



The City of New York
Manhattan Community Board 1

Anthony Notaro, Jr. CHAIRPERSON | Lucian Reynolds DISTRICT MANAGER

February 18, 2020

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

Dear Ms. Hartzog:

I am writing to assess the responsiveness of the Mayor's Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2021 to the Prioritized Budget Requests for FY 2021 submitted by Community Board 1 (CB1).

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 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.

One of CB1's capital budget priorities for FY 2021 was the following:

Mayor's Office of Recovery & Resiliency (ORR) / Economic Development Corporation (EDC)

Provide funds to close the funding gap for Lower Manhattan Coastal Resiliency, for the design and construction of long-term resiliency infrastructure in anticipation of future extreme weather events.

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

At a height of seven feet, CB1 experienced one of the highest inundation levels in Manhattan during Superstorm Sandy. Two people in our district drowned and the storm resulted in 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 years after Superstorm Sandy. We face an increasing potential for suffering extreme weather events and subsequent financial damage to Lower Manhattan and the City at large.

CB1 has worked collaboratively with City, State and Federal representatives since October 2012 when Sandy devastated our community. We thank the City for the funds it has already contributed towards resiliency in Lower Manhattan. The Lower Manhattan Coastal Resiliency projects are underway but there is a substantial funding shortfall. CB1 maintains that it is critical to fully finance all Lower Manhattan Coastal Resiliency projects and ensure that our district is protected in the future. It is unclear where the required funding will come from and we urge the City to find ways of securing additional funding sources for the construction of a more resilient Lower Manhattan. Above all, the Mayor's Office of Recovery & Resiliency, the Economic Development Corporation, and all future authorities, public benefit corporations or interagency dialogs must include representation and participation by members and staff of CB 1. Funds for the demolition and reconstruction of pier/pilings underneath the New Market Building site.

Critical to the hardening of Lower Manhattan's coastline is the concurrent redevelopment of the New Market Building site to close the gap in open space/community space for people who live and work in the eastern portion of CD 1.

Department of Transportation (DOT)

Additional funding of up to \$1.5 million apart from the \$500,000 that was already allocated to expand the scope of the study currently being framed by DOT for traffic and mobility analysis in the Financial District, including east of Broadway and south of Park Row, as well as the WTC area, to address safety, sanitation and crowding issues as noted previously by CB1 and numerous other groups, including for example, the "Make Way for Lower Manhattan" initiative.

CB1 has long requested a study of traffic and mobility issues in our district and specifically in the Financial District area. Our street grid is the oldest in the City and was not built to support a high density, 24/7 mixed-use community with car, truck and bus traffic; high volumes of commercial and residential garbage and recycling; pedestrian traffic from residents, commuters and tourists; and security infrastructure that crowds already narrow streets and sidewalks. We reiterate the request for funding to facilitate a study of these conditions as the first step to establishing a proactive, holistic approach to implementing a plan for better managing the unique street and sidewalk conditions in Lower Manhattan.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) has approved antecedent to this capital budget request and Manhattan Community Board 1 looks forward to working with our elected officials and DOT to make travel throughout the Financial District a more convenient, safer, more hygienic experience for all.

Reconstruction and restoration of cobblestone streets in CD 1 (multiple requests.)

In FY 2019, Community Board 1 staff joined staff from the NYC Department of Transportation and the Office of Councilmember Margaret Chin to survey all the cobblestone streets within Community District 1 after a resident was injured and hospitalized when he tripped on an improperly seated cobblestone block. Together, all three offices generated a list of cobblestone streets that were in need of reconstruction. These streets are listed in multiple capital budget requests, but our understanding is that DOT will package all of the streets together as one large capital project. Any historic cobblestone street reconstructions must be used as an opportunity to implement best practices for pedestrian crossings at intersections with historically sensitive materials that are smoother than the pavers and allow for easier crossings for people of limited mobility and parents and caretakers with strollers. DOT reports that capital funds were requested to meet this request and CB 1 urges the Mayor and City Council to work together to successfully appropriate these funds to protect safety, mobility, and historic character of Lower Manhattan.

Replace non-historic streetlamps with “Bishops Crook” streetlamps or best fitting contextual alternative within CB 1’s historic districts.

Community District 1 is a deeply historic area in the core of New York City as the many streets, buildings, and names harken back to the English and Dutch colonies that precipitated the New York, we know today. There is a wealth of well-preserved historic resources within the District, that are illuminated by modern-looking poles and lamps, many with exposed LEDs that substantially detract from the historic character and cheapen the incredible amount of time and financial resources that are spent every year to maximize the value of these districts and landmarks for all.

Department of Transportation (DSNY)

Install waste containment compartments in the public rights-of-way in areas where residential conversion buildings overwhelm the sidewalks. Such installations may be found in other large cities like Barcelona, Seville, and The Hague.

In 2018, CB 1 worked closely with the Mayor’s Community Affairs Unit and the Department of Sanitation (DSNY) to create strategies to mitigate the mountains of residential trash that choke narrow sidewalks and streets in Lower Manhattan. Unfortunately, there is no way to accommodate an additional pickup run by DSNY trucks and so there needs to be another kind of intervention by the city to create an alternative way for residential buildings to store waste within the public rights-of-way.

Here is a list of key expense budget priorities for FY 2021:

New York Police Department (NYPD)

Fund additional school crossing guards in needed locations, especially near elementary schools. It is also critical to increase the pay rates for school crossing guards and to office full-time positions in addition to part-time positions.

Students who attend schools in CD 1 do so in one of the most congested parts of the city. Colonial-era streets, impatient motorists and dangerous vehicles make for unsafe conditions around our schools. Currently, only 6 of our 9 school sites count on a school crossing guard. We hope to have full coverage in the upcoming fiscal year.

Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

Increase Community Board budgets to \$400,000 which would be the first baseline increase in over 20 years.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Anthony Notaro, Jr. in black ink.

Anthony Notaro, Jr.
Chairperson

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