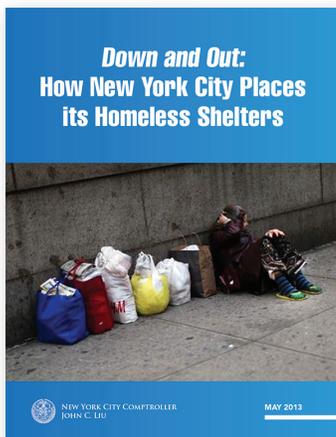


STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS:

A Proposal to Increase Community Involvement in Homeless Shelter Siting

MAY 2013



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NEW YORK CITY
COMPTROLLER
JOHN C. LIU

THE CITY IS FAILING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

Down and Out: How New York City Places its Homeless Shelters examines how and where the City decides to locate family and adult homeless shelters and whether the process gives communities meaningful opportunity to provide input.

Low-income neighborhoods across the City have a higher proportion of family and adult homeless shelters than others. Districts with the highest number of shelters are ones with the highest poverty levels.

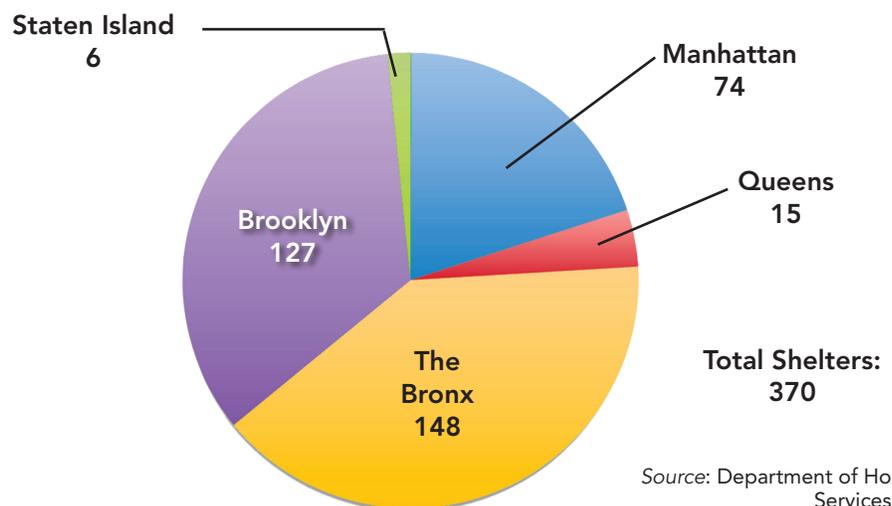
All New York City communities, regardless of income level, have little access to the process that decides where homeless shelters will be located. Most shelters are not subject to the City's land use review process (ULURP).

The lack of resources in poor neighborhoods further compounds their inability to have an impact on the location of New York City homeless shelters.

Per Diem Shelters particularly lack transparency. Approximately one-third of family and adult shelters in New York City are paid daily rates without a written agreement from the Department of Homeless Services (DHS). These shelters are not City facilities, are not sited through a competitive procurement process, and lack accountability for ensuring community consultation takes place, risking potential backdoor deals.

Weak monitoring leaves the City vulnerable to poor planning and inconsistent siting decisions.

BREAKDOWN OF ADULT AND FAMILY HOMELESS SHELTERS BY BOROUGH

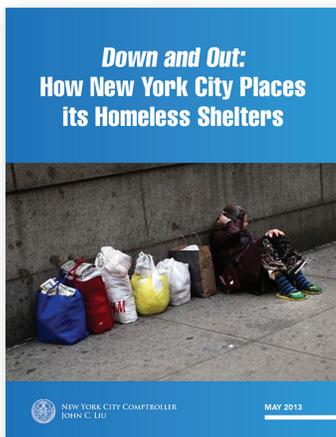


Source: Department of Homeless Services (2011)

continued

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The Proposal: Involve Communities

The Comptroller's Office recommends that the City require per diem shelters to have written agreements with DHS and be subject to the same level of public review and analysis as contracted shelters.

Further, DHS should provide a greater level of detail and information about homeless shelters in key public documents such as the City's Statement of Needs.

DHS should strengthen its planning so that communities are involved in siting long-term shelters contracted under emergency procurement and disclose information throughout this process.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOMELESS SHELTERS AND POVERTY RATES PER BOROUGH AND COMMUNITY DISTRICT

