



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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JESSICA CHAIT
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District Manager

February 12th, 2025

Hon. Eric Adams
Mayor
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Re: Statement on the Preliminary Budget, Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26)

Dear Mayor Adams,

Manhattan Community Board Four (MCB4) appreciates the opportunity to respond to your \$114.5 billion Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2026. MCB4, at its regularly scheduled Full Board meeting on February 5, 2025, voted, by a vote of 42 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstaining, and 1 present but not eligible to vote, to recommend the following comments on the Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2026.

Despite a great deal of uncertainty surrounding the future of federal funding, MCB4 is hopeful that the City is committed to spending on initiatives that improve the affordability and quality of life for its residents. MCB4 commends the Mayor on commitments to social services programs, public safety, housing affordability, education, and quality of life outlined in the budget. And yet, we fear that this budget may not go far enough given the ongoing issues with housing affordability, social services, public safety, quality of life, and education.

MCB4 is home to Broadway, Moynihan Terminal and the Port Authority Bus Terminal, as well as some of the largest employers in the city and our neighborhoods have been financially re-shaped by the changes in commuter activity and tourism following the pandemic. With tourism numbers hitting a near-high in 2024, first impressions are more important than ever. When visitors, commuters, and migrants come to this City, Manhattan's Community District 4 provides one of their first impressions of our City. We encourage City Hall to consider the negative impacts that quality of life and public safety issues create for visitors and residents alike.

Many of the programs we address in the following paragraphs need appropriate funding to accomplish the vision the Mayor has for a safer, healthier, more equitable New York City.

Social Services

As home to thousands of individuals in temporary and permanent shelters, as well as supportive housing, MCB4 appreciates the Mayor's demonstrated commitment to fund social services, including homeless services, in this Preliminary Budget.¹ We commend the announcement of 900 new safe haven beds, the Bridge to Home pilot, among other innovations announced in the Preliminary Budget. We invite new outreach innovations, such as those announced in the Preliminary Budget, as well as the B-HEARD program, to operate in MCD4. Given the high rate of street homelessness in MCD4 and lack of sufficient resources for street outreach, expanding these programs into Chelsea and Hell's Kitchen is particularly warranted.

One of the top priorities for MCB4 is to increase street outreach for street homeless individuals. Despite City Hall's commitment to services for those experiencing street homelessness, we need more boots on the ground to provide services for those seeking shelter and those experiencing behavioral health emergencies.

Housing

MCB4 appreciates the administration's commitment to solving the housing supply crisis through promoting development. MCB4 itself has identified sites throughout the community that could support new development in our Affordable Housing Plan.² We understand the needs that arise in social services are deeply connected to the lack of affordable housing, both in MCD4 and throughout the City. Simply put, homelessness is primarily a housing problem, and it is one we look forward to working together to solve.

Despite the benefits, new development can come with challenges around protecting existing tenants and residents. We applaud the Mayor's commitment to anti-harassment tenant protection program funding in the Preliminary Budget, and look forward to learning how tenants can access these services when they are made available. With the passage of City of Yes for Housing Opportunity, increased development and alterations will require additional code enforcement staffing, especially to ensure compliance with land use regulations in our special districts. Improper demolition permits in our district have resulted in over one hundred residential units demolished over the last five years. MCB4 appreciates the Mayor's commitment to increasing code enforcement staffing in FY2026.

We are also grateful that NYCHA's agency response prioritizes Fulton and Elliott Chelsea interim repairs as well as Harborview maintenance and management requests. Moving forward, MCB4 requests to urgently prioritize the plan providing both elevator

¹ <https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/all-committees/mcd4-social-service-maps/>

² <https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/all-committees/affordable-housing/>

repair and adequate capital subsidies for the HPD development at the NYCHA Harborview Terrace site. Not unusual, our requests for this have been bouncing between agencies only to thwart progress. We expect to have serious discussions in the near future pushing this project forward.

Despite the inclusion of capital funding for many HPD requests, including for the Multifamily Preservation Loan Program and Senior Affordable Rental Apartments, we are concerned by a potential lack of funding for the Slaughterhouse Site RFP. We will inquire further with the City's Economic Development Corporation to ensure that this project receives the funding necessary to complete the development.

Public Safety

Despite rising concerns over disorder and crime on many of our streets, MCB4 is disappointed to see no additional funding proposed to expand New York City Police Department foot patrols in Chelsea and Hell's Kitchen, traffic enforcement agents, nor Parks Enforcement Patrol officers. Concerns over the lack of boots on the ground—whether it be to address illicit drug sales or illegally parked cars—was the number one concern our community voiced in its 2024 Statement of District Needs.³

While we were pleased to see that 2024 largely continued 2023's decline in violent crime, public safety issues, including theft and drug crime, must be taken seriously. Our district's retailers are struggling to recover their footing due to changing customer behavior, increased costs, and quality of life issues. Despite reassuring statistics, the perception of safety has deteriorated further in the past year. In our public survey of district priorities in 2024, public safety remained a top priority for residents. We ask that you recognize and understand our need and reconsider funding for more programs that put officers and other public servants directly on our streets.

Quality of Life

MCB4 is grateful for the Preliminary Budget's commitment to funding both DSNY pickup and also expanding parks cleaning and hiring staff to address tree bed conditions. Given the dire need in places like McCaffrey Playground in MCD4, we hope to see the final budget include funding that can be used toward making our parks safer and more usable for local families. We were disappointed to not see additional funding for the Department of Sanitation's Environmental Police Unit, as discarded syringes in our parks and tree pits have become a particular danger to children and pets, and there is no swift and safe way to fix the issue when it arises.

Education

While MCB4 appreciates the Preliminary Budget funding dedicated to the Summer Rising Program, we are concerned about the proposed cuts to 3K that reduces the budget

³ <https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/about/budget/>

by half. There currently are not enough 3K seats to meet the high demand in Schools District 2, which MCB4 is part of. There are several 3K programs in MCD4, including one at Hudson Guild. The program remains a top priority for Schools District 2 Leadership in helping to ensure that all students including English Language Learners and Multi Language Learners are able to meet reading standards by the 3rd grade. These cuts threaten to undermine the progress taken in recent years to make the City more livable for families.

In addition to our concerns over 3K, we are concerned about the lack of funding for afterschool programs for elementary school students, and urge inclusion of more funding in the final budget for this priority.

Other Issues

MCB4 has also requested the financing of the transition to electric shore power at the Manhattan Cruise Ship Terminal. Our district has some of the dirtiest air in all of NYC. When docked, ships run their engines to generate power, emitting thousands of tons of diesel particulates into the air. Creating a facility for cruise ships to "plug-in" to draw power from the existing power grid will reduce diesel particulate matter and drastically improve the water quality in the Hudson River. We are disappointed that the long-promised project has once again been delayed, but look forward to continuing to work with the Economic Development Corporation to work toward shore power as soon as possible.

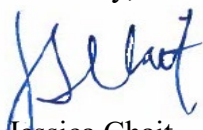
Furthermore, we would like to reiterate support for the following priority budget requests for which agencies do not have the funding:

- Completing the HVAC repair at the Columbus Library Branch at 742 10th Ave
- Completing upgrades and replacements of student and staff bathrooms and water fountains at Lab Middle School and NYC Museum School and PS 212 as well as door locks at Lab Middle School

We have appended a copy of our statement of district needs responses for further detail as well as a complete list of our budget priorities.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer feedback on this Preliminary Budget release from City Hall. We look forward to working together toward a more welcoming, inclusive, and thriving future for our district and the City as a whole.

Sincerely,



Jessica Chait
Chair

Manhattan Community Board 4



Roberta Barnett
Chair

Budget Task Force

CC: Hon. Mark D. Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Erik Bottcher, City Council
Hon. Gale A. Brewer, City Council