



Community Board No. 10 - Manhattan

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2012 District Needs Statement

Manhattan Community Board No. 10, commonly known as Central Harlem, is located in Northern Central Manhattan; it is bounded by Fifth Avenue on the east; Central Park on the south; Morningside Park, Saint Nicholas and Edgecombe Avenues on the west and the Harlem River on the north. A chain of three large linear parks; Morningside, St. Nicholas and Jackie Robinson are situated on steeply rising banks and form most of our district's western boundary. On the east, Fifth Avenue and Marcus Garvey Park (formerly Mount Morris Park) separate this area from the East Harlem Community.

Harlem has witnessed a phenomenal amount of social and physical change, perhaps more than is evident at first glance. This change has often had destructive influences on the neighborhoods in this community. The successes and bright spots in Harlem's revitalization today are a profound testament to the commitment and tenacity of Harlem's residents who many times have had only themselves on which to depend.

In the beginning of the 20th century, New York City's black community lived mainly on the west side of Manhattan, currently designated as the Clinton Special District. They moved northward after building speculation in Harlem, following the completion of the Lenox Avenue Subway, led to over development. Between 1904 and 1950, Harlem rapidly became the center of black settlement in New York City. Along with black southern migrants; artists, musicians, writers and poets were also drawn to Harlem and their talent provided the foundation of what was known as the "Harlem Renaissance."

Presently, African Americans make up 81 percent of the District's population, the highest percentage of any community district in New York City. As recently as 1980, this figure stood at 96 percent. Despite these populations' shifts, Harlem still remains an urban cultural center for African Americans of New York City as well as the nation.

Manhattan Community Board No. 10 is currently updating its 197-a Plan for submission to City Planning. The 197-a Plan is a planning device created by the New York City Charter Revision of 1989, aimed at insuring local participation related to land use issues.

Community Board No.10 solicited the help of Hunter College Graduate Program in Urban Planning through the Manhattan Borough President's Office. The students were provided a list of goals and objectives and issues of concern by the board. The graduate students provided a report designed to serve as a framework for the development of the 197a Plan. Subsequently, all recommendations were examined, edited and revised by community residents and board members. The Board partnered with Columbia University's Urban Technical Assistance Program; under the aegis of Professor Lionel McIntyre to update and revise the 197-a plan.

HOMELESSNESS:

The City of New York, Department of Homeless Services recognizes the need for an array of services for the homeless. Manhattan Community Board No. 10 has been the recipient of housing programs for the homeless for an excessive number of years. Since 1984 more than 4,500 families have been relocated from the City's hotel shelter system into Harlem. This has resulted in the District being over saturated with housing for the homeless that are not accompanied by adequate social service support.

The existing programs in Manhattan Community Board No. 10 need adequate budget allocations to allow for complementary social service components. This would enable many of the clients to become productive members of their communities and would minimize the exposure of undesirable behavior which spills over into the residential fabric of the community.

Manhattan Community Board 10 has its fair share of housing for the homeless, and is keeping the tradition of Harlem's commitment to social justice. However, it is in fact over-saturated as a community. There are at least sixteen (16) facilities in the District. The existing facilities need adequate budget allocations to provide needed complementary services. The aim should be to integrate the homeless population as productive independent members of the community.

HOUSING:

Affordable housing

The City, working primarily with local not-for-profit community development groups, has recently created thousands of affordable housing opportunities. Over 6,000 units were developed during the 90's as a result of the City's then 10-year housing plan; however, it is estimated that approximately 8,700 units were lost during this same period, resulting in a net loss in affordable housing for the district. The city's plans must create a larger number of affordable units to offset lost housing units. The Community Board is hopeful that Mayor Bloomberg's "New Housing Marketplace Plan" will build or preserve a net total of 65,000 units of affordable housing over the next four years as promised.

Mitchell Lama

The Board also supports the attempts to preserve affordable units in the Mitchell-Lama program. The affordability of thousands of units in this program is set to expire in the coming years. It is imperative that the property owners do not buy out of the program and move thousands of family units out of affordability.

Housing Stock Preservation

Central Harlem's architecturally significant housing stock and its low-rise, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods are considered important assets for revitalization. Private, public and non-profit developers, who also recognize the unique quality of Harlem's neighborhoods, are hoping to attract mixed-income households in order to increase diversity and economic stability in the area.

Current issues of concern that affect housing conditions in Central Harlem include:

- lack of preservation, stabilization of the residential fabric and housing stock

- limited homeownership opportunities, and
- limited affordable housing opportunities for community residents

Home Ownership Preservation

A key source of home ownership opportunities for Harlem residents is based on the transfer of formerly city-owned properties to the residents. This is facilitated through two related programs run by the Housing Preservation Department (“HPD”) known as the Tenant Interim Lease (“TIL”) and Housing Development Fund Corporation (“HDFC”). Under the TIL program residents get the opportunity to self-manage their buildings. After certain thresholds are met, the building is transferred to home-ownership under the HDFC program at modest cost.

While HDFCs offer an important means of access to home ownership for low- and moderate-income residents, this access to home-ownership is at risk for many buildings in Upper Manhattan. In contrast to traditional market-rate cooperatives and condominiums, the HDFCs often do not have the budget to hire a professional external management company as well as skilled superintendents and staff. Oversight and operations are heavily reliant on the volunteer activities of the coop board and pro-active tenants who may be overburdened with responsibilities or lack critical skills. While HPD does provide a project liaison to interact with the HDFCs and address their issues, the staffing and skill of these liaisons are often inadequate to address the property management and board oversight needs of the HDFCs. When problems with the HDFCs become critical, with limited alternative avenues for help, many of these organizations in Harlem turn to Community Board 10 (“CB10”) for help in resolving their problems. The District Manager and the Housing Committee of the Board of Directors of CB10 are responsible for responding to the community’s housing concerns. We perceive that a growing number of these HDFCs are at risk of failing. Once deemed no longer independently viable, the buildings would be taken over by HPD and potentially subject to disposition, thus ending this valuable path to home ownership for Harlem families.

We perceive that the challenges faced by HDFCs in Central Harlem may also apply to other HDFCs in Upper Manhattan and citywide. It would also be valuable to know how the issues faced by HDFCs in Harlem differ from issues faced in other neighborhoods and whether lessons can be applied across neighborhoods.

CB10 believes that is imperative to devise strategies to strengthen the long-term viability of HDFCs in Harlem. We see the following key areas of the scope of work:

- Quantifying and documenting the scale of problem;
- Convening key stakeholders including the HDFC property owners, city agencies, elected officials and non-profit service providers;
- Identifying and documenting best practices among successful HDFCs; and
- Recommending actions for HDFCs at risk of failure, including adopting best practices of more successful HDFCs and/or exploring innovative new solutions.

Housing Recommendations:

1. Preserve, stabilize and enhance the existing residential fabric:

- A detailed plan for assessing all blocks in Central Harlem should develop to determine the potential for development and to guide targeted development activities. The City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) should preferably use the Tenant Interim Lease Program and Homeworks for housing development, and as alternative measures, Community Board 10 will consider with critical support the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) and Neighborhood Entrepreneur Program (NEP).
 - The City should strictly enforce laws relating to the sale of drugs on streets and in buildings throughout the District.
 - Ensure that urban renewal plans generate the maximum amount of new construction as possible.
 - Encourage new contextual residential development on vacant lots along side streets (inner blocks) to reflect the existing traditional and physical characteristics of the neighborhood.
 - Eliminate the use of low-rise residential buildings, especially those on the side streets, for any type of special needs housing.
 - Establish a program to stabilize rather than demolish brownstones with structural defects.
 - Identify at-risk buildings and determine how abandonment can be prevented.
 - Seek out every opportunity for new housing construction to ensure variety in age of Central Harlem's housing stock.
 - When consistent with the plan's retail strategy, require all residential construction along major streets (i.e. 116th, 125th, 135th, and 145th streets and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., Malcolm X, and Frederick Douglass boulevards) to include ground floor commercial space or other residential amenities.
2. Ensure that Community Board 10 plays a key role in the decision-making process:
- City agencies should consult Community Board 10 prior to issuing an RFP or RFQ for special needs housing projects. Community Board 10 should be given the opportunity to evaluate such RFPs or RFQs to determine if it complies with the Board's goals and that of the City's fair share policy. The Board would take into account federal, state and private facilities as well as city-funded facilities in its own fair share analysis.
 - Community Board 10 should have maximum participation in decisions relating to the HPD housing programs, especially as it relates to the selection of managing organizations.
3. Increase affordable homeownership and housing opportunities for low and moderate-income residents of the district:
- Transfer abandoned city-owned brownstones and row houses to private owners through negotiated sales. Ensure that at least 51 percent of the buildings are made available to current Central Harlem residents. Sale prices should be based upon current physical condition. Central Harlem residents should be targeted for mortgage readiness programs, which could make it possible for residents to borrow construction loans from local banks.
 - Develop a program to assist Harlem residents to qualify for financing for homeownership in the community.
 - Increase the availability of quality affordable housing for low, moderate and middle-income individuals and households as well as senior citizens that currently live in Central Harlem.

- Encourage the development of homeownership units (i.e. the rehabilitation of brownstones for sale as fee-simple purchases, the rehabilitation of apartment buildings to create affordable condominiums and cooperatives, the new construction for homeownership and expansion of limited equity cooperatives).
 - Ensure at least 50 percent of all units housing developed by HPD or non-for-profit organizations be reserved for Harlem residents and ensure that Community Board 10 be provided with documents to confirm that the 50 percent target is met.
4. Address the Single Room Occupancy unit housing stock in Central Harlem:
- Streamline the process for converting brownstones that are now classified as SRO units and return city-owned brownstones with existing SRO units back to their original design as single-, two-family or multiple-dwelling buildings (up to 4 dwelling units per building).
 - SRO housing should be developed primarily for the elderly population and in buildings that are structurally suited for SRO such as hotels.
 - Provide SRO livable housing in Harlem using existing structures classified as hotels (both occupied & vacant).

The origins of Harlem's struggle to maintain affordable and decent housing are rooted in dynamic social and economic forces that have brought a range of public and private interests into the housing arena. Today, a slower, yet enduring rate of deterioration, coupled with the current trends of investment and revitalization, characterize the fundamental forces currently effecting housing conditions and population change. Critical to achieving neighborhood stability in Harlem will be housing policies that encourage a new income mix among residents, while providing opportunities for existing low and moderate income residents to acquire residency in the new housing stock being built in Community Board 10.

Additionally, there is a need to increase the rate of homeownership among community residents. A way must be found to preserve the physical character of the area, while recognizing the needs of Central Harlem's growing population.

STATE OF HEALTH:

Within the past decade the overall health of the African American population has declined even further, as evidenced by the decreasing life expectancy of both males and females, the increase in infant mortality rates, as well as the rise of African Americans diagnosed with AIDS. And this is only a partial listing of health issues.

Most of the African Americans health problems are linked to social and environmental factors related to unemployment, poverty, and restricted and segregated housing, which forces large numbers of people into smaller, older, overcrowded communities where school age children are confined to educational systems that automatically make them unable to cope with the technological demands of the job market. Unfortunately, the interrelatedness of this array of social and health problems has imprisoned succeeding generations of African Americans, precluding their chances of escaping the clutches of their confinement. The current narcotic and AIDS epidemics reflect the omission of these basic services. Members of these communities lack the option of mobility to move beyond their problem-plagued boundaries.

Hypertension or high blood pressure for example is one specific health problem that is especially deleterious to the African American population. Approximately forty percent (40%) of this population will be stricken by this illness as compared with thirty percent (30%) of Caucasians between the ages of 18 and 74 years of age. As a result, the Harlem Community is also disproportionately impacted.

Until recently, the scientific community assumed that African Americans' greater disposition for hypertension was linked to their genes and was passed from generation to generation. However, in a recently published report in The Journal of the American Medical Association, researchers noted that environmental factors could outweigh genetic determinants of high blood pressure in the African American community.

The Child Health Clinics, School based Clinics and extension clinics are vital to maintaining the health of Manhattan Community Board 10 residents. This District has experienced a large increase in population, many of whom are uninsured or underinsured. The working poor also comprise a large percentage of the population. The District has seen an increase in asthma, diabetes, the need for dental services, and breast cancer. These needs must be addressed in a manner that is accessible and affordable. Dental services must be maintained at their present level and should be expanded. Each city run dental clinic should be expanded in order to provide adequate services to area residents.

Harlem Hospital Center is a Level 1 Trauma Center and as a result is deserving of a new state-of-the-arts facility, which will encompass all of the services presently available.

In addition, an increasing number of adolescent mothers, upon giving birth, do not have human resources for their newborns. An alarming number of infants are reportedly spending the first three to six months of their lives in the Harlem Hospital Center. Ultimately, these infants face placement in foster care homes. As a result, Harlem is facing an increased demand for foster beds for infants.

It is necessary to immediately increase the number of preventive family assistance programs and resources in the district. Additionally resources must be made available for programs, which have as their aim, the education and prevention of teenage pregnancy.

Manhattan Community Board No. 10 continues to support the aforementioned goals and recommends the following:

- Increase health education and the practice of preventative medicine.
- Ensure that there are adequate health and human services to address the needs of Central Harlem residents.
- Promote service facilities that enhance Central Harlem's quality of life
- Provide Health Services for Infant-to-Young Adult Population.

THE ELDERLY:

In 2000, 11 percent of Community District 10's residents were age 65 and older. More than one-third of this population of Harlem has incomes below the poverty line. Accessible and affordable health care is an important service for this sector of the population, as they tend to be on fixed incomes. There is a need to increase the total spectrum of services delivered to this population through the Department for the Aging and the Human Resources Administration, including home care, housekeeping and free meals programs.

Eighteen senior centers operate within Community District 10. Most have comprehensive programs to address a variety of needs within Central Harlem's senior population. Other smaller centers specialize in specific programs such as nutrition or emotional support. There are also a number of residential health facilities and senior housing facilities, many of which are Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly.

Improved outreach efforts are needed to identify senior citizens who are living in relative isolation and without their basic needs being met, such as adequate shelter, nutritional and utility support, are necessary. According to reports from senior services providers, there remains a significant number of elderly persons in Central Harlem who are eligible for available services but do not take advantage of them. Identification of this "at risk" population is of critical importance.

Housing services for seniors has diminished due to the needed focus on housing for middle and upper income families in Community Board No 10. As a result, the need for housing for the elderly is becoming more pronounced.

Approximately 33% of the elderly living alone, the need for home care has increased. We support alternative private and public programs to fill this need.

Expense needs for the elderly include the following:

- 50% increase in staff for DFTA to offer Technical Assistance to Community Based Organizations assisting the elderly.
- 50% increase in funding for employment services for the elderly.
- Continuation and expansion of essential services to low income and disabled elder adults in including job training assistance and opportunity.
- Expansion of assistance program to address new health needs for the elderly, i.e. AIDS.
- Develop family mentor program for grandparents.

YOUTH:

Community District 10 has suffered tremendously from the selection process and general disorganization of the Summer Youth Employment Program. The District office has been involved with this process in early 2004, and there are several aspects of the program that have been cause for concern.

The number of slots that Community District 10 has received from summer jobs grossly underestimates the number of children in this community who could benefit from this program. Furthermore, the Board feels that the children should have been accommodated on a "first come,

first serve” basis, rather than a lottery system. The lottery system gave most of the children who applied a false hope for employment that they would ultimately not secure.

As you know, children in Central Harlem are in desperate need of the experience, money and skill development that summer employment provides, and this program is a lynchpin to their efforts to obtain that employment. Among youth between ages, 16-25, the rate of unemployment is greater than 50%. The alternative to the positive experience of employment is far too often a “lost summer” for our youth, spent on the streets engaged in idle behavior that will invariably lead to criminalization for many of them.

SOCIAL SERVICES:

Adequate social services continue to be a need in the Manhattan Community Board No. 10. A large percentage of the population is unemployed, more than twice the borough rate and twice the city rate. Currently one of every three persons in the district is receiving some form of public assistance.

Support and distribution

Many of the people who relocated to the Harlem community through the city’s social services programs are not from the community, thereby distorting the numbers and increasing the need for social services. The extraordinary number of families relocated to Harlem through the City’s shelter system has created a pressing need for additional social/support services in the area.

Most of these families continue to face many of the same problems, which led to their homelessness: anti-social behavior, substance abuse, inadequate incomes, new overcrowdedness, and battered spouse syndrome. Simply re-housing these families does not solve their complex social problems. In order to attempt to meet the needs of these families, additional resources must be committed. Other communities must bear their fair share of relocated families and all communities must receive an increased funding for social programs to support relocated individuals and families.

Federal Mandates

An estimated 38,000 people are scheduled by mandate to be terminated from the federal welfare rolls. Neither, the city or state has created a supportive net that must be in place to avert a social disaster. It is imperative that programs be put in place to provide counseling, meaningful and relevant job training, and job placement. This District has a large population that will be impacted by the Welfare Reform Act.

Foster Care Support

Resources must be made available for preventative family assistance to stem the flow of children into foster care. Programs that provide education and prevention of early and unwanted pregnancies must be funded. Programs to work with families to remove their children from foster care must be given priority. In addition, programs that work with children and families, especially adolescents and their children must be supported.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

While Harlem has a significant economic base, the economic potential of the area is not being maximized. It is estimated that in 2004, Central Harlem residents spent approximately \$375 million on retail goods and services. However the area suffers from a limited supply of large for-profit businesses, high failure rate among local small businesses and chronically high unemployment rate. It is estimated that the unemployment rate for African-men in the area exceeds 50%. The severe economic contraction of 2008/2009 has increased pressure on families and small businesses in Harlem. Given that Harlem lagged in the economic growth of the rest of Manhattan during the last decade, it is reasonable to expect that Harlem's economic performance could significantly lag an economic recovery of the rest of Manhattan without strategic management of the community's human and financial resources.

Entrepreneurship and unemployment

The high level of unemployment in the area is unlikely to be addressed if Harlem remains a "bedroom community" for the rest of Manhattan. New local businesses in Harlem, particularly small businesses, can be an important source of new job creation. Successful economic development of Central Harlem will require the addition of new dynamic business clusters. In addition to building upon the current base of local businesses, the opportunity exists to leverage the 2009 federal economic stimulus to support the formation of new businesses. Potential areas of new business development include broadband technology, health information technology, as well as green jobs including weatherization.

The existing economic base of Central Harlem is adequate to support the formation of new businesses. Detailed documentation of this underutilized economic base in Harlem is available in the "*Retail Analysis of North-South Corridors, Central Harlem*" conducted in fall 2008 by the Urban Technical Assistance Project ("UTAP") of Columbia University. The study evaluated the expenditure potential in the area bounded by Malcolm X Boulevard and Frederick Douglass Boulevard, between 124th and 135th Streets and made the following conclusion:

*"As a result of \$158,673,738 of total trade area's projected household expenditure and \$85,096,916.73 of the estimated amount of revenue, total projected household expenditures in the trade area exceed the estimated sales in the corridors by at least \$73,576,822.01. This indicates that 54% of the projected expenditure by trade area households is captured locally, while the remaining 46% of expenditures are spent outside the study corridors."*¹

Despite this underutilization of the area's economic base, there remains significant levels of retail vacancy. The UTAP study identified 72 vacant storefronts in the area: with 43.1% of the vacancies occurring on Malcolm X Boulevard; 37.5% on Adam Clayton Powell and 19.4% on Frederick Douglass Boulevard. These high levels of retail vacancy occur despite availability of important public infrastructure, including extensive public transportation service from subways and buses as well as attractive wide avenues.

¹ Retail Analysis of North-South Corridors, Central Harlem", conducted by Urban Technical Assistance Project of Columbia University, prepared by Harlem Business Alliance, Fall 2008, page 11.

Role of small business in Harlem's revitalization

The economic revitalization of Harlem has to date focused on attracting large established retailers. While the success of these initiatives have been critical to addressing the chronic lack of services in the community, we believe that large retailers will not be the primary source of business and job creation over the next decade for a number of reasons:

- Small businesses are historically the leading source of job creation specifically in New York as well as overall for the United States;
- There is a declining number of suitable sites for big box retailers, particularly with the development already completed or planned along the 125th Street corridor; and
- The current economic crisis has hit large national retailers hard and it will likely be a significant period of time before these companies generally return to an aggressive national expansion strategy.

Physical environment for small businesses

Central Harlem's economic base is largely determined by its land use and zoning which designate it as a predominantly residential district with supporting retail and service centers, community facilities, and entertainment and tourist establishments along its principal east/west and north/south thoroughfares. Much of the focus on the commercial life of Harlem has focused on the 125th Street east-west corridor, Central Harlem's primary retail area. The 125th Street corridor ranks as a regional shopping and commercial street and serves as a cross-borough thoroughfare that provides direct connections to major regional transportation arteries. 125th Street was rezoned in 2008 with an increase in the residential and commercial density particularly in the central core between Malcolm X Boulevard and Frederick Douglass Boulevard. Other areas in Central Harlem with significant commercial zoning include the other east-west corridors of 116th, 135th and 145th Streets. These east-west corridors have also experienced increased economic activity in recent years and are achieving a critical mass of businesses.

While the east-west corridors have increased commercial activity, the north-south corridors in Central Harlem remain underutilized and potentially offer the most significant potential for small business formation. The majestic north-south corridors of Frederick Douglass, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., and Malcolm X Boulevards, as well as St. Nicholas Avenue which bisects them, are widely recognized as some of the most striking avenues in New York City and their revitalization would be a significant benefit to the neighborhood and the City.

Harlem's north-south corridors are mainly characterized by residential buildings with entrances that face the street and consequently reduce the amount of ground-floor commercial space available. Some existing building types along the corridors are not designed with retail space and thus serve as gaps to the corridor's retail continuity. The three main north-south corridors have mostly a C1 commercial overlay designation with a few exceptions of a higher zoning especially where east/west commercial corridors intersect. C1-2 is a local shopping and service district that is designed to accommodate the retail and personal service shops needed in residential neighborhoods. This coupled with the amount of limited ground-floor retail available (average size of 600 square feet per store) allows the north/south corridors to accommodate neighborhood type goods and services that are geared toward the local resident population.

Maximizing business visibility and traffic

In discussions with local small business, the Economic Development Committee of Community Board 10 has heard consistent feedback regarding the difficulty of small business in garnering visibility from local residents as well as other New Yorkers and tourists. Many of Harlem's small businesses are located off the main east-west corridors which suffer from a lack of critical mass in businesses. As previously mentioned, there is the lack of continuity of retail presence along the north-south corridors and this can create a condition in which businesses can often be isolated as a sole commercial presence on a block. Some small business indicated that neighboring residents have been unaware of their presence for years based on their pattern of commuting to the subway. In order to increase traffic and visibility of small businesses along the north-south corridors, key strategies to be developed including (i) streetscape improvements; (ii) maximizing tourist activity; and (iii) neighborhood marketing.

Streetscape improvement

While there has been some investment in streetscape improvements along the north-south corridors, particularly for Malcolm X Boulevard, a number of important opportunities for improvements remain. Key priorities include the following:

- Improved street lighting and façade illumination;
- Filling out gaps in tree planting along the sidewalk and improving landscape maintenance;
- Median improvements;
- Pedestrian-friendly street furniture; and
- Neighborhood markers including flagposts.

Maximizing tourist activity

The high level of tourism traffic to Harlem remains an untapped opportunity to grow small businesses. The tourism industry is the 6th largest industry in New York City generating in excess of \$17 billion of spending annually. However, while Harlem is one of the most visited neighborhoods in New York, it receives only “1/10 of a penny” of tourism spending according to the 2005 study by Columbia University students entitled “Tourist City–Social City? A Community Tourism Plan for Harlem”. This conclusion is not surprising to local residents who frequently note the fact that most tourists don't get off the bus or only do so at a few well-known destinations. Some of the key reasons identified by the study for the low level of tourism revenues for the area include “spatial fragmentation” and “lack of tourism related business coordination and visibility.” A focus of the revitalization of Harlem's north-south corridors would serve to maximize tourism revenue to Central Harlem as it would attract visitors to walk through the neighborhood in addition to visiting the iconic cultural anchors of the Apollo and the Studio Museum of Harlem on 125th Street and the Schomburg Center on 135th Street.

Neighborhood marketing

The density of commercial activity along the north-south corridors of Central Harlem is not adequate to support the formation of a business improvement district, as exists for 125th Street. Instead, the potential for neighborhood marketing can be best facilitated through the formation district marketing organizations to support these corridors, similar to the Meat Packaging District Initiative and the Soho Partnership.

In the past, going "uptown" meant an evening spent at a nightclub listening to jazz at a legendary club such as the Cotton Club or the Savoy. At present, the existing attractions still draw evening

crowds, but not like in the past. With its access to mass transit, parking availability and its existing and emerging attractions, Central Harlem has the potential to recapture its former title of "nightclub destination" of New York City. Highlighting these existing assets through the formation of district marketing organizations is likely to bring additional traffic to existing businesses as well as inspire the formation of new businesses.

Marshalling community resources

Community District 10's local businesses and entrepreneurs are well positioned to understand and address the specific needs of their community. However, a key requirement for their success is the successful implementation of a well-structured plan for local business capacity building through technical assistance and expertise, information sharing and financial resources. There is already significant time and treasure dedicated to fostering the economic development of Central Harlem, with a number of non-profit organizations and government agencies involved in the promoting Harlem economic development through harnessing resources at the City, State and Federal level. However our conversations with small businesses identified four key constraints to progress:

- (i) failure to systematically focus on the needs of small businesses;
- (ii) the lack of a coordinated "blueprint" for action designed with input from key stakeholders;
- (iii) the absence of a formal feedback mechanism between community development agencies/non-profits and the small business community;
- (iv) the need for more speed of action, particularly given the severity of the 2008/2009 recession.

Community Board 10's Economic Development Committee calls for the timely planning and implementation of a Strategic Economic Visioning of Central Harlem, with involvement of the community's diverse stakeholders, to allow for its transformation by 2020 from a bedroom community with chronic unemployment to a thriving and sustainable *Village*. Potential models for Strategic Visioning include "Great Expectations, Citizens Agenda for Philadelphia's Future", which was facilitated by the Penn Project for Civic Engagement and the Philadelphia Inquirer.

POLICE:

Manhattan Community Board No. 10 supports Community Policing and would like to see more police officers on the streets, not only on the commercial post on West 125th Street but also patrolling to eradicate the pockets of persistent drug trafficking and usage.

The narcotic problem contributes to a high rate of violent crimes including robberies, burglaries and assaults. While "CRACK" and the cocaine epidemic appear to have subsided at the moment, the quality of life problems, associated with dependent populations still exist. Manhattan Community Board 10 is extremely concerned about the reemergence of Heroin sales on the Frederick Douglass Boulevard from 114th Street through 127th Street and on Manhattan Avenue in the area between 115th and 118th Street.

The 28th, 32nd, PSA5 and PSA6 precincts need additional manpower and updated technology to provide the community with adequate police services. Many officers have retired, transferred

out, or left for other reasons, while not being replaced. Now that we are experiencing rapid development and growth with new residents, businesses and tourists, the tables have turned. With this growth for the most part positive, came expected negative consequences and a need for more police officers.

Narcotics interdiction must be increased. Over the last four years from 2001, both Central Harlem precincts has seen a loss of over 100 police officers (each) dedicated to this function. As the new housing starts translate into increased population, additional manpower and quality of life enforcement must be addressed.

Listed below are some of the problems that need immediate attention, especially on and within the vicinity of our major economic corridors.

- Grand Larceny Theft of Property
- Loitering by Methadone clinic clients
- Illegal cigarette selling and bootleg items on 125th Street.

There has been an increase in the following as well that warrants immediate attention.

- Grand Larceny Auto
- Robberies
- Burglary
- Felonious Assault

Community Board 10 requests that additional officers be assigned to the 28th precinct to deal with the new challenges this community is being faced with. We are in need of additional officers for all shifts, especially the 8am – 4pm and the 4pm – midnight.

SANITATION:

Street Pickup

With the redevelopment of city-owned properties and the growth of the population residents the Sanitation staffing has not kept pace with the need to process the additional waste tonnage, therefore, adjustments need to be made with tonnage process in this community. Staffing allocations must be increased to adjust for the increases in population, as well as increased basket service.

Many of the complaints received by the Community Board concern the condition of the district's streets, particularly during the weekends. Area residents, churches and other community organizations continue to complain about the excessive street litter and overflowing litter baskets, which they witness on Sundays.

The Central Harlem Community has now become a designated route for sightseeing tour buses resulting in additional refuse and a need for cleaner streets and sidewalks. Additional pickups are needed, in the high tourism / commercial areas to accommodate increase foot traffic as Harlem's visibility grows evermore and as a common sense means of addressing the ongoing rodent problem. Therefore, increased basket service is strongly recommended.

Vermin Control

The Department of Health has made drastic cuts in its Pest Control Unit and has only two Health Inspectors for the entire borough of Manhattan. This is unacceptable. The rodent problem in residential and commercial areas has become unbearable. The department must assign additional rodent control resources to address the rodent issues impacting the residents of Manhattan Community Board 10.

There must also be a coordinated effort on the part of Department of Health, Housing Preservation and Development and the Department of Sanitation to maintain the vacant and occupied properties. Often debris/trash is allowed to sit on pavement in front of vacant lots/buildings for long periods of time. The Department of Citywide Administrative Services must be allocated additional funds to fence city-owned vacant property to prevent illegal dumping, vehicle abandonment and unhealthy conditions.

Many fences that are in place have been destroyed or are in a state of disrepair exacerbating illegal dumping at vacant lots they are meant to protect. Better efforts between agencies are needed to clean these lots and repair broken fences. This condition also creates breeding grounds for rodents, fleas and other vermin, thereby creating a serious health problem for the community and surrounding areas.

The Board also supports the following: additional sanitation workers operate the additional mechanical sweepers, additional basket and dump truck, and motorized litter patrol, additional pest control and health inspectors. There is a clear need to increase the number of enforcement officers.

PARKS AND RECREATION:

The ecology of Community Board 10 is a complex mix of residential and institutional buildings, businesses, factories, municipal infrastructure, parks, recreation facilities, and community gardens, among others. In the last decade, there has been an increasing scientific and popular understanding about how greener urban infrastructure improves environmental quality and public health in densely populated, heavily constructed communities like Central Harlem.

The foliage from tree canopy captures and breaks down air pollution—particulate matter and toxins that both cause and exacerbate asthma. Trees and vegetation in parks and graders also reduce ground surface temperatures in summer, thus helping to reduce the chronically elevated temperatures associated with the urban heat island effect and global warming. Parks and gardens also provide a critically needed network of recreational and learning spaces for this generation of young people, who are suffering from alarming increases in obesity and childhood diabetes, as well as asthma. Finally, trees and green spaces also help to reduce storm-water surges and flooding that plague parks and boulevards in CB10.

Most CB10 residents are moderate to low income-working people who must make the most use of green public spaces in their immediate vicinity. As a Harlem Pastor in 2001 once put it, “City parks are the Hamptons of working people in Harlem.”

Harlem is surrounded by six major parks: Central Park on the southern border, Morningside Park, St. Nicholas Park, Jackie Robinson Park and Highbridge Park on the western border, and Marcus Garvey Park on the eastern border. In addition to these parks, Central Harlem has 13

playgrounds, five sitting areas, two sandlot ball fields and several informal parks such as Success Garden on 134th Street near P.S. 175. This usage serves as an excellent model for unused vacant land located near schools.

While CB10 does have 23.6 acres of parkland, we cannot ignore the fact that it still ranks 34th in the City in terms of its open space ratio (open space acres per thousand residents). The four linear public parks—Morningside, St. Nicholas, Jackie Robinson and Highbridge—that help form the western boundary of Community District 10 are located on top of a ridge that runs from 110th Street to the southern end of Dyckman Street creating a physical boundary that separates Central Harlem from Morningside and Hamilton Heights. Central Park defines the southern boundary while Marcus Garvey Park is part of the eastern boundary along Fifth Avenue. Jackie Robinson Park is the only one of these parks that is located in Community District 10. It covers approximately 13 acres. In addition to this park, there are thirteen playgrounds in the community. Seven of these are part of school or housing complexes. Other open spaces include triangles and sitting areas such as the A. Phillip Randolph Square at 117th Street and St. Nicholas Avenue, and Hancock Park at 123rd Street and St. Nicholas Avenue. At least a portion of this open space/parkland is in fact cemented or otherwise sealed over protectively for playgrounds, games, and other recreation. This covering is necessary and important; nevertheless, we need to recognize that the “cementing over” of open space does reduce the overall greenery in the neighborhood and, therefore, the benefits that come with this greenery.

The public health aspect of greenery and open space is an incredibly important focus point for CB10. The community, in conjunction with the City, must plan wisely for the health and well being of its future generations. A 1999 City Council study found that CB10 had 2791 asthma and respiratory illness hospital admissions, as compared to a citywide district average of 676. The asthma problem in Harlem has been, and is currently being, widely studied and documented. Parks and open space are an enormous part of the solution to this monumental problem. An increase of maintenance of current parks and open space, as well as an increase in the number of such spaces, is a must if Central Harlem is going to continue to flourish.

TRANSPORTATION:

Harlem is located at the center of a very vital transportation network and has the basic facilities and infrastructure for an efficient transportation system. However, many of the elements of the transportation system in this district continue to suffer from lack of maintenance and show signs of deterioration that now warrant the investment of capital funds for their improvement. Manhattan Avenue is long over due of a compressive roadway reconstruction.

Harlem is well serviced by subway transportation including the IND 6th and the 8 Avenue lines, the IRT Lenox / Broadway lines and the IRT Lexington Avenue lines offer easily accessible service to area residents and workers.

Bus shelters are needed throughout this heavily traveled community. Proposed cut backs on bus services are a serious concern of community Board No. 10, since many of the local residents who work within the community ride the busses to and from work at staggered hours during the day and evenings. Also, many elderly use the buses to run errands, seek medical treatment, and access other city services.

The Department of Transportation must allocate funds to the Bureau of Engineers office. Replacement of Bus Stop, Parking, Street Name signs are vital to this community. Drastic cuts in this area have caused parking problems, inconvenience to commuters and visitors. There is a need for additional personnel for traffic studies to determine the need of additional traffic signals as the neighborhood continues to be revitalized.

We are also requesting that the Department of Transportation and the Department of Design and Construction include in their budget ongoing extermination and pest control measures for the major construction project that is presently underway and any proposed work.

The issue of truck traffic enforcement has long been neglected by the city's enforcement agencies. Community Board 10 calls on the DOT to limit the number of truck routes in Community Board 10, particularly on West 110th Street (Central Park North) and also on Manhattan Avenue. Limiting truck traffic should have a net impact of moving vehicular traffic along while reducing the particulate pollution, which contributes to the high incidence of asthma in Central Harlem.

Transportation and Infrastructure Recommendations:

- Improve access and amenities near subway and bus services.
- Address infrastructure deficiencies.
- Improve residential and commercial parking availability.
- Improve vehicular circulation.
- Control the flow of commercial traffic and reduce air pollution.
- Increase pedestrian safety.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION:

The newly formulated Region 10 holds two Community School Districts—Districts 3 and 5, which serve Central Harlem. School District 5 mostly serves Community District 10; the area north of 122nd Street, while a small portion of School District 3 covers 122nd to 110th streets. The greater portion of School District 3 covers the west side of Manhattan from 122nd to 59th streets. The majority of Community District 10's schools are located in School District 5. In addition to 20 public schools, Central Harlem has two charter schools, nine private and parochial schools.

The schools that fall within the boundary of Community Board 10 now comprise of the newly formulated Region 10 (parts of District 3 and District 5). However, with the influx of the new students, relocating into the district, the school needs to increase its effectiveness to attract the students and reclaim its original standing for academic excellence. In fact, all of the elementary and middle schools which fall within those boundaries must improve their academic performance in order to gain the academic attractiveness that the students in the Community deserve.

The vast majority of Community Board No. 10 schools are included in this school district. Among the capital needs of schools in Central Harlem is the restoration of unused school buildings for the increased student population. Community Board No. 10 supports the efforts of the local school district to obtain funding for additional computer rooms. We also support after school programs and the use of schools for afternoon and evening community use.

Recommendations:

- Set aside small buildings and land for use as early learning centers, private schools, business ventures and technical learning centers to address the needs of the community.
- Identify space in the district to be set-aside for college collaborative efforts.
- The district will encourage major established colleges and universities, along with new qualified groups to address the issues of low college attendance of the residents of Central Harlem.
- Pre-kindergarten and nursery schools should be available for every child in the District. Adequate space can be provided through Department of Education leases along with present space in available schools.
- Buildings and land should be identified for the provision of quality alternative programs for parents who choose to send their children to schools in the neighborhood for special educational programs.

Manhattan Community Board No. 10 strongly supports the students right of safe passage to and from schools by recommending that no land use within two blocks of it's schools in any direction be approved for liquor stores, pill mills, drug paraphernalia, bodega, cigarette or alcohol advertisement or any other undesirable, or immoral unsightly or unhealthy usage.

LIBRARIES:

Community Board 10 urges the restoration of funding to library services 6 days a week. The four neighborhood library branches need to remain open at least six days a week to provide learning opportunities to an already underserved population. Manhattan Community Board No.10 supports the request for an increase in funding for books, materials and electronic databases, computer networks to access twenty first century learning and communications. With the increase in housing and population, there is a critical need to provide full spectrum library services. The libraries play a vital role to address and complement the educational environment and provide a valuable resource to residents in the community. Libraries serve, as educational and cultural centers that often are the only resources children have to go after school. They are the knowledge base of the community and the future. There is a need for sufficient hours of public service more mornings and evening hours, adequate levels of staffing, a safe and clean library environment and security for library materials and facilities at all times. Community Board No.10 continues to recognize its branch libraries as important educational, informational and cultural resources in the district. We support capital budget requests, which include funding for the site selection for a full - size replacement branch for Macombs Bridge Library. The present facility is only 685 Sq. feet. The population of that area has increased due to renovated housing stock. This merits a much larger facility to serve the needs of the community.

W. Franc Perry
Chairman

Paimaan Lodhi
District Manager