Dear Friends,

New York is one of the great coastal cities in the world. Our harbor, with the Hudson and East Rivers flanking it, gives shape to our geography and has helped define our history. Poets have celebrated our waterways, and countless generations of immigrants and visitors have been welcomed by them. Our rivers, creeks, and bays have supported industrial growth, neighborhood development, transportation, open space, and recreation. That continues to this day, as our new citywide ferry service transforms the coastline and opens it up to new generations.

We have just one local environment, and we have to constantly support and nurture it. The plan outlined here is one of the ways we do that. It represents the best of New York City government. Multiple agencies worked together on it, combining a range of skills and expertise, while receiving critical input from New Yorkers. This plan raises the bar on the great work we have already done. It creates innovative new initiatives, sets audacious new goals, and holds us accountable by mandating that we measure our progress.

New York City has long been a world leader in environmental protection. The first wastewater treatment facilities in this country were built here in the 19th century. In 1972, New Yorkers came together to launch the modern era of environmental stewardship with the passage of the Clean Water Act. Since then, our waters have become steadily cleaner. Today whales, oysters and wetlands are thriving. This new plan for our waterways builds on my Administration’s environmental roadmap, OneNYC: The Plan for a Strong and Just City, which included 15 specific initiatives for our local waterways.

Together, today’s New Yorkers will continue the work of those who came before us, to enhance and protect our waterways and pass on a healthy and sustainable harbor to our children.

Mayor Bill de Blasio

NYC Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner
Vincent Sapienza, P.E.