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**DEPUTY MAYOR GIBBS, SPEAKER QUINN AND AGING COMMISSIONER  
DESIGNEE BARRIOS-PAOLI ANNOUNCE PLANS TO RE-EVALUATE  
STRATEGY TO MODERNIZE SENIOR CENTERS**

*Importance of Efforts to Improve Senior Services for  
Growing City Senior Population Are Endorsed*

Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Linda I. Gibbs, City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn and Aging Commissioner Designee Lilliam Barrios-Paoli today announced plans to re-evaluate the Department for the Aging's modernization of senior center programs. The reform of the \$117 million senior center program is part of the City's wide-reaching effort to strengthen and improve senior services and prepare for the growing and diverse needs of tomorrow's seniors. The City and the Council agree on the overall vision of modernization, which intends to offer a comprehensive health and wellness approach promoting social, physical and mental wellness. They also agree that a withdrawal of the current RFP for senior centers will allow the new leadership at DFTA to map a strategy for moving forward. The Deputy Mayor, Speaker and Commissioner Designee were joined at today's announcement in the Blue Room at City Hall by the Chair of the Aging Committee Maria del Carmen Arroyo and Chair of the Sub-committee on Senior Centers James Vacca.

"Our plan to re-evaluate will allow newly appointed Commissioner Lilliam Barrios-Paoli to take a fresh look at our modernization plan," said Deputy Mayor Gibbs. "Lilliam and I will consult with the City Council and our community partners to ensure we are creating the best possible services for the largest number of seniors."

"I am pleased that today we are moving forward in a collaborative manner to ensure our seniors receive quality services," said Speaker Christine C. Quinn. "I want to thank Deputy Mayor Gibbs and Commissioner Designee Barrios-Paoli for working with the Council, and for listening to the City's hundreds of senior centers and thousands of older New Yorkers who responded to this plan. As New York City's older population continues to grow, we must grow with them, and I look forward to working with Commissioner Designee Barrios-Paoli to develop and implement a comprehensive and workable plan for senior services."

“I’m thrilled to take the helm at DFTA at such a critical time for the future of our city’s seniors,” said Commissioner Designee Barrios-Paoli. “Over the course of my long career in public service, I’ve worked closely with elected officials and stakeholders in the social service world. I know we all share a great vision for the older adults of New York City, and by working together as a team, we will be able to move our senior services into the future without losing the wonderful qualities our seniors have grown to love in the centers across the five boroughs. This re-evaluation will give me the time I need to listen, learn and make smart decisions moving forward.”

“Local senior centers are a home away from home for many seniors especially for my constituents in the Bronx,” said Council Member Maria del Carmen Arroyo. “I am happy that we are working with the administration to re-examine how to improve New York City’s senior services. Thank you to Deputy Mayor Gibbs for working with us over the last couple of months. New York City’s senior centers are great, and can be even more effective. I look forward to continuing to work together with the Deputy Mayor and now Commissioner Designee Barrios-Paoli toward a new and more inclusive plan for our growing senior population.”

“In these tough economic times it is more important than ever to protect our core senior services,” said Council Member James Vacca. “I look forward to working with Commissioner Barrios-Paoli to ensure that seniors have access to vital services in their community while anticipating the changing needs of our growing elderly population. I am pleased this plan has been withdrawn, and we will all work together to develop a new plan that re-examines the needs of our senior population and the neighborhood centers they rely on so strongly.”

DFTA runs more than 300 senior centers citywide. Currently, only two percent of the City’s 1.3 million seniors actually attend a senior center on a given day. As a result, close to one million meals are not served annually and the majority of seniors are not taking advantage of all that the City has to offer. The City’s modernization of aging services is a far-reaching effort to strengthen and improve the services seniors receive today and to prepare for the growing and diverse needs of tomorrow’s seniors. Under the City’s plan, Centers will not only offer meals and a comprehensive support system, but will also include disease prevention programs, exercise classes, opportunities for meaningful volunteerism and civic engagement activities. Enhancements made to services provided for seniors will result in more seniors being served, providing more options without a loss of services to seniors. The City will continue to work with stakeholders to answer questions, resolve concerns and ensure transparency in its efforts to provide enhanced services for seniors.

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