

Resolution demanding NYC government (henceforth “the City”) halt its use of pesticides purported to reduce the spread of the West Nile Virus (WNV)

WHEREAS in 2006, a federal judge ruled that the City’s spraying of toxic chemicals to control the West Nile Virus was in violation of the Clean Water Act and in 2021, the NYC Council unanimously voted to ban pesticides, “such as glyphosates, on any playgrounds, parks, or other property owned or leased by the City”,

WHEREAS roughly 80% of the number of people who contract West Nile Virus are asymptomatic,

WHEREAS the percentage of West Nile Virus cases that are neuroinvasive (i.e., traverse the blood-brain barrier) and CAN be fatal is LESS than 1%, a population,

WHEREAS the City has not provided any empirical evidence showing a decline in West Nile Virus-related death as a result of the pesticide spraying,

WHEREAS the City has yet to publish a comprehensive peer-reviewed study on the impact of insecticide spraying on the bee populations and other organisms essential to a healthy ecosystem,

WHEREAS barring 2020, the top two causes of death in New York State between 2012 and 2021 have been heart disease and cancer,

WHEREAS pesticides have been linked to heart disease, cancer, respiratory illness (a sixth leading cause of death in NYS), endocrine disruption among other adverse human health effects,

WHEREAS no comprehensive studies have been conducted in NYS comparing benefits vs. risks of pesticide spraying and its impact neither on the environment nor on human and animal cardiovascular, respiratory, reproductive or other body systems,

WHEREAS the current pesticide spraying program began in 2000 under now indicted former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and little public information exists on the vendor(s) involved, their payment or other terms without submitting a FOIL request,

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that Manhattan Community Board 9 strongly urges the City to comply with Local Law 37; refrain from using these pesticides to control the West Nile Virus; provide at a minimum, a one-week notice of any such chemicals applied to public spaces; adopt natural measures to mitigate the vector population and, in general, provide an easily accessible database allowing for transparency with all chemicals used in public spaces and contractors/private companies partnering with the city on this and similar measures without the need for a FOIL request. **Be it Further Resolved** that any exemptions to the aforementioned must be granted only by a federal government authority.



CB9M

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(212) 864-6200

COMMUNITY BOARD #9, MANHATTAN

Mark D. Levine
President, Borough of Manhattan

Hon. Victor Edwards
Chair

June 27th, 2024

Hon. Barry Weinberg
First Vice-Chair

Hon. Monique Hardin-Cordero
Second Vice-Chair

Hon. Eric Adams

Mayor

Hon. Deirdre McIntosh-Brown
Treasurer

City Hall

New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carolyn Thompson
Assistant Treasurer

Hon. Ashwin Vasan, MD, PhD

Commissioner

Department of Health & Mental Hygiene (DOHMH)

Hon. Solomon Prophete
Secretary

42-09 28th St.

Long Island City NY, 11101

Hon. Theodore Kovaleff
Assistant Secretary

Eutha Prince
District Manager

Hon. Rohit T. Aggarwala

Commissioner & Chief Climate Officer

Department of Environment Protect (DEP)

59-17 Junction Blvd.

Flushing NY, 11373

Hon. Jessica Tisch

Commissioner

Department of Sanitation (DSNY)

125 Worth St.

New York, NY, 10013

Hon. Susan M. Donoghue

Commissioner

Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)

The Arsenal, Central Park,

830 5th Ave. Room 203

New York, NY, 10065

Dear Mayors Adams and Commissioners Vasan, Aggarwala, Tisch, and Donoghue,

Resolution Demanding NYC government (henceforth “the City”) halt its use of pesticides purported to reduce the spread of the West Nile Virus (WNV)

At its regularly scheduled General Board Meeting held remotely on Thursday, June 20th, 2024, Manhattan Community Board No. 9 passed the following **Reso RE: Demanding NYC government (henceforth “the City”) halt its use of pesticides purported to reduce the spread of the West Nile Virus (WNV)** by a vote of 37 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

WHEREAS in 2006, a federal judge ruled that the City’s spraying of toxic chemicals to control the West Nile Virus violated the Clean Water Act, and in 2021, the NYC Council unanimously voted to ban pesticides, “such as glyphosates, on any playgrounds, parks, or other property owned or leased by the City”,

WHEREAS roughly 80% of the number of people who contract West Nile Virus are asymptomatic,

WHEREAS the percentage of West Nile Virus cases that are neuroinvasive (i.e., traverse the blood-brain barrier) and CAN be fatal is LESS than 1%, a population,

WHEREAS the City has not provided any empirical evidence showing a decline in West Nile Virus-related deaths as a result of the pesticide spraying,

WHEREAS the City has yet to publish a comprehensive peer-reviewed study on the impact of insecticide spraying on the bee populations and other organisms essential to a healthy ecosystem,

WHEREAS barring 2020, the top two causes of death in New York State between 2012 and 2021 have been heart disease and cancer,

WHEREAS pesticides have been linked to heart disease, cancer, respiratory illness (a sixth leading cause of death in NYS), endocrine disruption, among other adverse human health effects,

WHEREAS no comprehensive studies have been conducted in NYS comparing benefits vs. risks of pesticide spraying and its impact neither on the environment nor on human and animal cardiovascular, respiratory, reproductive, or other body systems,

WHEREAS the current pesticide spraying program began in 2000 under former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, and little public information exists on the vendor(s) involved, their payment, or other terms without submitting a FOIL request,

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that Manhattan Community Board 9 strongly urges the City to:

1. comply with Local Law 37;
2. refrain from using these pesticides to control the West Nile Virus;
3. provide at a minimum, a one-week notice of any such chemicals applied to public spaces;
4. adopt natural measures to mitigate the vector population and, in general;

5. provide an easily accessible database allowing for transparency with all chemicals used in public spaces and contractors/private companies partnering with the city on this and similar measures without the need for a FOIL request;

Be it Further Resolved that any exemptions to the aforementioned must be granted only by a federal government authority.

If you have any questions and/or need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me or the District Manager, Eutha Prince, at the board office (212) 864-6200.

Sincerely,



Victor Edwards
Chair

cc: Hon. Brad Lander, NYC Comptroller
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Cordell Cleare, New York State Senator
Hon. Daniel J. O'Donnell, Assembly Member
Hon. Inez Dickens, Assembly Member
Hon. Al Taylor, Assembly Member
Hon. Shaun Abreu, City Council Member
Hon. Yusef Salaam, City Council Member
Hon. Zead Ramadan, Executive Director, West Harlem Development Corporation

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY FOR NYC MUNICIPAL RETIREES,
URGING THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL TO PASS INT. 1099-2023**

Manhattan Community Board 9 remains steadfast in its support and advocacy for NYC Municipal Retirees, urging the New York City Council to pass Int. 1099-2023. This critical legislation requires the city to offer Medicare-eligible city retirees and their dependents at least one Medigap plan with benefits equivalent to or superior to those available as of December 31, 2021.

Whereas the seniors of West Harlem have spent their careers building and nurturing our community, contributing significantly to its growth and prosperity;

Whereas these retirees have not only served the city but also formed the backbone of our local economy, volunteering in schools, and participating in community organizations;

Whereas healthcare is not just a benefit but a fundamental human right, particularly for those who have spent their lives serving the public;

Whereas it is our moral and ethical duty to ensure that retirees receive the healthcare they have been promised and which they have earned through years of dedicated service;

Whereas the current healthcare policy changes threaten to disrupt the lives of 250,000 retirees, potentially decreasing their access to necessary medical services;

Whereas such disruption can lead to increased healthcare costs for retirees, many of whom are on fixed incomes and cannot afford additional financial burdens;

Whereas access to a familiar network of healthcare providers is crucial for the ongoing health and wellness of seniors, who often have complex medical histories;

Whereas forcing seniors into new healthcare plans could lead to decreased continuity of care, which is proven to result in poorer health outcomes;

Whereas the trust between retirees and the city needs to be upheld, as it forms the foundation of public service commitment;

Whereas any reduction in healthcare benefits could set a dangerous precedent for how we treat our senior and retired populations in other sectors and communities;

Whereas a diverse range of healthcare options allows retirees to tailor their medical care to fit their individual needs, thus promoting better health and well-being;

Whereas denying this choice undermines the city's commitment to its former employees and erodes the trust in future promises made to current employees;

Whereas the integrity of our city's commitments to its retired workers is a measure of our respect for their contributions and our values as a community;

Whereas a stable and predictable healthcare environment is essential for the mental and emotional well-being of our retirees, who should not have to face uncertainty in their twilight years;

Whereas preserving traditional Medicare benefits ensures a higher standard of care, unrestricted access to specialists, and no interference in the doctor-patient relationship;

Therefore, Be it resolved that Manhattan Community Board 9:

1. Insists that the New York City Council recognize the vital importance of healthcare autonomy for retirees by ensuring that Intro 1099-2023 is passed without delay.
2. Demands transparent and inclusive policy-making that involves significant input from the retirees affected by changes to healthcare benefits, ensuring policies truly reflect their needs and preferences.
3. Urges the Mayor and NYC Council to prioritize the health of our seniors by opposing any reduction in healthcare benefits or choices.
4. Calls for the city to establish a city-sponsored advisory committee, including retiree representatives, to provide ongoing oversight and input into healthcare policies affecting retirees.
5. Advocates for maintaining a robust selection of healthcare plans, allowing retirees to choose the options that best meet their health needs.

Manhattan Community Board 9 stands resolute in its commitment to our retirees, recognizing their lifelong contributions and championing their rights to secure, dignified healthcare in retirement. We call for immediate and decisive action to safeguard these rights.

Resolution - Promoting Environmental Sustainability and Public Health Through Increased Tree Planting and Education

Whereas, rising temperatures pose a significant threat to the health and well-being of New York City residents, with an estimated 370 New Yorkers dying each year from heat-related injuries according to the city health department; and

Whereas, children, older people, and those living in low-income and majority-minority neighborhoods are particularly vulnerable to extreme heat, making it crucial to implement strategies that mitigate these risks; and

Whereas, trees provide essential shade that helps to cool neighborhoods and reduce the impact of heat waves, contributing to the overall health and comfort of community members; and

Whereas, the city is committed to an initiative to plant 1 million more trees by 2030 to enhance the urban canopy and improve environmental conditions, yet is still far from achieving this goal; and

Whereas, existing trees in New York City currently produce 30% less shade than their potential, highlighting the need for increased efforts in tree planting and maintenance; and

Whereas, educational programs on the benefits of planting and caring for trees are necessary to engage and inform the community about the positive impacts of a robust urban forest; and

Whereas, Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine and Councilmember Shekar Krishnan have urged Mayor Eric Adams to aggressively pursue federal and state funding to increase the city's tree population and meet staffing requirements for forestry positions within the parks department; and

Whereas, it is essential for the city to fulfill its commitment to allocate 1% of the city's entire budget to the parks department to ensure adequate resources for tree planting and maintenance; and

Whereas, Community Board 9 has experienced a reduction in green spaces and tree cover, which exacerbates heat island effects and negatively impacts air quality and overall environmental health; and

Whereas, increasing tree planting in Community Board 9 will contribute to improved air quality, reduced pollution, enhanced biodiversity, and a more aesthetically pleasing environment for residents; and

Whereas, trees play a critical role in carbon sequestration, helping to mitigate the impacts of climate change and improve the resilience of urban areas; and

Whereas, Manhattan Community Board 9 passed a resolution on January 19, 2023, re: Increasing Community Resiliency and Quality of Life through New York City Urban Forest Canopy Protection, Maintenance, Expansion, and Planting at least a MILLION MORE TREES, recognizing the crucial role of the urban forest in providing social, environmental, economic, and public health benefits;

Therefore, be it resolved that Community Board 9:

1. Strongly encourages the City of New York to prioritize the planting of additional trees within our community to enhance the urban canopy and provide essential shade.
2. Urges the city to implement comprehensive educational efforts to inform community members about the environmental and health benefits of planting and caring for trees.
3. Supports the call for increased funding from state and federal sources to support urban forestry initiatives.
4. Advocates for the reduction of degree requirements for forester civil services titles and the creation of training programs for parks employees interested in forestry, as suggested by Borough President Mark Levine and Councilmember Shekar Krishnan.
5. Calls on the city to develop and implement a comprehensive tree maintenance plan for its NYCHA program to ensure the longevity and health of the urban forest.
6. Requests the city to fulfill its promise to dedicate 1% of the city's budget to the parks department to adequately fund tree planting, maintenance, and related educational programs.
7. Specifically calls for an increase in tree planting initiatives within Community Board 9 to address the reduction in green spaces, improve environmental health, and enhance the quality of life for residents.
8. Emphasizes the urgency of these actions in light of the increasing threats posed by rising temperatures and climate change, making it imperative to build on the commitments made in the 2023 resolution to create a sustainable and resilient urban environment for 2024 and beyond.



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
COMMUNITY BOARD 9
MANHATTAN

Morningside Heights
Manhattanville
Hamilton Heights

January 20, 2022

Hon. Susan Donoghue, FAICP
Commissioner
New York City Department of Parks
And Recreation
The Arsenal
830 Fifth Avenue, Rm. 203
New York, New York 10065

Dear Commissioner Donoghue,

At its regularly scheduled General Board Meeting held on Thursday, January 19, 2023 in a Hybrid Platform (Remotely and In-Person), Manhattan Community Board No. 9 passed the following resolution re: **Increasing Community Resiliency and Quality of Life through New York City Urban Forest Canopy Protection, Maintenance, Expansion, and Planting at least a MILLION MORE TREES by unanimous consent (with 40 members present):**

WHEREAS, the urban forest refers to the more than seven million trees in New York City and the physical and social infrastructure on which they depend;

WHEREAS, the urban forest canopy refers to the area of the tree leaves, branches, and stems when viewed from above;

WHEREAS, the urban forest is found on both public and private lands, including parks, streets, NYCHA campuses, schools, businesses, institutions, and private residences with approximately 28% in city parks, 25% in the public right-of-way, and 47% on other property types citywide;

WHEREAS, the urban forest canopy cover of New York City is approximately 22% and of Manhattan is 21.4%;

WHEREAS, the urban forest serves as critical natural infrastructure and provides myriad social, environmental, and economic and public health benefits, including but not limited to cooling, shading, energy efficiency, cleaner air, stormwater absorption and filtration, increased property values, enhanced mental and physical health, and improved business activity (See Chapter 3, [State of the Urban Forest in NYC](#));

WHEREAS, extreme heat and flooding are a threat to the health, wellbeing, and economy of our communities and the New York Panel on Climate Change predicts up to 3-5 times the number of extreme heat days and 1.5 times the amount of precipitation by the 2080s;

WHEREAS, the urban forest canopy is disproportionately distributed throughout the City and communities of color and low-income communities tend to have significantly less canopy while often being more vulnerable to heat and other health risks. Furthermore, African Americans in the city is twice as likely to die from heat exposure as white New Yorkers, according to the city's health department;

WHEREAS, each Community District has a unique distribution of urban forest canopy across property types;

WHEREAS, the urban forest canopy of Community District 9 is **26.45%** (<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/5353de3dea91420faaa7faff0b32206b> or in the [State of the Urban Forest in NYC](#));

WHEREAS, there is significant opportunity to expand the urban forest in New York City and to plant at least a million more trees across public and private land, and realizing this opportunity requires the whole city and all Community Districts;

WHEREAS Manhattan is the only Borough with the majority of practical canopy at 56.97% within the jurisdiction of the city. The large majority of practical canopy in the other Boroughs is mapped on private property and typically within 1-2 family residential properties. Furthermore, in Manhattan, the majority of private property practical canopy fell within 3+ family residential properties.

WHEREAS from a citywide perspective, it is critical to prioritize engagement with private property owners, particularly those that own 1-2 family residential properties and owner occupied 1-4 family properties such as row houses that may also include storefronts in Historic Districts given the substantial practical canopy there, stable housing environment and emphasis on the economic development of small businesses.

WHEREAS, native tree species are a crucial component of a sustainable urban forest and research has shown that native trees are necessary to support the native insect, bird, and animal species that depend on the urban forest for their survival;

WHEREAS, urban forest canopy expansion requires protecting existing trees, planting more trees, and maintaining all trees,

WHEREAS, the protection of trees can best be established by the installation of tree guards which are fences around the perimeter of a tree pit and provide a physical barrier between a tree and our sometimes harsh urban environment. These tree guards reduce soil compaction, shield the trunk from physical damage, and prevent pet and human waste from entering the tree pit.

Tree guards have been proven to extend the longevity of trees, reduce mortality rates, and can also provide a small protected planting bed for gardening.

WHEREAS, in some communities, local elected officials are able to provide tree guards around newly planted trees. However, in Community District 9 local elected officials must provide a discretionary funding budget to sponsor tree guard installations for existing trees on public sidewalks at the request of any resident or community group who enters into an agreement to maintain the tree guard area.

WHEREAS, through the Trees and Sidewalks Repair Program, New York City currently performs free repairs for qualifying broken sidewalks severely damaged by curbside tree roots in front of one, two, and three family homes only. An official inspection of the broken sidewalk determines if it qualifies for free repair. However, in Community District 9 which comprises significant vulnerable populations and the need for increased tree canopy coverage that this program be expanded to owner occupied four family row houses held as any ownership type, but especially in Historic Districts that may also include a storefront to protect the health, economic viability, nature and character of the community and therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that Manhattan Community Board 9:

- Supports the 5 Borough Presidents' goal of planting a million more trees by 2030, and
- Endorses the [NYC Urban Forest Agenda](#), and
- Adopts a total cover goal of at least **35%** canopy, equitably distributed, for Community District 9 considering there is an opportunity to add up to **8.78% cover (or about 84 acres of urban forest canopy)**. Reaching this goal will require a combination of protecting existing trees, increased maintenance of existing trees to ensure they survive and thrive, restoring fallen trees, and planting new trees and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Manhattan Community Board 9 calls on the City to:

- Plant at least one million new trees citywide across public and private lands by 2030 with an emphasis on increasing equity in canopy distribution by expanding canopy in the most heat vulnerable communities and in other environmental justice communities.
- Implement the NYC Urban Forest Agenda.
- Set a citywide goal of equitably achieving at least 30% canopy by 2035.
- Develop and implement a citywide Urban Forest Plan that centers on health, well-being, climate resilience, equity, environmental justice, and sustainability and that also prioritizes the planting of NYC native and native adjacent trees that will better support native insect, bird and animal populations.
- Support the development of community-scale urban forest plans and goals.
- Invest in urban forestry workforce development.
- Increase and equitably distribute public funds for public urban forestry projects including the installation of tree guards for new and existing trees on public sidewalks.
- Strengthen regulations and develop incentives which may include tax credits, tax abatements, rebates, and cash incentives in exchange for the prescribed maintenance of trees to protect and increase the urban forest canopy on private property.

- Mandate that the Parks Enforcement Patrol, NYC Park Rangers, NYS Park Police, NYPD and Department of Sanitation issue violations to individuals who permit human or pet waste to be deposited within 15 feet of a tree in a public space. These violations may also be private citizen reported by submitting picture evidence to 311 with adjudication by the Environmental Control Board.
- Expand coverage of properties qualifying for free sidewalk repair as a result of tree roots damage to mixed use owner occupied four family properties held as all ownership types in Historic Districts.
- Develop and establish tree planting and management standards for all property types.
- Develop enabling conditions to transform wood waste into a sustainable local resource.
- Track canopy health and change over time.
- Sustain and increase investment in citywide stewardship education and events including programs such as Super Stewards, Tree Care Captains, Citizen Pruners, micro-grants for community-led stewardship projects, and providing stipends to stewards that have achieved requisite number of training hours and stewardship activities encouraging continued commitment to ongoing care of trees.
- Involve community members in creating the vision of how and where trees will be implemented.
- Utilize community assets such as schools, libraries, community gardens, urban farm programs and environmental justice organizations to leverage community education about the benefits of planting trees as a form of community resiliency.
- Advance the sustainable development path of District 9 communities with this project by requiring that funds will be truly dedicated to this mission and not be subject to redistribution or diverted to other projects.

If you have any questions and/or further information is needed, please do not hesitate contacting me or District Manager, Eutha Prince, at the board office (212) 864-6200.

Sincerely,



Barry Weinberg
Chair

cc: Honorable Eric L. Adams, Mayor of the City of New York
 Hon. Anthony Perez, Manhattan Borough Commissioner, Parks & Recreation
 Hon. Brad Lander, NYC Comptroller
 Honorable Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate of the City of New York
 Honorable Jerrold Nadler, 12th Congressional District Representative
 Honorable Adriano Espaillat, 13th Congressional District Representative
 Honorable Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
 Honorable Cordell Cleare, NYS Senator, 30th Senatorial District
 Honorable Daniel J. O'Donnell, NYS Assemblyman, 69th Assembly District
 Honorable Inez Dickens, NYS Assembly Member, 70th Assembly District
 Honorable Al Taylor, NYS Assemblyman, 71st Assembly District

Honorable Shaun Abreu, Member of the NYC Council, 7th Council District
Honorable Kristin Richardson Jordan, Member NYC Council, 9th Council District
Honorable Charles Schumer, U.S. Senator, State of New York
Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand, U. S. Senator, State of New York
Steve Simon, Chief of Staff, Manhattan, NYC Parks
Zead Ramadan, Executive Director, WHDC

RESOLUTION OPPOSING CITY'S BUDGET CUTS TO HIV PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, HIV/AIDS continues to be a significant public health issue in New York City, particularly affecting communities of color that suffer from health disparities; and

WHEREAS, the City of New York has made significant progress in reducing the prevalence of HIV and AIDS since the height of the epidemic in the 1980s, with fewer than 2,000 new infections reported each year; and

WHEREAS, the program known as "The Undetectables" has been instrumental in helping hard-to-reach HIV patients achieve and maintain undetectable viral loads, thereby preventing further transmission of HIV; and

WHEREAS, this program has demonstrated success, increasing the share of patients with virally suppressed HIV levels from 39% to 62% over two years, with notable improvements among homeless patients, patients with substance use issues, and Black patients; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Eric Adams' recent directives to reduce the city's health department budget by \$75 million, including a \$5.3 million cut to HIV programs, threaten the continued success and expansion of The Undetectables program and other vital HIV services; and

WHEREAS, these cuts will disproportionately affect vulnerable populations and exacerbate existing health disparities, particularly within communities of color; and

WHEREAS, representatives from organizations such as Housing Works, GMHC, and Callen-Lorde have expressed concern that these budget cuts will eliminate or reduce essential services that help HIV patients adhere to treatment and achieve viral suppression; and

WHEREAS, the elimination or reduction of these services undermines the city's commitment to public health and jeopardizes the progress made in the fight against HIV/AIDS;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board 9 of Manhattan strongly opposes the proposed budget cuts to HIV programs, including The Undetectables, as outlined by Mayor Eric Adams and Health Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Community Board 9 of Manhattan urges the City Council and the Mayor to prioritize funding for HIV programs that have proven effective in reducing transmission and supporting the health and well-being of New Yorkers, especially those in marginalized communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Community Board 9 of Manhattan calls on the Mayor to reconsider these budget cuts and restore full funding to HIV services to ensure that all New Yorkers have access to the support and treatment they need to achieve and maintain undetectable HIV levels.

[NYC program to keep patients' HIV levels 'undetectable' faces Mayor Adams' budget cuts](#)
gothamist.com

Sent from my iPhone