



C O M M U N I Y      B O A R D      # 1 2  
( I H E      B R O N X )

**STATEMENT OF NEEDS**

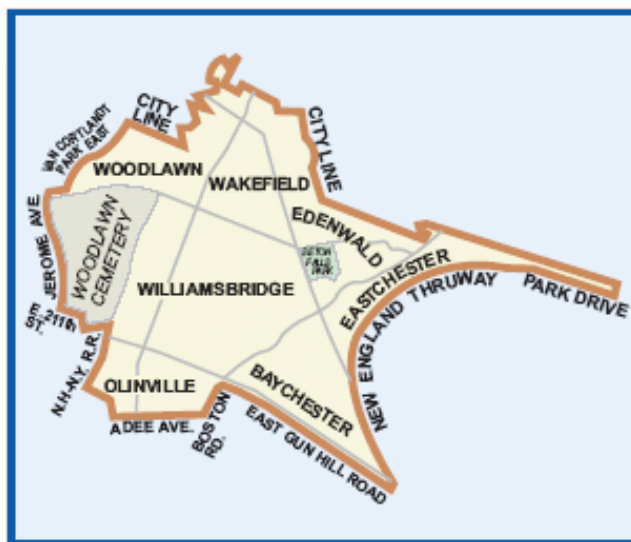
INTRODUCTION

The Municipal Administration of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, having secured a second lease on City Hall of four (4) years duration, offers New Yorkers the mixed vision of a City in which there is simultaneous cause for both optimism and apprehension. The continued maintenance of *THE BIG APPLE* as one of the safest large cities in the United States, the improved job market and employment figures, and thriving industries such as those in the tourism, service, and sports entertainment sectors are among several encouraging indices in a City that is Capital to the World. Conversely, any number of disquieting issues prevent vast numbers of residents, as Frank Sinatra sings, from "*making it in good, ole New York.*" It is becoming more grueling by the day for the middle class to survive in the City of New York. Citizens with full-time employment are unable to pay their bills and to provide their family with the basic necessities of life. The quality of public education, while heralded as improving and as mastering the challenge of affording another generation of learned and skilled graduates to enter the New York workforce, nevertheless is under question. Overall crime is down in our town; yet, many neighborhoods have seen violent crime return to unacceptable and frightening levels, even as fewer New York City Police Officers are available to patrol our streets. Getting about town has become an exasperating experience of endless traffic delays while the congestion and the aggravation characteristic of the City's public transportation network increases in the face of looming service cuts and fare hikes. In a *BIG APPLE* still scarred and shaken by the haunting images of 11 September 2001, the reality of terrorism remains real and requires a significant commitment of resources along with ingenuity and preparedness in order to keep those who would harm us at bay.

Bronx Community District #12 mirrors this mixed-bag dichotomy of life in the Big City. The District views with great satisfaction the construction of three (3) new educational complexes whilst its local Forty-seventh (47<sup>th</sup>) Police Precinct wants for lack of personnel and sector cars. Numerous projects enhancing our local infrastructure are underway or on the verge of being launched, admittedly many more than a majority of Community Board Districts citywide have been apportioned. Nonetheless, many more such projects with no funding or any hope of soon acquiring it abound on this District's wish list from the Departments of Environmental Protection (D.E.P.) and of Transportation (D.O.T.). Local development has brought new homes and shopping malls to our locale but has concurrently afflicted our residents with a dearth of parking spaces, overtaxed government services, and the sacrifice of precious green space. The Mayoral mantra oft repeated in prior years proposing "*to do more with less*" has meant having to do with less in many instances for the residents of Bronx Community District #12. As a fiscal framework is formulated for Fiscal Year 2008 (F.Y. '08), it is a formidable endeavor for Community Board #12 (The Bronx) to advocate vigorously for the needs of the local citizenry it serves even as the City of New York as a whole strives to manage prudently within the constraints of its far from unlimited monetary means.

With this background in mind, Community Board #12 (The Bronx) herewith submits its ANNUAL STATEMENTS OF NEEDS (S.O.N.) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008 (F.Y. '08). For purposes of effective presentation and organization, the comments and observations are arranged in categories corresponding to the Standing Committees of the Community Board.

### DISTRICT PROFILE



Source: Department of City Planning (D.C.P.)  
City of New York (December 2002)

Territorial Boundaries. The territorial boundaries of Community Board #12 (The Bronx) -- *i.e.*, Bronx Community District #12 -- are delineated in the official description of Community Districts in the Borough of The Bronx as follows:

North	The City Line with various jurisdictions in the County of Westchester (Village of Pelham Manor, City of Mount Vernon, City of Yonkers).
East	Long Island Sound, Park Drive, Western Prolongation of Park Drive, Interstate #95 (The New England Thruway).
South	East Gun Hill Road, Boston Post Road, Adea Avenue.
West	Eastern and Northern Boundary of Bronx Park, METRO NORTH New York-New Haven Railroad, East 211 <sup>th</sup> Street, Bainbridge Avenue, Jerome Avenue, East 233 <sup>rd</sup> Street, Van Cortlandt Park East.

*Source: Office of the Mayor, Community Assistance Unit (C.A.U.) (2004)*

TOTAL LAND AREA	
Acres:	3,596.3
Square Miles:	5.6

*Source: Department of City Planning (D.C.P.)  
City of New York (December 2002)*

Land Use. Within the territorial confines of Bronx Community District #12, both residential and non-residential land uses can be ascertained. According to information contained in the records dated August 2002, supplied by the Division of Real Property of the Department of Finance (D.O.F.) of the City of New York and modified by the New York City Department of City Planning (D.C.P.), residential land uses in Community Board #12 (The Bronx) include one-family and two-family residential, multi-family, and mixed residential and commercial usages. Non-residential land uses in the vicinity consist of commercial and office, industrial and manufacturing, transportation and utility, public facilities and institutions, open space and outdoor recreation, and parking facilities as well as a rapidly decreasing and nearly non-existent quantity of vacant land.

LAND USE, 2002			
	Lot Area		
	Lots	Sq. Ft. (000)	%
1- 2 Family Residential	14,057	39,949.8	38.4
Multi-Family Residential	3,001	16,835.5	16.2
Mixed Resid. / Commercial	457	1,772.9	1.7
Commercial / Office	415	3,943.3	3.8
Industrial	147	3,670.8	3.5
Transportation / Utility	160	2,861.2	2.8
Institutions	209	6,336.7	6.1
Open Space / Recreation	30	21,696.2	20.9
Parking Facilities	412	1,979.6	1.9
Vacant Land	1,104	4,682.2	4.5
Miscellaneous	—	316.7	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,057</b>	<b>104,044.8</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Department of City Planning (D.C.P.)  
City of New York (December 2002)*

Population. According to the statistics provided by the most recent United States Census conducted in 2000, the overall population of Community Board #12 (The Bronx) increased by some fifteen percent (15%) in the decade subsequent to the prior Census taking in 1990. Said growth in the overall population of Bronx Community District #12 occurred despite a corresponding drop in the local birth rate. Simultaneously, during the aforesaid time frame -- *i.e.*, 1990 through 2000 -- the District experienced a decline in the rate of deaths, the infant mortality quotient, and in the proportion, both in terms of a *per capita* and a

percentage basis, of the aggregate District population receiving some sort of income maintenance and support.

<b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
Number	128,226	129,620	149,077
% Change	—	1.1	15.0

*Source: Department of City Planning (D.C.P.)  
City of New York (December 2002)*

<b>VITAL STATISTICS</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2001</b>
Births: Number	2,223	1,964
Rate per 1000	17.2	13.2
Deaths: Number	1,353	995
Rate per 1000	10.4	6.7
Infant Mortality: Number	37	9
Rate per 1000	16.6	4.6

*Source: Department of City Planning (D.C.P.)  
City of New York (December 2002)*

<b>INCOME SUPPORT</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>2002</b>
Public Assistance (AFDC, Home Relief)	19,017	8,595
Supplemental Security Income	4,937	6,018
Medicaid Only	5,828	15,164
Total Persons Assisted	29,782	29,777
Percent of Population	23.0	20.0

*Source: Department of City Planning (D.C.P.)  
City of New York (December 2002)*

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS SERVICES

Commercial Strips. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) boasts of three (3) noteworthy commercial strips. To the East, there is the commercial strip along Boston Post Road that proceeds, in a northerly to southerly direction, from the Baychester neighborhood, through Edenwald, and then on down to the Fish Bay area. Approximately in the center of Bronx Community District #12, the White Plains Road commercial strip runs a course that extends the entire length of the District, progressing from Wakefield in the North, through Williamsbridge, and winding up in the Olinville neighborhood in the southernmost reaches of the Community Board. Finally, the Katonah Avenue commercial strip is located in the western region of Bronx District #12 in the Woodlawn Heights area. Said strip cuts dead through the center of this neighborhood, going from the City Line with Yonkers in the North on down to East 233<sup>rd</sup> Street and Woodlawn Cemetery in the South. Each of the abovementioned commercial areas has a long and rich history, not only in the District, but, indeed, in the Borough of The Bronx. Each is of crucial and critical importance to the

quality of life and the economic vitality of Community Board #12 and of the Northeast Bronx overall.

Common concerns pertain to each of these three (3) commercial hubs identified above -- viz., the four (4) "C's" of Crime, Cleanliness, Cars, and Commotion. The issue of crime -- i.e., public safety -- is foremost relative to the welfare of these commercial areas. All three (3) strips have been afflicted by the sale of illegal drugs and the insufferable presence of loiterers. These loiterers, both adults and younger folk, often in large and unruly clusters, have been known to block passage along sidewalks; become boisterous and rowdy; deface and devastate private property; and misappropriate public streets, lots, and other open spaces for waste disposal sites and/or public lavatories. For our commercial streets to attract business owners and patrons, they must be safe and sound locales in which to transact business. They must be eye-catching and appealing spots where merchants can develop a clientele and customers can engage in a safe and rewarding shopping routine. A permanent and palpable police presence is indispensable in order to rid these commercial strips of undesirable elements and conditions so as to maintain them for the benefit of businesspeople and the shopping public.

The second "C," -- i.e., cleanliness -- will further enhance the vibrancy of our commercial streets. Well-maintained streets, kept free of garbage on the curbs and of litter on the sidewalks and in the roadways, are excellent advertisements that attract both buyers and business folks. The Department of Sanitation (D.O.S.), through its enforcement arm, should prudently and reasonably hold merchants to the requirements of keeping their storefront in a good and tidy condition. D.O.S. should not only continue, but also expand, its street cleaning efforts in these areas. The restoration of crews of street sweepers -- an excellent resource lost from yesteryear -- and the regular emptying and, when necessary, replacement of trash receptacles throughout these commercial zones would be enormous assets in advancing the strength and the allure of our business areas. The Sanitation Department (D.O.S.) must be assured of adequate personnel and apparatus in order to be equal to the demands imposed upon it in this regard.

"C' #3 -- viz., cars -- refers to the parking issues along the commercial strips. Double parking is a nuisance and a precarious problem that cannot be allowed to interfere with either the careful and continuous flow of traffic or the transaction of business. Conversely, the City of New York should seriously re-evaluate, and quite frankly, do away with the daily invasion of Hun-like hordes of Traffic Enforcement Agents (T.E.A.'s) who turn up by the vanload and overrun our commercial strips, seeking to summons the motor vehicles of unwitting, and basically law-abiding, shoppers. For many years, Community Board #12 (The Bronx) has advocated the institution of parking meters that permit shoppers ten (10) minutes of complimentary parking free-of-charge in order to undertake short errands. Such a program, long overdue, is already blissfully in effect in the City of Yonkers, and has been much applauded by business owners and shoppers alike. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) urges New York City to follow suit and to effect what is obviously a sensible and worthy initiative for the good of our commercial streets.

Finally, commotion, the fourth "C," the result of a proliferation of nightlife and entertainment establishments, the overwhelming majority of which offer music, oftentimes in the form of live performances and, if not, from jukeboxes, frequently accompanied by the availability of alcoholic beverages, must not be allowed to blight the beauty of our commercial strips. Similarly, loud, disturbing noise and racket both from within these enterprises and from the congregation of their customers, too many of whom are now standing outside on the street in order to smoke, must not be tolerated or allowed to disturb the inhabitants of adjacent residential areas. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) supports a comprehensive review of the outmoded and out-of-date municipal cabaret law in addition to the levelheaded and rational amendment forthwith of Mayor Michael R.



Bloomberg's anti-smoking regulations. One even-handed proposition in this respect would be the authorization of isolated, individually and appropriately ventilated smoking areas to be designated in bars and restaurants. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) also welcomes the endeavors of The Honorable Christine C. Quinn, Speaker of the Council of the City of New York, as she undertakes to ameliorate the harmful aspects of New York City nightlife upon local neighborhoods. The Community Board is hopeful that the fruits of the Speaker's efforts will come to bear in the District, bringing relief to area residents adversely affected by entertainment establishments that serve alcohol and have music.

Beyond these collective concerns, each of the three (3) commercial strips demonstrates difficulties peculiar to it. On Katonah Avenue, the abundance of bars, pubs, and taverns has created a quality of life nightmare for the residents of Woodlawn Heights, most especially the homeowners and tenants in the vicinity of this street. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) is committed to a case-by-case and judicious analysis of whether or not more of such enterprises should be launched in this locality. On both Boston Post Road and White Plains Road, the ever-expanding number of houses of worship, fast food joints, nail salons, beauty parlors, barbershops, and discount stores present formidable challenges to the viability of these commercial strips. These establishments exacerbate problematic conditions along these streets, such as loitering, noise, parking, and street cleaning. Taking notice of the substantial local upsurge in the emergence of houses of worship, Community Board #12 (The Bronx) urges the Department of City Planning (D.C.P.) to reassess on a recurrent basis the effect of community facilities situated in commercial and residential settings.

Not all developments in our three (3) commercial strips are undesirable, though. The formation of The Bronx Business Alliance, which successfully sponsored the creation of The North Bronx Business Outreach Center located at 4309B White Plains Road in Bronx Community District #12, is a *bona fide* advantage to our local economy. The Center, funded Assemblyman Carl E. Heastie, provides hands-on technical aid and professional services to local business owners in order to enable them to compete in the complex, demanding Bronx marketplace of the twenty-first century. A healthy mix and diversity of business enterprises along our commercial strips must be fostered and promoted by The Bronx Business Alliance and its Outreach Center in order to forestall the increasing possibility that these business areas will be overpopulated by such outfits as hair and nail salons, discount outlets, and fast-food eateries. Additionally, the funding of "OPERATION CLEANSWEEP," sponsored by the Doe Foundation through the efforts of The Honorable Carl E. Heastie, is ridding White Plains Road of trash and refuse, creating a shipshape street on which it is a pleasure to stroll and/or to shop. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) extols the Assemblyman's efforts and urges the uninterrupted funding of these undertakings.

Liquor Licenses. The spreading conglomeration of pubs, bars, taverns, and social clubs, the majority of whom avail their patrons of alcoholic beverages, requires the constant surveillance and oversight of Community Board #12 (The Bronx). Through the actions of its Standing Committee on Economic Development and Business Services, the Community Board will monitor existing clubs and licenses and act to insure that these establishments will be law-abiding good neighbors rather than crime-engendering nuisances in Bronx Community District #12. The Standing Committee will furthermore exercise oversight over all other business enterprises that sell beer, wine, and hard liquor in order to foster and to preserve the quality of life in our neighborhood. Community Board #12 (The Bronx), seeking a meaningful role in the granting of all forms of liquor licenses, calls upon our New York State legislators to empower Community Boards with a greater than their current advisory role in the licensing procedures of the New York State Liquor Authority (N.Y.S.L.A.). Specifically, a Community Board should be given the authority to delay, if not deny altogether, the initial licensing or the renewal of an existing liquor license for an establishment that is crime-ridden or that falls short in conducting its dealings in a lawful

and legitimate fashion that is not injurious to the welfare and tranquility of the neighborhood. Once again, the initiatives of Councilwoman Christine C. Quinn, Speaker of the City Council, devised to grant the City of New York greater oversight and enforcement capabilities relative to the licensing and the operation of drinking establishments are applauded.

Hexagon Laboratories. With the clearing and the decontamination of this former toxic waste site east of the intersection of Peartree Avenue with Boston Post Road in Bronx Community District #12 finally realized, the Community Board will vociferously advocate for the complete restoration of this location to a productive and profitable usage in our area. It anticipates doing so in partnership with the Office of the Borough President of The Bronx, other public officials, the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (B.O.E.D.C.), business interests, and concerned neighborhood associations and residents.

### ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Department of Sanitation (D.O.S.). Community Board #12 (The Bronx) salutes and appreciates the consistent and the competent service provided by the Department of Sanitation (D.O.S.) of the City of New York under the stewardship of its Commissioner, The Honorable John J. Doherty, along with the leadership of our local Superintendents and Supervisors in the Borough of The Bronx. Overall, Community Board #12 is satisfied with the services supplied by the Sanitation Department (D.O.S.) and is pleased with the general response of D.O.S. supervisory and other personnel to the Community Board's complaints and requests for service.

Community Board #12 (The Bronx) advocates for the continuation of the level of Sanitation services presently provided to the residents of our neighborhood. In light of the increased number of homes, business, and residents in the District as a consequence of the epidemic of over-development that continues to take place, Community Board #12 expects that sufficient personnel and equipment will be retained -- and additional funding, if required, budgeted -- so as to satisfy the year-round demands of the residents and the merchants of Bronx Community District #12 in the areas of garbage collection, street cleaning, recycling and, during the Winter months, of snow removal and street salting.

As highlighted in the prior section of this ANNUAL STATEMENT OF NEEDS (S.O.N.), the Department of Sanitation (D.O.S.) can contribute to the renaissance and the resurgence of our three (3) commercial strips by an effective street cleaning operation, including on Sundays; assigning personnel to street sweeping crews; and dependably attending to the trash receptacles along our commercial streets, replacing them wherever and whenever necessary. Furthermore, reasonable enforcement by the Sanitation Police of regulations pertaining to sidewalk conditions should be sensibly executed so as to be encouraging to area merchants rather than punitive. Such should be a complement to similarly evenhanded and equitable D.O.S. enforcement actions pertaining to homeowners in the neighborhood.

The need for aggressive D.O.S. enforcement for dumping along Bullard Avenue in the Wakefield area, some of the upper reaches of Boston Post Road in Baychester, and in empty lots and spaces throughout Bronx Community District #12, particularly in the environs of Interstate #95 (The New England Thruway), is a matter of the utmost urgency that has been fervently and long espoused by the Community Board. Ample Sanitation Police should be allocated for and hired so as to make enforcement versus illegal dumping as extensive as possible. Along these lines, the agency must address the issue of cleaning

and fencing uncut -- i.e., undeveloped -- streets in the neighborhood, such as Harper Avenue.

Department of Environmental Protection (D.E.P.). Devastating flooding in the wake of torrential rainstorms has shattered the joy of many first-time homeowners in Bronx Community District #12. The recent, rapid expansion in the number of two-family and three-family private homes in the area gives an added exigency to this ruinous circumstance. The attention and the resources of the Department of Environmental Protection (D.E.P.) of the City of New York need to be brought to bear without delay in order to address this grueling predicament.

Community Board #12 (The Bronx) assigns the highest priority to several items that it wishes to be included in the Fiscal Year 2008 (F.Y. '08) Capital and Expense Budgets. Said budget requests are as follows:

1. the installation of sewers, sidewalks, and curbs on Pittman Avenue, specifically the "2054" block, between Wilder Avenue and Murdock Avenue in order to alleviate the flooding problem currently confronting homeowners;
2. the provision of a new sewer line in the "2800" block of Bruner Avenue in order to address the serious flooding and backing up of sewers with which the local residents are faced;
3. the putting in place of more catch basins on Bronxwood Avenue near Tilden Street that are sorely needed in order to relieve the rather extensive financial loss of the local residents due to flooding resulting from the inadequacy of the current catch basins on Bronxwood Avenue; (N.B.: This area has previously been surveyed and it has been determined that the placement of additional catch basins would go far in easing this problem.)
4. the construction of a sewer line in the vicinity of Steenwick Avenue, Rombouts Avenue, and Hollers Avenue since, in the wake of even moderate rainfall, the five (5) homes situated in the area being serviced by cesspools are subjected to basement flooding and overflowing cesspools triggering a most unsanitary condition;
5. the hiring of additional D.E.P. personnel in order to respond to violations of the municipal air quality and noise codes, specifically one (1) more inspector to see to noise complaints generated by the growing number of discos, bars, cabarets, and social clubs; eight (8) added agency employees in order to identify and, subsequently, initiate any requisite enforcement response against offenses of the Air Pollution Control Code; and four (4) extra inspectors in order to enforce the provisions of the air and noise codes during the weekends; and
6. the hiring of additional D.E.P. personnel for sewer maintenance, specifically six (6) added construction laborers in order to reduce the backlog of pending work orders; an extra supervisor and four (4) more employees in order to respond to acute and/or chronic arterial difficulties; the supplementing of personnel [five (5) more supervisors along with nineteen (19) added workers are advised] assigned to follow-up on matters relative to catch basin cleaning with the rodding, flushing, and clearance of catch basin connections; and seven (7) additional staff members in order to implement a permanent City-wide program of utilizing dry bacteria cultures in connection with flushing, rather than the present practice of rodding and flushing, in the removal of grease from problematic sites.

Croton Water Filtration Plant. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) continues to view with grave concern the proposed construction of the Croton Water Filtration Plant underneath the Mosholu Golf Course in Van Cortlandt Park just west of Jerome Avenue in



the Borough of The Bronx. The Community Board has always regarded with great reluctance any proposals affecting parklands and green spaces in the Borough of The Bronx. The maintenance and preservation of such has always been a priority of the highest order.

While not actually sited in Bronx Community District #12, the suggested water filtration plant is quite close to the southwest boundary and portion of the District. Its nearby physical proximity raises a number of important issues to which Community Board #12 (The Bronx) must turn its attention. First and foremost, during the commenced construction period of the next several years, the spillover consequences upon the District, particularly the Woodlawn Heights neighborhood, will be substantial. Trucks and motorized heavy equipment will be profoundly involved in this project in great numbers and the retro-fitting of them with environmental safeguards along with the utilization of more ecologically-friendly low-sulfur fuel as promised by D.E.P. must not be subject to further procrastination. Similarly, the bearing that these mammoth machines will have upon the safe and smooth flow of traffic entering and exiting the Major Deegan Expressway as well as along East 233<sup>rd</sup> Street gives rise to tremendous apprehension as does the impact that these colossal vehicles burdened with heavy loads of cargo and materials will have upon the condition of our local roadways and streets. Secondly, once fully erected and in operation, the chemicals utilized in the water filtration process are a further source of worry. The danger to all forms of life -- vegetative, animal, and, above all, human -- should an accident occur either at the location of the filtration plant *per se* or during the course of transporting these chemical substances is a matter not to be lightly dismissed or overlooked. Finally, in this day and age when terrorism is not a far-fetched fear to be ignored, the potential value of the Croton Project as the target of a fanatical strike against New York City's water supply is a real possibility. Security at the plant itself and in its environs must be meticulously planned and dependably executed with adequate resources, principally D.E.P. Police and other security personnel.

### HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Community Residences and Group Homes. The number of group homes and community residences continues to skyrocket in Bronx Community District #12. A large assortment of charitable and benevolent agencies in the private sector, that are either faith-based or non-denominational not-for-profit (N.F.P.), operate group homes in the neighborhood. State and municipal agencies of government likewise directly administer community residences or fund private and charitable agencies that do so by means of the "R.F.P." -- *i.e.*, "Request For Proposals" -- and the public bidding/contracting processes. These facilities serve a variety of populations defined by age, gender, economic class, condition of family life, physical and mental challenges, and status *vis a vis* the criminal justice system.

The brisk expansion in the number of two-family and three-family homes in the area has facilitated the uninterrupted growth in the number and type of community residences and group homes. While priced so as to defy being even remotely classified as "affordable," this new housing, nevertheless, is well within the means of public and private agencies wishing to establish group homes in the District. Of course, houses in more affluent, well-to-do neighborhoods are beyond their reach, thus repeatedly drawing these organizations and government entities back time and again to Community Board #12 (The Bronx) in their search for new sites. This circumstance, when coupled with the inability of the Community Board to assert over-saturation of these facilities, has created a most frustrating state of affairs. The deliberate definition of over-saturation in New York State legislation based upon extremely narrow and specific categories guarantees that the tedious prerequisites of over-saturation cannot and will not ever be attained.

Community Board #12 (The Bronx) calls upon our representatives in the New York State Legislature to enact a meaningful, realistic amendment of the State Mental Hygiene Law relative to what constitutes over-saturation of community residences in a neighborhood. A noteworthy suggestion in this regard would be to count on a strictly per capita basis, irrespective of population served, the total number of group homes in a District when determining whether or not over-saturation exists in that locality. Moreover, Community Boards should be given an authentic decision-making voice in the site selection process for community residences. Community Boards should no longer be reduced to their contemporary superficial role of only being informed of the launch of this type of facility along with, perhaps, being requested to render an advisory opinion. Finally, state and local government must provide aggressive oversight of the fiscal and procedural operation of group homes. Under-financed community residences and/or poorly staffed, maintained, and managed ones too frequently become bad neighbors and nuisances to nearby homeowners and local residents.

Administration for Children's Services (A.C.S.). The abuse of children is a dreadful horror that has regrettably reared its ugly head on far too many occasions in Bronx Community District #12. The Community Board implores the Bloomberg Administration to continue to boost funding for A.C.S. so that a sufficient, well-trained cadre of social workers and skilled professionals is ready to protect children at risk of violence, maltreatment, and neglect and to care for them in a compassionate and dignified fashion. Preventive services must continue to be devised, funded, and implemented by the Children's Services Administration (A.C.S.) in order to prevent ab initio the mistreatment of young ones by birth parents, foster parents, and other adults.

Department for the Aging (D.F.T.A.). The requirements of a senior population on the rise in the City of New York and in Community Board #12 (The Bronx) must be aptly addressed and financed. Budget lines for our District golden age centers and senior citizen service programs must take into account the rate of inflation as well as increases in the price tag of salary and benefits for staff and employees. Adequate staffing of senior centers must be accompanied by appropriate resources for proper maintenance in order to make sure that those places wherein our older folks gather to socialize, exercise, eat, and relax are safe, clean, and attractive. Appropriate monies must be on hand to enable senior centers in the District -- such as the one at 711 Nereid Avenue -- to be renovated, rendered readily accessible, or, if necessary, relocated. The provision of home care, social services, and transportation for medical appointments and the like is of the utmost importance for our elderly who are frail or confined to home. Intergenerational programs must be encouraged and budgeted.

Two (2) key issues in Bronx Community District #12 with respect to aging services are the senior meal program and senior housing. Affordable, safe senior housing will enable adults, who have lived in the neighborhood for many years in private homes but who can no longer do so for a variety of reasons pertaining to old age, to remain in the District, an area familiar to them. This development would be a boon not only to the elder generation but to others in the neighborhood as well -- e.g., the merchants -- since the seniors would continue to patronize the local businesses whose goods and services are already well known and near to them. The recent decision of the Department for the Aging (D.F.T.A.) to enact a sweeping and far-reaching change in the furnishing of home meals to senior citizens must continue to be painstakingly monitored and critically evaluated. The medical, social, and emotional aspects of having hired staff or volunteers supply a hot meal on a daily basis to the home of an older person must be appraised along with nutritional issues in light of D.F.T.A.'s decision to deliver frozen, freeze-dried meals once or twice a week. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) calls upon D.F.T.A. to commit itself to providing a hot, freshly cooked meal on an every-day basis to any senior individual who so desires

one for whatever rationale. One (1) final issue is the status of the senior building situated at 720 East 221<sup>st</sup> Street, which must be definitively determined without additional delay.

Department for Homeless Services (D.H.S.). Community Board #12 (The Bronx) applauds the farsighted and sensible announcement by the Municipal Administration to go beyond the difficulty of sheltering the homeless to analyzing and rectifying the underlying causes of being homeless in order to reduce its incidence. It also endorses the initiatives of the Department of Homeless Services (D.H.S.) to train and to transform mentally able and physically fit homeless persons into productive, taxpaying citizens and contributing members of society.

The process of site selection for homeless shelters and transitional housing for itinerant individuals must be thoroughly revamped and reformed. The process for locating shelters or Tier II temporary housing for those lacking a roof over their head must be made transparent and free of deception and deceit. The back door, underhanded practice in which not-for-profit (N.F.P.) charitable organizations in the private sector and D.H.S. wink at each other as they engage in a devious, surreptitious progression from "R.F.P.'s" to which only a pre-determined agency can and will respond, even as that same agency prepares and acts to open a homeless facility, to a farcical, pro forma bidding/contracting procedure -- all of which evades appropriate public scrutiny as well as credible local neighborhood input and review -- cannot and should not be tolerated any further. Additionally, the ongoing practice of sheltering the homeless in area motels, designed to circumvent the requirements and violate the spirit of the municipal ordinance forbidding such action, must be terminated effectively and forthwith. Besides being a distinct burden and disadvantage to Bronx Community District #12 with its dozen or more motels, it also is an unnecessary and unjustified expense to the hard-working taxpayers of the City of New York whose Municipal Administration forks over nearly one hundred dollars per diem to motel owners and operators in order to put up dispossessed persons and families.

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (D.O.H.M.H.). The health and safety of our children is a top-notch priority of Community Board #12 (The Bronx). Ergo, the Community Board supports the funding to station a school nurse in every school and educational facility in Bronx Community District #12 and throughout the Borough of The Bronx, regardless of its age/grade level or whether it is public, private, parochial, or Church-affiliated.

Human Resources Administration/Department of Social Services (H.R.A./D.S.S.). Even with an improving national and local economy and the recent decline in unemployment figures, albeit smaller in the New York metropolitan region than nationwide, attention to the needs of those persons coming off of public assistance, voluntarily or otherwise, must not be swept under the rug or ignored. The accessibility of adequately-salaried and long-range jobs, work training, literacy, computer education, and life skills programs is essential for those attempting to advance themselves by taking another bite at the apple of life. Welfare recipients whose public assistance payments are being terminated and who are being directed to enter the work force must be trained with skills commensurate to the prerequisites of employment in the twenty-first century. In Bronx Community District #12, the need for a Job Opportunity Center with an emphasis on unearthing employment for single individuals is manifest and should be funded by the Human Resources Administration/Department of Social Services (H.R.A./D.S.S.).

Community Board #12 (The Bronx) has an alarming incidence of domestic violence. Social services in order to tackle this social scourge in our neighborhood and to extend much needed assistance to its victims are greatly needed. Other family-centered programs, such as those teaching parenting skills, should be offered. The Northeast Bronx has been deprived of a family services center ever since the agency closed down its Office of

Neighborhood Family Services on the second floor of TOWN HALL, the Headquarters of Community Board #12 (The Bronx), many years ago. It is long overdue for H.R.A./D.S.S. to budget for and bring back this obviously necessary bureau.

The arrival of colder, more inclement weather and the impending Winter highlights the requirement for adequately stocked food pantries and kitchens for those who are down on their luck for any number of reasons. In a society where the prevalent over-abundance of food has resulted in a tremendous jump in the rate of obesity, a worrisome increase in the incidence of diabetes, most especially among young people, and a scandalous amount of wasted and/or discarded food, there is no justification or rationalization for folks being hungry or denied proper nutrition. H.R.A./D.S.S. should provide healthy, well-balanced meals and food stocks to those underprivileged and in need.

Our Lady of Mercy Medical Center (O.L.M.M.C.). This renowned institution, once known as Misericordia Hospital, is an indispensable component of the social services and health care networks in Bronx Community District #12. Besides affording medical care through the efforts of gifted and dedicated administrative, medical, and support staffs, it is a significant source of jobs in our District and throughout The Bronx. Furthermore, O.L.M.M.C. is an area provider of first-line emergency health care for those in urgently tragic circumstances or who cannot afford proper medical insurance. The cooperative arrangement between Our Lady of Mercy and the Montefiore Healthcare System, another prominent Bronx agency, temporarily mitigates the fear that the District may soon be deprived of valuable local health care resources. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) intends to remain fully informed of developments in this regard.

### HOUSING

As a matter of usual course, the development of new housing is greeted as an advantageous and optimistic development in an area. In Bronx Community District #12, however, the brisk appearance of new homes over the past few years has not been without its detrimental and unfavorable outcomes. Regrettably, eager developers have swallowed up every open lot and free spot of green space for more and more private residences. The high price range of these contemporary homes places them beyond the scope of affordable housing. To be profitable for builders and financially feasible for buyers, the new housing has increasingly taken the shape of two-family and three-family dwellings. As an upshot, two (2) or three (3) families now reside in the same space where previously only a single family lived. The resultant increase in population places a severe strain on municipal services, many of which are already delivered on a less than adequate basis in Community Board #12 (The Bronx), and concomitantly generates a dire dearth of available parking spaces on local streets already tightly crammed with parked cars. The decision to construct multi-family residences has further instigated a novel style of architecture that resembles the garish, box-like type of building characteristic of the former Soviet Union. Besides being too expensive and thoroughly unattractive, these recent homes are contrary to the architectural character and cultural heritage of our neighborhood.

Approximately a half (½) dozen years or so ago, a privately financed and developed apartment house complex was erected on Boller Avenue in the Eastchester area of Bronx Community District #12. Loudly opposed by many local homeowners, it represented the initial instance of rental housing in the neighborhood that was obtainable outside of a private residence. Additional units of this category of housing, rather than the multi-family units currently proliferating, need to be erected in the District so as to offer alternative housing choices both to present and prospective residents.



Department of Buildings (D.O.B.). The issue of illegal conversions continues as a critical concern in Community Board #12 (The Bronx). The danger given rise to by this prohibited practice is as severe as the many nuisance situations that it instigates -- *e.g.*, an increase in population, a strain upon city services, and a bothersome parking crunch. It can likewise lead to tragedy as the people of Bronx Community District #12 have witnessed in the past. An augmented force of building inspectors needs to be funded and positioned in the Borough of The Bronx in order to address this matter aggressively. The insufficient number of available D.O.B. inspectors in The Bronx lags far behind that of our other four (4) sister Boroughs. Furthermore, the "HALF DAY PROGRAM," a concerted effort conducted by the Department of Buildings (D.O.B.) in partnership with the New York Police Department (N.Y.P.D.) and the Fire Department of New York (F.D.N.Y.), should be assertively utilized in the District in order to alleviate the occurrence of illegal conversions. In a similar vein, it is incumbent upon D.O.B. to formulate a necessary plan of action to address the need for its inspectors to check for an illegal conversion when said personnel are unable to gain access to a site. An increased team of D.O.B. inspectors is also called for in light of the necessity of inspecting the plethora of new homes and houses of worship mushrooming throughout Bronx Community District #12 so as to insure their compliance with all municipal safety codes and ordinances as well as the blueprints that have been submitted to the Department of Buildings (D.O.B.).

Monies should be allocated in the Fiscal Year 2008 (F.Y. '08) Expense Budget in order to hire additional staff for the Environmental Control Board (E.C.B.) of the City of New York so that illegal uses can be prosecuted in a more timely and effective manner. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) has endured, and continues to deal with, a plague of violations against THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK as well as the city building code. At present, the Building Department (D.O.B.) is not capable of attending to many of these quality of life complaints in our locality. The Community Board supports the D.O.B. proposal to transfer such violations impinging upon the quality of life to enforcement by the Environmental Control Board (E.C.B.). This objective mandates the hiring of more personnel for E.C.B. Additional staff should also be budgeted for the Building Department's (D.O.B.) Emergency Night Squad and also assigned for weekend inspections to prevent contractors from working contrary to code and to law on Saturdays and/or Sundays. Finally, Community Board #12 (The Bronx) anticipates and welcomes the long-awaited renovation of the Bronx Borough Buildings Office at 1932 Arthur Avenue.

New York City Housing Authority (N.Y.C.H.A.). Public housing in the four (4) New York City Housing Authority (N.Y.C.H.A.) developments in Bronx Community District #12 -- *i.e.*, Baychester Houses, Edenwald Houses, Boston Secor Houses, and Gun Hill Houses -- is slowly aging and demonstrating the ravages of wear and tear over numerous years. Renovations must be undertaken and completed forthwith so as to ensure safe and pleasant accommodations to all N.Y.C.H.A. residents in our neighborhood. The safety of the folks in public housing must further be enhanced by the immediate installation of carbon monoxide (C.O.) alarms in each unit as *per* the dictates of recently enacted municipal law.

### LAND USE

Several important land use issues require awareness and consideration in Community Board #12 (The Bronx). The previous discussion of the impact of over-development and its consequences for the neighborhood points to the need for re-zoning throughout Bronx Community District #12. To date, neighborhoods such as Wakefield, Edenwald, Baychester, Woodlawn Heights, and Olinville have benefited from the expertise of the staff at the Bronx Borough Office of the Department of City Planning (D.C.P.). This process should proceed expeditiously in order to preserve the character and the integrity of the area.



Zoning Amendments are a most effective response to the scourge of over-development in the District.

In the City of New York, the Borough of The Bronx is first among all five (5) Boroughs with respect to the number of short-stay motels within its territory. Much to our consternation, Bronx Community District #12 tops its eleven (11) sister Community Boards in The Bronx as the prime location of these nuisances to the quality of our life. So-called "hot sheet" motels are a blot upon the good name and reputation of our neighborhood insofar as they are frequently the scene of serious crime -- *e.g.*, illegal drug use, prostitution, assault and battery, larceny, auto theft, and even, murder. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) wholeheartedly recommends the immediate re-visiting and re-examination of a proposed amendment to THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK put forth by the immediate past Borough President of The Bronx, The Honorable Fernando Ferrer. The Ferrer Zoning Amendment called for eliminating motels in residential areas by restricting their location to within a designated number of feet adjacent to the points of access to and egress from major roadways. The prior Municipal Administration of Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani refused, for political reasons, to consider seriously this application. Now is the time for Mayor Giuliani's successor in City Hall to correct this blatantly partisan error.

As stated above, Community Board #12 (The Bronx) enthusiastically supports zoning amendments pertaining to community facilities, such as churches. The propagation of houses of worship in Bronx Community District #12 evidences several harmful spillover effects relative to their local establishment -- crowding, congestion, a crunch for parking, and noise, just to single out a few. Churches, like all other organizations and entities in the neighborhood, must act as "good neighbors" to area residents and business enterprises even while their First Amendment rights are respected. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) applauds the continued study of this topic by the Department of City Planning (D.C.P.).

Like other Bronx Community Board Districts, Community Board #12 (The Bronx) has several zoning areas characterized by mixed -- *i.e.*, commercial and residential -- usage. These mixed use zones present unique complaints and consternation as homeowners struggle to live side-by-side with commercial outfits. Adverse conditions created by this conglomeration of opposing uses should be looked at carefully and researched in order to determine any means of relief and/or conflict resolution between private residents and commercial proprietors/operators.

Finally, continued vigilance must be exhibited relative to adult entertainment establishments in the District. Said businesses must be held to strict conformity with the prerequisites of municipal codes and ordinances. To thwart a resurgence and to preclude a re-appearance of these scars upon the face of our District, Community Board #12 (The Bronx) strongly urges the Department of City Planning (D.C.P.) to proceed expeditiously and deliberately with the process of implementing an amendment, suggested in a recent decision promulgated by the Court of Appeals of the State of New York, involving legal challenges to the adult entertainment zoning amendments formulated and enacted during the Giuliani Administration. In its pronouncement, the Court of Appeals espoused defining the so-called "60/40" ratio for determining whether or not an establishment is "XXX" on the basis of its gross sales rather than stock quantities and floor space. The Community Board unreservedly concurs with the guidance offered by New York State's High Court.

### LIBRARIES AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

The New York Public Library (N.Y.P.L.). Community Board #12 (The Bronx) continues to assign the utmost magnitude to the Capital and Expense Budget items relevant to the

priorities of the New York Public Library (N.Y.P.L.). The Public Library is a valued resource for residents of all ages and walks of life in our neighborhood.

Community Board #12 (The Bronx) ardently urges the City of New York to augment funding for the local branch libraries in order to enable them to provide six (6) days of library service in our neighborhood. Currently, most of our libraries are open for only five (5) days. The added day of service in our District branches, the enrichment of library resources and materials -- e.g., book collections, magazines, periodicals, computers, literacy programs, job skills information, foreign language instruction, "ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE" (E.S.L.) classes, and audio-visual (A/V) materials -- and Sunday hours of operation at Fordham and other specialized and reference libraries will be made possible by the investment of additional tax dollars in the New York Public Library (N.Y.P.L.). N.Y.P.L. services are of special import to our children, especially since Bronx Community District #12 suffers from a lack of funded youth programs.

Each of the four (4) branch libraries in the District is in severe need of capital improvements. The Woodlawn Heights Branch requires the immediate installation of a new roof and rear drainage system along with the construction of a new second-floor addition. Security fencing is needed at the Edenwald N.Y.P.L. Branch and it is incumbent upon the City Administration to undertake the complete restoration of both the Eastchester and Wakefield Branch Libraries. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) believes that these capital projects cannot be overlooked without a potentially disastrous interruption of services offered by the Public Library to our residents.

Department of City-wide Administrative Services (D.C.A.S.). The Department of City-wide Administrative Services (D.C.A.S.) oversees the operation and the maintenance of the Headquarters of Community Board #12 (The Bronx) in TOWN HALL situated at 4101 White Plains Road at the intersection of East 229<sup>th</sup> Street in what were the original premises of the Forty-seventh Police Precinct. In order to afford a safe and clean premises for the staff of the Community Board and the ever-increasing number of public officials, government agencies and visitors who have come to call TOWN HALL "HOME," the Community Board again asserts the need for D.C.A.S. to continue funding a full-time maintenance/custodial position in TOWN HALL.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

The services of the employees of the Department of Parks and Recreation (D.P.R.) of the City of New York are truly treasured and appreciated by the residents of Bronx Community District #12. Their contribution to the enhancement of our quality life in this area is of inestimable value. The Community Board seeks the inclusion of the several important items for the enrichment of our parklands and green spaces in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2008 (F.Y. '08) Capital and Expense Budgets.

Seton Falls Park is the crown jewel of all parks in Bronx Community District #12. It certainly ranks high in significance among all parklands in the Borough of The Bronx. To boost the security of this precious green space, which, in years gone by, has been subject to the ravages of mindless vandalism and dumping, Community Board #12 (The Bronx) supports the erection a fence along the perimeter of the Park to preserve the environmental programs contained therein. Furthermore, the Community Board calls for the ongoing funding of ecological and other instructional programs in Seton Falls Park to enrich the studies of the students attending the educational facilities adjacent to Seton Falls and that of all youngsters in the neighborhood. The assignment of additional D.P.R. Park Rangers will also be of great merit in this regard.

Bronx Community District #12 is the proud home to a most bountiful and beautiful tree population. Regrettably, fiscal restraints and budget cuts imposed over the years upon the Department of Parks and Recreation (D.P.R.) has resulted in, among other circumstances, long periods of waiting in order to have trees pruned in our area. The Community Board, ergo, once more advocates for increased funding that will permit the hiring of additional personnel for D.P.R.'s Forestry Division in addition to monies for sidewalk repairs necessitated by the damage resulting from uprooted trees. Likewise, added dollars for the Parks and Recreation Department (D.P.R.) should be apportioned in order to hire recreational personnel for our local parks and playgrounds to supervise and to provide security for our children; extra maintenance staff to perform "in-house" repairs to benches and other equipment in parks and playgrounds; and staff workers to administer our parks and recreational spaces during after-school hours and vacation periods.

Shoelace Park, which runs its thin, elongated course along the shore of The Bronx River, should be renovated and upgraded. The Bronx River Restoration Project compliments the value and the necessity of improving Shoelace Park and vice versa. Enhancing this picturesque green space should not be further delayed, nor should the renovation of the mini-pool in Edenwald Playground and the lighting of the Magenta Basketball Courts be postponed any longer.

Finally, additional parklands must be ascertained and obtained for extra baseball fields and soccer fields in order to respond to the increased desire for sports programs of these types in Bronx Community District #12. The construction of athletic fields with artificial grass or greenery that can be employed for both baseball and soccer games would be ideal as would the reinstated availability of the small playground at Light Street and Huguenot Avenue in the Pelham section of the District.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### New York Police Department (N.Y.P.D.)

Forty-seventh (47<sup>th</sup>) Police Precinct. No singular issue commands the strict attention and the acute interest of Community Board #12 (The Bronx) and of the citizens it serves more than that of public safety. If not empowered to live securely in our homes, to transact business safely on our commercial strips, to send our children off to school or to play with confidence, to pray with serenity in our Churches, and to go about our daily living routines without hindrance or fear, the residents of Bronx Community District #12 have no real life to enjoy, no reasonable justification for even being in this neighborhood in the first place. The services, therefore, of NEW YORK'S FINEST, the men and the women of the New York Police Department (N.Y.P.D.), are primary and without equal in guaranteeing a respectable quality of life and decent existence in our locality.

The arrival of *OPERATION IMPACT* in the Forty-seventh (47<sup>th</sup>) Police Precinct at the outset of Calendar Year 2005 was a long-overdue blessing for the neighborhood. Crime along White Plains Road from East 236<sup>th</sup> Street on down to East Gun Hill Road had reached frightening levels. More than dollar bills and coins, illegal drugs and guns were the currency along this thoroughfare. Whether in the light of day or in the dusk of evening, criminal and rowdy elements prevented law-abiding citizens from enjoying the stores on their street. *OPERATION IMPACT* recovered White Plains Road for "the good folk" and the departure of *IMPACT* Officers must not be a signal to delinquent elements to take back the avenue from the people and detract from the quality of life in Bronx Community District #12. Likewise on the topic of quality of life issues is the need for the "47" to develop a comprehensive approach to responding to and resolving the high volume of complaints

about such matters as disturbance of the peace, blocked driveways, and loitering. The Precinct must also return to enforcing regulations pertaining to the parking of commercial vehicles on residential streets. The Community Board, at the request of the Commanding Officer of the "47," proposes a substantial increase in the fine for this violation to two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00).

Community Board #12 (The Bronx) continues to advocate for an immediate infusion into the Forty-seventh (47<sup>th</sup>) Precinct of fifty (50) additional Police Officers who would be assigned to patrol services. Of great anxiety to the Community Board is the dispatch of only two (2) or three (3) sector cars during the "4 - 12" and "Midnight" patrol shifts on many days in our District. Also, a greater number of cops will afford to the Precinct the capacity of increasing police attention to traffic enforcement on our residential streets and roadways, an ever-growing concern of the Community Board and of our local citizenry. In this vein, the Community Board urges the Municipal Administration to pay our Police Officers like the heroes that they are in order to increase retention of experienced Police Officers in the City of New York. The flight of N.Y.P.D. cops to other jurisdictions is a significant factor contributing to the reduction in size of the New York City Police Department (N.Y.P.D.).

In order to carry out their responsibilities effectively and well with maximum safety, our Police Officers need an adequate supply of suitably cared for equipment and vehicles in good condition. The Forty-seventh (47<sup>th</sup>) Precinct should be budgeted monies for these enumerated items in the forthcoming Fiscal Year:

1. an all terrain vehicle (A.T.V.) to aid in patrolling our parks;
2. additional sector cars with low mileage;
3. extra unmarked motor vehicles with low mileage;
4. a four-wheel drive jeep; and
5. additional radar guns and tint meters.

Beyond equipment and cars, our "47" FINEST require a physical plant appropriately apportioned and furnished, clean, and commensurate with the demands placed upon them as they police Bronx Community District #12. Accordingly, Community Board #12 (The Bronx) yet again makes its yearly plea to complete the seriously delayed construction and fencing of the parking area diagonally across Laconia Avenue from the station house. Also on the matter of facilities, a portion of what was once an indoor garage for the Precinct was originally supposed to be a meeting room for the neighborhood *EXPLORER* Program and was unilaterally expropriated for Precinct office space. The Community Board proposes that this area be returned to its designated purpose in order to serve the increasing number of *EXPLORERS* in the District.

The untimely, appalling deaths in traffic accidents of school-aged children in prior academic years are scandals of the penultimate degree in Bronx Community District #12. Among other needs, they highlight, along with the building of three (3) more schools in the neighborhood, the requirement for many additional school crossing guards to be immediately hired and deployed in the Forty-seventh (47<sup>th</sup>) Police Precinct.

Housing Bureau P.S.A. #8. NEW YORK'S FINEST detailed to P.S.A. #8 are in need of more undercover vehicles. The command, like its Forty-seventh (47<sup>th</sup>) Precinct equivalent in the N.Y.P.D. Patrol Bureau, is in pressing need of at least two (2) dozen extra Police Officers for patrol duty and response to quality of life complaints in the District's four (4) New York City Housing Authority (N.Y.C.H.A.) Developments. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) actively supports the allocation of ample monies for these items. It also backs the continuous presence of the P.S.A. #8 North Sub-station in the confines of the Edenwald Houses.

Transit District #12. Along with additional personnel, the New York Police Department's (N.Y.P.D.'s) Transit District #12 requires the purchase of scooters or other types of motorized vehicles in order to assist with policing between the various stations along the Dyre Avenue #5 and White Plains Road #2 Subway Lines.

Fire Department of New York (F.D.N.Y.)

Woodlawn Heights Firehouse. The shortsighted and shallow leadership of the political appointees placed in charge of the New York City Fire Department (F.D.N.Y.) no more demonstrably displayed their disdain for the people of Bronx Community District #12 than when they shut down the Woodlawn Heights Fire Station on East 233<sup>rd</sup> Street and moved Ladder Company #39 one (1) mile east to the Wakefield area in the Spring of 2006. Such a move left the good citizens of Woodlawn Heights devoid of the presence of their own fire company for the first time in decades. More than placing Woodlawn residents in greater danger from fire and other serious life-and-death emergencies, it also took a bite out of their wallets in the form of more expensive insurance rates. Our brave Fire Fighters have likewise been impacted in a negative fashion by this development. Personnel assigned to Ladder #39 will henceforth find themselves barreling down one (1) of the steepest hills in the Borough of The Bronx and through the two (2) most congested intersections in the area in their large tiller rig whenever they are called upon to protect the people of Woodlawn. The real possibility of a serious accident resulting in injury to our Fire Fighters and to civilians will be extensively magnified on days when East 233<sup>rd</sup> Street, on which traffic is usually a nightmare (particularly during the morning and evening rush hours), has either a rainy, snowy, or icy roadway. Rising response times are a bona fide reality in Woodlawn Heights, as real as the fear that the Bloomberg Administration, as it did in other Boroughs with other closed fire stations, will put the Woodlawn Heights Firehouse up for sale. The disingenuous and unconvincing claim by Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta and his cohorts that the circumstances pertaining to the final locate of Ladder Company #39 will be evaluated over a year's time are as deceitful and misleading as the reasons proffered throughout the years for their failure to maintain the Woodlawn Firehouse in proper condition. The ultimate intention of the City of New York to shut the Woodlawn Heights Fire Station permanently is highlighted by the refusal of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg to accept the City Council's recommendation to include the monies necessary for the construction of a new firehouse in the Fiscal Year 2007 (F.Y.'07) Municipal Budget. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) will accept nothing less than the return of Ladder #39 to its true home in Woodlawn Heights!

The F.D.N.Y. sacrificed a host of heroes on 11 September 2001 due to, among other reasons, radios that did not facilitate clear and unencumbered communications between Fire Fighters and all other emergency personnel. This precarious problem must be rectified at once. Police Officers, Fire Fighters, E.M.T.'s, and the like must be able to speak to each other without hindrance in the event of a tragedy or terrorist attack. The radio technology to affect this capacity must be unearthed and acquired. Defective equipment and hazardous fire apparatus, such as fire trucks with faulty doors that spring open, likewise should not compromise the safety of our Fire Fighters. Speaking "9 - 11," F.D.N.Y. personnel who rushed to the World Trade Center and who toiled in "THE PIT" should not be denied any appeal for medical care, counseling, and other support benefits.

The Borough of The Bronx has been without Fire Marshals for the past several years. Said personnel must be re-located back to The Bronx forthwith, as should F.D.N.Y. Community Assistance personnel. Just as Fire Marshals should not be taken out of the Borough, so, too, should fire companies and battalions not be removed from our neighborhood and our Borough for training purposes. Doing so leaves a locale without the best possible fire



protection available. It requires personnel and apparatus outside of an area to respond to a fire or other emergency in an area wherein they are not as familiar with the streets and other local conditions. Funding for Battalion #15 to purchase the requisite technical equipment -- *e.g.*, laptop computers, digital cameras, and POWER POINT -- for training programs needs to be identified and set aside so that our Fire Fighters are always where we need them the most in times of trouble -- *viz.*, in the local firehouse!

All Fire Department Engine Companies should be restored to the level of five (5) Fire Fighters. Similarly, all fire stations in the Borough of The Bronx should be upgraded to afford NEW YORK'S BRAVEST with clean, safe, and relatively comfortable quarters. Such an undertaking may include window replacement, restroom renovation, roof refurbishing and re-installation, waterproofing, kitchen overhaul, and substitution of the apparatus floor. Dollars must be allocated for such projects, as they should be for fire safety education outreach programs, the purchase of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors for public distribution, and the purchase of C.P.R. kits for public training.

### TRANSPORTATION AND CAPITAL PROJECTS

Department of Transportation (D.O.T.). The marked growth of population in Community Board #12 (The Bronx) has as an upshot, among other things, the emergence of additional traffic moving about in altered traffic patterns. There is an essential need for the Department of Transportation (D.O.T.) of the City of New York to undertake at once an overall review of traffic patterns throughout Bronx Community District #12. In doing so, it must consider the need for the following:

1. a left turning signal on to White Plains Road for vehicles traveling in a westerly direction along East 233<sup>rd</sup> Street;
2. a left turning signal on to Boston going West along Conner Street;
3. a left turning signal on to East 233<sup>rd</sup> Street for vehicles pointed South on Webster Avenue; and
4. an effective program of safety improvements along the Baychester Avenue corridor between Boston Post Road and East 233<sup>rd</sup> Street where there are four (4) -- and soon to be five (5) -- schools.

For many years, matters pertaining to infrastructure were widely neglected in Community Board #12 (The Bronx). While many projects have been completed in the past few years in the District, much remains to be accomplished relative to the conditions existing on our streets and roadways. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) seeks immediate funding to provide capital design and construction dollars for our top five (5) projects itemized below:

- the improvement of Wilder Avenue between East 233<sup>rd</sup> Street and Pittman Avenue;
- the reconstruction of the intersection of Barnes, Bruner, and Bissel Avenues
- the improvement of Hill Avenue between Edenwald and Bussing Avenues;
- the reconstruction of Strang Avenue from Baychester Avenue to Pratt Avenue; and
- the reconstruction of Givan Avenue from East Gun Hill Road to Boller Avenue, along with requisite ancillary street work.

The Community Board also expects that, upon completion of the refurbishing of the subway el on White Plains Road, D.O.T. will undertake to resurface its roadway. It further supports the hiring of additional traffic safety inspectors to work in the Borough of The Bronx.

Metropolitan Transportation Authority (M.T.A.). Despite the rather severe fiscal dilemmas buffeting it, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (M.T.A.), specifically its

maintain the current delivery level of public transport services while not allowing the transit fare to skyrocket into the stratosphere. Either development would impact heavily and in a most detrimental fashion upon the neighborhood residents of Bronx Community District #12 who rely heavily upon the public transportation system. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) retains its steadfast opposition to the removal of conductors and of token booth personnel from trains and subway stops respectively along the upper reaches of the Dyre Avenue Subway during the evening and nighttime hours. Such a decision severely diminishes the safety of the riding public. The Community Board also calls upon the M.T.A. to improve its operation of commuter buses into the Borough of Manhattan, as the service is noticeably shoddier than that offered by the private bus companies from whom the Authority took control of the so-called express buses.

### YOUTH SERVICES AND EDUCATION

Youth Center. The exigency of a mounting population of young people underscores the need for safe and clean places where our children can socialize, learn, and play. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) proposes the establishment of youth recreation centers in the neighborhood at both 1250 East 229<sup>th</sup> Street and 1825 East Gun Hill Road. The continued lack of such facilities for our young people must be remedied immediately.

Department of Education (D.O.E.). Overcrowding in our local schools urgently requires the erection of new educational edifices for our children. Community Board #12 (The Bronx) welcomes will continue to support the construction of three (3) additional schools -- viz., P.S./M.S. #189 to be named after Rosa Parks; M.S./H.S. #362 to memorialize the late Albert Tuitt, Sr.; and an Early Childhood Development Center to be located on the site of the former Baychester Diner at the intersection of Boston Post Road and Baychester Avenue. The Community Board also calls upon D.O.E. to install forthwith a new and properly operating public address system in Public School #78 (P.S. #78).

In light of the abolition of Community School Boards and the re-organization of the public education bureaucracy, Community Board #12 (The Bronx), through the endeavors of its Standing Committee on Youth Services and Education, plans to open lines of communication with all interested parties in the public school system -- i.e., administrators, teachers, support staff, union officials, parents, and students -- in order to ensure the quality of the education being afforded to our youngsters. The Community Board intends to advocate convincingly for schools that are sanitary, safe, and successful.

Department of Youth and Community Development (D.Y.C.D.): Funding inexplicably eliminated for Out-of-School Time (O.S.T.) Services, expertly provided heretofore by the National Council of Negro Women (N.C.N.W.), National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (N.A.A.C.P.), and Crawford Day Care Centers in Bronx Community District #12, must be restored at once.

### A CONCLUDING REMARK RE "3 1 1"

The challenge of composing this ANNUAL STATEMENT OF NEEDS (S.O.N.) this year was made exceedingly more difficult by the absence of information re complaints to "3 1 1" by residents of Bronx Community District #12. The service requests of our local citizens have always been a primary source for this yearly S.O.N. The fact that no Community Board in the City of New York has access to this vital data is nothing less than criminal on the part of the Bloomberg Administration. Municipal ordinance obliges the Administration to release these records to every Community Board. The technology to do so is available. Good will, mutual respect for government colleagues, and a commitment to obey the law are what are not available on the part of those playing in THE BULLPEN on the second floor of City Hall.