



**New York City Council Committee on Parks and Recreation  
Monday, October 3, 2022  
Committee on Parks and Recreation- Beaches and resiliency  
Sherrise Palomino, Director of Advocacy and Programs**

Good afternoon, my name is Sherrise Palomino and I am the Director of Advocacy and Programs at New Yorkers for Parks (NY4P). We are a founding member of the Play Fair Coalition, which includes over 400 organizations from across the five boroughs. Thank you to the Committee on Resiliency and Waterfronts and the Parks Committee for the opportunity to speak about the resiliency of city beaches and waterfronts. I also want to thank Chairs Krishnan and Kagan for their leadership on this important issue.

This climate crisis has highlighted the critical needs of our parks system including adequate funding for park staffing to do resiliency work and to address inequities in access, infrastructure, and general maintenance. The city's decades long disinvested in parks continues to exacerbate these tragic inequities in our parks system. The city council and mayor can fix it by making the 1% investment of the city budget into parks.

Beaches like Coney Island and the Rockaways need urgent investments in maintenance and upkeep. With a well-funded parks department, our beaches and waterfronts can be properly maintained. Basic maintenance issues on the Coney Island boardwalk can reduce issues for beach goers from damaged planks of wood and exposed nails. Many parks advocates and community leaders invest their time volunteering to do jobs that NYC Parks department has not been able to adequately fund like cleaning up beaches and supporting our wetlands that are much needed at our beaches and waterfronts. New York is the greatest city in the world with a parks system that does not reflect modernity nor have the proper infrastructure to support the climate crisis we are living in.

We are overdue for transformative investment in our parks system – 1% of the city budget for parks could improve maintenance for the 160 miles of waterfront that NYC Parks manages and ensure that our beaches and waterfronts are well-maintained and equitably serving New Yorkers of all communities and backgrounds. The NYC Parks department does a valiant job maintaining these aging resources but needs more funding to do so. It is time to allocate 1% of the city's budget to parks.

*For over 100 years, [New Yorkers for Parks](http://www.ny4p.org) (NY4P) has built, protected, and promoted parks and open spaces in New York City. Today, NY4P is the citywide independent organization championing quality parks and open spaces for all New Yorkers in all neighborhoods. [www.ny4p.org](http://www.ny4p.org)*