

## **KEITH POWERS**

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September 27, 2021

Mayor Bill de Blasio  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

I write to you today regarding the conditions of East 14<sup>th</sup> Street between 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Avenue A. In the past year, my office has repeatedly requested assistance from city agencies with regard to the state of conditions on this block. I am asking today for an immediate fix to these conditions before the end of your administration.

Over the past year, the situation on this block has significantly deteriorated. My constituents and neighbors in Stuyvesant Town and local businesses on the block have reached out repeatedly to seek assistance in rectifying this problem. Reports of homeless encampments, illegal vending, obstructed sidewalks, and unsanitary conditions have unfortunately become a regular occurrence. Neighborhood residents who are simply trying to drop their children off at school, board public transit, or simply wish to patronize the local businesses are unable to walk unobstructed down 14th Street.

We have sought remedies for dealing with these issues nearly since the beginning of my term in 2018. I have convened meetings in City Hall with officials from your administration, done site visits on the block with police officers and other officials, spoken with the business owners and operators, and my office has consistently been in contact with your staff to urge for more action. Each time an area is cleared and made passable for pedestrians, issues inevitably reoccur because of the lack of consistent enforcement that is clearly needed to rectify the situation.

While my constituents and I are grateful for the efforts of the Department of Homeless Services (DHS), Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP), Police Department (NYPD), Sanitation Department (DSNY), and others, additional attention is needed for lasting solutions. The DCWP Street Vendor Enforcement Unit has conducted regular visits to the site over the past few months. We are grateful for their efforts, especially as the new unit within DCWP begins its work, but a more continuous and coordinated interagency approach is required.

There are several steps the City can take to improve conditions on East 14<sup>th</sup> Street between 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Avenue A. I ask that you immediately implement the following steps:

- Establish a Neighborhood Support Team to help coordinate interagency cooperation in order to improve conditions in this area.
- Conduct daily joint site visits and enforcement efforts from DCWP Street Vendor Unit & NYPD officers to eliminate illegal vending.
- Station police officers from the local precincts and the Business District Recovery Initiative to serve as a deterrent against illegal actions.
- Utilize the City Cleanup Corps to reduce the amount of litter on the street and have a presence in the neighborhood.
- Increase the frequency of DHS Street Outreach Team visits to the site to offer services to unhoused individuals.
- Placement of more robust litter baskets by DSNY on the corners that would withstand attempts to knock them down.
- Additional coordination between DHS & DSNY to clear any encampments that unhoused individuals may have erected in the area to block the flow of pedestrian traffic.
- Have the Department of Transportation consider adjustments to street furniture so that pedestrian traffic is not impeded.
- Focus on regular efforts to ensure that the L train subway station exits and entrances on each end of the block, as well as the crosstown bus stop, are kept free of obstruction.

Thank you for your work on behalf of all New Yorkers. I hope we are able to find a solution to the issues our community faces here. I look forward to discussing this issue with the relevant City agencies soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Powers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Keith Powers  
Council Member, District 4