

ACCOUNTING FOR
OUR FUTURE:

**CONFRONTING
THE CLIMATE
CRISIS**

a plan from

BRADLANDER
for NYC Comptroller

ACCOUNTING FOR OUR FUTURE

Confronting the Climate Crisis

Record-breaking temperatures and cataclysmic storms are proven signs of the climate emergency New York City is facing. The climate crisis poses grave risks for the health of our communities, the soundness of our infrastructure, the stability of our finances, the capacity of our democracy, the possibility of a just and equitable city, and the very lives of New Yorkers.

The New York City Comptroller is responsible for taking the long-term view on our city and confronting our biggest risks. The climate crisis poses the most catastrophic long-term risks to New York City. It also holds immense economic opportunity to create high-quality green jobs that can steer us out of this recession towards a just recovery. So the climate crisis should be the office's top priority.

One grim lesson of COVID-19 is how deadly it can be when we fail to prepare for a crisis. We've already seen climate devastation from Superstorm Sandy. We already know the deadly racial inequity of asthma-inducing air pollution and heat waves. If we don't act boldly now, climate change will multiply that devastation and inequity many times over.

That's why millions of people are taking to the streets across the globe to demand a Green New Deal. As New York City Comptroller, Brad will fight for, invest in, and hold us accountable to a Green New Deal for New York City, building off of landmark local and state laws including the Climate Mobilization Act and the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.

Facing up to our climate risks also offers a generational economic opportunity, and our best bet to recover strongly from the COVID-19 economic crisis in a way that confronts racial and economic inequality. Vastly reducing our economy's reliance on fossil fuels and building a resilient city will create tens of thousands of good, green jobs in NYC and reduce energy costs for millions of struggling families.

Brad will deploy the tools of the Comptroller's office to confront climate change and accelerate a just transition to a clean energy economy:

As [fiduciary of the pension funds](#), Brad will complete responsible divestment from oil, gas, and coal corporations, join and lead strategic alliances of shareholders to compel bold climate action by publicly-traded corporations (utilities, banks, car and technology companies), help address financing gaps, and provide investment for the transition to clean energy.

As [the city's chief fiscal officer](#), Brad will assess the financial risks that the climate crisis poses for our city's future, and use that analysis to transform the city's spending, contracting, banking, and infrastructure to mitigate climate risk and create economic opportunities.

As [the city's chief accountability officer](#), Brad will establish a new, dedicated audit team to focus on agency sustainability and environmental justice performance, hold public- and private-sector actors to NYC's ambitious clean energy targets, and bird-dog the city's oft-neglected investments in coastal resilience and climate readiness.

As [an innovator in public engagement](#), Brad will work in partnership with NYC’s communities to build democratic and equitable solutions from the ground up, and offer accessible ways for New Yorkers of all backgrounds to participate in the transition to a sustainable economy.

New York City can and must be a leader in winning – and implementing – a Green New Deal before it’s too late. As New York City Comptroller, Brad will help lead the way.

1 AS FIDUCIARY OF THE CITY’S PUBLIC SECTOR PENSIONS FUNDS, Brad will responsibly steward the funds to compel bold private action, in order to secure the future for the city’s public sector retirees, their families, and their neighbors.

- a. **Complete the divestment of the pension funds for teachers and other retirees from fossil fuels.** Oil, gas, and coal investments are too great a risk, both financially for our public-sector retirees, and existentially for our future residents. Current Comptroller Stringer has spearheaded fossil fuel divestment for 3 of the city’s 5 pension funds, which cannot be fully accomplished by 2021 since the funds cannot sell all of the city’s billions of dollars invested into oil and gas corporations at once without incurring unacceptable financial risks. As Comptroller, Brad will take the ball and run with it to ensure that fossil fuel divestment is fully accomplished on schedule, within five years from the city’s commitment, or by the end of 2023.
- b. **Join and lead efforts with other major institutional investors, as part of their ESG (environmental, social, and governance) strategies, to push and hold corporations accountable for bold climate action.** The vast majority of companies that the city’s pension funds are invested in are neither fossil fuel extractors, nor solar energy providers. They are the companies that make up the global economy, all consumers of energy and producers of waste, whose actions have significant consequences for our climate future. As Comptroller, Brad will put pressure on the financial sector to stop funding, insuring, and investing in the climate crisis and hold corporations – especially utilities, banks, transportation, and technology companies – accountable for bold climate action. Brad will work to strengthen the environmental commitments enshrined in the city’s [Corporate Governance Principles and Proxy Voting Guidelines](#), including more specific language around phasing out fossil fuels, tackling climate change, and accounting for environmental justice. The Comptroller’s Bureau of Asset Management will then work in partnership with other investors, utilize proxy voting and other tools of shareholder action, to shift the economy toward these goals. Brad will lead strategic alliances of shareholders to take climate action through (1) supporting shareholder resolutions at select public companies to go above and beyond the minimum standards set in the Paris Climate Agreement, and (2) holding corporate leadership accountable by defeating the re-election of corporate directors at firms that fail to take such climate action. The power to vote out corporate directors, who select, direct, and compensate “C-suite” executive leadership, is a critical tool for accountability.
- c. **Utilize the funds’ Economically Targeted Investments (ETI) portfolio to research and identify credit gaps, and invest in renewable energy and sustainable technologies, especially those that**

create jobs in New York City, and that offer a broad array of New Yorkers the opportunity to reduce their energy costs. Compliance with the city’s new law requiring large buildings to upgrade to high energy efficiency standards will require large deployments of investment capital. As Comptroller, Brad will explore the creation of climate loans and dedicated funds for property owners to retrofit their buildings—which account for nearly 70% of NYC’s climate emissions. A reallocation of the pension funds could supply this necessary capital, achieve the reasonable returns expected by pensioners by taking a portion of the energy savings earned by landlords, and create good union jobs in our city, financed by local economic activity, all while aiding resources that help mitigate the climate crisis. Brad will also research and seek opportunities to invest in asset classes that use capital to close credit gaps and invest in renewable energy and other sustainable technologies, such as infrastructure investments in green building and transportation infrastructure.

2 AS THE CITY’S CHIEF FISCAL OFFICER, Brad will assess the financial risks that the climate crisis poses for our city’s future, and use that analysis to transform the city’s spending, contracting, banking, and infrastructure investments to mitigate climate risk and promote a green economy.

- a. **Analyze and reckon with the risk and cost implications of climate change for New York City to make the financial case for bold climate action.** *What has climate change already cost the city? What will climate change cost the city and how does that compare to the cost of investment?* Using the resources of the Comptroller’s office, Brad will transparently evaluate and report on NYC’s exposure to climate risk, with objective and credible data. This evaluation will include monitoring emerging climate threats and the city’s response to those threats, like extreme heat, methane leaks, flash floods, and air quality, particularly in environmental justice communities. As Comptroller, Brad will use these analyses to mitigate the risk climate change poses to the city’s bond rating and interest rates, as de-carbonized investment will yield long-term financial security and credit for the city. In addition, these analyses will help make the financial case for funding new programs—such as new real estate buyback programs to reduce vulnerabilities along New York City’s coasts, new funding mechanisms for building large scale coastal resiliency projects, and the restoration of New York Harbor as a sustainable source of food—and support his advocacy for federal and state policies like the Green New Deal, progressive emissions pricing schemes, and more. Such analysis will also consider the city’s own role in financing the climate crisis, which would further inform divestment and financing decisions.
- b. **With a Climate Risk Analysis in place, bring a climate lens to the city’s budget, balance sheet, and infrastructure:**
 - i. **Analyze the overlapping risks of racial inequality and climate change in areas including air quality, health, and vulnerability to sea-level rise and heat waves.** The catastrophic risks of the climate crisis do not threaten all communities equally, as environmental justice advocates have long shown, and as recent research on redlining makes even clearer. Brad’s “climate lens” will include a strong focus on the ways that racial and economic inequality overlap with climate risk—in the particulates and co-pollutants that come from power plants, in the location of waste transfer stations and truck traffic, in which communities are vulnerable to sea-level rise,

in which families are most at risk from heat waves—so we can build a platform for change toward a city that is not only more sustainable and more resilient, but one that confronts its legacy of systemic racism and moves irrevocably toward racial justice.

- ii. **Explore the creation of a Voluntary Flood-Zone Buy-Back Fund in advance of the next storm.** It is only a matter of time until the next Sandy-strength storm devastates our city’s coastal communities. As Comptroller, Brad will explore the creation of a standing voluntary buy-back fund for coastal homeowners to assist New Yorkers in securing funds to relocate without months-long delays. Instead of repeatedly spending public dollars on the city’s rebuilding efforts in the neighborhoods most vulnerable to sea level rise, storm surge, and high winds, Brad will make the financial case for creating this voluntary homeowner fund for the purchase of high-risk coastal properties for redevelopment as open space and resiliency infrastructure that will protect our coasts in the long-term, and provide vulnerable New Yorkers with the option to safely relocate without delay.
- iii. **Bring a green lens to contracting and procurement decisions, through the Comptroller’s contract registration responsibilities and advocacy for procurement reforms.** New York City is hamstrung by outdated laws that limit our ability to prioritize sustainability and resilience in how we procure billions of dollars of goods and services every year. Still, the Comptroller can play a critical role as an advocate through the office’s responsibility to review and register city contracts, which can be scrutinized for their environmental impacts and significantly stalled if they are found to pose risks to the city. In addition, as Comptroller, Brad will continue to push for authorization to prohibit the awarding of city contracts to top polluters by excluding the [Carbon Underground 200](#) from contract provisions, allow New York City to weigh companies’ carbon footprints in awarding city contracts, and allow the city to actively seek out sustainable, socially responsible, community-owned, and M/WBE businesses to award city contracts. With these reforms, Brad will push city agencies to take a green and climate-conscious lens to all of their purchasing decisions.
- iv. **Examine the potential for using the city’s capital program to invest locally in climate action.** New York City’s capital program issues tens of billions of dollars of bonds that finance capital needs from mass transit to schools and bridges to buildings. Brad will take a careful look at new and innovative uses for the city’s capital program to further climate action responsibly in the short- and long-term. Brad will explore the creation of new low-interest loan funds and examine the viability of directly funding rooftop solar and wind turbines with city capital dollars on private property citywide in order to help take pressure off the city’s overextended energy grid, wean the city off of fossil fuels, create high-quality jobs, and develop a municipally-owned network of renewable energy sources.
- v. **Protect the city’s bottom line and push the financial sector to stop funding, insuring, and investing in the climate crisis through city purchasing of services.** Brad has been outspoken about the need to end the financial backing of Big Oil and the fossil fuel industry and is in full support of the [Stop the Money Pipeline](#) campaign. Climate change is a major risk factor for corporations, including big banks, with which the city currently contracts. Brad will work to push big banks—which [poured about \\$1.9 trillion](#) into fossil fuel corporations between 2016

and 2018—that [hold city deposits](#) to comport their business with the Paris Agreement by phasing out of their financing of fossil fuels. The Comptroller appoints a member to the city’s three-person Banking Commission to represent the city’s interests. Brad knows that Wall Street and major financial institutions cannot escape accountability if we want to secure the health and future prosperity of the planet and our communities. He will make this message clear in the Comptroller’s office to protect our bottom line and proactively use the city’s power as an investor to influence the financial sector to invest with our climate future in mind.

- vi. **Move our city toward zero-waste by advocating for universal food waste composting and analyzing other proven strategies to reduce solid waste.** Over one-third of the city’s municipal waste is made up of food scraps and yard waste. The overwhelming bulk of these materials are now sent to landfills or incinerators. But when these organics are buried in landfills, they generate methane – a very potent global warming gas. And when food waste or yard waste, with their high moisture content, are sent to incinerators, they create additional air pollution. Making matters worse, landfills and incinerators are often located in already overburdened neighborhoods and communities of color. In contrast, bringing food scraps and yard waste to local composting and anaerobic digestion facilities can produce useful compost and capture methane – a big plus for the climate and the landscape.

As Comptroller, Brad will advocate and help make the financial case for universal food waste composting for New York City. Brad will also work with advocates, experts, community partners, and grassroots organizers to research, design, and analyze other equitable approaches to reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill, increasing recycling and composting rates, and reducing city costs.

- vii. **Support the Renewable Rikers proposal to transform the island into a hub for environmental sustainability and green jobs.** As the city moves forward with its plan to close Rikers Island, we have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reimagine the use of this 400-acre site. There is a significant opportunity to build the infrastructure of our future: to generate and store clean energy, build green infrastructure and create new green jobs, especially for the New Yorkers who have suffered harm as the result of Rikers Correctional Center. As Comptroller, Brad will support the vision of Renewable Rikers to advance a just transition, create high-quality green jobs, reduce the environmental burden on the South Bronx and surrounding communities, and move us towards our goals of climate justice.
- viii. **Advocate for significant, measurable reductions in emissions by supporting public transit, congestion pricing, and active, sustainable modes of transportation.** Transportation accounts for more than [30%](#) of NYC’s emissions—86% of which is produced by private vehicles. If we are serious about reducing emissions and mitigating the threats posed to our city by climate change, New York City must invest in our public transportation infrastructure. Brad has a strong track record fighting for congestion pricing in 2008 and 2018, pushing for [transit signal modernization](#), winning major legislation to combat reckless driving, and has consistently supported the creation of cycling and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. In the Comptroller’s office, he will continue to be a champion of public transit, active and sustainable modes of transportation, and accessible, livable streets.

First and foremost, Brad will continue to be a champion for congestion pricing, which we cannot afford to delay and must be implemented in January 2021 in accordance with the policy passed by the State Legislature last year. This would make NYC the first American city to implement this policy and would reduce our city’s greenhouse emissions, while simultaneously providing critically-needed funding to the MTA. Brad will fight for an implementation strategy that is rooted in equity to achieve our emission reduction and revenue raising goals—without putting a disproportionate burden on communities of color—and will fight to ensure that the revenue raised is used for transportation improvements that serve all New Yorkers equitably, particularly those underserved by transit, not just the privileged few.

Brad will also help make the financial case for investing in NYC’s bus and subway systems, bicycle infrastructure, and pedestrian spaces through regular, high-quality audits, oversight and data-driven policy reports, and budget advocacy to city, state, and federal leaders for the full funding and implementation of the [Better Buses Initiative](#) and [Fast Forward Plan](#), including fighting to upgrade the subway’s century-old signal system and to improve the management of the MTA’s capital projects. Brad will research and raise awareness around the cost-benefit of reallocating our curb space to prioritize people over cars and the implementation of new tools to more efficiently and automatically enforce issues related to illegal parking in bike and bus lanes, placard abuse, speeding, and other behaviors that threaten the health and safety of New Yorkers and discourage sustainable and active modes of transportation.

- ix. **Oppose any new fossil fuel infrastructure.** In recognition that our city is on the brink of a climate crisis far worse than some can even imagine, New York City has adopted some of the strongest climate goals in the country with respect to reducing existing emissions and adopting renewable energy – yet proposals for new fossil fuel infrastructure continue to threaten our city by extending New Yorkers’ dependence on fossil fuels.

Brad has vehemently opposed the [Williams Pipeline](#) – a billion-dollar fossil fuel infrastructure project proposed for NYC which would carry fracked gas from Pennsylvania across the Lower Bay of New York’s Harbor. As Comptroller, Brad will continue to fight hard against the approval of this project and all future private and public infrastructure proposals that fail to advance a clean energy future for New York City. National Grid’s proposed North Brooklyn pipeline and NRG’s proposed fracked gas power plant on the Astoria waterfront should not be built, and Astoria Generating Corporation’s Gowanus Generating Station, another fracked gas plant, should not be repowered.

- c. **Explore and develop new financing and implementation strategies that accelerate the transition to clean energy, green the city’s own portfolio, and enable a wide array of New Yorkers to participate in the transition and reduce their energy costs.**
 - i. **Research and develop new “Climate Loans” and other financing tools to help New Yorkers transition to a clean, green energy and infrastructure now instead of later.** In his handbook [Rewiring America](#), Saul Griffith notes that the United States has solved plenty of problems that look just like the climate crisis with the invention of new, easy-to-use, accessible, and attractive

financing tools—auto financing in the 1920s, the modern 30-year government-guaranteed mortgage in the 1930s, and rural electrification during the New Deal all offered low-interest loans to Americans to advance national policy goals.

Today, New York State’s Green Bank and New York City’s Efficiency Corporation (NYCEEC) have been successful models for demonstrating that New York’s government entities can fund private sector investments in sustainability and resilience while saving New Yorkers money, cleaning the air, and creating good jobs. As Comptroller, Brad will explore ways to scale up these programs and create new tools for financing clean energy, sustainable technology markets, community-owned sustainable business models, and local climate resiliency infrastructure. With new, easy-to-access and use financial products like low-interest loans, we can make it attractive for landlords and small businesses to invest in rooftop and community solar, new electric heating units and electric delivery vehicles now, instead of later, and create viable models for cities across the country to replicate.

- ii. **Help bring rooftop solar & heat pumps to scale in NYC to reduce emissions while creating high-quality jobs.** Through research, advocacy, and the creation of easy-to-use resources, Brad will help NYC’s building owners and developers bring rooftop solar and heat pumps to scale in the short-term, helping New Yorkers fund energy efficiency and clean energy projects while dramatically reducing their utility bills. One of the challenges to rooftop solar has been that private solar companies are reluctant to work with homeowners seeking to install rooftop solar arrays in historic districts, fearing red-tape, bureaucracy and that permission to install rooftop solar will ultimately be denied. Brad will work with the solar industry and, if necessary, push for City Council legislation, to assist homeowners who want to take advantage of this climate- and money-saving strategy. Brad will also help increase awareness and access to the city’s existing financing tools, including the Property Assessed Clean Energy ([PACE program](#)), which will be set into place by the city in the coming months. Brad will also advocate for improvements to the efficiency of lighting, heating, water conservation, and ventilation systems (especially by [installing](#) more and better temperature sensors and heat controllers in every apartment) in public and private buildings. In addition, Brad will explore ways to increase the accessibility of micro-electricity and heat generation technologies to bring these technologies to NYC’s low-income neighborhoods, in particular.
- iii. **Expand opportunities to support energy-efficient and sustainable development of affordable housing.** Brad will explore ways to finance the development of new, sustainable, affordable housing and the retrofitting of our existing affordable housing stock to slash building emissions, which account for nearly 70% of NYC’s greenhouse gas emissions. As Comptroller, Brad will research and advocate for new innovative financing tools, including the deployment of city capital dollars—to upgrade our building stock and ensure that any new development helps us meet our 80x50 goals—and will push for policies that will require building owners to upgrade existing affordable housing stock without unfairly passing those costs onto low-income tenants.
- d. **Make the financial case for public- and community-owned power to speed the transition off of fossil fuels while cutting utility bills and delivering better service.** With widespread blackouts, service shutoffs, explosions, and rate hikes to fund new fossil fuel infrastructure, it has become

increasingly clear that the for-profit corporations running our city's utilities are failing to meet New Yorkers' short- and long-term needs. We need a new strategy for delivering clean, reliable, and affordable electricity to New Yorkers, which is why Brad supports the [Public Power](#) campaign to create a publicly owned, democratically run source of power for New York City. As Comptroller, Brad will further explore and make the financial case for public power models that will improve accountability and increase transparency and affordability in how we deliver utilities to New Yorkers in order to expedite our transition to renewables while ensuring that no New Yorkers are struggling to keep their lights on. Brad will work alongside [Public Advocate Jumaane Williams](#) to fight against unsustainable and unjust rate hikes, advocate for public and cooperative-ownership models for our utilities, and explore the viability of developing a new, city-owned and controlled renewable energy network through responsible capital investments in solar and wind energy on public and private properties citywide, including offshore wind.

e. Support economic recovery strategies that put New York City on a path toward a just transition for workers and frontline communities to create a more sustainable and resilient city.

- i. **Advance a just transition to green jobs that leaves no New Yorkers behind.** With record unemployment, we must focus our economic recovery efforts on creating high-quality, high-paying jobs that create career pathways in the sustainable industries of the future. There is a unique opportunity to rethink the jobs that our city can offer New Yorkers. As climate and environmental justice leaders like NYCEJA and UPROSE have been saying for decades, green jobs can help the city achieve its climate goals while simultaneously offering workers long-term financial security, stabilizing our local economy, and advancing goals of racial and social justice. Brad is committed to the principles of the Green New Deal and will work hard to ensure the city listens to our climate and environmental justice leaders to shift toward a more just and regenerative job market for the health and stability of the city's economy on the whole.

As Comptroller, Brad will critically examine where the city is spending its workforce development dollars, whether the programs it is funding are advancing a just transition, and who is getting hired by the city and private building owners to upgrade buildings to high energy efficiency to satisfy new city laws. Through policy reports and budget advocacy, Brad will fight hard to advance a Green Jobs agenda aligned with our goals related to renewable energy and retrofits and to expand opportunities for and access to employment in environmental justice communities (including those presently and historically exposed to disproportionate levels of pollution) in the clean energy and technology sectors.

In addition, Brad will explore the potential for job retraining programs to support a transition for those currently employed in unsustainable industries like fossil fuels into more environmentally conscious and good-paying jobs (true [green-collar jobs](#)) that can support these workers, their families, and our city for decades to come. Brad will work with existing green job training providers, such as the Association for Energy Affordability, Center for Sustainable Energy at the Bronx Community College, and Sustainable South Bronx among others to advance a just transition for New York City.

- ii. **Support urban agriculture, regenerative/agroecological farming, and a “Blue New Deal” to help combat environmental injustice and end food insecurity.** As Comptroller, Brad is committed to supporting the overall health of New York Harbor and decreasing the burden that seafood consumption puts on our environment and supporting the health of the New York Harbor. Through partnerships with environmental advocates working to create models for sustainable ocean-based economies, Brad will advocate for the expansion and support of these models to create new high-quality and accessible “blue” jobs for New Yorkers that simultaneously provide local communities with more protein-rich and low-carbon alternatives to farmed fish. In addition, Brad will audit the city’s efforts to promote sustainable eating options to identify the ways New York City can significantly scale up GrowNYC greenmarkets, green cards and other programs to provide more healthy and sustainable food options, particularly in food deserts and neighborhoods lacking affordable supermarkets in an effort to foster and increase local food sovereignty. In addition, Brad is committed to supporting public educational initiatives and advocacy around urban agriculture, food justice, and affordable healthy eating by partnering with local environmental and educational organizations with a focus on engaging the city’s youth.

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AS THE CITY’S CHIEF ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER, Brad will hold New York City accountable to achieve bigger, better climate goals together.

- a. **Establish a dedicated “Sustainability and Environmental Justice Audit Team.”** Given the economic interest of the city in adjusting quickly to a zero-carbon, climate-resilient future, Brad will create a dedicated Sustainability and Environmental Justice Audits Team within the Comptroller’s Audit Bureau to systematically audit city agencies’ sustainability and preparedness, beginning with those with the largest carbon footprint and resiliency responsibilities. The team will audit agencies’ energy use, emissions, solid waste, emergency preparedness plans, and the implementation of agency commitments such as green fleets, solar and green roofs, and energy efficiency in city buildings. In addition, this team will specifically **audit agency spending** plans, which can dramatically shape the city’s contribution to carbon emissions and landfill. Looking at agencies’ capital and operating expenses, these audits will help ensure that agency decisions are fully taking into account the social cost of carbon and fully exploiting opportunities to green NYC government.

The team will bring a lens of equity and environmental justice to all of its work, but will specifically support in the development of an environmental justice audit of city spending. So many of our city’s decisions can detrimentally and unfairly impact brown and Black neighborhoods, exacerbating health disparities and inequality in our city – the way we plan our truck routes, waste management, transportation improvements, and maintenance of parks and open spaces has historically put a disproportionate burden on and underserved communities of color which threatens the health and well-being of NYC as a whole. As Comptroller, Brad will develop a methodology to continuously monitor city spending and siting decisions to identify and advocate on behalf of the neighborhoods receiving less than their fair share of city resources to address these critical needs. This would include an audit of the city’s provision and maintenance of open and walkable green spaces for pedestrians in order to ensure that all New Yorkers can enjoy the public health and social benefits of well-maintained green spaces as well as an audit of the city’s

progress toward improving air quality citywide and in brown and Black neighborhoods, specifically. Together with grassroots organizers and advocates, Brad will push hard to ensure that the recommendations of these audits are seriously considered and implemented by city agencies.

- b. Keep a strategic, vigilant, and consistent focus on oft-neglected coastal resiliency capital projects, the health of the harbor, and climate adaptation.** The city must also work more effectively to boost the resiliency of our coastal communities by investing in the health of our oceans and marine ecosystems—especially the preservation and restoration of our [wetlands](#). After the devastation caused by Superstorm Sandy, New York City developed plans for billions of dollars of infrastructure investments in climate resiliency (for example, the Big U, improved resiliency in Hunts Point, the Industrial Harbor in Sunset Park, sand dunes in the Rockaways and Staten Island, Integrated Flood Protection System in Red Hook, etc). But many of these projects have fallen far behind their timelines, with little accountability. And COVID-19 has only created new setbacks to such progress. Brad has long fought to improve the way the city manages its capital projects and passed [legislation in February 2020](#) to establish the first-ever citywide capital projects tracking database as a first step towards increased transparency and accountability in how the city spends its capital dollars. Along those same lines, Brad’s interactive climate dashboard will be the first available resource to continuously monitor the status of these large-scale climate adaptation projects that are often funded by a complex mix of federal, state, city and private funds. Informed by the dashboard, Brad will fight to ensure these projects are moving ahead on-time and on-budget and advocate for the city to improve and adapt these plans over time.
- c. Track progress on the city’s ambitious climate goals, especially Local Law 97 of 2019 (the Climate Mobilization Act) and move quickly to ensure proper implementation.** New York City and State have passed many bills that set strong climate mitigation goals, but if these regulations are not actively monitored and implemented, the city will fail to meet them, threatening the long-term health of the city and its economy. Brad will work with experts and organizers to track our progress on city and state climate goals, including Local Law 97 of 2019 which requires large buildings to implement energy efficiency upgrades. With thorough audits conducted by a new “Sustainability & Environmental Justice Audits” team and the creation of a first-of-its-kind interactive and publicly accessible dashboard to monitor the city’s progress (or lack thereof) towards climate mitigation goals, Brad will improve accountability and transparency in city government and bring a sense of urgency to meeting these long-term goals. Where New York City starts to fall behind, Brad will act swiftly and push the city and the private sector to comply with existing requirements, troubleshoot issues where there are real barriers to achieving our goals, and advocate for stronger enforcement mechanisms.
- d. Support the enactment of new laws and programs to require smaller buildings to upgrade to higher energy efficiency over time, building on New York’s Local Law 97 of 2019 (the Climate Mobilization Act).** Brad was proud to fight for and help enact this historic, world-leading legislation to reduce building energy use, which is responsible for about 70% of New York City’s climate footprint. Thanks to this legislation, the city’s roughly 50,000 largest buildings must slash their climate pollution in accordance with the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement and existing city law. Now, new laws and programs should be enacted to ensure that small buildings also slash their climate pollution over time in order to support the climate agenda, while ensuring that renters and

low and moderate income homeowners do not face increased costs. As Comptroller, Brad will play a key role in building public and Council support and proper financing for such a package of legislation and programs to cover smaller buildings.

4 AS AN INNOVATOR IN PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT, Brad will work in partnership with NYC’s communities to build democratic and equitable solutions from the ground up, and dramatically expand ways for New Yorkers of all backgrounds to participate in the transition to a sustainable economy.

- a. Create an [accessible and interactive dashboard](#) to monitor the city’s progress (or lack thereof) towards climate mitigation and resilience goals. Today, there is no one place New Yorkers can go to better understand our city’s progress toward becoming a more sustainable and resilient city or for holding our government accountable to the legal requirements that Brad fought hard to pass during his time at the Council, including his long battle against plastic bags and advocacy to reduce emissions from our buildings, which account for around 70% of the city’s greenhouse gas emissions.

As Comptroller, Brad will work with experts to develop an interactive public dashboard to track the city’s progress on city and statewide climate goals—including reducing our emissions by 80% by 2050 (80x50), reaching 70% renewable energy by 2030, and reducing solid waste sent to landfill by 90% by 2030—the implementation of the Climate Mobilization Act, which should slash buildings’ climate emissions by upgrading to high energy efficiency standards with ambitious targets for 2030 and 2050, the status of coastal resiliency and climate adaptation projects (e.g. Integrated Flood Protection System in Red Hook and Gowanus, etc.), the installation of solar and green roofs, the implementation of green infrastructure and CSO reductions, and other infrastructural and financial commitments like divesting our city’s pension funds from fossil fuels. Environmental data points for measuring New York City’s progress toward improving air and water quality, increasing open space, and reducing rates of asthma in environmental justice communities will provide New Yorkers with an up-to-date and easy to understand snapshot of our city’s standing in the battle against climate change.

Where big polluters are not complying (e.g. big building owners, such as the Trump Organization), the office will work with allies to shine a bright spotlight and compel change. On the flip side, the dashboard will also identify where there are real barriers to achieving our climate goals, such as a lack of access to capital for energy efficiency upgrades in affordable housing. Informed by this dashboard, the Comptroller’s office can help focus the city’s attention on what it can do to ease compliance and create new pathways to energy efficiency and decarbonization.

This ongoing and visible tracker of everything from CO2 levels to open space will invite New Yorkers help oversee and participate in achieving our climate goals while putting pressure on the city where it’s needed most. The tracker will specifically focus on the environmental [issues directly harming environmental justice and frontline communities](#), such as traffic volume, lead paint exposure, diesel particulate matter, and wastewater discharge, to bring attention to the air and water quality

issues that produce disparate health outcomes in Black and brown neighborhoods and identify concrete solutions for climate justice in partnership with communities.



- b. **Get lots more New Yorkers involved in the fight against climate change.** The interactive online dashboard will also feature an accessible, multilingual **online resources hub** to help New Yorkers get more involved in climate advocacy through organizing, policymaking, building upgrades, changes in their workplaces and institutions, individual behavioral changes, and arts activism. The hub will aim to help increase New Yorkers’ awareness and access to existing programs and financial assistance for installing solar panels, microgrids, green roofs, and composting at home and at work. That hub will include a **“Climate Consciousness” online toolkit** including social media templates and digital tools to help New Yorkers promote and facilitate climate consciousness in their own communities and neighborhoods. Brad will also explore advertising opportunities like subway ads and Link kiosks in addition to partnerships with grassroots organizers and community groups to ensure that these accessible, multilingual resources reach all New Yorkers.

New York City can and must be a leader in winning – and implementing – a Green New Deal before it’s too late.

As New York City Comptroller, Brad will help lead the way.