



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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Chair

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District Manager

**PROPOSED PAYPHONE RESOLUTION**  
**JULY 27, 2011**

WHEREAS, the public pay telephones currently installed in New York city streets are based on a 50 year old technology and provide a service which utility has steadily declined; the low usage can be seen as an indicator that technology has advanced with 96% of the US population currently owning a mobile or smart phone; and

WHEREAS, a large proportion of public phones have fallen in disrepair because of the low usage, with up to 40% of the phones in some districts, having no dial tones or severely damaged booths; and

WHEREAS, in some neighborhoods pay phone locations have become a magnet for crime or public disturbances, without the community having the option to remove problematic installations; and

WHEREAS, the current design is large and bulky. At the street level they create unused and unwelcome blockages, particularly on major pedestrian avenues and narrow streets. The sidewalk space they occupy is increasingly at a premium, with competing priorities including pedestrian safety and right of way, rapid transit shelters, muni-meters, trees, newsstands, and sidewalk cafes; and

WHEREAS, the contract/licensing agreements for these installations is coming to its term in 2014 and will need to be renegotiated by the City and approved by the City Council. This is an opportunity for the City to require the franchisees to provide an installation that is more of a product of our times and can offer more than just a telephone; and

WHEREAS, there remains an important emergency notification need for these installations, (particularly in districts with low phone ownership rates);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the New York City Department of Information and Technology replace current "Public Pay Telephones (PPT's)" with more useful and better service to New York City communities as part of the new contract to be signed in 2014; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the new appliances provide a menu of real benefits that each community could choose from: including 911 and 311 free access, pedestrian lighting, Wi-Fi, cell battery fast-charge, on-line directions and search access, arts or community announcements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the process for selecting installation design and uses should include a design competition and active public involvement with the ability to comment on potential options;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the new installations' footprint reflect the technology trends in miniaturization and incorporate current state of the art payments methods and problem management systems with a fully transparent reporting to the public on use and repairs on a Community District basis; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that current installations should not be grandfathered and site selection should utilize existing and new modeled after other street furniture (e.g., newsstands) as well as current DOITT guidelines, and should ensure sufficient distance between each other and from corners to avoid sight obstructions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that site selection should include a Community Board comment and review period; as neighborhoods change and develop, the need for Public Pay Telephones also change and should be evaluated at a community level.