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CM CHIN & BP BREWER CALL ON MAYOR TO RESET MANHATTAN DETENTION COMPLEX SCOPING PROCESS

***Joint letter to Mayor cites lack of community input in site
selection decision and demands consideration of all
possible locations***

NEW YORK – Council Member Margaret S. Chin and Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer issued a letter today to Mayor Bill de Blasio outlining the lack of meaningful community engagement regarding the proposal for the Manhattan Detention Complex, and calling for a reset of the scoping process at 80 Centre St. to allow for the full consideration of all sites. Additionally, the Council Member invited Mayor de Blasio to a forum, to be scheduled in Chinatown, in order to better engage with residents on neighborhood concerns.

“Criminal justice reform and true community input on important land use decisions are not mutually exclusive. No excuse can justify the flagrant lack of community engagement we have seen in a process that will determine the future of a Detention Complex with a long and troubling history in our downtown community,” said **Council Member Chin**. “While the closure of Rikers Island is a goal that I continue to believe in, it is upsetting to me that the communities who stand to be the most impacted by the creation of a borough-based detention system have been given the least amount of opportunities to engage with the process. We ask that the Mayor reset the scoping process at 80 Centre St., survey all possible sites in Manhattan, and establish a transparent process that prioritizes – not minimizes – real community engagement.”

“Closing Riker’s and moving to borough-based detention facilities is the right call, but it’s also a decision with huge consequences that will play out over decades. It’s not too much to ask that we restart the process, actually listen to the community, and get the land use part of this right,” said **Manhattan Borough President Brewer**. “The mayor must take the time to actually listen to what the neighborhood has to say, minimize the bad, and maximize the good.”

After an abrupt mid-August announcement of 80 Centre St. as the proposed new site for the Manhattan Detention Complex, Council Member Chin joined Borough President Brewer to cosponsor an

emergency Town Hall to give residents and small business and property owners an opportunity to express their concerns about the proposal directly to City officials.

Last month, Council Member Chin faulted the Administration for neglecting to answer substantial site-specific questions about the plan or provide clarity on the timeline for reaching critical criminal justice reform goals before a Manhattan borough-based jail scoping hearing.

Acknowledging the broader criminal justice reform movement behind the shuttering of Rikers Island, this letter calls on the Administration to give our communities the opportunity to engage in a conversation about all possible sites.

Attached is the joint letter to Mayor de Blasio.

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