



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036

tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512

www.nyc.gov/mcb4

Delores Rubin
Chair

Jesse R. Bodine
District Manager

April 13, 2017

Hon. Bill de Blasio
Mayor
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Melisa Mark-Viverito
Speaker
City Council
City Hall, New York NY, 10007

Re: Neighbor Support Teams and Additional Agency Support for Community Boards

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Speaker Mark-Viverito,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) would like to be on record echoing the significant objections raised by Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer regarding the Request for Expression of Interest for the Neighborhood Support Teams (NST) program. This program duplicates the role and purpose of Community Boards. As you know Community Boards serve as a component of New York City government, and as described on the City Hall website, are "local representative bodies... [which] implement procedures to improve the delivery of City services to the district... and are usually successful in resolving the problems they address".

Moreover, MCB4 believes the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit (CAU) should *already* be providing the services outlined in the NST program. The Community Affairs Unit role is to "liaise with community boards, civic groups, neighborhood associations, and public and private agencies in order to address and bring to the attention of the Mayor and other appropriate City officials issues and problems of concern to communities citywide." MCB4 believes that the NST will create unnecessary competition between communities and not serve the stated needs of the community.

When asked directly at a recent Town Hall held in Chelsea, if Community Boards could expect more resources and support, the response from Mayor De Blasio was, "it would be irresponsible" to commit funds considering the many dire budgetary needs in the upcoming fiscal year. However, MCB4 would like to remind you both that resources and support come in many forms including:

- A strong mandate from the Administration and City Council to agencies to respond to Community Board concerns and requests for information
- Better representation, coordination and response from CAU on district issues requiring agency coordination

- Proactive information sharing regarding policy and general administrative changes
- Access to legal assistance for community boards for the complex land use work Community Boards are mandated to perform
- Access to technological and communications support to better connect with residents
- Recognition by the Administration and City Council of community boards significance and capability

Rather than responding to the Request for Expression of Interest Manhattan Community Board 4 would like to highlight the top quality of life community priorities that are listed in our Statement of District Needs, Response to the Fiscal Year 2018 Preliminary Budget, and District Service Cabinet Meetings. The stated quality of life priorities for Manhattan District 4 are as follows:

- Preventing displacement and evictions of current residents and businesses through interagency coordination, city website updates, and public education campaign of the anti-harassment and demolition restriction protections in special districts.
- Reducing Street Homelessness by way of working with clients, outreach teams, shelter providers, and social service providers
- Reducing sidewalk sanitation and obstruction issues including overflowing street baskets, illegal dumping, refuse from homeless encampments; illegal street furniture, and sidewalk obstructions
- Over saturation of on street bus parking and idling and need for study of a tour bus garage
- More programing and staffing for city parks in CD4

Community Boards are charter mandated to produce Statement of District Needs and Capital and Expense Budget Requests on yearly basis. MCB4 spends hours of their time holding public meetings, collecting data, and drafting official documents that highlight the community's needs. The NST program has the potential to be duplicative of the charter mandated responsibilities of community boards, create competition for scarce resources, and could ultimately serve special interests and not the stated needs of the community articulated in open public community board meetings. The Community Affairs Unit, City Council and the entire Mayoral Administration could better serve residents by working more closely with Community Boards, attend our meetings, have City agencies respond to the budget requests, and most importantly helping educate the public on how Community Boards work with the City for all residents and businesses.

We invite you and your staff to attend future

Sincerely,



Delores Rubin
Chair

Cc Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Corey Johnson, City Planning
Marco A. Carrión, Commissioner, Community Affairs Unit