



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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LOWELL D. KERN
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

August 6, 2021

Edward Grayson
Commissioner
NYC Department of Sanitation
125 Worth St., New York NY, 10013

Re: Need for Additional DSNY Resourcing in CD4

Dear Commissioner Grayson,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) appreciates the continuing efforts of the Department of Sanitation (DSNY) to communicate relevant updates to our Board and community members. DSNY Manhattan Community Affairs Liaison Marissa Yani attended the recent meeting of the Arts, Culture and Street Life Committee (ACES) on July 12, 2021 to provide updates on DSNY programs.

At the meeting, committee members and members of the public were able to ask questions and provide feedback about DSNY operations in Community District 4 (CD4). Key points of Board and community feedback are included below. These comments were approved at the July 28, 2021 Full Board meeting of MCB4 with 35 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstaining and 0 present but not eligible to vote.

Syringe Removal:

Committee members and members of the public including Catie Savage, leader of the Hell's Kitchen Litter Legion, communicated the need for additional resourcing for syringe clean-up in our district. One of the unfortunate effects of an apparent increase in drug use is an increase in improperly disposed syringes on our streets and sidewalks. These improperly disposed syringes create a significant safety hazard for residents, particularly children and pets. DSNY has a specialized team responsible for syringe removal, but staffing is currently limited to a 12 person team citywide. The lack of adequate resourcing often leads to syringes remaining on the sidewalks and streets long after they are reported.

Board and community members called for an increase in resourcing, as well as a consideration of alternate options for syringe removal. For example, having all DSNY trucks be capable of syringe removal instead of a single specialized team.

In addition, there is not currently a way for residents to report the specific need for syringe removal via the 311 app. The app lacks a syringe removal category and the corresponding page

on the 311 website instructs residents to call 311. The lack of a specific reporting category and user flow within the app makes it more difficult for residents to report these hazards, and leads to a lack of data specific to syringe removal requests.

Street Sweeping:

Committee members and members of the public also commented on the importance of street sweeping, which was a service cut from twice to once per week at the outset of the COVID pandemic. Residents noted continuing issues with debris in the street, as well as rats. The restoration of mechanical broom cleaning frequency was among CB4’s FY22 Expense Budget Priorities, and the board reiterates this need.¹

A related concern expressed by board members is the need for greater transparency and communication about the frequency of mechanical broom cleaning. Specifically, making it clear to residents when alternate side parking is in effect and displaying accurate information on alternate side parking signs. Current signage indicates twice per week, resulting in unnecessary car idling if street sweeping will remain only once a week for the foreseeable future.


Containerized Trash:

Board members were glad to hear that funding is being restored for DSNY basket pickups, with increased pickups taking effect in the next few weeks. In CD4, this means a restoration to 18 trucks Monday through Saturday, and 2 on Sunday.

MCB4 has previously expressed support for testing containerized trash bins in order to remove trash and recycling bags from the sidewalks.² Board members reiterated support for this type of program, and suggested Restaurant Row (46th Street between 8th and 9th Ave.) as a potential location. There have been issues with the ability of DSNY to access trash bags on the sidewalk on Restaurant Row due to the outdoor dining stalls.

We again thank DSNY and our Community Affairs Liaison for their willingness to engage on these issues. We look forward to keeping updated on the Department’s plans to further modernize its operations, and discussing areas where MCD4 can be a pilot site for new initiatives.

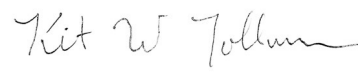
Sincerely,



Lowell D. Kern
Chair
Community Board 4



Allen Oster
Co-Chair
ACES Committee



Kit Tollerson
Co-Chair
ACES Committee

cc: Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker, City Council
Jessica Tisch, Commissioner, Department of Information Technology

¹ [MCB4 FY22 Budget Requests](#), page 22.

² [Letter Re: Support for CHEKPEDS Pilot TOSS program](#)