

September 27, 2018

Dear Mayor de Blasio,

We, the undersigned, are a group of nonprofit leaders who serve the low-income and working class individuals and families who call Chinatown home. We are concerned about the proposed relocation of the Manhattan Detention Complex (MDC) to 80 Centre Street. We are calling on you to STOP THE CLOCK on the proposed relocation until a process is in place that addresses the concerns of the residents, small businesses, and other stakeholders. We also request a meeting with you to discuss the issue and review the concerns we have.

All of us have deep roots in the area and have a demonstrated track record of our commitment to the area and its residents. We agree that Riker's Island must close and that true criminal justice reform must happen in New York City. We affirm that the city's jail population and overall crime have decreased significantly in that last ten years. However, we also believe that these numbers would not have declined without the work of non-profit organizations and community advocates who provide critical social services, housing, education, health and mental health care to our communities. These community programs and resources have played major roles in making New York City a safer place where individuals and families are able to increasingly find support, opportunity, and success.

However, the process for engaging Chinatown has been superficial and perfunctory at best. As community-based organizations, we did not have sufficient dialogue with City Hall and have not had enough time to meaningfully engage our constituents, understand their needs, and come to consensus on recommended resources. Given that the plan calls for new jails in other boroughs, we know that we are not alone in our concern of the lack of an outreach and engagement strategy. Multiple Council Members, State Senate and Assembly Members, and countless community members and residents in all four boroughs have issued letters urging the withdrawal of the current scope of work, unbundle the ULURP process, and redesign each site based on authentic community feedback.

Many of us attended the meetings that City Hall held to share the proposed relocation of the MDC. The community's anger and frustration at the lack of engagement with and input from Chinatown has not been sufficiently addressed by City Hall. The plan, the little that we know, will impact the Chinatown community considerably in a myriad of ways, from the start of construction and environmental issues to post-construction traffic and neighborhood affordability and much more. The community deserves a transparent process and urges that all our concerns, questions and ideas be vetted thoroughly.

We are recommending that the City:

- Withdraw the current Draft Scope of Work for 18DOC001Y.
- Unbundle the ULURP for all community jail sites.

- Have meaningful community dialogues on the design and scope of new plans.

We recognize the urgency of closing Riker's Island. We look forward to meeting with you in the next week to discuss a path forward.

Sincerely,

Asian American Federation
Asian Americans for Equality
Chinese American Planning Council
Chinatown Business Improvement District
CMP
Chinatown Partnership
Chinese Progressive Association
Chung Pak Local Development Corporation
Hamilton-Madison House
Immigrants Social Services Inc. (ISS)
OCA-NY
Rotary Club of Chinatown
Two Bridges Neighborhood Council