



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN

SCOTT M. STRINGER
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

July 7, 2006

Dear Friend:

I am writing to inform you of an exciting new housing initiative that my office will be undertaking this summer—a **targeted street-by-street survey of abandoned buildings and vacant lots in Manhattan—and I hope you will join me in this count.**

Historically, New York City has been a leader in dealing with building abandonment. In the 1970s, property tax delinquency and building distress were rampant. The City stepped in, took control of over 100,000 units of housing, and in the 1980s began an expansive effort to renovate this housing and transfer it to non-profit and private ownership. Today, the City owns and manages fewer than 2,100 units.

However, while the City's portfolio has diminished significantly and building abandonment is no longer the problem it was in the 1970s, there remain private owners whose properties sit vacant or abandoned. By stunting economic growth and detracting from the appearance of their blocks, these vacant buildings often negatively impact the neighborhoods in which they are located. In order to know how far we have come in the past 35 years and to better understand why abandoned buildings still exist in pockets of Manhattan despite the "hot" housing market, my office is calling on volunteers to participate in this inventory.

I invite you to join us on **Saturday, July 22, 2006** as we conduct the street-by-street survey in Greenwich Village, the Lower East Side, East Village and Chinatown, Morningside Heights, Central and East Harlem, Washington Heights and Inwood (Community Board Districts 2, 3, 9, 10, 11 and 12). **Prior to beginning the count, volunteers will be asked to attend a morning training session beginning at 9:30 am at either 1 Centre Street, 19th Floor, or at 163 West 125th Street, 8th Floor.** During the training, volunteers will be assigned areas to survey and a survey team, and will be provided with packets of walking maps, survey instructions, and the survey tool. **Volunteers will reconvene at 4:30 pm to return completed materials.**

If you are interested in volunteering, please complete the enclosed Volunteer Interest Form and return it to my office at the listed address or fax number. We will contact you shortly to confirm your interest and to schedule you for a training location. I look forward to working with you to identify under-utilized properties in an effort that will help communities across the borough.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Scott M. Stringer".

Scott M. Stringer
Manhattan Borough President