



# COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 4Q

SERVING: CORONA, CORONA HEIGHTS, AND ELMHURST

104-03 CORONA AVENUE 2ND FLOOR

CORONA, NEW YORK 11368-2923

Phone: (718) 760-3141 Fax: (718) 760-5971

e-mail: communitybd4@nyc.rr.com

**Helen Marshall**  
Borough President

**Louis Walker**  
Chairperson

**Karen Koslowitz**  
Deputy Borough President  
Director of Community Boards

**Richard Italiano**  
District Manager

## **FY 2008 DISTRICT NEEDS STATEMENT**

Community Board # 4Q is an ethnically diverse area that encompasses the communities of Corona, Corona Heights, and Elmhurst. The total land area of Community Board # 4Q is 2.4 square miles, bounded by Roosevelt Avenue to the North, Flushing Meadow-Corona Park to the East, Horace Harding Expressway to the South, and New York Connecting Railroad to the West.

According to the 2000 Census the population of CB #4Q is 167,005 a 21.9% increase from the 1990 Census. With the steady growth in population over the past sixteen years, the vast amount of new building permits issued, and illegal conversions of existing housing stock, the actual population may be approaching or surpassing the 200,000 mark. Service levels are based in part on Census information. In order to provide adequate service to the residents of CB # 4Q, service agency budgets must be increased to keep pace with the growing population.

Illegal conversion of residential housing stock is a major concern. Not only do illegal conversions burden services they pose a threat to the safety of those residing in the illegally converted buildings. Structures erected as one or two family dwellings are being converted to three, four, or more units of housing at an alarming rate. The formation of a joint task force with Buildings, Fire, Health, and police is necessary to address the illegal occupancies.

Older housing stock, which consists mainly of one and two family homes are being demolished and replaced with new buildings that house three, four, and in some instances more residential units on the same site where one or two families once resided. The current levels of service and infrastructure can no longer absorb the additional housing units. In order to secure the future stability of CB #4Q, careful consideration must be given to the rezoning of our community.

Our youth population is being short changed, schools are overcrowded, after school programs are limited, and libraries are used beyond capacity. Children are the future of this country we must provide them with all the resources necessary so that they can grow into responsible adults. We will continue to advocate for a safe, affordable, and well- balanced environment for our residents.

*The following is a statement of needs and priorities focusing on improving the quality of life for all the residents in the Community Board #4Q district.*

## **DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS**

We thank the DOB for their help in resolving some of our building issues. However, while regulations have changed and fines increased, the DOB must follow through on inspections and violations. The period from when a complaint is filed to the actual inspection is too long. In order to perform inspections and enforcement in a professional and timely manner, the hiring of additional qualified personnel is a necessity. Building permits should be issued only after it is determined that the existing infrastructure can accommodate the new units of housing.

## **DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING**

Community Board # 4Q is being overdeveloped at an alarming rate. In the last year CB #4Q received more than 100 notices of buildings to be demolished. While we are not against progress, we question why our older housing stock, which consists of primarily one and two family homes are being razed to make way for new buildings that are out of character with the existing buildings in the neighborhood. Where once a one or two family home stood now stands a multiple family dwelling with anywhere from three to fifteen and, in some cases, more units. The infrastructure of CB # 4Q was built mainly for low-density housing. The addition of housing units places an undo strain on our infrastructure. As a result, streets are overcrowded with traffic, leaving very limited parking. The Sanitation Department is overwhelmed with the increase in trash generated by the new units. Police and Fire department response times are up due to the increase in traffic clogging our roads. Schools and hospitals are stretched beyond capacity. The new housing units renting at market rate places the units out of reach for most of the potential residents. This adds to the overcrowding forcing families to double and triple up to make the apartments affordable.

Community Board # 4Q is requesting that The Department of City Planning look at the zoning in CB # 4Q. Most residential areas need to be down zoned to stop the overdevelopment and areas where affordable housing can be built must be identified. New zoning regulations must include off-street parking provisions for each unit built and a requirement to install street trees for each building. The development along the commercial strip of Queens Boulevard needs close attention. Existing commercial one story buildings are being replaced with high density buildings. A planned balance between residential and commercial buildings along the boulevard is necessary so Queens Boulevard does not end up being a boulevard of haphazardly placed buildings. We look forward to working with DCP to achieve the above goals.

## **DEPARTMENT OF ENVIROMENTAL PROTECTION**

Noise complaints are a major concern, numerous residents complain of loud music late at night, ice cream trucks constantly playing music at high decibel. Complaints of low water pressure and odors from sewers are common, caused by water and sewer lines not being able to accommodate the increase of residents. An aggressive campaign to upgrade the water delivery and sewer system needs to be undertaken to address the additional demands placed on the system due to the overbuilding of our community. Most of the fire hydrants in the CB # 4Q area have been locked, however in the summer months, we still receive complaints of broken locks and open hydrants flooding the streets and wasting water. From the time a request for service for a collapsed catch basin is logged to the time the actual repair is performed needs to be shortened. Additional inspectors and repair crews are necessary to relieve the back log of service requests.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Currently the 110th Precinct is housed in an antiquated building with no facilities for parking of police vehicles. A new Precinct house with adequate parking is a necessity. After the opening of the new Precinct, the existing Precinct house could be utilized for NYPD special operations. With the limited resources allotted to the 110th Precinct, they are doing a great job protecting the public. The population of CB # 4Q is growing daily, additional funding is necessary in order to increase staffing levels in the 110th Precinct to keep pace with our ever-growing population. The 110th Precinct is not coterminous with CB # 4Q; the precinct covers Willets Point (CB # 7Q) and Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. Flushing Meadows-Corona Park is home to Shea Stadium, the USTA National Tennis Center, Queens Theater In The Park, The Hall of Science, The Queens Zoo, and The Queens Museum, to name a few. The Park is also host to many large cultural events it is used by the residents of Queens on a daily basis, with weekends seeing the largest concentration of park visitors. As stated above Flushing Meadows-Corona Park is host to many events and countless taxpayer dollars were invested in the park. In order to protect New York City's investment in this park a new permanent Police Precinct must be established to serve Flushing Meadows-Corona Park exclusively. The replacement cycle for Police officer equipment and vehicles must be shortened.

## **PARKS AND RECREATION**

Trees are a vital component of our environment. Pruning of trees once in every ten years is not enough. CB # 4Q receives many complaints of dead and/or diseased trees, branches breaking, and branches that are low to the ground forcing pedestrians to walk around the trees. Tree pruning needs to increase, with an emphasis on emergency service. We request an increase in DPR's budget to allow for a five-year pruning cycle instead of the current ten-year cycle.

We look forward to the final design, construction, and completion of the new Elmhurst Park on the former site of the Keyspan Gas Tanks and the Corona Golf Playground (ID # Q450). A number of the parks in the CB #4Q area are in need of re-design and renovation including, but not limited to, Veterans Grove (ID #Q013) and Hoffman Park (ID # Q360N).

We also continue to support the completion of the renovations to the five remaining Center Islands located on 111th street between 45th Avenue and Corona Avenue, in front of Flushing Meadows- Corona Park. Flushing Meadow-Corona Park is one of the most utilized parks in New York City, in order to provide a safer environment for the park users and to protect the infrastructure of the park additional Parks Enforcement agents are necessary to patrol the park.

The US OPEN at the USTA National Tennis Center and NY MET'S baseball games at Shea Stadium need to be coordinated. There should not be any home games scheduled for the NY MET'S when the US OPEN is at The USTA National Tennis Center. The surrounding communities can not absorb the traffic impact of the two events at the same time.

## **DEPT. OF YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The 2000 Census states that within CB # 4Q resides 38,770 (23.2 % of our population) children under the age of 18 years. This reflects a 21.9 % increase in our youth population since the 1990 census. The need for additional youth services, such as, After School Programs, ESL courses, Day Care Centers, Intergenerational Programs, Graffiti Prevention, and Gang Activity Prevention has

never been greater. An increase in the budget for youth services is necessary to meet these additional demands. Community Board input into the funding process for these programs must be re-established.

## **SCHOOLS**

Although New York City as a whole will experience a downward trend in school enrollment in the next ten years, the school district encompassing CB # 4Q will see an upward trend in enrollment. Schools can not be built fast enough. As soon as a new school is opened it is overcrowded. Additions are being built on schools that are open only a few years. We look forward to the completion of PS/IS 260 and the design and construction of the proposed 2,000-seat school in Elmhurst. The Department of Education and the School Construction Authority need to identify additional new sites for schools with an emphasis on constructing a new High School in our district.

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

With the influx of new housing units, an increase to the budget of the Fire Department is necessary to meet the additional demand placed on our fire companies. FDNY should be part of a task force with DOB, NYPD, and DOH that investigates illegal occupancies and unsafe building conditions.

## **LIBRARY**

CB # 4Q is one of the most ethnically diverse areas in the country. Library budgets must reflect the growing demand of this diverse population. An expansion of operating hours is necessary to accommodate the needs of the public. In addition, there is need for a new library facility in the Corona Heights area to alleviate the burden placed on the Elmhurst and Lefrak City Libraries.

## **STATE LIQUOR AUTHORITY**

While the State Liquor Authority is a New York State agency, an increase in enforcement of SLA Regulations in New York City is a necessity. Additional investigators must be hired to address the growing demand for SLA licenses in NYC. Currently any establishment that is applying for an on-premise liquor license must notify Community Boards via Registered Mail Return Receipt. We receive many of these notes from applicants that are poorly written and unclear as to which license they are applying for. Perhaps SLA could establish a uniform "Community Board Notification Form" that all new and renewal applicants can submit for review to Community Boards. The SLA should be required to provide written explanations to Community Boards of their decisions that are not consistent with those of the Community Board.

## **DEPARTMENT OF SANITATION**

DOS is doing a great job cleaning our streets, removing trash, and snow, however DOS must have budget increases to reflect the increase in housing units, legal and illegal, in the CB # 4Q area. Establish and or enhance the education component for recycling. Many of the new residents that reside in CB # 4Q do not understand the components of recycling, they need to be educated before being summoned. Night and weekend Sanitation Police patrols are needed to curtail illegal dump-

ing and drop offs. An increase in education and enforcement of DOS regulations on commercial streets should be addressed.

### **TAXI AND LIMOUSINE COMMISSION**

While For-Hire Vehicles are necessary to fill the small gap not covered by public transportation, CB # 4Q is well served by train and bus lines. We are over saturated with For-Hire Vehicles; they are everywhere competing for street hails. Street hails as they exist must be stopped; they are a danger to the passenger and the public. Many of these driver's constantly violate Vehicle & Traffic Laws, cutting off other motorists, making illegal u-turns, going through Red Lights & Stop Signs, and harassing other motorists, to name a few. We have witnessed drivers sleeping overnight in their vehicles, and throwing trash out of their vehicles onto our streets. These actions must cease, enforcement must be consistent and enhanced. Yellow Cab service is almost non-existent in Queens. If FHV's cannot or will not abide by TLC and NYS Department of Motor Vehicles regulations, perhaps monetary incentives could be given to Yellow cabs to stay and work in Queens.

### **DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING**

According to the population counts of the 2000 Census, 19.5% (32,600) of the residents in the CB #4Q area are 45 to 64 years old and 8.3% (13,913) are 65 years and over. These numbers are sure to be greater taking into account the steady growth in population witnessed in the CB #4Q area. Senior citizens are in need of special services, such as meals on wheels, homecare, and help with shopping and home cleaning. They are also in need of social activities and programs that are supplied by senior citizen centers. Community Board # 4Q is in need of at least two additional senior centers, one to be located in the Corona Heights area and one to be located in the Lefrak City area to address the needs of the current senior population and be prepared to address the needs of the future senior population. With the vast wealth of life experiences that seniors have to offer they could act as mentors to our youth in intergenerational programs. Let us not forget the caregivers, we receive many inquires regarding this segment of the population. The caregiver requires some relief from their daily responsibilities. An increase in services is necessary for this segment of the population. The Department for the Aging must monitor all senior programs to insure that the services provided are in the best interest of our senior population.

### **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & MENTAL HYGIENE**

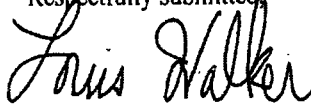
The department is doing the best it can with the limited resources allocated to it. Complaints concerning food vendors and rodent infestations are escalating. While we thank you for your help, additional personnel are needed to maintain consistent levels of inspections. We support the continuation and enhancement of programs that address the health needs of our growing population.

### **DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION, TECHNOLOGY, & COMMUNICATIONS**

In order to help Community Boards better manage their districts the 311 Call Center should be required to notify individual Community Boards of all service requests and complaints it receives, by location. Community Boards should be able to access, by location, individual requests and complaints so we can identify trends and areas that our attention.

*As always the Chairperson, District Manager, Members, and Staff  
of Community Board #4Q wish to thank all our agency representatives  
for their help in resolving many of the issues encountered during the year.*

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Louis Walker".

Chairperson

A handwritten signature in cursive script, likely belonging to the District Manager.

District Manager  
cb4qdm@nyc.rr.com