



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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JESSICA CHAIT
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District Manager

August 6, 2024

Jordan Salinger
Mayor's Office of Climate and Environmental Justice
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Re: Highlighting the Need for Environmental Budgeting in All City Policy & Projects

Dear Mr. Salinger,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) thanks the Mayor's Office for Climate and Environmental Justice (MOCEJ) for the presentation to the Waterfront, Parks and Environment Committee on June 13, 2024 regarding the mission of cleaner, greener New York City. At its July 24th Full Board meeting by a vote of 38 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstentions and 1 present but not eligible, MCB4 provides the following comments.

We are encouraged the Mayor's Office recognizes the importance of developing climate programs and policies for the city by creating this new office of MOCEJ, combining previous environmental offices. MCB4 agrees climate thinking needs to be embedded in decision making across all city agencies, a main objective of the MOCEJ.

Understanding the MOCEJ's efforts are city-wide, MCB4 is optimistic we can successfully work together targeting environmental challenges in our district that will ultimately provide great benefit, overall. Some of the environmental concerns and priorities in our neighborhoods are as follows:

Electric Shore Power at the Manhattan Cruise Ship Terminal

Our district registers as having some of the worst air quality in all of New York City. Much of this is attributable to the cruise ships docked at the Manhattan Cruise Terminal (MCT), sometimes three at a time. MCB4 has been strongly pushing NYCEDC to provide shore power infrastructure to allow the ships to run on electric power as they are in many ports throughout the world.^{1 2} A recent internal EDC study concluded shore power at the MCT is "definitely feasible." However, they have not provided a

¹<https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2020/10/06-WPE-Letter-to-EDC-HRPT-Nadler-re-Manhattan-Cruise-Ship-Terminal-need-for-Flexibility-of-Space-Shore-Power-and-Financing.pdf>

²<https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2023/11/23-Letter-to-EDC-re-progress-of-Shore-Power-at-Cruise-Ship-Terminal.pdf>

timeline for the actual implementation of shore power in our district, and it unfortunately does not seem to be a priority for EDC right now.

Coastal Resiliency and How It Effects the West Side of Manhattan

MCB4 is on record in response to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New York/New Jersey Harbors and Tributaries Study.³ To capsulize, The Board supports coastal storm risk management elements of alternative plans 2 and 3A, utilizing an offshore barrier and gate system. We would like to note our strong objection to the grotesque concrete wall proposed to run north-south between the West Side Highway and the Hudson River Park as presented in the endorsed plan 3B. Not only is it prohibitive and unsightly, it is part of a plan that only benefits 63% of the study area at direct risk.

Accelerating the Transition to E-vehicles (Commercial & Private) and Provide a Charging Network Infrastructure

MCB4 is disappointed to see barely any movement attempting to electrify both private and commercial vehicles that travel throughout the city. Our district contains both the West Side Highway (State Route 9A) and the entry/exit points of the Lincoln Tunnel. Suffice to say, our district sees a fair share of traffic and includes Penn Station, Port Authority Bus Terminal and a UPS delivery truck depot. Despite the voiced priority of switching to clean energy vehicle power, we have seen zero to little incentive and infrastructure supporting any efforts to do so. In fact, we have no public charging stations in our district and, as far as we know, no plans to provide them. Fleets can't switch to electric power if there is nowhere to charge them.

Towards the same end, we encourage the development of commercial electric micromobility and last leg delivery. We hope the city is embarking on a wide-spread plan to incorporate this new form of urban mail and package service.

NYSERDA plans to have all school buses be electric by 2035. In 2022, the Environmental Bond Act offers both public school districts and contracted fleet operators over \$500 million in funding toward school bus electrification. We urge the MOCEJ to quickly advance these efforts to efficiently and cost-effectively convert our school bus fleet with the hope that it will be achieved substantially before 2035.

For the MOCEJ to Work with All Capital Projects to Ensure Green-Build Infrastructure

Climate budgeting is paramount for all city capital projects. Our aim is to have the MOCEJ administer environmental oversight and conditions for every agency and project. Above and beyond required benchmarks, we must ensure every aspect of new builds and renovations (parks, roads, buildings, infrastructure, etc.) incorporates the newest climate sciences.

In our district alone, we have major projects such as the Port Authority Bus Terminal Replacement, the Gateway Project, and the Chelsea/NYCHYA Redevelopment Proposal in both the design and build phases. For the most favorable environmental results, MCB4 encourages the MOCEJ to take on a significant role advising the best and greenest routes forward and working with the Community Board to implement our clean and renewable asks, macro and micro. Just to name a few, pushing and incentivizing:

- green roofs and accompanying green spaces
- renewable energy generation equipment
- public electric charging stations

³ <https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2023/03/10-WPE-Letter-to-USACE-re-Coastal-Storm-Protection-Project.pdf>

- permeable pavement
- sidewalk widening
- planting a healthy tree canopy and preservation of existing street trees
- separation of storm and sewage water

Sanitation and Trash Collection

Our garbage systems are antiquated. Trash and recycling bags engulf our sidewalks, most organic waste is not being composted and building owners and developers have no significant incentive to internalize their refuse collections. We call on the MOCEJ to pursue newer and better ways of dealing with urban trash including compacting, pneumatic tube systems (especially in new builds) and a real, concerted effort confronting food waste.

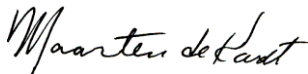
MCB4 advocates for your expertise on guiding the premises outlined above. We also hope your office will have substantial engagement with other city agencies providing a green template for projects beyond current law and be an environmental touchstone throughout the planning and implementation of these projects.

MCB4 looks forward to working together on environmental issues and projects in our district and contribute to a greener and cleaner west side.

Sincerely,



Jessica Chait
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4



Maarten deKadt
Co-chair
Waterfront, Parks & Environment Committee



Leslie Boghosian Murphy
Co-chair
Waterfront, Parks & Environment Committee

CC: Hon Erik Bottcher, NYC Council Member
Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor, City of New York