



CITY OF NEW YORK  
**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD No. 4**

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January 9, 2026

Andrew Kimball  
President and CEO  
NYC Economic Development Corporation  
One Liberty Plaza  
New York, NY 10006

Re: Manhattan Cruise Terminal - Master Plan Design

Dear President Kimball,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) thanks NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC) for presenting the Manhattan Cruise Terminal (MCT) Master Plan at the December 11, 2025 Waterfront, Parks & Environment Committee (WPE) meeting. This first-look design incorporated suggestions and feedback from community stakeholders, MCB4 and elected officials through public sessions, coordinated meetings and letters over the course of the last year. On Wednesday, January 7<sup>th</sup> 2026, at its regularly scheduled full board meeting, MCB4 unanimously voted to approve the following comments on the MCT Master Plan first draft.

MCB4 is pleased to see many of the Board's recommendations incorporated in the Master Plan. In the public design phase we have advocated for shore power, riverfront access and new, public open space, a pedestrian overpass connecting Hell's Kitchen and the waterfront, widening of the bike and pedestrian lanes and transportations improvements including delivery truck access and drop-off/pick-up spaces.<sup>1</sup> We are encouraged all these elements are included in the Master Plan and thank the EDC for incorporating our suggestions. MCB4 asserts there is still a lack of information on the proposed configuration. According to the current drawings, it seems many of these improvements are dependent on reclaiming space along the shoreline and into (or over) the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2025/04/35-WPE-Letter-to-EDC-re-Vision-for-Manhattan-Cruise-Terminal-Master-Plan.pdf>

Hudson River. How will this be achieved? What is the design for the foundational aspects of this space? How will it affect our estuary and estuary-life? Are there any alternative plans that do not include the “bump-out” into the Hudson River or an extension of the piers (with or without making them retractable). What does that look like? We are enthusiastic about the redevelopment of the MCT but need more information to understand the totality of the project.

We strongly recommend EDC partner with MCB4 to create a formal working group, including MCB4 members, to achieve defined goals, develop recommendations, foster positive communication and help implement effective solutions. MCB4’s successful involvement in other district project working groups may serve as a template for a prosperous partnership on the Master Plan moving forward. Much of MCB4’s approbation is dependent on the formation of the working group.

### **Shore Power**

MCB4 has long maintained the installation of shore power is the first and foremost objective of modernizing the MCT. We continue to be dismayed that connecting cruise ships to electric power is subject to a full redevelopment of Piers 88, 90 and 92. This spurious connection is delaying a necessary and immediate need in our neighborhood of eliminating inimical pollution spewing out of the ships every time they dock. We hope EDC seriously explores quicker paths to shore power connections including temporary solutions. We are more sanguine regarding recent developments that \$20 million has been dedicated to the first phase of delivering electric capabilities from terra firma to the piers. We expect this to begin immediately, notwithstanding any current or future redesign plans of the MCT.

### **Waterfront Access & Open Space**

We acknowledge both the need to safely maintain and modernize the terminal to accommodate modern cruise vessels and the value of economic growth the cruise industry offers New York City. But we maintain this cannot be done without acknowledging our wishes to return waterfront access to the community, which this plan seems to consider. We have now witnessed first hand how EDC’s approach to Manhattan’s west side is taking place given the redevelopment of Pier 94. While a film studio is an important use, the redevelopment of that pier has all but completely walled off the neighborhood from the waterfront. Hudson River Park (HRP) has created a green oasis and is home to a critically important marine estuarine sanctuary, as well as piers for recreation and passive park use. Yes, we want an active cruise ship terminal but importantly, it should be integrated into the waterfront considering the surrounding context, especially connecting to its park neighbor to the north and south. We also expect the terminal building design encourages through-lighting (having a sightline through the buildings) and river sightlines and is not merely an unfortunate extension of Pier 94 which now separates the riverfront from the public.

When HRP was created, the MCT was removed from its proposed footprint in exchange for a 20% revenue contribution to support HRP's ongoing maintenance and operations. Given that HRP provides invaluable waterfront access and open space throughout the community, we request EDC maintain this ongoing support.

We greatly appreciate the Master Plan returns riverfront access to the public in the forms of plazas, terraces, promenades and a concourse rooftop. With the public prohibited ingress since 9/11, one of MCB4's main asks was the return of this waterfront space for communal use. The additions of a viewpoint deck and elevated open spaces is greatly valued. Understanding the illustrations are subject to change and refinement, these are our preliminary open space asks in response to the initial design presented:

1. Please incorporate more green space. Much of the plan indicates the use of hard-surface materials. We hope a refined design includes more green elements with stormwater management.
2. The existing, small historical park at the southern most point of the MCT footprint has been closed for years with EDC deeming it unsafe due to overhead, structural damage. Despite our importunate requests, the repairs have never been made and this space remain inaccessible. We urge the Master Plan revives this space and re-incorporates its historical theme with permanent, historic, interpretive signage that documents the long history of the harbor and the terminal to highlight the last vestige of working waterfront in Manhattan.
3. We ask the plan includes a congruous connection of the EDC footprint (MCT, Pier 92 and Pier 94) to HRP at both the north and south points. Please coordinate with the HRPT so both the widened pedestrian/bike lane and the newly formed open spaces merge seamlessly with the existing connectors.
4. Install solar lighting throughout the open spaces, both elevated and at land-level.
5. Please include an outdoor accessible, public bathroom.

#### Overpass connection to DeWitt Clinton Park

MCB4 thanks EDC for including a pedestrian bridge over Rt. 9A connecting the surrounding neighborhood to our public riverfront. Connectivity to green spaces in our district is exceedingly limited and the elevation of Dewitt Clinton Park to the east presents a natural traverse opportunity bridging the two valued open areas.

The examples presented during the public meetings illustrated a wide platform serving as not only a crossover but as an expansion of public space. Understanding these graphics are just samples, we hope the proffered sketching is not a quixotic design but a dedicated element moving forward.

## **Transportation**

MCB4 values that the Master Plan addresses the main transportation concerns we have previously identified such as situating a drop-off/pick up area on the MCT footprint, creating a delivery and service truck base removed from the West Side Highway and installing a new, public transportation bus stop nearby. We anticipate this will palliate the effects of intense vehicular and tourist congestion we are seeing now.

There remain key traffic and safety issues that will have negative impacts on the adjacent greenway and the pedestrians. These are magnified by the significant (30%) increase in volume of vehicles and passengers, as well as the proposed addition of a freight terminal using cargo bikes. Public safety is consequent to these additions and must be incorporated into the design of the facility itself.

### **Key Concerns:**

1. The continued presence of a vehicular ramp with possible impacts on pedestrians and bike traffic.
2. The double width ingress and egress to the highway, that will negatively affect the greenway users and their safety
3. Unresolved volume and safety issues for pedestrian crossings of the greenway and the highway.

## **Environmental Considerations**

MCB4 is glad electric vehicle charging stations are incorporated for personal and commercial vehicles visiting the piers. We asseverate the Master Plan include space for untolled, public access, vehicle charging intended for those not traveling on the cruise ships.

MCB4 also appreciates the plan to install solar panels on the future terminal's expansive rooftops and pairing it with on-site battery storage. Our Board has been a long-time advocate of alternative energy and we expect this project adhere to the goal of being a net zero energy complex.

Understanding this project will go through the Environmental Impact Statement process, MCB4 expects all aspect of renovations at Piers 88-92, from the beginning phases, incorporate the greenest and most environmentally sustainable elements including but not limited to:

### Environmental Budgeting

- Sustainable sourcing
- Thermal comfort including air quality, and noise control
- Waste management
- Integrating renewable energy sources and passive design strategies

### Environmental Building

- The use of sustainable and recycled construction materials

- Stormwater separation and management
- Solar lighting (and other natural energy power sources)
- Porous pavement and asphalt
- Waste reduction and building trash compactors
- Plant a robust and varied amount of trees and greenery

During our public meeting there was also expressed concern for the renovation effects on the Billion Oyster Project and how dredging operations might affect sea life health. Too much silt suspended in the water column over prolonged periods asphyxiates oysters. Consideration for them and other marine life must be included in this plan.

### **Water Resources Development Act Approval (WRDA)**

EDC's Master Plan is contingent up deauthorizing the Federally Authorized Navigation Channel in the Hudson River and receiving Federal WRDA approval. While MCB4 has no initial objection to extending the new piers, we would need to review the following additional information in order to help us determine any future action.

- Evaluation and comment from the US Coast Guard and the United States Army Corps of Engineers.
- A summary of feedback from EDC's stakeholder engagement outreach including elected officials and community members.
- An environmental analysis specific to the lengthening of the piers and the associated covering of the estuary. Considering the enlarging of MCT's shoreline footprint in the Master Plan is directly attributable to the augmentation of the piers, the combined environmental effects should be examined.
- A completed Navigational Safety Risk Assessment. (MCB4 is particularly interested in the conclusions as they relate to people-powered and recreational water craft users.) We appreciate EDC's outreach so far, holding both public and stakeholder meetings to address concerns and potential conflicts. MCB4 would like to see an aggregation of these discussions and potential ways EDC can mitigate prospective problem points.

Public comment to CB4 included but was not limited to the following concerns:

1. the risk of new construction extensions is the need by small and human-powered crafts to venture significantly further out towards the middle of the river to pass by. That puts them closer to those larger vessels, exposes them to more wind and current and leaves them farther from potential egress points.
2. Visibility, or lack thereof, for smaller vessels and how it effects navigation near the larger cruise ships.
3. Even though the anticipated larger cruise ships do not draw significantly more than the current ones, they still draw a lot and they will extend much further into the

channel. What would the impact be on the currents along the pierhead line down- or up-stream of the new slips?

The accelerated nature of this process should be acknowledged. In the attempts to meet a 2026 deadline for federal WRDA authorization, conventional steps, including community outreach and detailed studies, have been truncated. While MCB4 understands EDC's efforts to move forward with this project, the hastened timeline makes it difficult for the Board to offer complete comment.

MCB4 has no apparent objection on EDC's application for a WRDA exemption conditional on the considerations listed above. Indeed, redesign of these piers is long overdue.

### **Personal/People-powered Crafts - Mitigation Actions**

Throughout this process, many issues of concern regarding navigation for human-powered boaters have been raised. MCB4 joins with the recreation boat users to ask for the following:

1. Devise a monitoring and communication system with regular radio calls before cruise ship landings and departures. It can be difficult for human-powered boaters to communicate by radio--they are often using both hands to paddle, and, in many cases, they are unreliable.
2. Explicitly evaluate pier configurations that avoid forcing small craft into active through-traffic, blind zones, and higher-energy water and that allow for safe nearshore passage when cruise vessels are not present. These risks are not captured in Navigation Safety Risk Assessment (NSRA) traffic data. Pier geometry reflects assumptions about future cruise vessel size and quantity, shoreline infill, and building placement. Evaluating these is necessary to inform a safer design.
3. The presence of a patrol boat before cruise ship arrivals and departures to escort or hold up any approaching small boats and incorporating a semaphore system.
4. If safety vessels, signals, or monitoring systems are implemented, they should be treated as supplemental tools. Because these measures rely on timing, interpretation and presence, they cannot replace terminal geometry that minimizes blind zones and conflict points. Any such measures must be directly usable to transiting mariners in real time and supported by a funded, long-term operations plan with the full cooperation of other stakeholders, i.e. United States Coast Guard, NYPD, and nearby operators.
5. Avoid locating ferry and freight operations behind extended cruise piers, 20% where fast and frequent vessel movements would emerge from blind zones. Introducing this traffic creates new collision risks that were neither evaluated in the NSRA nor reviewed by marine stakeholders.
6. Webcams pointing north on the northwest corner of Pier 92 and for those headed south, another facing south on the southwest corner of pier 88.

7. Restore and upgrade the web-enabled current meter and water temperature gauges at the science station located on Pier 84.

EDC lays out vast sums to support commercial interests like the cruise line industry. It should consider spending a modest percentage of that on harbor education and navigational safety for non-commercial stakeholders. We request capital support for new community boathouses, access points, and waterfront education centers and funding upgrades to public-facing water-quality dashboards and sensors, such as are currently at Piers 84 and 96. Supporting safe access to the harbor, New York City's largest public space, will ultimately contribute to the city's economic development.

## **Pier 92**

Another significant facet of the Master Plan is the redevelopment of Pier 92, including commercial usage separate from cruise ship operations. The plan designates Pier 92 as a blue highway hub and Hudson River Ferry landing. While MCB4 is enthusiastic about water-based transport and less truck traffic on our roads, we would like further information and analysis on logistics and effects to the Hudson River Park, the greenway's bike and pedestrian path and overall anticipated traffic patterns. There is concern of cargo bike flow and potential greenway conflicts if this course of action is to be pursued. A safe park and greenway use is our top priority in this area.

Designedly (and unbeknownst to MCB4), EDC and Department of Transportation recently released a marine freight pilot between Manhattan's Pier 79 and the Brooklyn Marine Terminal as part of New York City's Blue Highways program. This pilot identified Pier 92 as a future site for this venture. Considering the working relationship and consistent communication between EDC and MCB4, the Board was frustrated to first learn about these plans in our district upon public release. We have had no opportunity to discuss or assess this project and any subsequent requests for a presentation have been unsuccessful.

Similar to other elements of the Master Plan, information is incomplete on the Blue Highway proposal and, therefore, its potential placement at Pier 92.

Regardless of its future commercial use, MCB4 is interested in exploring if this space can hold small vessel docking and/or historical ships including gangway access. For example, boats such as the John J. Harvey Fire Boat, which provides free historical and educational programs, are a valuable resource for our community and are becoming increasingly difficult to operate. Consideration for bathroom and shower space for crew members would also be appreciated. Opportunities for the docking of smaller boats and independent vessels have become progressively limited along the Hudson River. We wish to investigate the flexibility of multiple users at Pier 92.

## Community Benefits Agreement

In addition to fulfilling its financial obligation to the Hudson River Park Trust, it is not exceptional that a project of this magnitude is accompanied by a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA). Envisioning a massive, long-term construction period including connecting shore power across Rt. 9A and heavy disruption to the surrounding areas, MCB4 hopes EDC realizes the need for specific, negotiated benefits outside the MCT footprint. This CBA is intended to improve the quality of life during construction and attenuate pernicious effects of this long-term redevelopment, the details of which can be determined in the working group discussions.

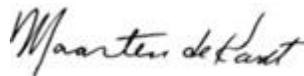
To be sure, MCB4 is enthusiastic about the proposed redevelopment of the Manhattan Cruise Terminal. It is apparent the current terminal is outdated and in need of significant updates to its aging infrastructure. The profusion of new open space, installation of shore power and substantial transportation upgrades highlights the many good changes. But this is a massive plan that would fundamentally transform this portion of our waterfront. While EDC is eager to continue to move this project forward, there are many questions that remain unanswered that are critical to MCB4's understanding of this project and how its implementation will affect the immediate and surrounding area.

MCB4 anticipates many more discussions moving ahead, including a Uniform Land Use Review Process, and a productive working partnership as the project develops.

Sincerely,



Leslie Boghosian Murphy  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board 4  
Committee



Maarten deKadt  
Chair  
Waterfront, Parks & Environment

cc: Hon. Jerrold Nadler, US Congress  
Hon. Brad Hoylman-Sigil, Manhattan Borough President  
Hon. Linda B. Rosenthal, NYS Assembly  
Hon. Erik Bottcher, NYC Council Member  
Hudson River Park Trust  
Mayor's office of Climate and Environmental Justice  
NYC Department of Transportation