



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

P.O. Box 2622, New York, NY 10108
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LOWELL D. KERN
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

October 19, 2020

Hon. Corey Johnson
NYC Council Speaker
250 Broadway, 18th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Re: Sidewalk Maintenance for Winter 2020-2021

Dear Council Speaker Johnson,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) at its October 7th Full Board meeting by a vote of 42 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible, voted to request that a plan be put in place and exceptional measures be taken by the City to maintain safe sidewalks, in good state of repair and clean and free of snow/ice in the upcoming winter season.

We are glad that the administration restored funding to the sanitation department's basket pickup program to its pre-COVID level. However, sidewalks are falling in disrepair, and debris is accumulating, due to the high number of empty storefronts in the district. Besides the unsanitary and run-down environment this creates, it is dangerous for pedestrians, especially parents with strollers, seniors, and people with disabilities. We are concerned that during the coming winter, many sidewalks will not be cleared of snow and ice, presenting even more of a challenge.

MCB4 requests that communications of the highest priority be sent to landlords to remind them that their responsibilities do not end if their retail properties are vacant. Inspection teams should be deployed to bring landlords in compliance and keep the pedestrians safe and healthy.

Such a problem would not arise if the City maintained the sidewalk – just like it maintains the roadway for cars and drivers. Pedestrians are forced to navigate dirty and damaged sidewalks, particularly those in front of vacant lots or retail spaces. The current crisis threatens to exacerbate this problem. The vast majority of New Yorkers walk for all or part of their commute, or shopping trips. This fiscal crisis presents an opportunity to review how the resources of the Departments of Sanitation and Transportation are allocated to benefit the most.

Sincerely,



Lowell Kern
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4



Christine Berthet
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning
Committee



Dale Corvino
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning
Committee

Cc: Hon. Antonio Reynoso, Councilmember, Chair of Sanitation Committee
Edward Grayson, Acting Commissioner, Department of Sanitation
Ed Pincar, Manhattan Borough Commissioner, Department Of Transportation