



**The Council of the City of New York  
Committee on Governmental Operations  
Fiscal Year 2011 Preliminary Budget Hearings**

**Testimony by Noah Pfefferblit, District Manager,  
Manhattan Community Board One**

**Thursday, March 15, 2010, 1:15 p.m.  
250 Broadway 14<sup>th</sup> Floor**

Thank you, members of the City Council, for convening this important hearing and for this opportunity to testify on behalf of Manhattan Community Board One. I am Noah Pfefferblit, the District Manager of Community Board One (CB1).

I am speaking in regard to the proposal in the Mayor's Preliminary Budget to reduce the budgets of all Community Boards by four percent in FY 2010 and eight percent in 2011. The total amount of these cuts would reduce our budget from \$206,895 in FY 2010 to \$160,437 in FY 2011.

It is important to first emphasize that community boards already function with a budget that provides the minimum resources that we need to adequately carry out our responsibilities as mandated by the New York City Charter. As you know, Community Boards have a myriad of responsibilities that are carried out by a very small staff. CB1, with a staff of just three full-time employees and one part-time employee, provides operating support for eleven committees and eight task forces and addresses many issues and inquiries pertaining to the quality of life in Lower Manhattan. Some of our other responsibilities include researching and drafting correspondence, testimonies, and resolutions; scheduling meetings; and responding to various applications such as those for liquor licenses, sidewalk cafes, zoning changes, and newsstands.

Community Boards interact with City, State and Federal agencies to get the word out about their programs and initiatives and work together with these agencies to improve or refine services that they provide or oversee. Strong Community Boards can be important partners to



the City Council and can help the Council to maintain quality of life in the City. One example of this is our work with the Office of Emergency Management, which led to the launch of the Notify NYC program. The important new initiative was tested in Lower Manhattan and is now being expanded to other communities throughout the city.

For a very modest investment in terms of the overall City budget, we significantly increase efficiency and effectiveness throughout City government. We harness the energy and talents of fifty dedicated and concerned volunteer board members, many of whom have special expertise in the areas that we assess, for the public benefit.

CB1 has been particularly impacted by numerous redevelopment projects currently underway and set to continue for at least the next five years. These construction projects can have potentially severe adverse impacts from air and noise pollution to falling debris to traffic congestion. It is critically important for CB1 to have staff and resources in place to monitor these impacts and intervene with government agencies to address problems that arise.

Moreover, Lower Manhattan has the fastest growing residential population in New York City, and this rapid increase is placing a strain on the infrastructure and services in the area. A recent study by CB1 shows that the district's population is projected to grow from 34,420 in the 2000 census to 63,561 when the current development boom concludes in 2013, an extraordinary 85% increase. CB1 is helping to manage this rapid growth by advocating for the needs of our growing community and working in tandem with government agencies to ensure that the quality of life in the area will be sufficient to retain new residents.

We hope that the City Council shares our strong belief that in light of the important functions that we carry out with a budget that is already so limited and has not grown along with that of other agencies in recent decades, Community Boards should be spared any additional cuts. We believe that a decision to not proceed with these reductions would be in keeping with the emphasis that the City Council has placed on effective service delivery and quality of life.

Thank you all very much for the opportunity to testify this afternoon. I hope very much that with your support and assistance we will be able to continue to provide essential services to improve the quality of life in Lower Manhattan.