

## **Community Board 12, Q Community District Needs Statement**

Community Board 12, Queens area bound by Hillside Avenue (South), the Van Wyck Expressway (West), North Conduit Avenue (South), and Francis Lewis Boulevard/Springfield Boulevard (East), encompassing the communities of Jamaica, South Jamaica, South Ozone Park, Hollis, St. Albans, and North Springfield. All of which constitutes Community Board 12 Queens, it is the second largest Board in the Borough of Queens and takes up a large portion of the southeastern corner of the Borough. Officially, according to the 2010 census, we have a total population of 225,919 people. The number does not reflect an acknowledged undercount, especially among the undocumented residents of Community Board 12. Actually when the acknowledged undercount is factored in community board 12 has well over 280,000 people with all the additional houses in the district within the last ten years. The district has become more and more culturally and ethnically diverse as a community. It is situated in the well-known flood basin of the world's largest dam, John F. Kennedy Airport. The Airport built on Wetland which was our natural drainage area, has greatly contributed to a lack of adequate rainwater runoff in our community. Compounding our problem is the fact that our major trunk line sewer system has been the Thurston basins system, is crucial for the community. Community Board 12 suffers from serious infrastructure problems, our roads and sewers are inadequate to serve our community needs

### **Education**

A number of schools in the district beginning in 2013-2014 are part of the Proposed Opening and co-location. Overcrowding and the transportable classroom units continue to be a problem: permanent space should be added to the schools and smaller class sizes.

The New York City School Construction Authority (SCA) has moved forward with the construction of a new 4 story elementary school and intermediary school. The new school purposed to be called PS/IS 314. It will accommodate 831 students from grades pre-k through 8<sup>th</sup> grade; it will be located at 88-08 164<sup>th</sup> street, in Jamaica. The new school is scheduled to open September of 2015, serving Community School District No. 28.

In community board 12, we have two Beacon Programs, they are effective programs that should be supported and expanded in other schools where there is a need.

### **Department of Environmental Protection**

Flooding is a major problem in Community Board 12 due to a poor drainage system and a high level of ground water. Some Homeowners are forced to have pumps installed in their basements but, it is not addressing the problem. Ongoing meetings are being held, but there are no solutions to the problem. We continue to ask that resource be allocated to move a number of projects forward that have been on hold for a lack of funding.

We received complaints about street flood so severe that basements and properties are damaged. We are in need of ongoing routine maintenance of catch basins. We have a number of seepage basins that are not functioning. Seepage basins are like a quick fix, good for a number of years.

Our homeowners are not the only one's faced with flooding problems, York College, a number of our Senior Housing Developments, our schools, and other facilities.

A solution is needed.

### **Department of Health and Mental Hygiene**

We continue to be confronted with a number of health problems, a high rate of breast cancer, prostate cancer, asthma, diabetes, HIV/Aids and other chronic conditions.

We are oversaturated with social service programs, some of duplication; quality healthcare is not being received. Primary health care facilities are opening. We need a full scale, quality hospital in the district.

### **Human Resources Administration**

The use of various services under HRA/DSS continues to be extremely high and demand outpaces resources by a large margin. There is a clear need for more coherent policy regarding the homeless in the city in general and community Board 12, in particular. We have the most shelters in Queens County. There are 17 shelters in the Borough of Queens, 10 of them are in Community Board 12.

**Department of Transportation (DOT):** We have two transportation hubs in Community Board 12, Archer Avenue and Parsons Boulevard, Sutphin Boulevard and Archer Avenue; at both locations we need enforcement. At Archer Ave and Parsons Boulevard you have the vans in the bus stop; at Sutphin Boulevard and Archer Ave you have the cars picking up and in the bus stops.

A major traffic study of the downtown Jamaica area, including Sutphin Boulevard and Archer Avenue is needed.

We need a traffic program that will channel Commercial traffic away from the residential streets.

We need a process whereby missing street signs and faded street signs are replaced in a timely manner.

We need to look at the way speed hump requests are processed.

### **Department of Buildings**

In community Board 12 district we need additional building inspectors to address working without a permit, illegal conversion,) single room occupancy (SRO's), and working on the weekends. The problems continue to escalate, illegal use must not just be cited, and they must not be allowed to continue. There continues to be a lack of enforcement in community board 12. We need Consumer Affairs Inspectors. Local Law 6, the Padlock Law, must be used vigorously in the district where illegal businesses proliferate.

### **Youth Services**

Our youth are our future their needs must be addressed. Resources and funding are limited; efforts must be made to provide more. We have two beacon schools in the district providing afterschool, evening recreational programs and activities.

There is a growing need for an additional Latch Key Program. We have only one in the district. The Latch Key Program is helpful for working parents; it provides safe and supervised activities for the children, including helping them with their homework.

Youth employment programming addressing the high school dropout rate. There is a need for more jobs for youth, not just during the summer, in some cases after school. Locally and city-wide businesses should make a special effort to provide jobs for our youth. Every year the summer program suffers. We need a youth center in the district for our youth. Some of our youth needs are being addressed, but they are by no means enough.

**Parks and Receptions:** We have been successful in getting the majority of our parks reconstructed. ; A person should be assigned to each facility on a daily basis. Our major problem is the lack of equipment for the upkeep of the parks and the lack of enforcement that is needed in Baisley Park and Rufus King Park.

Forestry services are still lagging though, some trees that twenty years ago were so alluring, are now overgrown, ugly; blocking street lighting, stop signs, and branches on private property (roof tops). Darkened streets from overgrown trees provide cover for those individuals who would injure members of the community. Trees beautify an area. We need an increase in service regarding pruning of the trees and stump removals. Queens Forestry, Parks and Recreation Division need additional personnel to provide service to address these problems.

### **Department of Design and Construction (DDC)**

Some of our capital projects that were delayed due to budget cuts are finally complete and some continue to remain in limbo, ineligible for resurfacing or other maintenance while waiting construction.

### **Fire Department**

In Community Board 12 the incidence of fire and other related problems has decreased. The Fire Department, some years ago, instituted a strong and permanent community-based fire prevention program, the Fire Safety Education Fire Reduction Program, and the Smoke Detector Program. These programs continue to be effective.

### **Economic Development**

We are requesting that economic development programs be implemented on our commercial strips. Community Board 12 Economic Development Committee is working with the Local Development Corp. and business groups on some of our commercial strips. They seek ways to attract additional businesses that are compatible with the adjoining communities. Our local merchants need help to remain stable and profitable.

**Department of Sanitation:** We are facing a major problem with sanitation, dumping is an increasing problem. We must have more strict enforcement not less to deal specifically with illegal dumping. We need additional manpower for street cleaning, dump-outs and litter basket operations. Some of the dumping is in the residential area, where there's vacancy due to foreclosure.

In order to have cleaner streets in the residential area you must have alternate side of street parking in which we do not have in the majority of the areas; so the mechanical broom can clean.

### **Public Safety**

We have two Police Precincts in the district 103<sup>rd</sup> and 113<sup>th</sup> Police Precincts. The 113<sup>th</sup> never get its fair share of officers. Both Precincts show a drop in crime. Ongoing requests are made for more police visibility in the community. The 103<sup>rd</sup> Precinct has a number of Operation Impact Zones. When schools are in session 8,000 to 9,000 students flow through Jamaica Avenue five days a week. Traveling to different schools. The 113<sup>th</sup> Precinct has one Impact Zone.

We have asked that resources be allocated for a tow-truck to tow the (18) wheelers (Big Wheelers) using the residential areas for a staging area overnight and weekends.

### **Housing Preservation and Development**

Community Board 12 no longer has their Neighborhood Planning Officer. Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the Partnership have constructed a number of units. There remains a strong concern that the housing being planned to often does not "match" the income levels of the people in the surrounding community. The residents of a community must not be made to feel that they are being priced out of their community. Units have been developed on:

Guy R. Brewer Boulevard North  
MCR Restoration Corp.  
Bob Starzecki, 21 two-family – 42 units.

South Road and Sutphin Blvd.  
Joe Development Corp.  
13 Buildings: 11 2-family and 2 3- family

### **Private Development**

On the former Queens Family Courthouse (project) located at 89-14 Parsons Boulevard in Jamaica:

Demot Company, Inc. (Moda)  
334 Units – (Apartments)  
Approximately 19,220 gross square feet of space mix use (Restaurant)

Rufus King Court  
148-19 90<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Jamaica, NY  
The Arker Companies  
64 Units (Apartments)

Bluestone Organization  
100 Units (Apartments)  
90-14 161<sup>st</sup> – 160<sup>th</sup> Streets  
Mix use (Restaurant)

### **Senior Citizens**

Seniors comprise a large segment of our population; it is imperative that programs be developed to meet their needs.

Community Board 12 is requesting that all of the existing Senior Programs continues.

### **Finally**

Through all of our struggles our communities will survive. But, we cannot ignore the fact that basic municipal services are minimal. Extra help now will keep us stable and prevent the need for excessive amounts of rehabilitation and revitalization dollars in the future.

The needs in each community are different. We at Community Board 12 will continue to fight for our fair share of city services that we are not receiving that must be provided to maintain the quality of life for all of the residents within the district.