, 2022

Mayor Eric Adams  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor Adams,

When you promised to increase city capital spending to [\\$4 billion a year on housing](#), you sent New Yorkers a loud and clear signal that you understood the magnitude of a worsening crisis – and that you were going to do something about it. That promise, coupled with a consistent campaign theme to increase operational efficiency, prompted hope in the housing community that much-needed affordable and supportive housing would not be plagued by the familiar bureaucratic issues and would come online faster.

We are dismayed to hear that the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) is subject to your directive to [reduce city-funded expenses by 3 percent](#) in FY 2022, 2023, and in out-years thereafter. This decision is short-sighted and will ultimately exacerbate a housing emergency that is impacting millions of your constituents. **We call on you to exempt HPD from the 3 percent budget cut.**

You have exempted other agencies, including the Department of Corrections, Health + Hospitals, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, citing the “unique challenges” facing those agencies. New York’s long-standing housing crisis fits the same bill.

Your directive also calls on agencies to right-size their budgeted headcount by reducing vacancies, which will especially harm HPD and housing production. HPD is already short-staffed; total agency staffing is down 5 percent from before the pandemic, while the office of development, which manages affordable housing production, is down 13 percent. Reducing staff and resources at HPD will only lengthen approval time, delay projects, and decrease housing production, preventing your constituents from accessing the affordable and supportive housing that they desperately need. We ask that HPD be allowed to continue backfilling vacancies and that OMB aids the agency in expediting new hires.

It is worth reiterating the scale of the crisis we now face. Even before the pandemic, [nearly half of all New York City renters](#) were rent burdened, and one-in-four rental households are compelled to spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing. This crisis has accelerated during COVID, with New York City renters [significantly behind on rent](#) and tens of thousands at imminent risk of eviction once the state’s moratorium expires this weekend. This does not even factor in a [\\$40 billion backlog](#) at the New York City Housing Authority, nor does it factor in the fact that nearly [50,000 of your constituents spend each night homeless](#).

New Yorkers across the five boroughs are fed up with rising housing costs and insufficient city response. You have an opportunity to set the tone for your entire administration – and by living up to your campaign promises, you can address this crisis now. Impacted New Yorkers will not forget it.

Sincerely,



Rachel Fee  
Executive Director  
New York Housing Conference

In partnership with:

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