



The City of New York

Manhattan Community Board 1

Catherine McVay Hughes CHAIRPERSON | Noah Pfefferblit DISTRICT MANAGER

March 2, 2016

Dean Fuleihan
Budget Director
New York City Office of Management and Budget
255 Greenwich Street, 8th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Fuleihan:

I am writing to assess the responsiveness of the Mayor's Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2017 to the Prioritized Budget Requests for FY 2017 submitted by Community Board 1 (CB1).

CB1's number one capital budget priority for FY 2017 was the following:

- Construct 1,000 Pre-K to 5th grade school seats in CB1 in the next 5-year Capital Plan as committed by the DOE and construct a zoned middle school for CB1.

CB1 is pleased that a location for close to 500 school seats was recently found in our district and that the School Construction Authority is currently planning the build-out of the space at 42 Trinity Place. However we remain disappointed by the Department of Education's response to our number one capital budget request which does not address the remaining need for over 500 additional school seats. DOE responded in the following way in the Register of Community Board Budget Requests for the Preliminary Budget Fiscal Year 2017:

- Community District is located in a School District with identified capacity need. Location for school will be based on site and funding availability.

There remains a an urgent need for the additional school seats that we requested, which has been created by the extraordinary growth in our district's residential population in recent years. This has been our number one capital budget priority for over five years.

According to the U.S. Census, the population in Community District 1 (CD1) increased 77% between 2000 and 2010, making it the fastest growing residential neighborhood in New York City. During this period, our district's child population has increased exponentially. The fastest growth occurred in the Financial District, where the population of children aged 0-19 increased 246%, and where there is currently no zoned school. Our research indicates that nearly 6,400 residential units were added to our district between 2010 and 2016, and that another 4,022 residential units are in the pipeline to come online shortly after^{1,2}. Using an average household

¹ [Switaj, Diana & Flippen, Cammie. Manhattan Community Board 1 Child Demographics Update. Dec. 2015. Web.](#)

² U.S. Census Bureau. *Census 2010 Summary File 1*. Esri forecasts for 2012 and 2017.

size of 1.94 multiplied by the number of built and expected housing units in CB 1, our research further indicates that district's population has increased by approximately 12,300 residents from 2010 to 2016 with a projected increase of approximately 7,800 residents within the next couple years.

The recent population growth has raced far ahead of the number of school seats that have been added. It is imperative for the DOE to make a commitment to identify and develop as soon as possible 1,000 new school seats to meet the critical need in our district.

CB1's number two capital budget priority for FY 2017 was the following:

- Provide funds for the design and construction of short to medium term resiliency infrastructure in anticipation of future extreme weather events.

Given the potential for future weather-related events it is crucial that short and medium-term measures such as storm walls, levees and berms be constructed as soon as possible.

At a height of seven feet, CB1 experienced one of the highest inundation levels in Manhattan and unfortunately two people in CB1 drowned and there was billions of dollars of damage to infrastructure, housing and commercial property and utilities. We are concerned about both the short-term and long-term time frame because Lower Manhattan remains largely unprotected approaching the fourth anniversary of Superstorm Sandy and faces an increasing potential for suffering extreme weather events and subsequent financial damage to Lower Manhattan and the City at large.

CB1 has repeatedly made priority requests for the provision of funding for short, medium and long term resiliency infrastructure in its annual budget priorities. In response to these requests for the FY2017 budget priorities, the Economic Development Corporation's (EDC) response was that, "securing funding for this request is outside of EDC's jurisdiction; please contact the agency if you have any questions about the EDC budget process" and "EDC suggests that the Community Board work with federal and state representatives to secure grant funding." CB1 has worked collaboratively with City, State and Federal representatives since October 2012 when Sandy devastated our community.

The City had previously dedicated \$100 million towards resiliency funding and was recently awarded an additional \$176 million through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's National Disaster Resiliency Competition. However, it is unclear if, where and how much will be allocated in CD1. CB1 maintains that it is necessary for the City to allocate \$234 million of dedicated funds to finance the Manhattan Tip project and ensure that CD1 is protected against future extreme weather events. We have attached a resolution passed unanimously at our February 23, 2016 meeting with more details about this matter.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on our number one and two capital budget requests for FY 2017. We urge the city to fund these items.

Sincerely,



Catherine McVay Hughes
Chair

cc: NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio
NYC Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito
Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
NYC Council Member Margaret Chin
Daniel Zarrilli, Director, Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency

/NP/DS

COMMUNITY BOARD #1 – MANHATTAN
RESOLUTION

DATE: FEBRUARY 23, 2016

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: SEAPORT/CIVIC CENTER

BOARD VOTE: 32 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained 0 Recused

RE: Community District 1 Resiliency

WHEREAS: Community District 1 (CD1) is surrounded by water on three sides. At a height of seven feet, CB1 experienced one of the highest inundation levels in Manhattan during Superstorm Sandy, resulting in the drowning of two people in our district as well as extreme property and financial damage; and

WHEREAS: Superstorm Sandy also affected tens of thousands of individuals in Lower Manhattan, including seniors and otherwise vulnerable populations who were displaced or unable to evacuate, and who consequently suffered the extended loss of basic services within their own buildings and in the community, causing dangerous and unsanitary conditions; and

WHEREAS: Community Board 1 (CB1) has played an active and positive role in the public process of Sandy recovery with the City since October 29, 2012; and

WHEREAS: While great strides have been made in CD1 in terms of recovery and relief, there is still much that must be done to rebuild and revitalize what was destroyed, and to protect the area in anticipation of future extreme weather events; and

WHEREAS: Lower Manhattan is in desperate need of immediate resiliency and hardening measures; and

WHEREAS: According to the American Geophysical Union, “combining the newly calculated rise in storm tide with the rise in sea level that has taken place since the mid-1800s, the researchers found that today, waters can be expected to overtop the lower Manhattan seawall -- 1.75 meters (5.74 feet) high -- once every four to five years;” and

WHEREAS: We are concerned about both the short-term and long-term time frame because Lower Manhattan remains largely unprotected approaching the fourth anniversary of Superstorm Sandy and faces an increasing potential for suffering extreme weather events and subsequent financial damage to Lower Manhattan and the City at large; and

WHEREAS: The Lower Manhattan Protect and Connect Project is a vision of comprehensive resiliency investments that are integrated into the community fabric; and

WHEREAS: The Lower Manhattan Protect and Connect Project defines Lower Manhattan to be south of Montgomery Street, including a large portion north of the Brooklyn Bridge which is the northern boundary of CD1 on the east side; and

WHEREAS: In March 2015, the City announced nearly \$15 million for Lower Manhattan resiliency, which included \$6.75 million from the City and State for preliminary design and environmental review and another \$8 million in City capital funds for first-phase flood protection design and implementation at the Battery; and

WHEREAS: The City also recently announced that it will commit an additional \$100 million for this project. The City intends to leverage its own commitment to this project with National Disaster Resilience Competition (NDRC) funds to make the next phase of this project a reality; and

WHEREAS: New York City's Phase 2 application for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) NDRC contains four main components:

1. Coastal Protection for Two Bridges
2. Coastal Protection for Manhattan Tip
3. Stormwater Management through Placemaking
4. Multi-Family Resiliency Retrofit Program

WHEREAS: Of these four components, Coastal Protection for Manhattan Tip, which is defined as the area from the Brooklyn Bridge to the western edge of Battery Park, is the only one that occurs in CD1; and

WHEREAS: The Manhattan Tip project is expected to cost \$234 million in capital costs; and

WHEREAS: The coastal flood protection system for the Manhattan Tip area begins adjacent to the Brooklyn Bridge, connecting to the southern end of the coastal flood protection system for Two Bridges, and continues along the southern tip of the island to the western edge of Battery Park but does not include Battery Park City; and

WHEREAS: The application proposes transitions from fixed walls along the FDR, to deployable panels along the Whitehall Ferry Terminal building, and concludes with a levee system at the perimeter of the Battery; and

WHEREAS: The coastal flood protection system would defend the critical arteries and infrastructure of the region, including the Battery Park Underpass and the entrance to the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel as well as other key assets; and

WHEREAS: The City proposes a levee for Battery Park and aims to add a series of landscape elements to the levee, including constructing a pedestrian and bicycle trail and adding various shading elements, a covered walkway and an outdoor amphitheater; and

WHEREAS: Five deployable pump stations and wet wells would be placed based on the proximity to key portions of the existing sewers and the alignment of the coastal flood protection system along the East River; and

WHEREAS: In September 2015, CB1 adopted a resolution endorsing the Manhattan Tip portion of the proposal, the only proposal in the application affecting CD1, as a medium to long range solution and stating that we remain gravely concerned by the lack of short to medium range strategies to protect CD1 in the event of another large storm; and

WHEREAS: In January 2016, HUD announced that New York City would be awarded \$176 million from the NDRC. It is unclear where those funds will be allocated, or if any will be assigned to projects in Community District 1; and

WHEREAS: The Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency has indicated the possibility that all of the funds will be allocated north of the Brooklyn Bridge, outside of Community District 1, but that HUD will ultimately dictate the allocation of funds awarded through the NDRC; and

WHEREAS: Community Board 1 still has several questions and concerns regarding the \$100 million in resiliency funds designated by the City, and the \$176 million recently awarded through the NDRC:

- What is the order of implementation for proposal projects?
- How will the funds be allocated? What are the priority projects?
- Number two of three items is "stormwater management for NYCHA campuses in the Lower East Side and Two Bridges." What is the plan for south of that area in Community District 1 for stormwater management?
- Will stormwater storage be located under the Brooklyn Bridge for areas north of it? CB1 is currently working with City agencies to restore parks and recreation space in that area, as well as to relocate placard cars from under the bridge to alleviate congestion.
- The section outlining coastal protection for Manhattan Tip states that "the most feasible option for the coastal flood protection system for this area based on preliminary site analysis and basic design concepts transitions from fixed walls along the FDR, to deployable panels along the Whitehall Ferry Terminal building." We would like the City to clarify and provide details on specific types of protection along this stretch.
- Battery Park City and Tribeca are not included in the application. Therefore, CD1 continues to be exposed even if Manhattan Tip is completed; and

WHEREAS: There is still no comprehensive resiliency plan for CD1. The City has issued a Request for Proposals for Montgomery Street through Tribeca, but that engineering study cannot begin for some time due to vetting by the City and we have been told the planning process is expected to take two years; and

WHEREAS: CB1 has repeatedly made priority requests for the provision of funding for short, medium and long term resiliency infrastructure in its annual budget priorities. In response to these requests for the FY2017 budget priorities, the Economic Development Corporation's (EDC) response was that, "securing funding for this request is outside of EDC's jurisdiction; please contact the agency if you have any questions about the EDC budget process" and "EDC suggests that the Community Board work with federal and state representatives to secure grant funding;" and

WHEREAS: Above all, it is of the utmost importance to CB 1 that public participation throughout the planning and design process is implemented in a way that is equitable for all areas affected; and

WHEREAS: CB1 thanks the City for the investment of over \$100 million towards resiliency planning and protection in Lower Manhattan, but the City has never disclosed if, where or how this money will be spent in Lower Manhattan south of Montgomery Street; and

WHEREAS: On February 18, 2016, the City shared a letter dated January 21, 2016 addressed to the New York City Office of Management and Budget from HUD regarding the NDRC, notifying that NYC will receive a grant award of \$176 million. The letter states that HUD reserves the ability to partially fund proposals to ensure geographic diversity and that exact project funding amounts will be conveyed to designated staff; and

WHEREAS: The project is described in the award letter as follows:
“Coastal Protection: Two Bridges (Eastern) This project constructs a floodable coastal protection system from the Two Bridges neighborhood to the Manhattan Tip that incorporates both active (pumps) and passive stormwater management through placemaking features at nine NYCHA sites throughout the neighborhood. Community uses will include small retail and active and passive recreation areas;”
and

THEREFORE
BE IT
RESOLVED

THAT: CB1 reiterates the importance of implementing both short and long term resiliency projects in Lower Manhattan as soon as possible; and

BE IT
FURTHER
RESOLVED

THAT: CB1 requests its fair share of resiliency funding to ensure that our district is protected not only in the future, but in the interim as well.

BE IT
FURTHER
RESOLVED

THAT: CB1 requests detailed information from the City on how the \$176 million awarded by HUD will be allocated, and whether or not the award project includes the Manhattan Tip component of the NDRC application; and

BE IT
FURTHER
RESOLVED

THAT: Regardless of how the \$176 million HUD NDRC grant award and \$100 million in dedicated City funds are allocated, CB1 maintains that it is necessary for the City to allocate \$234 million of dedicated funds to finance the Manhattan Tip project and ensure that Community District 1 is protected against future extreme weather events. We urge our elected officials including Mayor de Blasio, Comptroller Stringer, NYC Council member Chin, Manhattan Borough President Brewer and Public Advocate James to include in this budget cycle whatever funding is necessary to cover the funding shortfall for hardening Manhattan Tip.