



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR
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Burt Lazarin
Chair

Jesse R. Bodine
District Manager

March 11, 2019

Hon. Bill de Blasio
Mayor
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Re: Statement on the Preliminary Budget, Fiscal Year (FY) 2020

Dear Mayor de Blasio,

Manhattan Community Board Four (MCB4) appreciates the ability to review and opine on your \$92.2 billion Preliminary Budget for FY2020.

Our district includes Chelsea, Hudson Yards, and Clinton/Hell's Kitchen which comprise the second fastest growing district in the City after three rezoning actions changed areas from manufacturing to mixed use. Once a bastion of economically and culturally diverse communities, the growth brought on by luxury, commercial, and tourism development has not been matched by city services.

MCB4 is alarmed, however, by the Administration's departure from supporting issues our community has previously seen eye to eye in, including the rejection of long-standing community agreements wrought through rezonings.

We note with grave concern the drastic change from a Points of Agreement through the Hudson Yards rezoning to develop middle- and moderate-income housing on DEP and MTA sites that are now slated for extremely low (ELI) and low income (LI) housing. The change was made after an RFP was released for the projects and done without community knowledge or input.

MCB4 has a long history of supporting supportive housing, ELI, and LI housing developments and our district includes shelters of large and small scale throughout. But

there is a concentration in the Hell's Kitchen neighborhood, where the DEP and MTA sites are located.

This community does not oppose housing for ELI and LI New Yorkers; rather, MCB4 supports an equitable balance of affordable housing across all income bands.

Once realized, the Hudson Yards development will bring almost 27% of its total units on line with ELI and LI housing. The MTA and DEP owned sites were identified as critical to establishing a mix of income in affordable housing development for our community and its rejection is unacceptable.

MCB4 writes further to highlight priorities in our capital and expense requests of the city¹, which are not currently included in your budget, although they fall squarely into categories you highlighted as priorities.

MCB4 requests the following **capital projects be funded** in the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget:

Affordable Housing:

- Provide adequate capital subsidy, in addition to land, for development of affordable housing at the NYCHA Harborview Terrace site (W 55th and Tenth Ave);
- Provide adequate capital subsidy for DEP and MTA sites, per Western Railyards points of agreements, at 705 Tenth Ave and 806 Ninth Ave, respectively, to develop middle- and moderate-income housing;
- Generally provide adequate capital subsidy for Multifamily Preservation Loan Program (MPLP) and the Senior Affordable Rental Apartments (SARA), including at 560 West 52nd Street, 464 West 25th Street, and 500 West 52nd Street.

Public Transit:

MCB4 is home to the Port Authority Bus Terminal, the Lincoln Tunnel, the future Moynihan Station, and 8 subway lines across 11 stations. It also accommodates a massive commuter population during working hours. Budget requests made regarding New York City Transit were responded to with an agency phone number. While we appreciate expanding our rolodex, the city is suffering because of woefully inadequate public transit funding. The response speaks volumes for the agency's awareness of the state of public transit and was an insult to a community who has worked hard to improve the mass transit system.

- Improve accessibility of transit infrastructure by providing elevators and escalators; expand funding to the L train repair project to provide ADA access and reopen passage between Sixth and Seventh Avenues;

¹ [MCB4 Fiscal Year 2020 Statement of District Needs and Budget Priorities](#)

- Fund a lateral westside ferry or water taxi study to connect Brooklyn and downtown with the growing Chelsea Tech Hub and the large worker and residential populations along the district's waterfront;

Education:

While none of the community's education budget requests were addressed, the most ironic among them was the rejection of funding a chemistry lab at the Food and Science High School. How can one expect a science student to excel at a specialized high school where there is no lab in which to practice?

- Fund \$2 million for a chemistry lab at the Food and Science High School, 525 West 50th Street.
- Provide a new or expand an existing elementary school, particularly in midtown south, where Hudson Yards will bring an extraordinary number of students in a short timeframe;
- Renovate and upgrade PS111, 440 West 53rd Street, entrance and gymnasium to be ADA accessible;
- Complete PS11, 320 West 21st Street, Capital Needs scope and fund handicap lift for universal building access.
- Renovate and make accessible bathroom at PS 111

NYCHA:

- Harborview Terrace, 525 West 55th Street:
 - Funding for roof repair, boiler upgrade, new building entrance doors, upgraded lighting for public hallways, new hoper doors for garbage shoots, renovate garbage storage area for senior building, and new apartment front doors;
- Elliot-Chelsea, 425 West 25th Street:
 - Repaint all building lobbies
 - Install cameras in front of the Hudson Guild pathway and playground at 441 West 26th Street
- Fulton Houses:
 - Install security cameras on the roof of all buildings,
 - Increase funding for new elevators at 418-419 West 17th Street and 420 West 19th Street; new sump pit/pumps for 420 West 19th Street and 434 West 17th Street.
 - Additional benches throughout complex

Parks and Libraries:

- Reconstruct or upgrade bathrooms at the following parks:
 - DeWitt Clinton Park (52-54th Streets, Eleventh – Twelfth Avenues)
 - Mathews-Palmer Park (445 West 45th Street)
 - Chelsea Park (450 West 27th Street)

- Provide \$800,000 for roof repair of NYPL Columbus Branch Library, 742 Tenth Ave.

MCB4 requests the following **expense projects be funded** in the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget:

Housing and Enforcement:

- Update Department of Building’s (DOB) website and software so applications for improper demolitions in special districts are flagged;
- Update DOB website and software to flag applications filed without a tenant safety plan and certificate of non-harassment;
- Enhance funding to further coordinate enforcement with DOB and HPD in interest of efficiency;
- Enhance funding to increase number of Inspectors, Community Coordinators, and Administrative Associates for MCD4 to aggressively pursue landlords and operators with repeat violations, enforce unsafe and after hours compliance.

Homeless Services:

- Provide additional funding for after placement support for homeless families that are selected through the family preference for buildings with 421a benefits;
- Increase funding for workforce development and GED completion programs to reduce homeless recidivism.

Public Transportation, Safety, Vision Zero Implementation:

- Study sidewalk capacity and pedestrian demand along Eighth and Ninth Avenues north of 34th Street to 59th Street;
- Study on pedestrian safety at Eleventh Avenue from West 20th to 23rd Streets;
- Study Tenth Avenue for protected bike lane from West 13th to West 52nd Street.
- Deploy nine traffic officers to increase enforcement of the following traffic violations: blocking the box, vehicular spill-back, park in no standing, bus drivers using unauthorized routes, vehicular idling, bicycles riding on sidewalks, vehicles blocking bike lanes, and unnecessary honking.
- Improve crossing-guard employment package to increase number of crossing guards on streets.

Parks:

- Increase funding for fixed post staff at DeWitt Clinton Park, Mathews-Palmer Park, and Chelsea Park;
- Parks with comfort stations should have fixed post staff to address constituents concerns, provide security, and perform routine maintenance of that park.

Sanitation:

- Base line needed overtime for additional basket truck crews
- Increase funding for an additional three crews on the day shifts for paper and other recyclables.

Public Health and Senior Needs:

- Increase funding for HIV/AIDS education, prevention, and treatment;
- Expand existing programs for Seniors Meals program to the following locations:
 - Penn South NORC, 290 Ninth Avenue
 - Encore Community Services, 239 West 49th Street
 - The SAGE Senior Center, 305 Seventh Avenue
- Expand existing programs for seniors for in-home supports, supportive housing, preventative health, and social services.

Environment:

- Conduct additional air pollution studies in the Lincoln Tunnel Corridor and Port Authority Bus Terminal by adding additional air monitors.
- Increase funding for organics collection program

We would like to **thank you** for funding the following capital and expense requests:

Capital:

- Fund \$500,000 to replace HVAC system with energy efficient model at NYPL Muhlenberg Branch

Expense:

- Convert Eleventh Avenue one-way from 57th Street to 42nd Streets, add pedestrian safety measures, protected bus lane, and bike lane;
- Install split phases and Barnes Dance signals at the following intersections:
 - West 42nd Street and Eighth Avenue
 - West 57th Street and Tenth Avenue
 - West 42nd Street and Eleventh Avenue
 - West 57th Street and Eighth Avenue
 - West 42nd Street and Ninth Avenue
- Provide additional funding for DOB enforcement inspectors for non-compliance ADA entrances;
- Install protected bike lane on Tenth Ave from 52nd to 59th Streets
- Increased funding for homeless outreach services;
- Provide funding for Hudson Blvd. Park blocks 5 and 6
- Provide funding for additional four collection truck crews for the week on the day shifts;

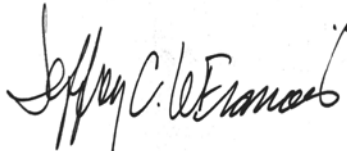
The aforementioned priorities will indeed help to make New York the fairest big city in America. It is a goal our community has long fought for – equity and equality for all – and thank you for what has been done to bring us this point. And as you have acknowledged, we have a long way still to go.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Burt Lazarin
Chair
Manhattan Community
Board 4



Jeffrey C. LeFrancois
Chair
CB4 Budget Task Force

cc: Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker, City Council
Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President