

**LOCAL LAWS
OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK
FOR THE YEAR 2026**

No. 128

Introduced by Council Members Williams, Louis, Salaam, Hanks, Cabán, Hudson, Avilés, Wilson, J. Sanchez, Brooks-Powers, Narcisse, Fariás and the Public Advocate (Mr. Williams) (in conjunction with the Manhattan Borough President).

A LOCAL LAW

In relation to a study and report on the potential installation of works of art or structures to acknowledge the draft riots of 1863

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. a. Definitions. For purposes of this local law, the following terms have the following meanings:

Agency. The term “agency” has the same meaning as set forth in section 1-112 of the administrative code of the city of New York.

Appropriate means of acknowledging or commemorating. The term “appropriate means of acknowledging or commemorating” means a method, mode, measure, or other means that is reasonably suited to honor, remember, explain, or preserve the significance of a person, group, event, place, contribution, loss, injustice, or other occurrence, having regard to its nature, context, public importance, affected communities, cultural sensitivities, and the need for dignity, accuracy, accessibility, and proportionality.

Commissioner. The term “commissioner” means the commissioner of cultural affairs.

Department. The term “department” means the department of cultural affairs.

Draft riots of 1863. The term “draft riots of 1863” means riots and protests occurring in the city from July 13 to July 16, 1863, that involved the burning of multiple buildings and the lynching of an estimated 11 Black persons, and that resulted in the deaths of approximately 119 persons.

Slavery and its legacies. The term “slavery and its legacies” means the practice of holding persons of African or Indigenous American descent as chattels that was legally sanctioned in the United States before 1865, and any effects or cultural or historical impacts of such practice.

Structure. The term “structure” has the same meaning as set forth in subdivision b of section 854 of the New York city charter.

Works of art. The term “works of art” has the same meaning as set forth in subdivision a of section 854 of the New York city charter.

b. Study. The commissioner, in consultation with the head of any agency deemed relevant by the commissioner, shall conduct a study and develop recommendations regarding the potential installation of works of art or structures to acknowledge the draft riots of 1863. The chair of the landmarks preservation commission and the president of the art commission may provide recommendations to the commissioner regarding such study. The recommendations the commissioner develops pursuant to this subdivision shall include, but need not be limited to:

1. Whether the installation of works of art or structures in accordance with chapter 2 of title 43 of the rules of the city of New York is an appropriate means of acknowledging or commemorating the draft riots of 1863;

2. Whether the installation of works of art or structures on private property through a public-private partnership is an appropriate means of acknowledging or commemorating the draft riots of 1863;

3. The number of such works of art or structures recommended for installation;

4. Potential geographic areas or locations where works of art or structures acknowledging or commemorating the draft riots of 1863 may be installed;

5. For any location identified pursuant to paragraph 4 of this subdivision that is on property owned by the city, the agency that has jurisdiction over such property;

6. For any location identified pursuant to paragraph 4 of this subdivision that is on private property, the person or entity that owns such property;

7. Potential funding sources for the installation of any work of art or structure acknowledging or commemorating the draft riots of 1863 that may be installed;

8. A process or procedure for selecting a person or entity to create any work of art or structure acknowledging or commemorating the draft riots of 1863, provided the study may recommend that the procedure set forth in chapter 2 of title 43 of the rules of the city of New York be used for such selection; and

9. Whether environmental review, in accordance with the article 8 of the environmental conservation law or chapter 5 of title 62 of the rules of the city of New York, would be required for the installation of a work of art or structure acknowledging or commemorating the draft riots of 1863 in an area or location identified pursuant to paragraph 4 of this subdivision.

c. Community input. In conducting the study required by this local law, the commissioner shall solicit input from no fewer than 10 persons residing in the city who:

1. Have personal experience regarding harms and injustices related to slavery and its legacies;
2. Represent institutions, organizations, corporations, or associations that are organized or operated primarily for historical, cultural, educational, religious, or charitable purposes relating to African-American heritage, history, or culture; or
3. Have experience promoting racial justice and equity in communities or organizations.

d. Expert input. In conducting the study required by this local law, the commissioner shall solicit input from no less than 1 person who has expertise in each of the following fields:

1. New York state or city history; and
2. African-American history or racial equity.

e. Information requests. Upon request of the commissioner, any agency, the head of which is appointed by the mayor, shall provide any information, reports, and assistance such commissioner may require for purposes of the study required by subdivision b of this section.

f. Report. No later than 14 months after the effective date of this local law, the commissioner shall submit to the mayor and the speaker of the council, and post on the department's website, a report on the findings of the study required by subdivision b of this section. Such report shall include the recommendations the commissioner develops pursuant to subdivision b of this section.

§ 2. This local law takes effect immediately.

THE CITY OF NEW YORK, OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK, s.s.:

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a local law of The City of New York, passed by the Council on July 16, 2026 and returned unsigned by the Mayor on August 18, 2026.

ALISA FUENTES, Acting City Clerk, Acting Clerk of the Council.

CERTIFICATION OF CORPORATION COUNSEL

I hereby certify that the form of the enclosed local law (Local Law No. 128 of 2026, Council Int. No. 496-A of 2026) to be filed with the Secretary of State contains the correct text of the local law passed by the New York City Council, presented to the Mayor, and neither approved nor disapproved within thirty days thereafter.

MOLLY MURPHY, Acting Corporation Counsel.