



**BROOKLYN COMMUNITY
BOARD 14
FLATBUSH–MIDWOOD COMMUNITY DISTRICT
810 East 16th Street
Brooklyn, New York 11230**

March 25, 2026

Sidyea Sherman
Director
Department of City Planning
120 Broadway, 31st Floor
New York, NY 10271

Sherif Soliman
Director
Office of Management and Budget
255 Greenwich Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Directors Sherman and Soliman,

Pursuant to Section 238 of the New York City Charter, I am writing on behalf of Brooklyn Community Board 14 members and members of our community in reference to the FY 2027 budget register and agency responses.

Before I begin, let me offer you sincere congratulations on your new roles, respectively. We are optimistic that this can be a new beginning for a process that has been deeply flawed and indifferent to community input, requests and civic participation in general.

If you have not reviewed the most recent Community District Needs Statements (CDNS) and their related budget requests, the main concern is procedural. Community boards and their district offices spend countless hours composing the CDNS and deriving from that their budget priorities. These requests are based on direct community input, on service delivery data, on public hearings, and consultations with at least 20 city agencies across all 59 boards. The amount of time and effort that goes into each agency budget request is met with responses from agencies that fail to address the identified needs and are often dismissive of the very communities each agency is meant to serve.

The platform for the CDNS was developed by DCP in 2016. Every year since then there has been an effort to make the input process easier (in terms of using the DCP platform) and both OMB and DCP staff have committed to trying to garner better responses from city agencies. However, improvement in agency answers has not come to fruition. This past year was about the worst, with agency responses varying from absurdly claiming that affordable housing has already been accomplished, to a rather insulting suggestion that community boards contact the agencies directly, as if that's not sewn into the process itself. Part of the problem is that the agencies are allowed to use drop-down menus that provide them with silly options. That's an easy fix. What might be more challenging, but where this board is optimistic with the change in administration, is a more genuine collaboration with community boards to develop a process by which agencies are held accountable to the very real requests rising from the lived experience of community members citywide. We hope to engage with you and your departments to develop a community-based approach and meaningful agency interactions. In the meantime, below are some of CD14's outstanding requests and documentation as to our efforts to "contact the agency" to resolve, chronic, urgent and decades-long issues that our community continues to bear.

DPR:

CD14 is one of the most park-poor communities in the city. With one of the highest percentages of residents who must walk more than a ¼ mile to a public green space, the need for park maintenance and development of potential assets is an important investment in the recreation and all related benefits such as health benefits that are well documented. CB14 has been in support of baselining the DPR budget to 1% of the city budget (addendum A). We also believe that Parks should have its own capital budget. The reliance on City Council member funding presents equity issues in our Community District, which overlaps with five council members.

As a community with nearly 10,000 trees, many of which are old growth, we annually advocate for more robust tree pruning contracts, both for the cycling maintenance contracts and for emergency response. This is a well-established request throughout the year, not just at budget time.

DEP:

Five chronic flooding locations have been brought to the attention of DEP over the last decade at least. CB14 has hosted many committee meetings with DEP and with science and advocacy organizations. The board has co-sponsored town halls, and retained a planning fellow for two research projects focused on flooding issues (addendum B). The district office has sadly, and very much to the point, assisted many residents and businesses with filing claims against the city for flood damage.

DOT and MTA/NYCT:

Engagement by the CB14 District Office with DOT is nearly daily. The portfolio of this Department is vast and community requests in relation to assets already in place (roadways, streetlights, sidewalk conditions, signage requests, etc.) are met with slow or no response and require repeated follow-up. This makes it all the more challenging when DOT presents a plan for new assets, especially when there has been little to no meaningful community engagement. Attached is a letter requesting a better process as it relates to recent plans. The District Office can provide data as to the number of outstanding service delivery request to DOT in general. We believe that there is an easy path to better collaboration in general and that will result in a more meaningful budget process annually (addendum C).

Another decades long matter relates to purview issues over Newkirk Plaza. NYC Transit refers to requests to DOT and DOT refers them to Transit. The attached correspondence demonstrates the resulting issues (addendum D).

DSNY:

This is another agency with which the CB14 District Office interacts nearly daily. The BK14 garage is extremely responsive and helpful and greatly appreciated. However, department policy in the last administration abandoned the practice of cultural sensitivity. New set out times, the imposition of costs on residents, businesses and organizations (such as BIDs) were not only insensitive but inefficient. Our most ardent request is the return of manual litter patrol (MLP) to the baseline budget for DSNY. This would mitigate a lot of the requests for service delivery that we receive in the office. In the last fiscal year, City Council members provided \$87 million dollars to garages for “cleaning.” That’s an inefficient and inequitable provision of a baseline city service. Again, CD14 has five overlapping councilmembers; two provide “cleaning” allocations to BK14. Not only has this been a budget priority for CB14 since Covid, but we have also written directly to the department several times (addendum E).

HPD and HRA:

It's hard to know what to write about HPD's policy statements in lieu of responses to requests to address the affordable housing crisis experienced at the local community level. HRA takes the same approach. Statements that ongoing issues have been addressed, or a recitation of policy are not appropriate responses and should not be a part of DCP's CDNS platform.

NYPD:

For over 30 years, the need for a new precinct house for the 70th precinct has been recognized by the City of New York. Attached are some recent letters of request with greater detail. DCP must maintain this need in the Citywide Statement of Needs; OMB must fund a site search and review of specs for a new building. NYPD should be much better at advocating for this needed resource. The leaking, flooding, mold, scaffolding, and technology problems at this 100-year-old, undersized building where closets are offices and the highest concentration of multiply handicapped residents must navigate their wheelchairs among police cars, is a stain on a usually proud department. Attached are recent letters, but we can go into the archives if you're interested in anything from 1982, 1993, 2006, etc. (addenda F, G, H).

Citywide, Community Boards advocate every year for an increase in crossing guards. NYPD's response that they do not support this request is inexplicable.

OMB:

Last but not least, Community Boards have not had a significant budget increase in two decades. Over that time there's been a 1.5% average annual increase while inflation was 2.4% over the same period. Yet there are more responsibilities and increased technological needs. Attached is CB14's most recent budget testimony on this urgent need (addendum I).

Thank you for accepting Brooklyn Community Board 14's Letter of Comment. While these examples are not exhaustive, I hope they provide perspective on the work we do throughout the year to engage our community members and agency colleagues alike to address community needs and determine resource needs in the budget process. We trust that we can work together to improve the only charter mandated, local community member role in the citywide budget for the years ahead.

Sincerely,



Shawn Campell
District Manager

cc: Hon. Rita Joseph, Hon. Farah Louis, Hon. Inna Vernikov, Hon. Simcha Felder, Hon. Shahana Hanif,
Members, NYC Council



BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 14
FLATBUSH–MIDWOOD COMMUNITY DISTRICT
 810 East 16th Street
 Brooklyn, New York 11230

ERIC L. ADAMS
 Mayor

November 15, 2023

ANTONIO REYNOSO
 Borough President

Hon. Eric Adams
 Mayor

Hon. Adrienne Adams
 Speaker

JO ANN BROWN
 Chair

City of New York
 City Hall

New York City Council
 City Hall – Legislative Chambers

SHAWN CAMPBELL
 District Manager

New York, NY 10007

New York, NY 10007

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Dear Mayor Adams and Speaker Adams:

STEVEN D. COHEN
 Second Vice-Chair

On behalf of Brooklyn Community Board 14 we are writing in support of ensuring that 1% of the New York City budget be dedicated to the Department of Parks and Recreation, as has been advocated by New Yorkers for Parks.

JOSEPH DWECK
 Third Vice-Chair

HINDY BENDEL
 Secretary

Community Board 14 has the highest percentage citywide of residents who live more than a quarter mile away from a park. This is more than an issue of recreation - it has serious public health ramifications. It is critically important that the few public green spaces in our district are well maintained, yet this fails to be the case due to current budget constraints.

SHAHID KHAN
 Member-at-Large

KARL-HENRY CESAR
 Member-at-Large

The CB14 district office receives numerous complaints related to playground conditions. Programming at our local playgrounds is nonexistent. Calls related to security, noise and quality of life complaints require police involvement because the number of PEP officers is so sparse.

ALVIN M. BERK
 Chairman Emeritus

Other DPR assets such as Green Streets and Flatbush Malls are attended to irregularly. Captain Coakly Square (known by the parks department itself as Capt. Oakley Square because the C fell off the sign some years ago) has benefitted from local community members willing to take money out of their own pockets and engage with Partnership for Parks to save this small green space. Dorman Square has had no such luck and volleys between being littered and cleaned but never greened.

The dedication of 1% of the city's budget to DPR would enhance the forestry budget. CB14 boasts 11,239 street trees. A seven-year pruning cycle does not keep up with needs and requests for emergency pruning have increased significantly. Unfortunately related is the increased number of service delivery requests for fallen limbs and branches. Note that the city has paid out over \$29 million dollars in related claims.

An increased parks budget is not simply an expenditure, it is an investment. It hedges against claims, benefits the health of community members and provides environmental benefits.

New Yorkers for Parks also notes, and CB14 agrees that the paradigm for capital funding must change. We believe that DPR should have agency over their own capital budget so they do not rely solely on council allocations. This would ensure that parks are rehabilitated according to need and would address issues of environmental justice. It would also ensure that the expense budget aligns with capital improvements.

We wholeheartedly endorse 1% for Parks and look forward to seeing this proposal, which has been endorsed by the mayor and a critical mass of city council members finally come to fruition in the FY25 budget.

Thank you,

Ed Cen

Edward Cen
Co-Chair
Community Environment,
Cultural Affairs and Economic
Development Committee

Melissa Minnich

Melissa Minnich
Co-Chair
Community Environment,
Cultural Affairs and Economic
Development Committee

cc: Hon. Rita Joseph, NY City Council, 40th CD
Hon. Farah Louis, NY City Council, 45th CD
Hon. Inna Vernikov, City Council, 48th CD
Hon. Kalman Yeger, City Council, 44th CD
Daniel Abram, Project Manager, Research and Policy, New Yorkers for Parks
Sherrise Palomino, Director of Advocacy, New Yorkers for Parks

B



Brooklyn Community Board 14

Serving the Community of Flatbush, Midwood & Parts of Kensington



FUND FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Flooding Resilience in Brooklyn's Community District 14

PAIGE KLOSS
FCNY FELLOW '23-'24

B

C



BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 14
FLATBUSH–MIDWOOD COMMUNITY DISTRICT
810 East 16th Street
Brooklyn, New York 11230

January 29, 2026

Commissioner Mike Flynn
NYC Department of Transportation
55 Water Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10041

Dear Commissioner Flynn,

Congratulations on your return to DOT. We look forward to working with you and have high hopes for a fruitful rapport with DOT under your leadership. I'd like to highlight some of the high-level priorities for Brooklyn Community District 14.

This first one should be easy. Please continue to work with MTA to adopt Newkirk Plaza into the DOT Pedestrian Plaza program. Newkirk Plaza is a deck over the MTA Brighton line station and is in the center of our district. For decades the public purview over the plaza was a matter of debate (or a game of hot potato depending on how formal we want to be about it). MTA claims it is DOT's responsibility and DOT rejects that claim. When DOT initiated the Pedestrian Plaza program in 2016, CB14 advocated for the plaza's adoption into the program. Nearly a decade later, with the appreciated stewardship of Ryan Lynch, DOT agreed. It then took about a year for DOT and MTA to arrive at an agreement. That agreement is now contingent upon a review of structural conditions that MTA asserts will be under contract and underway in March. Please ensure that DOT stays engaged and follows through on this long-awaited amenity in our district. We have a FOIL request pending with MTA for the agreement itself. We have a thoroughly researched letter with 14 supporting documents and a trove of additional materials on Newkirk Plaza. I would be happy to share more.

The next ongoing concern is related to the bike lane network expansion in CD14. I believe that this has been a source of mutual frustration between the department and the community. I am confident that a great deal can be resolved with meaningful public engagement and CB14 would like to be helpful to that end. There is a plan in place and the community members in the north of the district are eager for it to be implemented and were disappointed that it was put on hold due to "contractor capacity." This pause coincided with the postponement in southern end of the district pending engagement with community members south of Avenue H. To some, the pause in the northern end seemed punitive and related to community issues in the southern end of CD14. I trust that we can work together to address concerns from a whole host of perspectives.

A seasonal concern but one that is very relevant as I write this just following the 10 inches of snow on the ground from the January 25th storm is snow removal on DOT assets. In this district, DOT does this never. I

checked with the BK14 DSNY garage and we couldn't remember a time that DOT removed snow from road bridge sidewalks of which we have over a dozen, most of which have sidewalks on both sides of the street. Recently, our DOT liaison responded to our request for removal on local road bridges by stating the total number of road bridges in Brooklyn and the need to prioritize, suggesting that CD14 will never be prioritized. On Tuesday, Councilmember Farah Louis' office amplified a community complaint about Ocean Avenue, DOT responded with a mound of salt over the still un-shoveled walk. Unacceptable! If homeowners don't clear the sidewalk, they are subject to a ticket. When DOT does not clear sidewalks, there is no consequence. Typically, DSNY is blamed! I think we can work together to do better.

Generally, we struggle with responsiveness from DOT. The lines of communication between units and the Brooklyn office and the number of times we have to follow up on both simple and discrete requests to longer, more project-oriented requests do not meet the standard of other agencies. To be fair, I recognize that DOT's expanding portfolio is more varied than many other agencies and try to take that into account. I recognize that the requests we have range from service delivery to programs and initiatives to longer term capital projects. I recognize that DOT must coordinate with more agencies than most other agencies. Respect! Nevertheless, I think improved communication and timely response would go far to establish mutual benefit.

One example of how this impacts our ability to address community concerns is a saga related to traffic calming requests in the vicinity of Avenue H and Argyle Road. This includes a request for speed humps on Argyle Road between Avenue H and Foster, which was approved over a decade ago but never materialized. CB14 submitted a new request only to have it denied. The reason for the denial does not match up to past records or the fact that they were installed on the adjacent street, where it makes less sense (happy to provide support for that claim.) We were asked to submit yet another new request following a site visit with DOT, Councilmember Farah Louis and residents only to have it denied again within days. We have asked for the study, followed up twice and are still without answers.

Perhaps more resources in the Borough Commissioners' offices would help. Maybe a review of how units respond to the borough offices so that borough offices can respond to local public offices would help. Community boards are the liaison between our respective communities and all city agencies. We are here to facilitate, assist and partner – and we do! However, there is room for improvement, and I look forward to it.

With appreciation,



Shawn Campbell
District Manager

cc: Hon. Farah Louis, 45th CD
Hon. Rita Joseph, 40th CD
Hon. Inna Vernikov, 48th CD
Hon. Simcha Felder, 44th CD
Hon. Shahana Hanif, 38th CD
Keith Bray, Brooklyn Borough Commissioner DOT



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ERIC L. ADAMS
Mayor

ANTONIO REYNOSO
Borough President

KARL-HENRY CESAR
Chair

SHAWN CAMPBELL
District Manager

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

EDWARD CEN
First Vice-Chair

HINDY BENDEL
Second Vice-Chair

SHAHID KHAN
Third Vice-Chair

FLORENCIA CHANG-AGEDA
Secretary

ERIC OST
Member-at-Large

DEBORAH VALENTIN
Member-at-Large

ALVIN M. BERK
Chairman Emeritus

March 25, 2024

Paige Graves
General Counsel,
New York City Transit Authority
2 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

Dear Ms. Graves,

Since 2012, Community Board 14 members and the community at large have advocated for a settlement of the jurisdictional issues related to Newkirk Plaza (the “Plaza”) by urging its admission into the Department of Transportation’s (DOT’s) Pedestrian Plaza program. It is our current understanding that DOT has approached MTA/New York City Transit Authority (“MTA/NYCTA”) about this issue, but the matter has stalled in MTA’s real estate unit. If MTA/NYCTA cannot or will not settle on an agreement with DOT, NYCTA must nonetheless accept its responsibility to participate in the maintenance and security for the Plaza, whose open-air publicly accessible walkways provide, among other things, the only access to the Plaza subway station serving the B & Q trains.

As set forth herein, after exhaustive review of the underlying documentation, there is clear and convincing proof that NYCTA, as the long-term leaseholder of the portions of the Plaza nearest the center cut-out created for the subway station – and easement holder over additional property within the Plaza – bears responsibility, at a minimum, to participate in the preservation and security of the Plaza which our residents and your commuters utilize daily. In short, as a way to resolve the prolonged stalemate on this matter, we ask for NYCTA, as a shared party to the Plaza, to join with DOT and/or the Flatbush Development Corporation (“FDC”) and neighboring property owners to enter a joint maintenance and security agreement allowing for all affected parties to participate in a solution for the Plaza’s future.

By way of background, CB14 has strived for decades to resolve the issues plaguing the Plaza. (Attached hereto as **Exhibit A** is representative prior correspondence, including a 1992 letter from NYCTA to then-Congressman Schumer advising that a title search was to be completed to resolve the issue – this apparently was never done.) As a summary of CB14’s work, we set forth the following:

- In 1986, a coalition was formed to identify a mix of public and private funding for sanitation, maintenance, and lighting at the Plaza.
- In 1992, then-Borough President Howard Golden allocated \$500,000 to fix the sidewalks.
- In 1994, NYCTA repaired the surface of the Plaza in order to protect their station beneath.
- In 2011 and 2018, DOT agreed to paint the corrugated metal walls along Newkirk and Foster Avenues.
- In 2018, NYCTA agreed to repair the iron fencing inside the Plaza to protect their assets below.

Of note, none of these projects were improvements – they were necessary repairs.

Most recently, during the de Blasio administration, then-Borough President Eric Adams was a signatory to efforts to reach a resolution to these problems. (Attached hereto as **Exhibit B** is the letter to the de Blasio administration, dated January 29, 2020, which did not receive a further response.) Now that Eric Adams is Mayor, the timing seems propitious for reaching an acceptable solution to this decades-long wait.

With the aid of Lucy Phillips, CB14's 2022 Planning Fellow from the Fund for the City of New York, as well as years of work by a local researcher, Dr. Joseph Enright, CB14 has compiled the following evidence explaining why NYCTA is responsible for part of the maintenance of the Plaza. As set forth below, due to the apparent bifurcated control of the Plaza, and the prior and continued commitment from the FDC, it is clear that the most appropriate solution to ensure the future protection and vibrancy of the Plaza is to have NYCTA enter and fund a joint maintenance and security agreement for the Plaza.¹

History of the Plaza

The origin of the Plaza dates back to the creation of the two track Brooklyn, Flatbush and Coney Island Railroad in 1878, a surface line which transported primarily recreation-seeking passengers to a new Brighton Beach resort at the southern edge of Kings County.² Today's Newkirk Plaza stop was originally known as the "Parkville" station, which was situated on the north side of Newkirk Avenue, on the eastern side of the tracks.³ The original right-of-way was 50 feet wide. (Attached hereto as **Exhibit E** are the original granting documents from around 1878 which we obtained from the MTA. See, for instance, the middle of page 2 of same for a reference to the 50 ft. width – many contemporaneous publications reference the same dimension.) As development came to the area along this Brighton line, it became necessary to either elevate or depress the tracks below ground to avoid accidents and allow for a freer flow of traffic at roadway crossings. Thus, in 1903 New York State formed the Brooklyn Grade Crossing Commission (the

¹ It should be noted that most recently, in 2022 the FDC filed an application with the DOT for the Plaza to enter its Pedestrian Plaza Program. As with the other similar efforts since 2012, the DOT has not yet responded to this filing. Notwithstanding that it does not appear the DOT owns or controls any portion of the Plaza, it still appears that the best result would be, with the cooperation of NYCTA, that the Plaza be designated as a Pedestrian Plaza under this Program.

² "History of the Work of Eliminated Grade Crossings by the Brooklyn Grade Crossing Commission," Brooklyn Grade Crossing Commission, April 30, 1918, at 9. (Attached hereto as **Exhibit C**.) A video based largely on contemporaneous photos and documents has been created by CB14 to illustrate the unique history discussed herein and can be accessed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LT_1LQP73s.

³ Sanborn Map from 1890, Map 499. (Attached hereto as **Exhibit D**.)

“Commission”), which inter alia mediated issues involving the newly re-named South Midwood station.⁴ By this point, the rail line had been acquired by a subsidiary of Brooklyn Rapid Transit (“BRT”), who now operated it as a busy electrified daily commuter line for the increasingly developed areas of southern Brooklyn.⁵

The Commission approved a plan to depress a four-track railroad 15 feet below grade and create an express station at South Midwood, between Newkirk and Foster Avenues. This meant that the existing 50 ft. right-of-way would need to be expanded to allow for two island platforms accommodating local and express trains, and thick retaining walls to ensure structural stability for the station.⁶ (Attached hereto as **Exhibit F** is the current tax map showing the dimensions of Newkirk Plaza as an unmapped lot, which is greater than 50 ft. in width.) To accomplish this, the BRT negotiated easements with property owners: a 2-foot easement for each retaining wall and, in exchange for an additional 12.5-foot easement on each side of the right-of-way, it would deck over the entire length and width of the extra easement. (Attached hereto as **Exhibit G** is the original easement-granting documentation we obtained from the MTA.) These original granting documents provided to the neighboring property owners, among other things, “. . . the right to use as a yard, all that part of the roof over the station platform to be erected by [the BRT] . . .”⁷ Most telling is the grant by Henry F. Newbury and his wife Anna E. Newbury (see Exhibit G at page 13), which provides in relevant part that the easement shall be:

“. . . conditioned upon the faithful performance by [the BRT] of the following covenants, I. That [the BRT] shall and will ***establish and forever maintain*** . . . a suitable platform or walk not less than ten (10) feet in width at all points of the length, except at its end portions adjacent to Foster and Newkirk Avenues, where such walk or platform shall be widened to a line parallel to and distant not less than twenty-two (22) feet, nine (9) inches westerly from the easterly line of the end portions of the strip of land herein described, for the use of passengers and others in entering and leaving said building, and such platform or walk shall be located ***and forever maintained*** at for about the level of the surface of the strip of land described herein . . . and such platform or walk shall at its most westerly portion be provided with a guard railing or fence, not less than four (4) feet, six (6) inches in height, ***which shall be forever maintained*** . . .”.

(Emphasis added.)

These same easement rights carried through subsequent deeds for the neighboring properties. (Attached hereto as **Exhibit H** is a compendium of deeds compiled by Dr. Enright which reference the easement grants, and in particular the Newbury easement.)⁸

⁴ See note 2, at 5. See also, “Improvement of the Brighton Beach Line of the Brooklyn Heights Railroad Company,” *Electric Railway Review*, December 1906, at 968. The station’s name would be changed again in 1907 to Newkirk Avenue, and to Newkirk Plaza in 2011.

⁵ See note 2.

⁶ “Improvement of the Brighton Beach Line of the Brooklyn Heights Railroad Company,” note 4, at 969.

⁷ See Exhibit G at the top of page 3 and the middle of page 8. See also, “Improvement of the Brighton Beach Line of the Brooklyn Heights Railroad Company,” note 4, at 969.

⁸ Accompanying documentation is available upon request.

Ownership of the Plaza

These easement agreements outline the understood operation and ownership of the Plaza. Specifically, the portion of the Plaza deck closest to the center cut-out, and within the original 50 ft. right-of-way, appears to be controlled by Transit (as successor to the BRT), and the balance of the Plaza, while part of the easement grant to the BRT, was controlled by the adjacent property owners.⁹ In addition, within the easement documents, the adjacent property owners were granted “a right of way over so much of the land belonging to the [BRT], . . . as lies west of a line drawn parallel to and distance six feet westerly from the easterly boundary line of the land . . . for the benefit only of the owners of the premises herein described, their employees, tenants or persons doing business with them, or either of them”.¹⁰

It should be noted that for the westerly side of the Plaza, a large multi-state realty corporation, Wood, Harmon & Company, operating as Greater New York Development Company, had purchased a large section of the vacant land adjoining that right-of-way and conveyed a portion thereof to the railroad in March, 1906, in exchange for easements, the nature of which could not be located other than by citations in subsequent deeds to “Liber 50, Page 316, dated 3/9/1906.” [Note: Contemporaneous litigation revealed Wood, Harmon – and the east side property owners as well – were all eager recipients of thousands of pounds of dirt excavated from the Cut in order to bring their vacant land up to the grade level of the new decks.] The only other property on the west side was a long-standing hotel abutting the railroad’s right-of-way at the northwest end, at the corner of Marlborough Road and Newkirk Avenue. A reference in litigation related to construction of the retaining walls indicates the railroad via the Commission obtained control of at least part of the property by condemnation, also in March 1906.¹¹ The lack of an easement with the recalcitrant hotel owner explains why the deck on the west side ends at precisely where that hotel sat.

Simply put, the BRT and the adjacent parcel owners appear to have created a mutual access agreement across each other’s portions of the Plaza. Further, the Newbury grant outlines how the BRT, and now NYCTA, bear the responsibility for maintenance of the Plaza.

In 1915, the aforementioned Henry Fitch Newbury tested this designation of respective control by building a “spite” fence around his portion of the Plaza, leaving the remaining eight feet nearest the portion of the Station open to the sky as an accessway to the subway station.¹² The magistrate court’s dismissal of the charge against Newbury, prompted by disgruntled community members, demonstrates the original parties’ understanding of the easement agreements. In short, aside from maintenance of the retaining wall below the Plaza, the portion of the Plaza on the adjacent property owners’ side would be controlled by the respective owners, while the portion within the original 50 ft. right-of-way would remain under the control and operation of the BRT and its successors.

⁹ See generally Exhibits G and H.

¹⁰ See id.

¹¹ See id. The lack of development on the five lots south of the corner hotel that comprise the west side of the Plaza until 1916 to 1921 might have been attributable to the absence of a Newbury-like easement with Wood, Harmon. It also might explain why it was agreeable to the demands of Newbury et alia – who developed the east side in 1910 – that no entrance to the Station be built on the east side so as to grant them a “retail monopoly,” and why that west entrance was not built until November 1915.

¹² “Talk of Spite Fence Arouses Flatbush,” Brooklyn Eagle, August 24, 1915. (Attached hereto as Exhibit I.)

Moreover, the development of the Plaza supports the view that the BRT and its successors have never relinquished control over the portion of the Plaza within the original 50 ft. right-of-way. In 1953, the City and NYCTA entered a long-term lease to set forth the control that NYCTA has held ever since. (Attached hereto as Exhibit J is a copy of the lease.) Therein, the “Leased Property” is defined as, in relevant part, “. . . the transit facilities and any other materials, supplies and **property incidental to or necessary for the operation of such transit facilities . . .**” (Emphasis added.) As the walkway leading to the Newkirk Plaza subway station is indeed necessary for the operation of the transit stop, it is part of the property still under control of NYCTA. This conclusion is supported by the subsequent behavior by NYCTA. In 1977, NYCTA entered an agreement with FDC and the Newkirk Plaza Merchants Association to repave the entire Plaza. (Attached hereto as Exhibit K is the Agreement.) While the Merchants Association was designated as having sole responsibility over repairs to the pavers, NYCTA still “. . . **agrees that it shall continue to be responsible for those portions of Newkirk Plaza which are in any way subject to its jurisdiction.**” (Emphasis added.) This would include that portion of the Plaza within the original 50 ft. right-of-way. The issue of maintenance of the sidewalk outside of the Newkirk Plaza station came up again in 1991, as evidenced by a *Daily News* article. It does not appear a solution was reached until 1994 (discussed above), as NYCTA advised at the time that they were going to “review” the deeds. (Attached hereto as Exhibit L is a portion of this article.)

The same continued responsibility appears to be applicable to the western side of the Plaza – from the very beginning. In February 1916, Henry Fitch Newbury sued the BRT, requesting a temporary injunction to prohibit it from using the entrance on the western side of the station which had opened in November 1915. Newbury lost this case, presumably (there is no published opinion – Newbury died 18 months after his filing) because the court determined that the BRT retained control over the portion of the Plaza still within the 50 ft. right-of-way.¹³

Through the ensuing decades of the original easement grants, the BRT passed control of what became known as the Brighton Line to various subsidiaries, until, in 1940, the City of New York took control of the BRT’s successor, the BMT. (Attached hereto is Exhibit M which is the grant of same.) In 1953, NYCTA was created to manage the overall subway system and became a subsidiary of the MTA when that agency was created in 1968. This has been the ownership structure ever since. Exhibit N provides a timeline outlining the various owners, 1878-Present.

As such, the portion of the Plaza within the original 50 ft. right-of-way (approximately six to ten feet on either side) appears to be currently controlled by, and quite clearly the responsibility of NYCTA, as owner of the long-term leasehold over same. As NYCTA appears to control, and the city owns, at least a portion of the Plaza (something which would need to be surveyed to confirm the exact location of same), the duty falls partially on them to maintain and allow for proper policing of same. Arguably, maintenance responsibility for at least 10’ of the Plaza (and wider at the northerly and southerly ends) would fall under NYCTA, based on the original Newbury grant. In general, liability for sidewalks within the City falls on abutting property owners.¹⁴ Here, however, the sidewalk is partially located upon the property controlled by NYCTA. As such, general premises liability rules would apply. This fact alone should motivate NYCTA to arrive at a suitable solution.

¹³ “Would Close Entrance at Newkirk Station,” Brooklyn Standard Union, February 14, 1916. (Attached hereto as Exhibit N.)

¹⁴ See New York City Administrative Code § 7-210 and § 19-152

Conclusion

Taken together, the above information and analysis points to no other conclusion but that NYCTA retains certain responsibilities over the maintenance and security of at least a portion of the Plaza. Notwithstanding the method, with NYCTA, FDC and the neighboring property owners' cooperation, it would appear that the clear solution is to have participation by all representative parties in achieving a future maintenance and security plan for the Plaza. If MTA/NYCTA has not found a way to accept DOT's stewardship via the Pedestrian Plaza program, clearly the second-best path forward is to negotiate and fund a joint maintenance and security agreement to ensure the future vitality of the Plaza and the surrounding community.

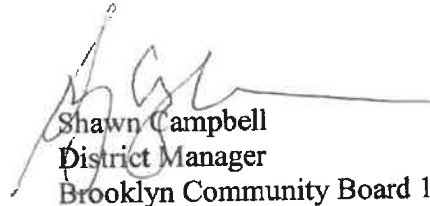
Just last month, CB14 rejected an OCM application for a new cannabis dispensary in the Plaza due to the uncertainties involved in the continued policing and maintenance of this important public space within our District. As the urgency in solving this issue remains strong, given the ongoing and constantly emerging issues at the Plaza, we respectfully request your response without delay to schedule a meeting to discuss further.

Thank you for your consideration of the foregoing, and we look forward to your response.

Best regards,



Karl-Henry Cesar
Chair
Brooklyn Community Board 14



Shawn Campbell
District Manager
Brooklyn Community Board 14

cc: Janno Lieber, President and CEO, MTA
Richard Davey, President, NYCT
Ydonis Rodriguez, Commissioner, DOT
Hon. Kevin Parker, NYS Senate, 21st District
Hon. Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn, NYS Assembly, 42nd District
Hon. Farah Louis, NYC Council, 45th CD
Robin Redmond, Executive Director, FDC
Gregory Alvarez, Co-Chair, CB14 Housing and Land Use Committee

E.



BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 14
FLATBUSH–MIDWOOD COMMUNITY DISTRICT
810 East 16th Street
Brooklyn, New York 11230

January 30, 2026

Javier Lojan
Commissioner
Department of Sanitation New York
125 Worth Street
New York, NY 10013


Dear Commissioner Lojan,

I am pleased that we will be able to continue to partner with the department under your leadership. CB14 is fortunate to work in close partnership with BK14 and appreciate and value their service to our community here in central Brooklyn.

I'll certainly begin with a sincere thanks to the department and especially to BK14 for the tremendous amount of work in challenging and uncomfortable conditions after the January 25th snowstorm. My office continues to be in frequent contact with Superintendent Rob McKenna and his team. They really stepped up.

However, I have expressed concerns with some DSNY policies and their impact on baseline services in our district and the city writ large. I hope that now that the city is under new leadership, DSNY will be able to address these issues. For several years this community has advocated for the return of Manual Litter Patrol (MLP). We hope that an equitable equivalent will be considered. DSNY has inexplicably come to rely on Councilmember funding for cleaning. In FY 25 city council returned \$87 million to DSNY, mostly for what would have been called MLP in the past. Five council members overlap with CD14 and only two of them grant funding to DSNY. This means that only segments of the district are regularly addressed by MLP. To add insult to injury, DSNY officials posited at budget consultations that BK14 has more MLP than ever. Upon review of that statement, it was determined that anytime even a single MLP action is taken by any truck in the district, DSNY counts that as an MLP truck for that day. If so, that manipulation of data is inefficient, inequitable and outrageous. MLP should be a baseline budget item applied equally across all districts in NYC and certainly within them.

As policy relates to set-out times, I'm glad to see that some progress has been made here. However, it's unfortunate that New York State legislatures felt that they had to act because of NYC inaction. Set-out times should be one hour before sundown. This would benefit elderly residents in our community who have expressed concerns about having to bring refuse to the curb in the dark. It would also address the many complaints we have received from members of our community who observe the sabbath and who cannot bring garbage to the curb after sundown on Friday. Enforcement has been aggressive in this district. There was a time when DSNY would practice more cultural sensitivity in the community. I am hopeful that we can return to that and change the rule to allow residents to take garbage out in the light of day.



Another pressing concern is DSNY's continued vendor enforcement failure. The lack of meaningful enforcement has ingrained illegal vendors at some locations. Since the DSNY vendor enforcement unit is not in our community daily, they don't know who has been a longtime vendor, who is vending as a cover for illicit activities, or who is just trying to get by and would be best served by education and redirection. Far too much time passes between DSNY making a preliminary visit and returning to act. Far too much time passes between the initial action and follow up to ensure DSNY's action resolved the issue.

Please note we have no complaints about our local garage. Superintendent McKenna and his team at BK14 continue to provide excellent collection services, cleaning within their responsibilities and capacity and responding to requests with swift expertise. However, this current system is not efficient or effective, and it troubles me because it is vastly inferior to previous systems.

I look forward to hearing back from you as to what steps will be employed by your department to improve conditions in CD14 and throughout the city.

Thank you,



Shawn Campbell
District Manager

cc: Hon. Rita Joseph, 40th Council District
Hon. Simcha Felder, 44th Council District
Hon. Farah Louis, 45th Council District
Hon. Inna Vernikov, 48th Council District
Hon. Shahana Hanif, 39th Council District



F

**BROOKLYN COMMUNITY
BOARD 14
FLATBUSH-MIDWOOD COMMUNITY DISTRICT
810 East 16th Street
Brooklyn, New York 11230**

ANTONIO REYNOSO
Borough President

**KARL-HENRY
CESAR**
Chairperson

**SHAWN
CAMPBELL**
District Manager

April 9, 2025

Daniel Garodnick, Director
Department of City Planning
120 Broadway, 31st Floor
New York, N.Y. 10271

Dear Director Garodnick:

This is to advise that pursuant to Section 204 of the New York City Charter, Brooklyn CB14 is offering the following comments regarding the Citywide Statement of Needs for City Facilities for Fiscal Years 2026-27 (SON).

First, while there are no current plans to locate facilities in Community District 14, we ask that we be advised should a CD 14 site come into consideration for facilities still to be determined.

Second, the citywide SON notes the need for a new 70th Police Precinct house. However, the record states that it was first proposed in 2020-21. ***This is incorrect.*** The precinct house has been repeatedly identified as a need for over 30 years and was in the City's capital budget during the Guiliani administration in the 1990s. Given the dearth of space in CD14, we ask (***again***) that the criteria for this necessary facility be reviewed. The current criteria require space for a 45,000 square foot building and 90 parking spaces. A site that offers less square footage might still be more appropriate than the 18,000 square foot dilapidated, antiquated and poorly situated current facility. We request (***again***) that NYPD provide a list of all sites that have been reviewed and the basis for rejecting those sites.

The history of attempts to relocate this precinct house goes back over 30 years. In 2006, the NYPD requested that Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) begin property acquisition at 1326 Ocean Avenue. In 2007 NYPD set aside \$30 million dollars for the acquisition of property and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) committed additional funding. Attached to this correspondence is an optimistic news article from 2008.

Subsequently, a previous ULURP was declared to still be applicable, and construction was set to begin in 2013. The project did not move forward.

In 2014 CB14 met with NYPD during budget consultations with NYPD and were given a somewhat encouraging response to this request. We were told that NYPD was in fact budgeting to rebuild or relocate older precinct houses. However, there was no progress until 2018, when the city allocated \$1 million to conduct a scoping study to determine if the current site could support a new building. The result of the study was that the lot is big enough to demolish the old precinct house and erect a new building that would be large enough to accommodate a new one. However, the issues of parking or competing for space with the adjacent facilities and the fact that the precinct house is located at the outer edge of the precinct could not be resolved. The recommendation was to fund a new site search. For two years, OMB sat on this NYPD request. The subsequent site search has yielded no proposed locations to date.

The current precinct house is one of the oldest in New York City. It is in disrepair – plumbing and heating problems are frequent. The telecommunications system is antiquated. Furthermore, the precinct house is located adjacent the Adapt Community Network (fka UCP) and the Belsky house – a supportive residence for multiply handicapped individuals. The residents must squeeze their wheelchairs between the buildings, police cars and buses dropping off Adapt clients. It is a sad irony that despite the density of mobility impaired neighbors, the 70th Police Precinct is not compliant with the Americans with Disability Act.

CB14 has asked if the city could consider purchasing the program site for Adapt Community Network, located at 175 Lawrence Avenue, to allow that organization to relocate so that the precinct house could expand on Lawrence Avenue? Is DCP working with OMB and NYPD Capital/Facilities on a solution to a worsening condition?

Where do you suggest we get answers?

Thank you,



Shawn Campbell

cc: Hon. Rita Joseph, 40th CD
Hon. Farah Louis, 45th CD
Hon. Inna Vernikov, 48th CD
Hon. Shahana Hanif, 39th CD
Councilmember Elect Simcha Felder, 44th CD
Commissioner Jessica Tisch, NYPD



BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 14
FLATBUSH-MIDWOOD COMMUNITY DISTRICT
810 East 16th Street
Brooklyn, New York 11230

G

BILL DE BLASIO
Mayor

April 27, 2021

ERIC L. ADAMS
Borough President

Hon. Mathieu Eugene

JO ANN BROWN
Chair

40th CD

SHAWN CAMPBELL
District Manager

900 Rogers Avenue

Brooklyn, NY 11226

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

GAIL L. SMITH
First Vice-Chair

Hon. Farah Louis

45th CD

STEVEN D. COHEN
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1434 Flatbush Aveune

Brooklyn, NY 11210

JOSEPH DWECK
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Hon. Kalman Yeger

44th CD

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Secretary

4424 16th Ave

Brooklyn, NY 11204

SHAHID KHAN
Member-at-Large

KARL-HENRY CESAR
Member-at-Large

ALVIN M. BERK
Chairman Emeritus

Dear Councilmembers,

Community Board 14 has advocated for the relocation of the 70th Precinct House for over three decades. This need has been recognized by and even partially funded by several administrations. We are at a new crossroads where the issue has stalled, and your continued support is needed.

In 2018, the City allocated 1million dollars to conduct a scoping study to determine if the current site could support a new building. The result of the study was that the lot is big enough to demolish the old Precinct House and erect a new building that would be large enough to accommodate a new one. However, the issues of parking or competing for space with the adjacent facilities and the fact that the Precinct House is located at the outer edges of the Precinct could not be resolved. The recommendation was to fund a new site search, but the Office of Management and Budget has not yet approved this request.

According to the NYPD Capital Unit, *“The 70th precinct CPSD was completed in Summer 2018 and was presented to OMB. The project focused on options for renovation or reconstruction on the current site. The preferred option was for a total building replacement. While the preferred option provided a suitable building for the command, the current parking and traffic issues in the area would not be improved. As a result, a new space request was submitted to OMB in January 2019. To this date, OMB has not approved this request.”*

For two years, OMB has sat on this NYPD request! We ask you, the councilmembers who overlap with this District to direct OMB to greenlight a new sight search.

As you all know, the current Lawrence Avenue precinct house is one of the oldest in New York City. Annually the City allocates funding to repair plumbing and heating, the crumbling facade, and flooding issues. The copper wire telecommunications system is antiquated. Furthermore, the precinct house is located on one of the most congested streets in the District: adjacent to the Joseph Belsky House, a 73-unit assisted living facility for severely handicapped individuals, and close by two busy facilities operated by Adapt Community Network fka United Cerebral Palsy of New York City.

Belsky House residents are forced to squeeze their wheelchairs between the buildings and a large number of vehicles attendant to an active Police precinct. Police vehicles must compete for limited space with the many buses serving these clients. It is a sad irony that despite this dense concentration of mobility-impaired neighbors, the 70th Police Precinct itself is not architecturally compliant with the Americans with Disability Act.

The history of CB14's efforts to relocate this aging facility goes back almost three decades. In 2006, the NYPD requested that the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) begin property acquisition at 1326 Ocean Avenue, which had been taken through the necessary ULURP steps to enable its use as the new precinct site. In 2007 the NYPD capital plan set aside \$30 million for the acquisition of property, and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) stated its commitment to identify additional funding. Construction was set to begin in 2013. Due to changes in the economy and resulting budgetary constraints, the project did not move forward.

In the meantime, the Mayor has identified 105 million dollars to create a brand new Precinct and build its house in Queens due to the availability of federal stimulus funds. Suitable lots within Community Board 14 have been identified, but without an approved site search, nothing can move forward. A few members of the Public Safety Committee and I would appreciate if we can arrange a brief meeting with you to discuss how to move this issue forward.

We look forward to speaking with you all.

Sincerely,
Jo Ann Brown

cc: Hon. Eric Adams, Brooklyn Borough President
Deputy Inspector Joseph Notaro, Commanding Officer, NYPD Facilities Division
Tzvi Plotsker, Co-Chair Public Safety Committee
Brian Cunningham, Co-Chair, Public Safety Committee
Joe Dweck, Third Vice-Chair, Member, Public Safety Committee

H

The history of community efforts to relocate the 70th Police Precinct goes back almost three decades:

- 1985 CB 14 wrote to Commissioner Benjamin Ward requesting a site selection analysis for the relocation of the 70th Precinct House
- 1987 Site selection analysis completed – 1326 Ocean Avenue identified
- 1987 Land Use Review Application submitted
- 1988 Completion of City Environmental Quality Review: Negative Declaration
- 1989 City Planning adopts resolution to acquire site
- 1996 Approval to release capital funds
- 2004 DCAS Division of Real Estate Services indicates NYPD removed this project and all other new construction projects not underway in order to meet mandated budget cuts
- 2006, the NYPD requested that the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) begin property acquisition at 1326 Ocean Avenue
- 2007 the NYPD capital plan set aside \$30 million for the acquisition of property, and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) stated its commitment to identify additional funding
- June 2008 – Environmental Assessment Statement completed
- Design was to be completed in 2011
- Construction was set to begin in 2013
- January 28, 2014 Community Board reiterates request to Commissioner William Bratton

State of Repair and Location

The current Lawrence Avenue precinct house is one of the oldest in New York City. Despite NYPD's efforts to maintain and repair it, plumbing and heating problems are unavoidable. The copper wire telecommunications system is antiquated. Furthermore, the precinct house is located on one of the most congested streets in the district: adjacent to the Joseph Belsky House, a 73-unit assisted living facility for severely handicapped individuals, and close by two busy facilities operated by United Cerebral Palsy of New York City.

ADA Compliance

It is a sad irony that despite this dense concentration of mobility-impaired neighbors, the 70th Police Precinct itself is not architecturally compliant with the Americans with Disability Act. The Citywide Statement of Needs for FY 2015-2016 indicates that a new precinct house is planned in Queens because the current facility is not ADA compliant.

Commissioner Bratton's recent comments related to the state of Precincts and relatively encouraging response at FY 2015 Budget Consultations with NYPD last year support maintaining this request.



**BROOKLYN COMMUNITY
BOARD 14**
FLATBUSH–MIDWOOD COMMUNITY DISTRICT
810 East 16th Street
Brooklyn, New York 11230

I.

Testimony to the Committee on Government Operations – March 13, 2026

Good afternoon, Chair Brewer, Committee Members, Members of Council and those assembled today. My name is Shawn Campbell. I am the District Manager at Brooklyn Community Board 14. I am here to offer testimony on the need for a baseline budget increase for Community Boards. This is a request in CB14's District Needs Statement and Budget Priorities for FY 2027.

While this is the need I wish to amplify today, it is also important to note that it was submitted by CB14 along with an additional 20 capital and 27 expense budget requests. Not one of those requests received a meaningful response from a city agency. The responses are generally absurd. Community Boards engage in a long process and devote many hours to the CDNS to play our charter mandated part in bringing local community needs to the New York City budget conversation. That reflection of community needs deserves to be respected. It has been anything but by DCP, OMB and those at the agency level who select nonsense answers from a meaningless drop-down menu developed by DCP.

Community Boards are independent non-mayoral city agencies which have not had a significant budget increase in over 20 years. The average is a 1.5% annual increase over the last two decades during which inflation averages 2.5%. CBs are not keeping up.

Inarguably, we have far more responsibilities, more community demands, and greater technical needs than CBs did in 2002. Yet, we have fewer staff and relatively less funding with which to get it all done. Nearly all other city agencies have had significant staff and budget increases.

Brooklyn CB14 is struggling to continue events such as our annual youth conference which just took place this week. There were nearly 70 agencies, organizations and job providers who met with nearly 400 youth. Somehow, we will host our 14th annual nonprofit roundtable in May. I say somehow because we don't have the funds that we've drawn from in the past.

CB14 has one District Manager and two Community Coordinators. My last merit increase was in 2020. The last time staff received a merit increase was in 2023 and 2024 respectively. And believe me, they merit more! However, none of us will be able to ever get another merit increase again without a baseline increase (or the departure of a staff member to take advantage of a position with salary growth possibilities).

A baseline budget increase of \$50,000 or .02% of the city budget would be a worthy investment in local community service.

In addition to a baseline adjustment in keeping with our growing populations, growing responsibilities and the economy itself; CB budgets should be stabilized by tying them to a funding formula that considers full staffing minimums, or creating parity with another service agency, or a set percentage of a percentage of the citywide budget.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

