



COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 9

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY DISTRICT NEEDS 2010

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INTRODUCTION

Community District 9 encompasses one of New York's first humanly inhabited areas. The area was once the home of the Mareckkawicks, a branch of the Canarsie tribal community, which occupied Kings County and parts of Jamaica. The area was colonized by Dutch farmers from the Netherlands (Holland) in the early 17th century. Lefferts Homestead, relocated to Prospect Park from its original location on Midwood Street and Flatbush Avenue, is a living reminder of this agricultural community which flourished in our district until the early 20th century.

Preliminary research has revealed that one of our neighborhood streets – Clove Road – played an important role in the Battle of Brooklyn on August 27, 1776. Preliminary data obtained from the research appears to indicate that our Clove Road is the “Bedford Pass” of the American Revolution. Research on this project continues and the Board has requested the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission and New York State Department of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation to investigate the location for historic designation.

Present day Community District 9 includes a portion of the neighborhood known as Crown Heights, northern parts of Flatbush, Prospect Lefferts Gardens, and the northern portion of Midwood (Wingate). Bordered by Prospect Park, Eastern Parkway and Lincoln Terrace Park, the district includes such prestigious cultural institutions as the Brooklyn Museum of Art, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, the Brooklyn Public Library and the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences.

Other notable institutions include Kings County Hospital Center (one of the largest hospital complexes in the world), SUNY Health Science Center at Brooklyn, Kingsboro Psychiatric Center, and Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center. Collectively, these institutions form the southern-most boundary of the district. Medgar Evers College of the City University of New York, seven high, four intermediate, ten elementary, including new small schools and charter schools, make up the District's public educational system. A significant number of private and parochial schools complete the education picture.

Only minutes by car or public transportation from downtown Brooklyn, Community District 9 is home to numerous small and medium-sized businesses and the 104,014 residents (2000 census), who live along our multitude of treelined streets. Our many religious institutions include a number of the largest Catholic churches in the borough,

a number of the oldest Protestant churches, and the world headquarters of the Chabad Lubavitch Jewish Movement.

Families and institutions have thrived in Community District 9 for generations. Over the past five decades this largely middle class community has undergone extensive demographic changes. The ethnic make-up of the community has become a unique blend of people of American, Caribbean, European, Asian and Hispanic descent.

This continued growth has brought with it a concomitant escalation in the need for vital municipal services. Community Board 9 has taken a critical look at our community district's needs and has embarked upon a the formulation of a 197-a plan which sets out our vision for a better future for our community, the objectives of which are as follows:

Objectives:

To improve the quality of life for residents through:

- The promotion of community safety and the reduction of crime;
- Social and cultural development;
- Improved health and social services;
- Support for the preservation, expansion and physical integration of the public parks system and educational institutions;
- Promotion of employment and business opportunities through
 - the strengthening and expansion of existing retail commercial areas;
 - the improvement of local businesses and economic development;
 - a local hospital jobs program.
- The promotion of new low-density/contextual residential development to provide both a humanly sealed built form and increased opportunity for neighborly social interaction;
- The guiding of future physical and human development programs to enhance the lives of the residents;
- Neighborhood beautification and development of new open space resources.

We submit this "Statement of Community District Needs" to document the Board's continued advocacy for the provision of acceptable levels of City services for the continued improvement in the quality of life for the people of this district. The restoration of services; the renovation and upgrading of school buildings and other public facilities; expanded economic/business opportunities, the acquisition of land for the creation and expansion of open space; and the implementation of a Traffic Calming plan; are all vital to our overall goal for the restoration of our neighborhoods.

DEPARTMENT OF SANITATION

Relocation of Community District 9's Sanitation Garage

With the relocation of Community District 14's Sanitation Garage, we are looking forward to the next phase in this process, and that is the relocation of Community District 9's sanitation garage. Experience has shown, that, as with the process for the relocation of CD 14's garage, we understand that the process for relocating Community District 9's sanitation garage will be a difficult one. However, just as the relocation of CD14's sanitation garage was accomplished, so too will the relocation of CD9's sanitation garage be accomplished.

As has been acknowledged for many, many years, 356 Winthrop Street is just not a suitable location for a sanitation garage. The reason is obvious, situated as it is, in close proximity to Kings County Hospital Center, SUNY Downstate University Medical Center and SUNY Downstate Biotechnology Incubator Project.

SUNY Downstate Biotechnology Incubator Project is a multimillion dollar facility. Again, relocating Community District 9's sanitation garage from 356 Winthrop Street is an URGENT, URGENT matter. We desperately need all the stakeholders to see how this Biotechnology Park will have far-reaching benefits for all of Brooklyn. This biotech facility will make Brooklyn competitive with the likes of Long Island and New Jersey in the Biotechnology market. Not only that, but attracting giant pharmaceutical companies to Central Brooklyn's Biotechnology Park will bring thousands of jobs to Brooklyn, revitalize Brooklyn's economy and its neighborhoods. The next step in this process is to do what has to be done to make this a reality.

A site has been identified at 757 Rockaway Parkway, Brooklyn, for the relocation of Community District 9's sanitation garage. 757 Rockaway Parkway, Brooklyn, is a large rubble-strewn vacant lot with abandoned construction containers and gigantic chunks of cement. It is a veritable eyesore. The construction of a modern sanitation garage will vastly improve this location.

Community Board 9 cannot over emphasize the major economic benefits that the Biotech facility brings to the Borough of Brooklyn. The funding is available to relocate the sanitation garage and move this project forward. It is to everyone's advantage that we move swiftly to accomplish this. We therefore once again call on the Borough President and City Council representatives to bring this project to fruition.

Illegal Dumping/Lot Cleaning

Illegal dumping is a matter that continues to require enforcement. An increase in the number of Sanitation Police personnel coupled with strict enforcement is needed to curb this blatant disregard for sanitation and environmental codes.

Litter Baskets and Illegal Postings

An additional basket truck is needed to effectively service the litter baskets in the district, especially on busy commercial strips. Additional baskets are needed in several locations to decrease the instances of littering. The agency must enforce against those individuals using the litter baskets to dump household garbage and other debris.

There appears to be an increase in the proliferation of illegal postings on light poles, street trees and traffic signals in the district. The agency must be more aggressive in enforcing against this abuse that creates blight in our community.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Facilities for Garaging Police Vehicles

Community Board 9 again emphasizes the dire need for a facility to garage police vehicles and vouched cars. The current practice by agency personnel to overtake the streets around the local precinct with police cars, trucks and other equipment, including vehicles vouched by the precinct is unacceptable.

Double parked cars and sidewalk parking around the precinct force pedestrians including seniors, school children, and mothers with baby carriages, to navigate around these conditions, sometimes by walking into the street and into the danger of oncoming vehicles.

The Board has done a search of the area around the 71 Precinct and has identified property suitable for garage facilities for the precinct's vehicles. Acquisition of these premises, whether by lease or purchase, will effectively eliminate the current congestion being experienced at Empire Boulevard and New York Avenue. We urge the agency to work with the Board on this matter, since it concerns the safety and well being of the people we both serve.

Facilities/Equipment/Technology

The Board believes that the Police Department has an obligation to bring all its precincts into the twenty-first century by upgrading facilities, equipment and technology. Studies have shown that the physical environment within which people work has a significant impact upon the manner in which they perform their jobs. The Board believes that this is even more significant for police personnel, given the nature of their job.

The 71 Precinct's physical plant continues to deteriorate. There is a definite need for a complete renovation of these facilities. Office furniture, including desks, chairs and cabinets are broken and dilapidated. Office equipment, including computers, is woefully out of date. A tour of the precinct by members of Community Board 9's Public Safety Committee revealed the need for a redesign of the main desk area, renovation of the radio room, computer room, and lockers/locker room.

Police Visibility

Visibility of police officers in reassuring numbers is lacking in the district. The Board continues to recommend the employment of civilian staff to carry out those clerical and related duties that would release police officers to do the job for which they have been trained. The combination of improved facilities, technology and increased civilian clerical support would allow more presence on neighborhood streets.

Enforcement is needed at Eastern Parkway and Utica Avenue. The large numbers of passenger vans and gypsy cabs – legal and illegal, competing for passengers exiting the Utica Avenue subway station creates a bottle neck at this location that is hazardous to all road users. These vans and cars, park in the bus stops and double park on the service road. Added to this is the proliferation of unlicensed vendors, plying their goods on the south side Eastern Parkway Mall. This all adds up to utter chaos all day long, increasing tremendously during the morning and evening rush hours.

Numerous improvements have been made by the Department of Transportation at this location, yet the chaos continues. There must be continuous enforcement by the Police Department. Occasional enforcement forays at this location will not suffice. Action must be taken on a sustained, continuous basis that will send a message that these activities are inappropriate for this landmarked street and are unwanted at this location.

Despite numbers showing a reduction in the main crime related areas, this district is far from being "one of the safest in the city." Community Board 9 continues to receive numerous complaints from residents regarding the sale of drugs on street corners and in apartments in their buildings. The Board feels that there should be continued police presence at these problem locations to serve as a deterrent to these activities.

We encourage an expansion of the F-TAP program to include all apartment buildings in the district. Community Board 9 stands ready to assist with this effort and to encourage building owners to work with the local precinct to implement this program. The Board recognizes that more needs to be done. We urge the agency to work with the Board to accomplish the task of providing safe and secure neighborhoods for our residents.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT OF CITYWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Land Acquisition for Open Space

Most recent statistics show that approximately 30% of our population is under the age of 18 years, while less than 6% of the district is dedicated to open space. Community Board 9, through its 197-a Planning Committee, has identified several possible locations in the district for the expansion of open space. In addition to identifying available land on the grounds of Kingsboro Psychiatric Center for a park, the Board has also identified property adjacent to Wingate Park for the expansion of this heavily utilized park. We have also identified other potential locations within the district for open space use – areas for greening, sitting areas, and the like.

The Board is encouraged by Mayor Michael Bloomberg's PlaNYC 2030 with its emphasis on open space. We especially like that the goal is to "... ensure that all New Yorkers live within a 10-minute walk of a park." Upgrading all of our school yards and playgrounds that are in desperate need of refurbishing is a goal that can be addressed immediately. The Board loves the idea of public plazas, but we are extremely concerned that the process is only open to groups and that community boards are not asked to participate.

Recreation Center

The community, with its large youth population, is in dire need of a Recreation Center, with an indoor pool, along with programming to address community needs, including health and physical fitness, youth development and delinquency prevention.

Community Board 9 therefore strongly urges the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services to work with us for the acquisition of land for the expansion and development of vitally needed open space and recreation facilities in the district. Our Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee will be contacting the agencies to begin dialogue on these matters.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Park Reconstruction Projects

The Board is pleased that our City Council representative has allocated the necessary funds necessary to complete the redesign and reconstruction of the unfinished portion of Hamilton Metz Park. We also urge our representative to provide the promised funds to include the work-out/exercise area requested by constituents. The inclusion of this feature will be welcomed by all and will complete the renovation of this park for the continued use by all those who use this park on a regular basis.

Mount Prospect Park

With the exception of a playground and new paths and stairs, funded by the late Councilmember Mary Pinkett, this park is an open canvass waiting to be developed. Currently, on rainy days, torrents of rainwater rush down the park's Eastern Parkway steps, flooding the sidewalk and the street, forcing pedestrians to walk in the street placing them in danger of oncoming traffic. Overgrown vegetation obscures the park from view and makes it foreboding and unsafe.

For the past eight years Community Board 9 has been requesting funding for a preliminary design investigation for the upgrade and reconstruction of Mount Prospect Park. We have not been successful with this request. However, being a resilient Board, we were able to obtain, pro bono from faculty and graduate students at the University of Virginia, a wonderfully interesting and innovative design for this park. This proposed design has been shared with the Department of Parks and Recreation, elected officials, community residents, and other stakeholders. The response to the design has been overwhelmingly positive

We have taken this bold step to help ourselves and the people of our community to begin the process for the complete reconstruction of this park. We plan to use the proposed design as a catalyst to spark ideas for the design of the park from the community and the Department of Parks.

We continue to stress, this park can no longer be used primarily for walking dogs. It needs to be reconstructed for use by the community. We call on our elected officials to provide the funding for the complete reconstruction of this park, beginning with funding for a preliminary design.

Hamilton Metz Park

Community residents are desirous of having a designated exercise/work-out area in this park. Discussions have been held with the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Council Member regarding funding for this segment of the project. We will continue to advocate for this funding allocation on behalf of the community.

Park Maintenance

The adequate maintenance of our neighborhood parks, playgrounds and malls has been severely hampered by budget cutbacks. A more sustained, consistent effort at weekly maintenance is needed, especially during the spring, summer and early fall, when more people are outdoors utilizing these facilities.

A very serious situation exists on the south side Eastern Parkway malls, specifically at Utica Avenue. Designed by Frederick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux, the Landmarked Eastern Parkway Malls are being desecrated by unlicensed vendors who appear to ply their trade with impunity while this portion of the mall continues its downward spiral into blight and deterioration. Has the Parks Department issued permits for vending at this location?

This problem which existed on both the north and south side service roads has been eliminated from the northern side, what then is the reason for allowing this situation to fester and become should a deplorable eyesore in our district? This matter needs to be addressed by park enforcement officers, as well as by the New York City Police Department to eliminate this blight in our community.

Community Board 9 has long been an advocate for restoration of adequate funding to provide the much needed upkeep of our parks and playgrounds. We continue to advocate for this funding as we strive for the improvement of park facilities within our district.

Tree Planting/Pruning Stump Removal

The greening of our district is an important aspect of our community beautification plan. The greening of traffic triangles and city-owned vacant lots to create vest-pocket parks are all components of this plan. Beautifying our neighborhood streets with the planting of street trees is a top priority. So is tree pruning. We urge the provision of adequate funds for the pruning of trees; and the removal of dead trees and tree stumps. These are important quality of life issues which must be addressed to avoid possible loss of life and property damage.

Prospect Park Projects

Community Board 9 supports the ongoing efforts to restore the structures and facilities in Prospect Park. Among the many important projects within the park that are in need of restoration are the Picnic House and Litchfield Villa. We urge that these projects be funded to completion

DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING

The senior population in Community District 9 continues to be under-served. In the face of this glaring reality, more outreach must be conducted in the community to reach seniors in order to provide them with the services that they need: Meals-on-wheels, home care, transportation and other vital services to seniors must be expanded to address the unmet needs of our growing senior population.

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Increased funding for Out of School Time Programs within the district is needed. Currently, there are not enough sites within the district offering these programs, especially at the high school level.

Community Board 9 envisions the establishment of a community youth center, a place where our neighborhood children can go to participate in healthy, clean and safe activities. We call on our City Council representatives to work with the Board to identify a site and to jointly fund the establishment of this facility. In providing constructive activities for our youth we will be doing our part to prepare them for the future.

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

In Community District 9, overcrowded classrooms and deteriorating buildings are some of the negatives that are hampering our children in their efforts to obtain the benefits of a quality education. Our children must be afforded an environment that is conducive to learning. With the exception of M.S. 2 and Middle College High School, which are new schools which were constructed in response to the overwhelming overcrowding in the district, the school buildings in Community District 9 (Community School District 17 – Region 6, Brooklyn), are in serious need of renovations and upgrading, including new windows, air conditioning, public address systems, gymnasiums and more.

Two of these buildings – P.S. 91 and P.S. 92 – are over 100 years old and are in the worst condition. In addition to the physical deficiencies, the ancient plumbing, heating and electrical systems in all of the school buildings in the district, subject the students, faculty and staff to endure inhumane conditions year round. We urge the Department of Education to move swiftly to rehabilitate all of our deteriorated school buildings, with priority being given to P.S. 91 and P.S. 92.

The Wingate High School building is another of our school buildings that is in dire need of renovation. This building now houses four “small schools” (Wingate High School no longer exists.) This building has numerous deficiencies which we urge the Department of Education and the School Construction Authority to address these deficiencies. This will allow the schools to provide an environment more suitable for learning and thus function in the manner they were intended.

AGENCY FOR CHILDREN’S SERVICES

With our significantly new and large immigrant population and a probable Census 2000 undercount, the Board strongly believes that the actual need for day care and head start services in Community District 9 is far greater than is currently estimated. There continues to be long waiting lists for placement of children at all of our existing day care centers. The demand continues to rise. An increase in the number of day care slots and vouchers and the establishment of at least one head start center will begin to address this need. Another possible solution to this major shortage of adequate day care would be to allow vouchers to be accepted at private day care centers.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

An on-site nurse should staff each public school. This would establish the first line of defense should our children become ill while at school. The health and well-being of our children should not be left to chance.

Again, with our growing immigrant population, the need for outreach within the community is vital. Education is needed so parents would understand the importance of immunization for childhood diseases. Education regarding the importance of prenatal care to reduce the infant death rate, and education for the prevention of teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases among young people, is also vitally important.

Rat Infestation

Our community is infested with rats. A surge in building construction, capital construction projects, dirty vacant lots, alleyways, sewers and subway tracks, all contribute to this scourge. These conditions are extremely prevalent in the warmer months and create serious health problems for the community. In addition, the West Nile Virus threat creates another level of concern for the community. There is a significant lack of resources to address this problem; therefore, the City must provide the additional funding that is necessary to arrest this problem.

HEALTH AND HOSPITALS CORPORATION

Reconstruction of Kings County Hospital Center

Community Board 9 continues to support the reconstruction of Kings County Hospital Center.

This institution is the primary health care facility not only for District 9 but for Central Brooklyn as well. We are pleased that low cost, quality health care will continue to be available to the hard working families who rely on this hospital for their health care needs.

Dr Susan Smith McKinney Nursing & Rehabilitation Center Therapeutic Horticultural Center

Dr. Susan Smith Nursing and Rehabilitation Center (DSSM) is one of only two skilled nursing facilities in Brooklyn which are Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) accredited. This facility has been providing excellent inpatient rehabilitation for consumers requiring the highest quality of care following surgery, acute health problems, accidents or injury.

The nursing home industry is experiencing a cultural change, moving from a medical mode to a cultural one, creating a more home-like environment for the residents. Renowned programs such as the Eden Alternative are leading the way toward this cultural change. The 2nd principle of the Eden Alternative is that Life in a truly human community revolves around close and continuing contact with children, plants and animals. In the garden, healing occurs as a result of a direct connection between the patient and the physical/natural environment.

Dr. Susan Smith McKinney Nursing and Rehabilitation Center is committed to making a culture change what will benefit residents for years to come. DSSM is seeking to expand the scope of therapies provided by the facility with the establishment of a Therapeutic Horticultural Center. Horticultural Therapy is a process which uses plants, horticultural activities, and the natural world to promote awareness and well-being by improving the body, mind and spirit.

Horticultural Therapy is universal, adaptable, and validated by research. Community Board 9 urges our elected officials to fully fund the establishment of the Therapeutic Horticultural Center at DSSM. The benefits of this therapy to the residents are immense.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION Traffic Calming

Approximately nine or ten years ago Community Board 9 requested the Department of Transportation to conduct a study for Community District 9, to determine how traffic calming principles could be implemented within this residential district to address the Board's and community's concerns for a safer district. This study by DOT was undertaken and completed some years ago but was "shelved" by the agency.

We believe that there have been many changes in statistics since this study was undertaken, therefore this study would perhaps not be truly reflective of today's conditions. The Board is once again requesting a study of the district by DOT to determine what traffic calming principles could be implemented in this largely residential district. This study would be helpful for PlaNYC's long term goals of providing safe streets and improving access to open space and encouraging cycling in the boroughs.

Street Resurfacing

Community Board 9 is pleased with the recent resurfacing of six streets in the district, encompassing approximately 63 blocks. Residents and motorists alike are pleased with the results. However,

many other streets in the district continue to deteriorate and remain prime candidates for resurfacing. The Board would like to see an expansion in the number of streets to be resurfaced each fiscal year.

There are always numerous potholes in our streets from the aftermath of winter, as well as other depressions from street openings by various parties. Streets all over the district are being excavated by cable and utility companies. The streets are not always restored properly and deteriorate after a harsh winter or some other circumstance. The allocation of adequate funding for a consistent street repair/resurfacing policy will serve to effectively address the pothole repair/street resurfacing needs of the City.

Pedestrian Ramps/Curb Restoration

There are a number of locations within the district where the curb is damaged and/or missing which creates a dangerous condition – one such location is in front of 888 Nostrand Avenue, Brooklyn, between President and Carroll Streets. In addition, there are a number of locations within the district where pedestrian ramps are missing. These locations need to be addressed to allow safe travel by all pedestrians, but especially those in wheelchairs, those with baby carriages, senior citizens and others.

Reconstruction of Empire Boulevard

The Board calls upon the agency to allocate funding for HWK 779 – the Reconstruction of Empire Boulevard from Flatbush to Utica Avenues. In 1990, the agency opted to shelve this project for five years, due to fiscal constraints. Now, fifteen years later the project remains shelved.

Empire Boulevard is regarded as the “gateway” to our district. This major roadway leads to key cultural institutions including the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, The Brooklyn Museum of Art, and Prospect Park. Empire Boulevard also has severe flooding and drainage problems which affect traffic, homes and businesses here.

Reconstruction of Clove Road (the Bedford Pass of the American Revolution) and Malbone Street – HWK166

The reconstruction of Clove Road and Malbone Street – HWK166 – is one of the most important roadway reconstruction projects in Community District 9. Clove Road has been identified by a NYC Department of Transportation preliminary archaeological study as the “Bedford Pass of the August 27, 1776 “Battle of Brooklyn”.

The next phase of research for this location is the archaeological dig. The Board is extremely pleased to have been advised by our council member of the allocation of adequate funding for this phase of the project the results. We are extremely thankful. The results of this study will have significant ramifications, not only for the district but for the borough as well. We look forward to working with the council member and the Department of Transportation to implement this project.

Clove Road has been submitted to the City’s Landmark Preservation Commission and the New York State Department of Parks and Historic Preservation for historic designation. It is extremely important therefore, that these studies be completed to provide the necessary supporting documentation for the historic designation process. We look forward to working with the agency and our elected offi-

cials for the preservation of Clove Road, a block long colonial road that has been preserved almost as it was in 1776 when it was a route through the Bedford Pass and was garrisoned by Continental soldiers.

Resurfacing of Nostrand Avenue from Eastern Parkway to Clarkson Avenue

Nostrand Avenue is one of the main thoroughfares in Brooklyn, running through several different neighborhoods. This street is heavily congested with city buses, delivery trucks, taxis, cars and other vehicles competing for passage all day long. The street is also in various stages of deterioration from harsh winters, numerous street openings by utility and various other private companies, and individuals. Nostrand Avenue needs to be resurfaced with attention being paid to alleviating traffic congestion, traffic calming, improved drainage and traffic flow.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Community Board 9 has repeatedly brought to the attention of the agency the problems with flooding in the district. We continue to request a catch basin reconstruction project for the district to correct capacity and other drainage problems in the district.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The importance of an adequately trained and properly equipped Fire Department cannot be over-emphasized. Appropriate training and proper equipment help to provide that safety net that our fire fighters need in their life-saving efforts on our behalf. One lesson learned from the 2003 Blackout that crippled the city, is that firehouses should be equipped with power generators. We strongly urge the agency and our elected officials to fully fund the acquisition of power generators for all firehouses in the city.

The Board sees a strong need for the provision of fire prevention and educational programs to be implemented for Community District 9, including the Child Fire Starter Program. This program, which provides early intervention services and has worked well in other areas, will help to reach those children who are at risk, thus saving valuable life and property. In addition, an increase in fire prevention programs will also help in the education of our citizens, thus reducing the risk of fire.

We strongly encourage the allocation of funding for a Carbon Monoxide Detector distribution program. We continue to support the Fire Detector distribution program.

Fire Marshals

The swift investigation of fires should be a priority. The lack of adequate numbers of Fire Marshals hampers the agency's ability to immediately begin the investigation as to the cause of a fire. Appropriate funding must be made available for the hiring of additional Fire Marshals to address this void. Not only will this lead to the apprehension of suspected arsonist(s), but will also help to curb the number of suspicious fires.

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS SERVICES

The revitalization of our local commercial strips is one of our main priorities. We urge the agency to continue to work with us for the revitalization of the following commercial strips in Community District 9:

- Nostrand Avenue from Eastern Parkway to Clarkson Avenue;
- Kingston Avenue from Eastern Parkway to Empire Boulevard;
- Utica Avenue from Empire Boulevard to Eastern Parkway;
- Bedford/Franklin/Rogers Avenues from Eastern Parkway to Parkside Avenue;
- Flatbush Avenue from Empire Boulevard to Clarkson Avenue;
- Empire Boulevard from Utica to Flatbush Avenues

The reconstruction of Kings County Hospital Center, the establishment of the Biotechnology Plaza, the expansion of Medgar Evers College of the City University of New York, opens up opportunities to attract viable businesses to the district to provide an array of consumer products and services, leading to the revitalizing not only the district's economy, but the quality of life as well.

NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Subway Station Rehab

Community District 9's residents and other commuters who use the Utica Avenue Subway Station are pleased that with the completion of the reconstruction project at this station. Other subway stations in the District in need of rehabilitation include the President Street Station, Franklin Avenue Station, Nostrand Avenue Station, Kingston Avenue, Sterling Street and Winthrop Street subway stations. We are heartened to see an acknowledgement in PlaNYC that these stations are in need of repair. We look forward to discussing with the New York City Transit Authority the plans and time-frame for planned improvements to these stations.

The Board is pleased that the MTA/NYCTA has finally recognized that the Eastern Parkway-Brooklyn Museum Station meets their criteria for stations to be ADA compliant. This subway station serves Community Districts 8 and 9 and the major cultural institutions in our district – the Brooklyn Museum of Art, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and the Brooklyn Public Library.

Thousands of local residents, visitors from the five boroughs and tourists from across the country and the world use this station to visit our neighborhoods and cultural institutions. These are the lucky ones. The disabled and our senior citizens cannot visit these institutions if they do not have access to a personal vehicle. Although, this station is not slated for immediate ADA compliance, we are pleased that the station has been approved for the designation and will work hard to make it a reality.

DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS

Response to complaints of building and zoning violations in the district by the Department of Buildings is poor. Follow-up to ensure compliance is even worse. To compound matters we have seen a rise in the numbers of unsafe buildings – bulging bricks, cracked exteriors, façade collapses, and other unsafe conditions. In addition, non-conformance with a building's Certificate of Occupancy provisions and commercial uses in residential zones are all on the rise in the district. A more effective and efficient code enforcement operation is needed to address the building and zoning violations that seriously hamper the safety and quality of life of our residents.

CONCLUSION

It is Community Board 9's belief that quality of life begins with good health and the nurturing of a built environment, set in aesthetically pleasing neighborhoods and reinforced with educational and economic development.

We believe that there is much to be done to enhance the quality of life for current and future residents. Our goal is to revitalize our neighborhoods to provide a safe and healthful setting, a place of tranquility and respite from the tasks of assimilation and striving to succeed. In order to accomplish these goals, the Board will continue to work with the City's agencies, elected officials and community to address the needs identified here.



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