



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

MATTHEW C. FRASER  
CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER

Executive Director Frampton Tolbert  
Historic Districts Council  
232 E 11th St  
New York, NY 10003

President Peg Breen  
The New York Landmarks Conservancy  
1 Whitehall St  
New York, NY 10004

Executive Director Rachel Levy  
Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts  
966 Lexington Ave #3E  
New York, NY 10021

Executive Director Sean Khorsandi  
Landmark West!  
45 W 67th St #1  
New York, NY 10023

Executive Director Andrew Berman  
Village Preservation  
232 East 11th Street  
New York, NY 10003

President Lo Van Der Valk  
Carnegie Hill Neighbors  
1326 Madison Ave  
New York, NY 10128

Executive Director Sharon Pope-Marshall  
CIVITAS NYC  
1457 Lexington Ave  
New York, NY 10128

January 31, 2023

To the Representatives of the above Organizations:

Thank you for your engagement on this matter.

We appreciate your stated interest in bridging the digital divide and providing wireless and cellular services to underserved communities. We share in this interest and believe that New York City deserves to be the most technologically advanced and equitable city in the world and that no neighborhood is left behind. Link5G kiosks, which provide 5G infrastructure, free Wi-Fi and nation-wide calling, connection to 911 and 311, and other digital amenities, are critical to ensuring that New Yorkers and visitors always feel connected and safe, wherever they are in the city. The LinkNYC program has already proven to be a valuable resource in this respect with over 12.6 million free Wi-Fi subscribers and more than 425,000 phone calls made every month from LinkNYC kiosks. During the pandemic, 30% of LinkNYC users said these kiosks were their primary connection to broadband internet.

Wireless networks in New York City – like in most cities around the country – are supported by a combination of antennas on building rooftops and street furniture. With more and more New Yorkers relying on cell phones as their



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

primary means of connecting to the internet, there is a pressing need to ensure that networks are as robust and resilient as possible.

To select potential locations for Link5G kiosks, our franchisee, CityBridge, works with wireless carriers to identify areas with a need for additional connectivity. Locations are chosen based on existing 5G network coverage and capacity deficiencies as well as an area's ability to broaden the range of LinkNYC's free Wi-Fi network. Proposed sites in residential zoning districts, as well as in historic districts, must have at least one wireless carrier committed to them, thereby ensuring that a wireless network coverage and/or capacity need within the immediate area is being addressed. Once sites are identified, the City conducts an extensive review to ensure that each location meets established siting criteria and is as minimally invasive as possible on the surrounding community. Examples of such criteria include minimum distances from parking meters and subway entrances, and sidewalk clearance requirements, among dozens of others. Siting criteria and other franchise documents are available on OTI's [website](#). As soon as the City ensures that sites meet these requirements, proposed locations are released for public comment. This cadence is intended to engage community stakeholders as early in the process as possible.

You can find lists and maps of current and proposed LinkNYC locations on the City's [Open Data portal](#).

As you note, any proposed sites in historic districts are subject to further review and approval by the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC). The Office of Technology and Innovation (OTI) is currently in conversations with LPC, the Public Design Commission (PDC), and other City agencies about additional public review processes. We will share information regarding the timing of further public reviews as soon as it is available.

The City is committed to providing New Yorkers and visitors with the digital tools necessary to succeed in the 21st century. While LinkNYC kiosks will be installed in every community district in the city, the vast majority —more than 90%— will be deployed above 96th Street in Manhattan and in the outer boroughs to help bridge the digital divide.

The team at OTI is more than happy to provide further information regarding the LinkNYC program and the public review processes. If you have additional questions, please feel free to reach out to my colleague, Stacy Gardener ([sgardener@oti.nyc.gov](mailto:sgardener@oti.nyc.gov)), Senior Director of External Affairs.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew C. Fraser".

Matthew C. Fraser  
Chief Technology Officer  
City of New York



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Cc:

First Deputy Mayor Sheena Wright  
Deputy Mayor Maria Torres-Springer  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Executive Director Sreoshi Banerjea  
Public Design Commission  
City Hall, Third Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Chair Sarah Carroll  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street, 9th floor  
New York, NY 10007