Written Testimony of Matthew Murphy, Executive Director, NYU Furman Center
to the New York City Council

New York City Council Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Hearing
Committee on Finance

May 21, 2020

My name is Matthew Murphy and I am the Executive Director of the NYU Furman Center. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on the Center’s FY2021 budget request for CoreData.nyc, New York City’s comprehensive data and mapping tool on affordable housing, housing, and neighborhoods. We recognize that this is a very challenging budget year and appreciate the Council’s consideration.

The Council provides the sole source of funding for our data infrastructure through CoreData.nyc. We could not do this work without your support. As the City focuses on addressing the significant housing and neighborhood challenges that have resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic, we stand ready to leverage any Council funding to support data and analysis that aids New York’s housing recovery.

Since 2011, City Council has funded the data and analysis for CoreData.nyc, an online, interactive data and mapping tool that standardizes over 20 datasets from a variety of city, state, and federal sources. CoreData provides free public access to over 100 metrics about New York City’s housing and neighborhoods, and provides a unique property-level database of subsidized housing in the city. In no other place can someone quickly find information about the subsidized housing and social conditions in their neighborhood. We have requested level funding to update and maintain this unique platform, which serves policymakers, public agency staff, advocates, community members, housing developers and many others. FY2021 Council funding would also support the Furman Center to analyze and disseminate timely data on pressing housing policy issues, with a focus on residential evictions.

In addition to completing our CoreData.nyc projects as described in our original budget request, with FY2021 support we would use our data and analysis to analyze the complex impacts of COVID-19 on housing and neighborhoods, inform responses by policymakers and service providers, and support New York’s longer term housing recovery and future planning efforts. We have already produced rapid data analysis on housing stability amidst this crisis, the households most vulnerable to job layoffs due to the economic impacts, and neighborhood level characteristics of COVID-19 cases. Council support would allow us to conduct additional timely data analyses, respond to data requests, and make this data easily accessible to the public.
During the challenging months and years ahead, our goal is to provide the most valuable housing and neighborhood data and analysis to New York City policymakers, agencies, organizers, and residents. We believe our work will be very helpful to this diverse community of stakeholders who are working to promote housing stability and an equitable housing recovery during this unprecedented time. We thank you for your consideration of our request and for your support.