



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.nyc.gov/mcb4

LOWELL D. KERN
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

August 5, 2020

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

Hon. Corey Johnson
Speaker, City Council
224 West 30th Street, Suite 1206
New York, NY 10001

Re: Community Feedback about Policing our NYC Communities

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Speaker Johnson,

Now more than ever, NYC community leaders need to meet with each other and elected leaders to voice our feedback/concerns/suggestions/best practices about policing in our communities. The much-needed conversations (including discussions about transparency, accountability, implicit bias and de-escalation training) are larger and higher-level than can happen at individual precincts or without our elected officials.

Accordingly, Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) requests that a Commission/Task Force/Working Group (a) be formed to meet regularly for 6 months to brainstorm and advise the Mayor's Office and City Council about community-initiated recommendations for policing our communities and (b) include at least one representative from each of your offices as well as a representative/designee from each NYC Community Board (which could form and meet in borough-wide sub-groups initially, if that is most productive). We believe that the voice of Community Boards must be included in such a Commission given the role of Community Boards as the "on the ground" liaison between our communities and City agencies. Of course, we also recognize that the City is receiving vital input about policing from other activists, clergy members and community leaders from the communities most affected. We look forward to supporting and partnering with such thought-leaders to ensure all community voices are heard and represented in this critical dialogue. This request for formation of a Commission on Community Policing is one of the NYPD-focused recommendations from the Group that was approved at the July 22, 2020, Full Board meeting with 47 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstaining and 0 present but not eligible to vote.

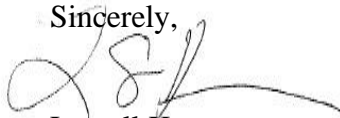
Following the unprecedented movement for racial justice in the weeks after the death of George Floyd and several others at the hands of the police (triggering memories of Eric

Garner's tragic death caused by the NYPD), Manhattan Community Board 4 set up the Social Justice Working Group to develop several specific and concrete recommendations to address and confront implicit bias, inequality, and systemic racism in our communities. The Group, comprised of several MCB4 and public members, convened for weekly brainstorming sessions to listen, learn, and discuss ideas for collective response. The work done over six weeks focused on recommendations in three areas: (1) Community Board 4, (2) Youth and Community Services and (3) the NYPD.

Thank you for considering this request and for the vital work being done by the Mayor's Office and the City Council during this tragic and challenging period for our city. We look forward to continued engagement with the Mayor's Office and the City Council on policing in our District, and with others related to their work in our District.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Lowell Kern
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4

[Signed 8/5/20]

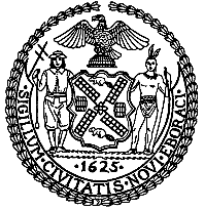
Katy Stokes
Co-Chair
Social Justice
Working Group



Viren
Co-Chair
Social Justice
Working Group

Enclosure

cc: Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Jerry Nadler, U.S. Congress
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NYS Senate
Hon. Robert Jackson, NYS Senate
Hon. Dick Gottfried, NYS Assembly
Hon. Linda B. Rosenthal, NYS Assembly
Hon. Helen Rosenthal, City Council



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**MCB4 Social Justice Working Group
Recommendations**

Following the unprecedented movement for racial justice in the weeks after the death of George Floyd and several others at the hands of the police (triggering memories of Eric Garner’s tragic death caused by the NYPD), Manhattan Community Board 4 set up the Social Justice Working Group to develop several specific and concrete recommendations to address and confront implicit bias, inequality, and systemic racism in our communities. The Group, comprised of several MCB4 and public members, convened for weekly brainstorming sessions to listen, learn, and discuss ideas for collective response. The work done over six weeks focused on recommendations in three areas: (1) Community Board 4, (2) Youth and Community Services and (3) the NYPD. Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4), at its regularly scheduled meeting on July 22nd, 2020, voted, by a vote of 47 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible to vote, to support the following recommendations.

Board-Focused

1. Identify an in-depth anti-racism training program and request participation by all MCB4 members. Relatedly, share with MCB4 members and on the MCB4 website anti-racism resources (e.g. recommended books, movies, podcasts).
2. Propose that the focused efforts of the Social Justice Working Group be continued, either as a MCB4 Working Group or as a MCB4 Committee (and be renamed the “Anti-Racist Working Group/Committee”), so that it can focus on longer-term anti-racist and social justice issues. Suggestions for future efforts include:
 - a. Create an outreach campaign to invite Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) in the District to become public members of MCB4 committees and also to apply to become MCB4 members. Great opportunity for community outreach from MCB4.

- b. Research community-based organizations that are working with constituencies of color within our District (e.g. Mid-Manhattan NAACP and NY Urban League) and form strategic partnerships and collaborate on forums and events.
 - c. Collaborate on initiatives with other Community Boards that have large Black and Brown constituencies
 - d. Review MCB4's Bylaws with a racial/social justice lens.
 - e. Recommend that all committees have 2 Co-Chairs for diversity of views
3. Recommend that each MCB4 Committee expand its commitment to actively enhance racial justice (e.g. review MCB4's affordable housing policies; require developers to outline their comprehensive MWBE commitments and vendors across all areas of the proposed real estate development projects; recommend that ACES identify and partner with community organizations focused on opportunities for Black and Brown artists).

Youth & Community Focused

1. Identify opportunities and physical space for Black and Brown youth that live or attend school in the district to engage in positive ways with NYPD, perhaps through after-school or recreational programs like those in place in other boroughs with the Police Athletic League.
2. Recommend the creation of MCB4 NCYHA Working Group, similar to that of MCB7
3. Actively connect workforce development organizations with local community groups and businesses with the objective of providing a focus on skills development, internship and employment opportunities for Black and Brown youth.
4. Partner with local organizations to support access to capital for businesses that are Black and Latinx owned, leveraging the existing network of Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) to promote financial inclusion. (Maybe invite banks in the District to explain what policies they have to address racial inequities regarding access to capital).

NYPD Focused

1. Recommend that Police Precincts be co-terminus with Community Board districts. Outline a plan to align our precincts with the District and build a 21st century precinct. <https://nyccharter.readthedocs.io/index.html> Seek support from other Community Boards so that this becomes a broadly-supported proposal. Also explore whether PSA4 units can be co-terminus with CB districts and/or co-located within Police Precincts.

2. Collaborate with police precincts and community organizations to foster better communication. For example:
 - a. Host meeting(s) between the police precinct and residents of Fulton, Chelsea/Elliott and Harborview Houses to foster communication and trust. Encourage reps from Police Precincts to regularly attend Tenant Association meetings. Facilitate a group meeting among Tenant Associations, PSA4 and Police Precinct reps focused on improving communication and coordination.
 - b. On a regular basis, invite officers from each precinct to report to MCB4 about their community outreach efforts and other community concerns.
 - c. Designate a MCB4 representative for each Police Precinct in the District to participate in Police Precinct Council meetings
3. Ask for more training for the NYPD focused on de-escalation and implicit bias (for all officers, not just for new hires).
4. Contact the Mayor and City Council and request that a member of every Community Board (including MCB4) be included on any committee/commission that is formed to address community policing (including review of NYPD actions during the recent protests). Main message needs to be the importance of transparency and accountability. (A proposed Letter to the Mayor and the City Council Speaker regarding this request was submitted to MCB4 for review and discussion at the July 23 CB meeting.)

cc: Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor, City of New York
Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker, City Council
Dermot F. Shea, Commissioner, NYPD
Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Jerrold Nadler, U.S. Congressman
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NYS Senate
Hon. Richard Gottfried, NYS Assembly
Manhattan Community Boards