We are calling on the next Mayor of New York City to ensure New York’s 520 miles of waterfront are a major priority for the administration. We will seek commitments from the candidates outlined in the following four-point plan:

- The harbor is central to the economy and regional recovery
- The climate is changing and so should our waterfronts
- Public access is key to breaking down physical and social barriers at the water’s edge
- The port and maritime sector is a 21st century economic driver

I. The Harbor is Central to the Economy and Regional Recovery
A green/blue infrastructure and jobs strategy is core to the economic recovery, as well as a broader set of protection strategies.

- Green and Gray Infrastructure Projects
  Prioritize holistic waterfront and resilient infrastructure, including renewable energy projects and stormwater management. Make significant investments in the long-term resilience of the City and address the intersectional vulnerabilities of the climate and Covid-19 crises.
• **An Offshore Wind Ecosystem**  
  Commit to capital investments and land use policies that will create an offshore wind hub in New York City.

• **BlueTech Strategy for a New Innovation Sector**  
  Leverage key assets of talent, space, and capital to become the next BlueTech sciences destination.

• **Resilient Retrofits Create Green Jobs**  
  Deploy strategies for resilient repairs and upgrades to building stock; expand the green roofs program across both public and private properties; and support related workforce development programs. Retrofitting can create a significant number of jobs that inject money into local supply chains, including into local MWBEs. Retrofitting buildings can also have a direct impact on the public health of residents, particularly critical during Covid-19.

II. **The Climate is Changing and So Should Our Waterfronts**

Every individual and every neighborhood should have the opportunity to adapt to a future of sea level rise and extreme storms. This will make New York City more resilient to a future of climate change. The climate and Covid-19 crises underscore the importance of equitable and just climate-related investments and policies that prioritize low-income communities and communities of color. Low-income housing across the U.S. has long been disproportionately placed in flood zones. By 2050, in New York City, 4,774 affordable housing units could flood every year.

• **A Strategy for Every Neighborhood**  
  Create a climate resilience framework across the City and across agencies to streamline decision-making and prioritize equitable investments, risk assessment across multiple hazards, resilience strategies, financing strategies, community engagement, accountability, and governance.

• **A Commitment to Conservation and Nature**  
  Support land conservation, wetlands preservation and ecological restoration for a more natural New York City. This includes a level of protection for natural habitat and existing wetlands in New York City and living shorelines to address sea level rise, as well as green infrastructure like street trees and pocket parks to manage stormwater.
• Near-term and Long-term City Resilience Programs, from Retrofits to Relocation
  ◦ A funding commitment and incentives are needed for retrofit programs to assist NYCHA, tenants, homeowners, and small business owners in high-risk areas from the effects of sea level rise.
  ◦ Develop long-view, holistic programs, through community led processes, that make strategic relocation of homes and businesses a viable option, coupled with land use strategies like increasing density in upland communities and returning some land to nature.

• Design Guidelines for Waterfronts
  Integrate the City’s Climate Resilience Design Guidelines into building code and infrastructure design standards, as well as incentivize the use of best practices in resilient and ecologically sound design.

• Balanced Growth, Density, and Risk Through Land Use Policy
  Zoning changes are needed to reconcile growth in areas at higher risk of climate change, with a particular focus on risk to housing and building stock through future decades.

• State and Federal Funding Opportunities for New York City
  Ensure our region fights for federal dollars from Washington and state dollars directed to critical resilience needs in New York City. Ensure the revenue shortfalls that municipalities are facing do not hamper our region’s ability to withstand the effects of climate change.

III. Public access is key to breaking down physical and social barriers at the water’s edge
Commit to opening up more waterfront access for recreation and education, with a focus on creating equitable open spaces for all New Yorkers. Open space access has been acutely felt by New Yorkers during Covid-19, especially as vulnerable and lower-income communities have access to fewer quality and large open spaces.

• Reimagined Barriers at the Waterfront
  Every new public waterfront project should allow New Yorkers to touch the water.

• Ride/Jog/Walk All 520 Miles
  Connect greenways along the perimeter of all five boroughs, including the Harlem River and Bronx River.
• **Parks Funding Core to City Budget Planning**
  Substantially increase funding in maintenance and operations for parks on or near the waterfront. The pandemic has highlighted the critical role of recreation and open space, a need that will grow as the City faces increasing high heat days due to climate change.

• **Creative Parks Funding Strategies**
  Capture the economic value that parks generate through funding models that carefully respond to local needs and context (green infrastructure, civic investment, concessions and marketing). Support public-private partnerships to generate open space funding, with a focus on communities where waterfront access is limited. Support street closures near waterfront parks to expand access during high demand times of the year, including hot weather emergencies.

• **Thorough Inventory of City-Owned Waterfront Property**
  Conduct a citywide inventory of city-owned waterfront properties, easements and restrictions, as well as pathways for transfer of land to NYC Parks and the financial implications. This will improve long term planning and create opportunities for new public open space of varying sizes and types.

• **Climate Based Curriculum**
  Create a better-informed citizenry about climate science, risk and local waterfronts by making climate change a part of New York City curriculum for all grades.

### IV. The Port and Maritime Sector is a 21st Century Economic Driver

Envision and invest in sustainable ports and working waterfronts that help to move more people and goods on the water and commit to a green port strategy. The port and maritime industry of New York and New Jersey are essential to our region’s and the nation’s supply chain and economy. From ferry workers and stevedores to fuel terminal operators and logistics, workforce opportunities are varied and growing and should be better connected to our schools and universities.

• **A Five Borough–Green Maritime Port Vision**
  Support the rebuilding, retrofitting, and innovation at our City’s working ports, piers, and industrial warehouses from Red Hook and South Brooklyn Marine Terminal to Newtown Creek and Howland Hook. Plan for and invest in electrification infrastructure that will support cleaner vessels and communities.
• **A Thriving Five Borough Ferry Service**
  Focus on revenue generation through a variety of new farebox collection options that provides for equitable and fair ticketing for ridership; explore branding, concessions, and partnerships; and assess new routes along the West Side of Manhattan, Southern Brooklyn and Northern Queens.

• **Resilient Waterfront Industrial Zones**
  Commit to preserving industrial jobs and manufacturing zoning by retaining the square footage and the footprint of Significant Maritime and Industrial Areas (SMIAs) while planning to address the public health impacts of industrial uses on vulnerable communities.

• **Moving More Goods by Water**
  Support investments in the maritime and port industries of New York City that provide jobs, keep trucks off the road and improve air quality. Develop a five-borough plan that would commit the City to reducing road congestion given the growth of e-commerce consequently reducing emissions, especially in environmental justice communities. Activate working piers to take trucks off the road and increase freight by barge closer to a final destination.

**For more information:**
Karen Imas
Vice President of Programs
kimas@waterfrontalliance.org
212.935.9831 x107