



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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JEFFREY LEFRANCOIS
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

January 14, 2022

Rachel Loeb
President & CEO
NYC Economic Development Corporation
One Liberty Plaza, 165 Broadway
New York, NY 10006

Re: Graffiti Free NYC

Dear President Loeb,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) thanks NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC) staff Nathan Moran, Radhy Miranda and Gianna Paglia for presenting on the Graffiti-Free NYC program at the Board's Arts, Culture & Street Life (ACES) committee meeting on December 13, 2021. These comments were approved at the January 5, 2022 Full Board meeting with 43 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstaining and 0 present but not eligible to vote.

Background

The Graffiti-Free NYC program provides no-cost graffiti removal for privately-owned buildings and storefronts across the city. Anyone can request graffiti removal by submitting a 311 request. Once a request is submitted, the Department of Sanitation (DSNY) contacts the property owner and attempts to obtain consent for graffiti removal. Once approved by the owner, the Graffiti-Free NYC team visits the site and completes the removal- targeting a response within 30 days of receiving the owner's consent, dependent on weather conditions.

Due to budget cuts related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Graffiti-Free NYC program was paused in April 2020 but has since been restarted in May 2021.¹

¹ More information about the Graffiti-Free NYC program is available at <https://edc.nyc/program/graffiti-free-nyc>

Board Comments

Graffiti has proliferated in our neighborhood during the pandemic, particularly on empty storefronts. We support the resumption and continuation of the Graffiti-Free NYC program, which helps to maintain the aesthetic of our neighborhood as well as help small business owners who may not have the time or equipment for graffiti removal. We will submit requests for problem areas in our neighborhood to gain greater insight into the full process from request to removal.

We applaud the EDC for making a special effort to hire formerly incarcerated individuals, and working with minority- and women-owned talent consultants to staff the Graffiti-Free NYC program. We would, however, also request that EDC consider union labor for the program.

We thank EDC for its willingness to engage on the issue of graffiti in our neighborhood, and request feedback if there are additional ways MCB4 can help to advocate for a solution to this issue.

Sincerely,



Lowell D. Kern
Chair
Community Board 4



Allen Oster
Co-Chair
ACES Committee



Kit Tollerson
Co-Chair
ACES Committee

cc: Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor
Hon. Erik Bottcher, City Council
Fred Kreizman, Commissioner, Mayor's Community Affairs Unit