



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

424 West West 33 Street, Suite #580
New York, NY 10001
tel: 212-736-4536
www.nyc.gov/mcb4

LOWELL D. KERN
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

October 22, 2021

Independent Redistricting Commission
250 Broadway, 22nd Floor
New York, NY 10007

Re: Redistricting Maps

Dear Chair and Commissioners:

On behalf of Manhattan Community Board 4 (“MCB4”), at a duly noticed public meeting taking place on Wednesday, October 6, 2021, by a vote of 43 approvals, 3 denials, 0 abstentions, and 0 present not eligible to vote, voted to support this letter. We provide the following observations on the preliminary district maps the Commission has issued.

The paramount issue for MCB4 in reviewing these maps is that our community district (which is bordered on the south by 14th Street, on the west by the Hudson River, on the north by 59th Street and on the east, by 6th Avenue from 14th to 26th Streets and by 8th Avenue from 26th to 59th) be kept intact, so that neighborhoods are not divided by Assembly or State Senate districts. The Commission prioritizes keeping towns in rural and suburban areas intact within single districts when new district lines are drawn. Manhattan’s District 4 should receive the same treatment and be considered a Community of Interest, since our board advocates for the residents of District 4 and coordinates with city agencies on the provision of their services within our boundaries.

To this end, the Democratic version of the Assembly map comes closest to achieving our needs. The southern border of the Assembly district is pushed south (from the border of the current 75th AD) to 14th Street, matching the district line. While the eastern edge does not exactly follow the district line, tracking Broadway will keep our district whole. We would prefer that the northern edge of the Assembly district be pushed to 60th Street, both to track the community district border and to keep the entirety of Hell’s Kitchen neighborhood (including the Coliseum Apartments) intact, instead of dividing the northern edge of Hell’s Kitchen between Assembly districts. One other aspect of this map that is helpful is that the entirety of Hudson River Park north of 14th Street is contained in a single Assembly district.

Conversely, the Republican version of the Assembly map divides Hell’s Kitchen between Assembly districts and includes portions of unrelated neighborhoods to the east within the district, including a large portion of the Midtown business district. The failure to include the northwest portion of Hell’s Kitchen within the district is a fatal flaw for this plan.

The Democratic version of the Senate map suffers from a similar flaw, dividing Chelsea in half and including Hell's Kitchen and the rest of Chelsea in an Upper West Side district, where our voices will be blunted, instead of the traditional inclusion of our neighborhoods with the Greenwich Village area. Particularly upsetting about this plan is that it divides the Mutual Redevelopment Houses (Penn South) (a group of 10 buildings that are managed as one unit) between two Senatorial districts. This must be corrected.

The Republican Senatorial map is better, in that it keeps our community district together, although the inclusion of the district with the Upper West Side causes the same concerns that the Democratic plan does. The issues that face our district have much more in common with the issues faced in the Village than on the Upper West Side.

Thus, while all of the proposed maps are flawed and need correcting, the Democratic version of the Assembly map and the Republic version of the Senate map at least keep most of our district intact, in line with the principle of a Community of Interest.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'LBR', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4

cc: Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Majority Leader, New York State Senate
Hon. Carl E. Heastie, Speaker, New York State Assembly
Hon. Brad Hoylman, New York Senate
Hon. Robert Jackson, New York Senate
Hon. Dick Gottfried, New York Assembly
Hon. Linda B. Rosenthal, New York Assembly