



COMMUNITY BOARD 9 – MANHATTAN

RESOLUTION

DATE: MARCH 21, 2024

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: LANDMARKS PRESERVATION AND PARKS

RE: Mayoral Preliminary Budget NYC Department of Parks & Recreation \$60 Million Budget Cut

WHEREAS: Mayor Eric Adams recently put forward his First Preliminary Budget proposal, which the New York City Council is currently reviewing; and

WHEREAS: Adams had previously committed to increasing the budget for the Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks Department) to 1% of the total city operating budget, which would mean nearly \$1 billion annually. Adams failed to follow through on that pledge during his First Preliminary Budget by proposing a \$60 million cut to the Parks Department budget. This equals .5% of the overall budget (in comparison, 10% is allocated for the construction of new jails); and

WHEREAS: The parks serving the residents of West Harlem in Manhattan Community Board 9 (CB9M) are chronically underfunded, leading to homeless encampments, broken stairs, unsafe and inadequate playgrounds, uncollected garbage and overgrown invasive weeds that obscure sightlines. Communities of color deserve the same – indeed more – operational and capital funding for parks than affluent areas that often have the additional support of well-funded, private conservancies and foundations.

WHEREAS: Childhood asthma remains the leading cause of pediatric emergency department visits and hospitalizations disproportionately affecting children living in urban environments. The proportion of high-density renters and dense buildings have the highest rate of asthma which is exacerbated in neighborhoods with proximity to high-traffic areas and lack green spaces. Investment in protected urban parks will ensure clean air for the residents of CB9M.

WHEREAS: New York City parks have suffered decades of reduced funding and operating on a skeleton staff, never having fully recovered after the 1970s and 1980s recession. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated how important parks are and called attention to a historic lack of funding for the Parks Department. There was a Parks Department budget cut two fiscal years ago with the onset of COVID-19, and within a matter of weeks the condition of parks across the city degraded significantly just as usage was skyrocketing; and

WHEREAS: There has been a hiring freeze at the Parks Department over the past two years. 250 positions were eliminated just from the most recent cut. That cut has been temporarily masked by federally funded positions that have been working in our parks over the last fiscal year. Nearly 3,200 employees currently working in parks are federally funded, and those positions will expire at the end of June. Additionally, about 250 City Council funded positions are set to expire at the end of June. This totals 3,450 parks positions that will no longer exist on July 1, leaving the City's parks in certain risk of immediately degrading in conditions and in safety; and



WHEREAS: Whereas Manhattan Community Board 9's open spaces such as St. Nicholas Park, Riverside Park, Morningside Park, and others carry cultural and historical significance for the City of New York and Harlem residents and therefore deserve to be properly recognized, maintained, and preserved;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Manhattan Community Board 9 urges Mayor Eric Adams to fulfill his previous commitment of 1% of the total city operating budget to be allocated to the Parks Department. This funding is essential not only to maintain the conditions and safety (via both Parks Enforcement Patrol and Urban Park Rangers) of the parks, but also for protecting natural areas and combating climate change.

**Community Board 9 Manhattan LANDMARKS, PRESERVATION & PARKS
Committee
Resolution in Support of
Establishing a Farmers Market in Montefiore Park Plaza**

WHEREAS, Manhattan Community Board 9 is committed to enhancing the quality of life for all residents, and community members by creating access to healthy and farm fresh foods; and

WHEREAS, A NYC Green Market previously occupied this location at Broadway and 137th Street prior to the development of the Montefiore Park Plaza and was a meaningful benefit to the community providing access to fresh food; and

WHEREAS, Community Board 9, District is a vibrant and diverse part of West Harlem, whose residents face challenges accessing fresh, healthy, and affordable food options; and

WHEREAS, Montefiore Farmers Market shall address food insecurity, promote local agriculture, increase access to composting facilities, and encourage community well-being; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of a Farmers Market in Montefiore Park Plaza shall enable resident's an opportunity to access fresh foods, locally grown produce, and promote healthier dietary choices; and

WHEREAS, A Farmers Market at Montefiore Park Plaza shall stimulate economic growth simultaneously providing opportunities for local farmers, artisans, and entrepreneurs, thus contributing to the overall vitality of our community; and

WHEREAS, Montefiore Park Plaza located at West 137th Street and Broadway is a beloved neighborhood green space ideally suited for a Farmers Market, its proximity to public transportation, and constant foot traffic affords vendors and opportunity to sell fresh foods and serve a wide-ranging population

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Manhattan Community Board 9 fully supports and encourages the establishment of a Farmers Market at Montefiore Park Plaza; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Manhattan Community Board 9 urges local government, elected officials, agencies, and relevant stakeholders to collaborate with residents, community members, local farmers, and organizations to facilitate the creation and successful operation of a Farmers Market at Montefiore Plaza; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Manhattan Community Board 9 commits to actively participate in the planning, promotion, and implementation of the Montefiore Plaza Farmers Market, ensuring that it meets the specific needs and preferences of our diverse community

ADOPTED THIS 21st day of March, 2024.

CB9 Community Board
Chair Victor Edwards
Manhattan Community Board 9
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