



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**DELORES RUBIN**

Chair

**JESSE R. BODINE**

District Manager

June 14, 2017

James Patchett  
President and CEO  
New York City Economic Development Corporation  
110 William Street  
New York, NY 10038

RE: Citywide Ferry Service expansion

Dear President Patchett:

Congratulations on the role out of the first phase of NYC Ferry. As a waterfront community, we applaud efforts by the city to improve public transportation that reduces air pollution and traffic congestion by all means possible, including on our waterways.

However, Manhattan Community Board 4 is dismayed that none of the planned ferry landings are located on the west side of Manhattan. Therefore, **we request that The Economic Development Corporation specifically study the west side of Manhattan for ferry service to be phased into the NYC Ferry system.**

**Community District 4**

Manhattan Community District 4 (CD4) is on the west side of Manhattan. It is made up of the neighborhoods of Chelsea and Clinton/Hell's Kitchen, and is bounded by the Hudson River to the west and Avenue of the Americas on the east from West 14<sup>th</sup> Street to West 26<sup>th</sup> Street; and Eighth Avenue from West 26<sup>th</sup> Street to West 59<sup>th</sup> Street.

The neighborhood has experienced tremendous growth in the past decade, experiencing an 18% increase in residential population from the 2000 to the 2010 census.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> NYC Planning, Community Planning Portal, Manhattan Community District 4:  
<http://www1.nyc.gov/site/planning/community/community-portal-1.page?cd=mn04>

CD4 falls within an area that is slated to receive some of the largest influx of populations in the City of New York. Since 2005, MCD4 has gone through three significant rezonings, which created mixed-use neighborhoods allowing for residential development in areas that were only manufacturing, commercial, or otherwise completely undeveloped. The Special West Chelsea District paved the way for large residential populations west of Tenth Avenue; Hudson Yards, currently North America's largest development, will generate a forest of towers over the rail yards west of Penn Station between Tenth and Twelfth Avenues, bringing residential and working populations to an area that has never seen it before; and the West Clinton rezoning changed uses to allow residential and commercial redevelopment in a manufacturing swath of Manhattan's west side along Eleventh Avenue.

Large rezonings to the south of MCD4, in Manhattan Community District 2, including the Hudson Square and St. John's Terminal rezonings, further extend residential development in Western Manhattan.

From 2010 to 2016, the Census Bureau estimated that Manhattan's population increased by 3.6%; that number is expected to at least double by 2020, and because of the aforementioned rezonings, we can expect a large amount of that percentage to move to the west side of Manhattan.<sup>2</sup>

While the potential development of the zonings has not yet been fully realized, development that is taking place is already significant. In 2016, the Department of Buildings issued 2,789 Certificates of Occupancy in CD4, the highest number in the City. As more buildings and sites are developed, that number will continue to increase.

When the L train shuts down in 2019, it will severely limit the abilities of residents and commuters to travel and access parts of Chelsea and the West Village. Ferry service is being used on the east side as a means of mitigation, but no talk of ferry service is planned for the west side.

### **Ferry Service**

The demands of development are further taxing the already over-burdened infrastructure and public transit system. Multiple bus and subway lines service CD4, but there is little public transit in the far western portion of the district along the river.

In 2011, the Economic Development Corporation released the "[Comprehensive Citywide Ferry Study](#)," which outlined a plan for studying the possibility of ferry service in all five boroughs. Only one site was explored in CD4. The methods for study considered existing marine infrastructure, commuter habits, census data, subsidy value, and comparative study to other cities. While these are all appropriate data points, the study ignored rezonings that will allow neighborhoods to increase in density, and therefore, its residential and commuter population.

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<sup>2</sup>NYC Planning, Current and Projected Populations: <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/planning/data-maps/nyc-population/current-future-populations.page>

CD 4's 2.3 miles of waterfront is active and accessible. It has commercial and recreational piers, and is lined by the Hudson River Park. And robust development is taking place west of Tenth Avenue bringing residential communities closer to the water and farther from established forms of public transit.

**CD4 requests that The Economic Development Corporation specifically study the west side of Manhattan for ferry service to be phased into the NYC Ferry system.** In its study, EDC should consider transportation needs when current rezonings have been fully realized. The potential for growth is enormous and the city should be proactively planning for public transit options because of it.

Pier 57, Chelsea Piers, Pier 76, Pier 84, and Pier 97 should all be explored as sites for potential ferry landings.

New York's transit system is robust, but the City should capitalize on its 578-miles of waterfront as a means to give New Yorkers more transit options. While CD4 has worked hard to welcome growth with significant affordable housing developments, we cannot expect to build new communities that are simultaneously starved for public transit options to be stable and thriving.

Cities around the country and world have incredible ferry networks. While we applaud the NYC Ferry system's first and eventually, its second phase, CD4 requests a study of the west side of Manhattan to expand the network to even more New Yorkers.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Delores Rubin  
Chair



Christine Berthet  
Co-Chair, Transportation  
Planning Committee



Yoni Bokser  
Co-Chair, Transportation  
Planning Committee

CC: Hon. Jerry Nadler, U.S. Congress  
Hon. Gale Brewer Manhattan Borough President  
Hon. Brad Hoylman, State Senate  
Hon. Linda Rosenthal, State Assembly  
Hon. Richard Gottfried, State Assembly  
Hon. Corey Johnson, City Council  
Hudson River Park Trust