



## Dear Neighbor,

This past summer brought more evidence that climate change is real, and that its impacts are being felt locally, nationally, and globally. In addition to devastating heavy rains from the remnants of Hurricane Ida, we saw fires rage across the west coast, record breaking temperatures in the Pacific Northwest and increasing temperatures nationwide, and extreme weather events, including major flooding in New York City. Climate news can feel scary and overwhelming, but it's critical that our response to what faces us is action and not paralysis.

In this newsletter, we're taking the opportunity to share information on the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change assessment report in August, and on the ways you can help be an environmental steward in your neighborhood. I know that robust policy changes will be needed to fight the climate crisis, but I also want to make sure we're sharing some of the smaller, individual actions we can all take to support conservation efforts and reduce emissions. Some start as close as in your kitchen - reducing food waste, which produces methane gas in landfills and contributes to over 50% of all habitable land being used for food production; cutting back on eating meat and dairy, the production of which produces 14.5% of all greenhouse gasses; and being mindful about conserving your household's water use. A single cotton t-shirt can take more water to produce than a person drinks in a year; reducing textile waste by purchasing less and investing in ethically made, long lasting clothing can help save water and reduce the amount of clothing that gets shipped to landfills around the world. It takes 17 million barrels of oil to produce the world's plastic water bottles each year - avoiding plastics and finding reusable alternatives continues to be an easy way

to have an impact.

I know that individual actions must be coupled with legislative changes, and I'm proud that New York State has been leading the nation in the response to the climate crisis. In 2019, we enacted landmark legislation to aggressively reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change. The Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act is the nation's boldest climate protection law. At the core of this comprehensive law are the emissions targets set forth; it sets a goal of 70% of New York's electricity be sourced from renewable sources by 2030, and 100% carbon-free electricity by 2040. In order to reach these ambitious goals, New York has taken action to make them a reality. Earlier this year, we approved legislation to mandate a goal that all passenger cars and trucks sold or leased in New York be zero-emissions by 2035, and that all medium and heavy-duty vehicles be zero-emission by 2045. There is still much to do to ensure a clean environment for future generations; in order to reach our goals we must continue to enact policies to further reduce our reliance on oil, plastics, and greenhouse gas emissions.

In November, voters will have the chance to make their voices heard on these issues. There will be a measure on the back of your ballot to add a constitutional amendment declaring that New Yorkers have the right to clean air, clean water, and a healthful environment.

The challenges that face us are immense, but I have hope that our collective action can meet the moment. Join me in fighting for our future.

Sincerely,

Deborah

## Understanding the IPCC Climate Report

In August, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its Working Group I's Sixth Assessment Report on the climate system and climate change. The report is a science review evaluating and synthesizing existing research from around the world in order to gain an understanding of climate change on a global scale. The information in the IPCC report is incredibly useful, but also foreboding. The report finds that the human influence on our warming climate is clear; the increase in extreme weather, droughts, and flooding are all results of human actions, and we will continue to see increased negative effects of climate change unless we act now to curb greenhouse gas emissions. The report is the first in a series of IPCC reports which will be released over the coming months, and is an important tool for moving us toward needed climate action.

The Working Group found that the global surface temperature has increased more since 1970 than at any time in the previous two millennia, and that increases in global surface temperature and extreme temperature swings will continue unless mitigated. A certain amount of warming—potentially at least 1.5°C—is now unavoidable and will be permanent at least for our lifetimes, but mitigating any further increases in surface temperature must be an urgent aim for policymakers and global leaders. As we have learned this summer, extreme temperatures exacerbate extreme weather events. Unmitigated greenhouse gas emissions will continue to increase surface temperatures, and those increases will fuel wildfires and extreme rain events in equal measure depending on the local climate and region.

The report also assesses risks of catastrophic events like abrupt changes in ocean current circulation or the destabilization of Antarctic ice sheets. The Working Group found that these events are “low-likelihood” but does not rule out their possibility. Even without these catastrophic events, at the expected 1.5°C surface temperature warming we can expect sea-levels to rise by 7 to 10 feet over the course of the next several hundred years. Here in New York City, that amount of sea-level rise means that what was considered a once-in-a-lifetime flooding event may happen annually. Extensive infrastructure improvements to protect downtown communities against the rising Atlantic Ocean will be needed.

However, we cannot simply build our way out of this problem. The production of concrete releases carbon dioxide, a potent greenhouse gas, and currently there is no means of construction that offsets its negative environmental impact. Addressing climate change by implementing more



*In July, I welcomed the opportunity to host a discussion with U.S. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and a small group of community leaders so he could hear about issues affecting the district as we recover from the pandemic.*

electric mass transportation, switching power generation to renewable or zero emission sources, reducing or changing fertilizers used in food production, and the harmful effects of building and construction are the types of approaches that are needed immediately. Climate change is real and will need to be addressed for the sake of future generations.

I encourage everyone to read the more digestible Summary for Policy Makers of the IPCC report in lieu of the longer Full Report for a deeper understanding of what we're facing. In the coming months, the IPCC will release findings from Working Group II (vulnerabilities and adaptations) and Working Group III (mitigations and averting Climate Change impacts). We should all become as educated as possible about climate change in order to learn how to address its widespread impact on our lives. As we have learned over the past decade, addressing climate change is not simply fixed by purchasing electric vehicles. This will require significant changes to our lives, a willingness to sacrifice for the good of the planet, and an openness to existing alternatives and the innovations to come.

## What to Expect When Everyone is Dining Outdoors

New Yorkers altered many aspects of our daily lives during the COVID-19 pandemic, including how we access our beloved restaurants. To quell the virus's spread, New York City neighborhoods—particularly those in Manhattan—accepted outdoor dining in our communities to help and keep the hospitality industry afloat. Some expansion of outdoor dining has been beneficial in that it allowed restaurant employees to return to work more safely and help long-standing community businesses. However, outdoor dining has been notoriously unregulated. The program has morphed into a complicated and maladjusted policy proposal where quality of life complaints from residents go unaddressed. The cost to quality of life for many residents in our mixed-use community has been unacceptable noise, excess trash, and increased vermin; this cannot be our future.

Currently, the New York City Department of City Planning (DCP) has proposed an Open Restaurants Text Amendment which will make sidewalk seating permanent. Zoning prohibits sidewalk cafes in some areas of the city, but this text amendment would create an as-of-right authorization for current and future restaurants to make use of public sidewalks as expanded dining space. The current legal mechanism for sidewalk cafes compels the restaurant to comply with zoning and then apply for a special permit through the Department of Consumer & Worker Protection which is then heard by the local community board for stipulations like

physical boundaries, hours of operation, and alcohol service. Passing the proposed text amendment would remove the community review portion from sidewalk cafes in the future, forfeit licensing fees or revenue to the City, and enshrine the outdoor dining program without a clear understanding of enforcement protections for residents and communities.

The text amendment from DCP functions largely like any other Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) application and is being heard by all community boards and borough presidents before being voted on by the City Planning Commission and City Council. Currently, it is in the community board and borough president review phase and may be voted on by the City Council before the end of the current term. I am concerned that this plan is being put forth without a clear understanding of how enforcement will occur from the Department of Transportation, which is tasked with regulating the temporary program. Without understanding the enforcement requirements or specific program aspects, it is impossible for communities to accept a potentially permanent program based on the lack of response to community concerns regarding the current program.

The loss of public space to a single industry is a short-sighted plan that could undermine a robust recovery. I am hopeful this Administration will re-evaluate the text amendment and work closely with the community boards reviewing the proposal to amend the proposal to address community concerns borne out of lived experience.

## Being A Good Neighbor

Many in our community are taking to the streets in greater numbers to enjoy city life and open air after a long stretch indoors during the global pandemic. By forming greater social bonds, connecting to parks and open spaces and partnering with support groups, we can all make this city more livable by keeping streets clean, curbing dogs, safeguarding oceans and waterways, maintaining our open spaces, and utilizing reusable bags and water bottles to collectively reduce our environmental footprint. Below are ways to help improve the quality of life across the City.

- Instead of throwing it away, try recycling old goods and gently used clothing. Your trash could be someone else's treasure as many are now finding ways to adjust to life after losing a job or experiencing housing insecurity. To donate items, visit the NYC Sanitation Department page to learn ways to give back: <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/site/services/donate-goods>
- Joining a neighborhood park is a great way to become a steward of the planet. The NYC Department of Parks and Recreation offers an easy way to help keep open spaces, parks and waterways in good order throughout New York City. Visit the link below to learn ways to sign-up to be a super steward at the Parks Department:

<https://www.nycgovparks.org/reg/stewardship>

- Overflowing garbage bins are an eyesore posing problems if debris makes its way to the streets and into our waterways. If allowed to clog sewers or build-up on crosswalks, this waste can endanger the quality of life of New Yorkers. The NYC Sanitation Department has a program allowing residents to adopt a basket to help maintain city streets. For more information visit: <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/site/contact/get-involved/adopt-a-basket-program>
- On a very local level, you can join or start a block association to meet your neighbors. In your own building, look in on an older neighbor even before there is an emergency. To connect to neighborhood associations, please visit Community Board 2's webpage: <https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb2/about/district-profile/>
- Volunteering is another great way to give back. By joining a local charity or high-needs cause, constituents can serve those in need of an advocate or community resource. To find a volunteer match that's right for you, visit <https://www.volunteermatch.org/>

## Local Impacts of the Bipartisan Federal Infrastructure Deal

As I write, Congress is preparing to pass an extensive infrastructure deal and send it to President Biden's desk for signature. The investment in infrastructure included in this legislation represents the largest investment in public works and infrastructure since the 1950s. I wanted to take the opportunity to highlight some of what we know about how this new investment will be spent in Lower Manhattan.

Lower Manhattan stands to benefit from increased spending in the infrastructure package both through new investments and by shoring up the 2019-2024 Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Capital Plan which was threatened due to decreased ridership in the pandemic. During the initial waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, subway ridership and utilization of other MTA transit essentially ceased. The agency was forced to use funds for long-planned capital projects to make up for the revenue lost due to decreased ridership. As the pandemic has subsided and many New Yorkers are returning to work or school, there are many "ready-to-go" projects in the MTA Capital Plan that now require additional funds. Increased infrastructure spending from the federal infrastructure plan, the state, and fare revenue will mean that these projects can begin. Some of these projects include:

- Signal modernization on the 6th and 8th Avenue lettered lines between 47th Street-Rockefeller Center or 59th Street-Columbus Circle and High Street in Brooklyn allowing the MTA to run trains more frequently along express tracks through Manhattan.

- Replacing 375 standard combustion engine buses with electric buses throughout the system or potentially 500 electric buses with additional federal infrastructure investment.
- Expanding electric fleet capabilities at bus depots to ensure that future bus electrification investments have the necessary charging infrastructure to handle a fully electric fleet.

The infrastructure deal is significant because it is the first piece of legislation in which both parties have acknowledged the existence of climate change as a real threat to our lives and taken action to address it. It includes funding for storm resiliency improvements, including \$46 billion to help mitigate flooding. There is also the possibility of climate change mitigation dollars in this plan going to flood barrier improvements needed in Lower Manhattan. \$7.5 billion is allocated in the plan for seed money to help build out the nation's electric vehicle charging infrastructure, which will assist New York State in transitioning our population from combustion engine vehicles to electric, especially when coupled with legislation like A.4302 which requires all vehicles sold in the state to be zero-emission by 2035.

There are ongoing discussions about additional infrastructure funding, and I'm grateful and excited that New York will be receiving support to improve our mass transportation and prepare for the future.

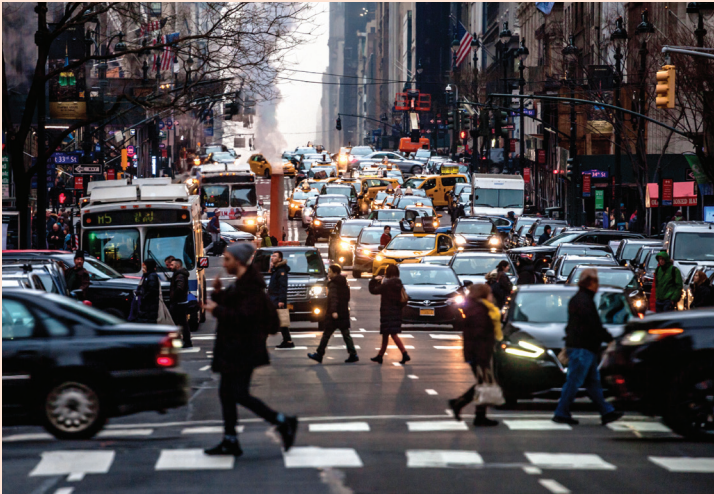




*I was so glad to return to the Assembly floor in person toward the end of the Legislative Session once vaccinations were more widely available, a sign of better days ahead.*

## Correspondence Corner

Letters play an essential role in the offices of elected officials – we write to formally state positions on important issues, ask key questions, and express both our concerns and our appreciation. I want to highlight some of the letters my office has sent in the past few months to share this important part of our work with you.



### **Fighting the Inappropriate Penn District Plan**

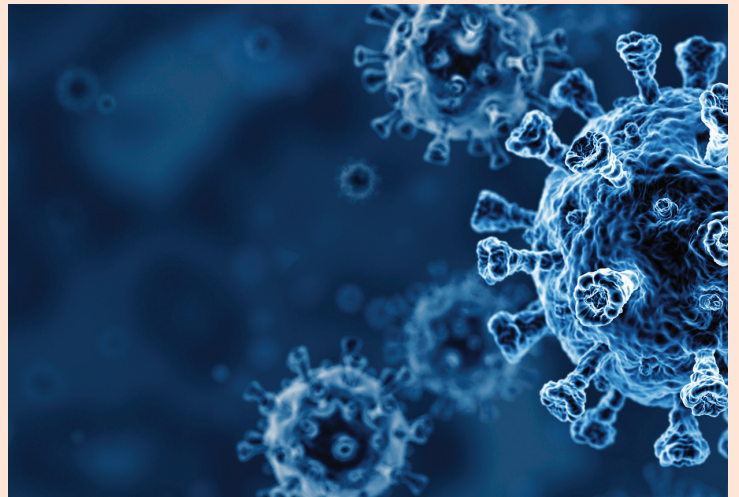
An integral part of former Governor Cuomo’s plan for redeveloping Penn Station, the “Penn District” would require that the state seize over 50 buildings through eminent domain and demolish them to make way for new tracks and capacity, but also for the development of ten large-scale commercial and residential buildings. The proposal would destroy blocks of Manhattan to make way for almost 20 million square feet of office space mere blocks away from another (unfinished) mega development, Hudson Yards, at a time when the pandemic has reshaped the office space needs of New York businesses and vacancy rates are high. I wrote to U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer to express my deep concerns about this plan, which prioritizes the needs of real estate developers over the needs of transit riders and the community. The redevelopment of Penn Station gives us the opportunity to make the transit hub work better for New Yorkers and travellers from all over the country, and the goals should be achieved without levelling city blocks or developing more unneeded super-tall buildings. I asked that any further federal funding for the current proposal be denied, and that the federal government work with New York State and the Empire State Development Corporation to develop a rational new proposal for Penn Station’s redevelopment and expansion.

### **Supporting Tighter Restrictions on “Ghost Guns”**

In August, I wrote to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) in support of proposed rule 2021R-05, “Definition of ‘Frame or Receiver’ and Identification of Firearms.” The rule would better regulate so-called “ghost guns,” guns constructed easily by users from core building blocks (like the frame of a handgun or the receiver of a long gun). While federal law establishes that these building blocks constitute firearms, ATF has historically exempted these parts from many gun safety laws, meaning that they could be used to construct guns that lack serial numbers and could be purchased without passing a background check. The new rule would require that those dealing the parts used to construct ghost guns would need to be federally licensed, that core building blocks be marked with serial numbers, and that purchasers be required to pass background



checks when purchasing ghost guns or parts from a licensed dealer. It’s especially important for New York, where we passed legislation that largely prohibits the possession and sale of ghost guns earlier this year but required federal intervention to prevent ghost guns from being purchased in other states and transported into the state.



### **Advocating for Better Reporting on the Delta Variant**

In July, I collaborated with Senator Liz Krueger and was joined by several of our Assembly and Senate colleagues and Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer in writing to Dr. Howard Zucker, NYS Commissioner of Health, and Dr. Dave A. Chokshi, NYC Commissioner of Health, to urge them to provide more detailed reporting on the Delta variant in New York. We included information on how other municipalities are responding to the Delta variant and pointed to New York’s recent increase in Covid positivity rates. We asked that the Commissioners share what measures are in place to protect public health, whether they are considering revised mask guidance, and the need for more public information on the status of the Delta variant in our City and State. Even though the state of emergency has been lifted, the pandemic is not over, and protecting public health remains one of my office’s highest priorities.





### Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)

In April, the State passed legislation in the budget to create the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) which is meant to provide funds to cover back rent for eligible New Yorkers whose finances have been impacted by the pandemic. Applications are available through the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA): <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/Emergency-Rental-Assistance/>.

Visit the OTDA's website, or contact the call center at 1-844-NY1-RENT (1-844-691-7368) to learn more about eligibility, and what documents you will need in order to apply. If you are struggling to complete the application, please reach out to my office and we will try to connect you with someone who can assist you. We understand that the application process has been challenging and are continuing to advocate on behalf of applicants. Please note, there is also a fund for landlords whose tenants are unable or unwilling to apply or who have vacated the apartment while still owing back rent.



### Excluded Workers Fund Applications Open

Earlier this year, the State Legislature passed the Excluded Worker Fund (EWF), the first such large-scale program in the country. This \$2.1 billion fund will provide financial relief for New Yorkers who have suffered income loss during the pandemic and were left out of the various federal relief programs, including unemployment and pandemic benefits. For more information, please visit: <https://dol.ny.gov/EWF>.



### Search for Unclaimed Funds

Many people are unaware that they may be able to find lost funds through the Office of the New York State Comptroller. Unclaimed funds could be the result of anything from overpayment of a utility bill to uncashed checks, dividends, settlements, or refunds for undelivered goods. Billions of dollars that belong to New Yorkers remain unclaimed each year, which is why I like to periodically remind people how to find and access their money using a free, easy, and secure online tool: <https://www.osc.state.ny.us/unclaimed-funds>

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# Deborah Glick's

## NEIGHBORHOOD UPDATE

ASSEMBLYMEMBER  
66<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT  
NEW YORK CITY

*HOW TO REACH US:*  
Call 212-674-5153 or  
email [glickd@nyassembly.gov](mailto:glickd@nyassembly.gov)



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*A visit for a series of meetings with the Adirondack Council was not only a chance to take in the beauty of our State, but also an opportunity to learn more about the importance of the preservation of water and air quality, and the ecological integrity of New York.*