



THE COUNCIL
OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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September 13, 2023

Jessica Tisch
Commissioner
New York City Department of
Sanitation
125 Worth Street
New York, NY 12226

Ydanis Rodriguez
Commissioner
New York City Department of
Transportation
55 Water Street
New York, NY 10041

Laura Kavanagh
Commissioner
New York City Fire Department
9 Metrotech Center
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Lisa Bova-Hiatt
Chief Executive Officer
New York City Housing Authority
250 Broadway
New York, NY 10007

Richard Davey
President
New York City Transit
180 Livingston Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Wanda Diaz
Manhattan Postmaster
United States Postal Service
421 8th Avenue
New York, NY 10001

Dear Commissioner Tisch, Commissioner Rodriguez, Commissioner Kavanagh, Postmaster Diaz, Chief Executive Officer Bova-Hiatt, and President Davey,

I write to share a survey my office conducted the week of July 24, 2023 identifying areas in Council District 6 that have been vandalized with graffiti. I echo the concern of my constituents over the growing problem in my district and throughout the city, and request that these areas be cleaned up as soon as possible.

The survey utilizes the different graffiti complaint categories of the NYC311 system. The survey area, West 109th Street to West 54th Street between Riverside Drive and Central Park West, was conducted on foot by my staff and interns. Constituents also flagged sites of concern via email. Altogether, 370 instances of graffiti were identified, located on residential and commercial buildings, sidewalks, public housing, street signs, mailboxes, and more. Multiple instances of graffiti were reported on nearly every block, mainly along avenues such as Broadway and their surrounding streets. A map of the graffiti is available at <https://bit.ly/47xgJ18>.

Like many residents of the Upper West Side, I agree that graffiti degrades the quality of life. Most of the graffiti, 17.8%, was found on residential and commercial buildings, followed by mailboxes, which took up 9.5%. Graffiti makes the neighborhoods appear unsafe and neglected, can affect property values, and can deter customers from shopping at businesses that have been serving our community for years.

For instance, on the southwest corner of Amsterdam Avenue and West 88 Street, there is a cluster of five shuttered and boarded up buildings (200 West 88 Street along with 568, 570, 572, and 574 Amsterdam Avenue) that are covered in graffiti. Across the street, the staff at Kidville, a popular children's play space located at 205 West 88 Street, made it clear that they would like the graffiti to be removed, feeling as though it is an eyesore to the families that patronize their business. Upon speaking to employees at other affected locations, such as the 99 Cent Plus Discount Store on the corner of Amsterdam Avenue and 92 Street, employees there said that the graffiti, especially on their own security gates and exterior walls, should be removed.

It is my understanding that the responsibility to remove graffiti does not lie entirely on one agency, but that the location of the graffiti determines which agency is responsible for its removal. For that reason, I request all agencies review the data and arrange for removal under your respective jurisdictions.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gale A. Brewer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gale A. Brewer

Enclosure