



CITY OF NEW YORK  
**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD  
FOUR**

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**Burt Lazrain**  
Chair  
**Jesse R. Bodine**  
District Manager

March 9, 2019

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

**Re: Community Board Budget Increases for Fiscal Year 2019**

Dear Mayor de Blasio,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) writes to express its support of Council Member Fernando Cabrera's, Chair of the Government Operations Committee, proposal to increase the base budget for Community Board's Fiscal Year 2019. CB4, at its May 2nd, 2018 meeting by a vote of 42 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible to vote, approved the following letter.

As you know, for most people who live and work in this city the Community Board is the gateway to the municipal government. Everyone from the wealthiest land development corporation to the small mom and pop business need to come through our doors in some way if they plan to work within the city bureaucracy. Community Boards by law are required to review and make recommendations related to land use, licensing, transportation planning, and waterfront uses. Community Boards must also participate in the budget process and the capital program. Community Boards are responsible for maintaining communication with the people of the district and consistently conducting board business in a transparent process. Community Boards are also considered city agencies that must follow the same protocols as large city wide agencies in terms of FOIL requests, inventory, billing, and record keeping.

In addition, Community Boards are many times a city resident's initial resource to resolve housing problems, mitigate quality of life issues, and managing inter-agency coordination. The Community Board is the main resource for the city agencies and elected officials to obtain consensus on issues that have serious repercussions. As you know, this is all done by each of the 59 Community Boards with a staff of 2-4 people and 50 volunteers, most of which have day jobs. We are an extremely utilized agency with the smallest budget in the city and probably the best value for the city.

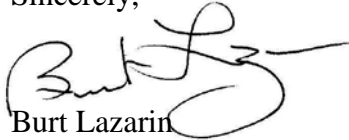
Community Boards continue to become more technical in nature; which results in increased network system maintenance costs, IT consulting services, and other needed technological infrastructure updates.

In addition, due to software such as GIS and Adobe, and Sketch up, Community Boards have been able to take even more of a lead in planning their own community. This software, its licensing, and the training is not inexpensive. These operational funds are fundamental for Community Boards to actively participate in the planning of their own neighborhoods and not be beholden to architects, planners, and attorneys hired by private developers.

For these reasons CB4 urges you and the City Council to increase Community Board's base budget and we support Council Member Fernando Cabrera's efforts

Thank you for your attention and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Burt Lazarin", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Burt Lazarin

Chair

Manhattan Community Board 4

cc: Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker, City Council  
Ho. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President  
Hon. Fernando Cabrera, City Council