



**The City of New York  
Community Board No. 3  
Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Plaza  
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## **DISTRICT NEEDS STATEMENT FISCAL YEAR 2015**

### **INTRODUCTION**

New York City is a conceptual wonderland that has attracted visionaries from all over the world. These visionaries have built a flourishing, diverse, and complex community through the diligent pursuit of authenticity and richness. The city has become a trend-setter and cultural educator amongst its peers. New York City culture has set standards for socioeconomic status as well as the importance of sustaining diversity to validate our country's position as "The Leader of the Free World."

The City is a precious necklace full of cultural riches. In the heart of this necklace are Brooklyn and the rare gem called Bedford-Stuyvesant. This gem is one of historical prominence, shaped to reflect the brilliance of a vibrant people.

Bedford-Stuyvesant was formed in 1930, with a genus Pan-African composition. Bedford-Stuyvesant is a collaborative of diverse perspectives of art, academics, faith, and nativism. The community offers a prime opportunity for the entrepreneurial spirit. One can indulge in industrial prevalence and achieve home ownership. Bedford-Stuyvesant possesses some of the most prime housing stock in all of New York City. The community desires to work with the Bloomberg Administration to uplift its people and implement effective strategies to progress Community District 3 for years to come.

Community District 3 has been a proponent for the Bedford-Stuyvesant populace. It has been our goal to amplify the essential needs of a people, working in conjunction with political officials to reach a common goal. This mission remains of utmost importance to our board as we prepare for Fiscal Year 2015. We greatly anticipate the budgetary allotment regulated by the Bloomberg Administration. These resources will directly aid in the replenishment and economic sustenance of a community that desperately desires to thrive despite historical challenges.

Our local and national economies are still in a fragile state. As a result, Community District 3 and its correspondents intend to implement new methodologies to best utilize our monetary resources. The adornment and commercialization of Fulton Street via the Bed-Stuy Gateway BID as well as the Nostrand Avenue Reconstruction Project HWK 1129 (Flushing to Atlantic Avenues) are powerful realities that we are enthusiastic about. These projects as well as the vigor of our constituents support our community's spirit. We are encouraged by Bedford-Stuyvesant's probability to sustain in a wavering economy!

When you hear about Bedford-Stuyvesant, you would think it is a community up and coming, but the attractions that have everyone clamoring to get here have always been a part of who we are. Our

architecture, sense of community and family owned businesses have maintained a presence throughout. The new restaurants that have come and are continuing to pop up are just taking a page from the rich history of this neighborhood and holding to the rich family and bonded community we have always been.

Even with all of the progress in Bedford-Stuyvesant our needs in some instances have grown even larger, while others have stagnated and some are just being met even as we speak. Listed below are some of the more pressing issues that must be overcome for the betterment of Bedford- Stuyvesant:

- ✓ CRIME/SAFETY are paramount issues here in Bedford-Stuyvesant as well as around this City and the Nation; particularly the proliferation of guns which are easily available
- ✓ We continue to be the epicenter of disastrous health issues such as HIV/AIDS, asthma, hypertension, diabetes, heart disease and obesity
- ✓ The educational system changes (inexplicable school closings)
- ✓ There are insufficient employment opportunities (increase manufacturing)
- ✓ A need for access to workforce development programs
- ✓ The opportunities for the growth of Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise (MWBE)
- ✓ Infrastructure and environmental issues
- ✓ Affordable housing
- ✓ Homelessness - permanent housing vs. transitional
- ✓ Recreational spaces as an alternative to hanging out on the streets

Community District 3 has always held the tradition of ongoing efforts to make this district a model for living, working, enjoyment and proactive efforts for a standard of quality and excellence. The residents in Bedford-Stuyvesant have a reputation for activism and concern that is unparalleled.

## ARTS & CULTURE

As a community we continue to advocate on behalf of our neighborhood's artistic and cultural survival. For an area so rich in artistic talent, there is so little funding that comes into this Bedford-Stuyvesant area. The cultural activities of our neighborhood are necessary components to its residents and their quality of life. It is through the mediums of arts, i.e., galleries, incubators, museums, theaters, etc. that we maintain our connectedness to our society. With so much diversity, it is imperative that we keep our individual as well as, collective cultures alive and visible.

**There are** many vacant buildings under HPD's purview that could be used to create cultural centers for youth and young adults to enjoy, learn, listen and view art, music, sculpture and more. This could be made possible with public funds. In addition to offering alternatives to just hanging out, we would be developing the talent and skills of the next generation that is steeped in the culture of their ancestors, community, and family, holding on to that which creates each of us.

It is still our desire to have an African American Cultural Center within the borders of Bedford-Stuyvesant. The community urgently bands together to hold on to the richness that is our diverse African Diaspora cultural experience. There should be funding made available for activities and programs that depict and enhance this community's eclectic culture.

Our art and cultural institutions are teetering on the edge because of a lack of capital. **We request funding and support for the following** organizations, institutions, foundations and programs that we would like to see survive: the Central Brooklyn Jazz Festival; the Fulton Art Fair **that is** celebrating its 56<sup>th</sup> year in 2014; the Bedford Stuyvesant Artists' Association (BeSAA), **and** our galleries. It would, indeed, be a travesty to allow these time honored entities to fade into nothingness. Our children must be exposed to their culture that is so rich and beautiful. The youth should be able to learn who they are through the expressions of those who have come before them. To share what we have is a

gateway to becoming who we are to be as a people. The diverse and rich culture of Bedford-Stuyvesant must be allowed to survive and be a prominent and integral part of the legacy that is the City of New York.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A Community District is only as strong as their economic development projections. We here in Bedford-Stuyvesant are working tirelessly to increase and stabilize the economics of this district.

Bedford-Stuyvesant has completed the rezoning of its northern portion of the district. We were careful not to change the zoning of our industrialized area because it is our desire to see light manufacturing return to this vicinity. As the community grows and becomes more and more diverse, the prospect of industry becoming re-energized is great and the need is even greater.

Jobs and the creation of jobs is the answer to the economy of the neighborhood. Underemployment is as great a problem as joblessness. People should earn a wage that is comparable with the cost of living. Nonetheless, statistics show that 18.3% of the population of Bedford-Stuyvesant earns less than \$10,000 per annum, how does one manage with that? An additional 13.6% earned \$15,000 - \$24,999; 10.4% earn \$25,000 - \$34,999. 12.4% earn \$35,000 - \$49,999; and 16.1% earn \$50,000 - \$74,000. However, the truth be told, \$75,000 is the new middle income everything else is really poverty level in this present financial system. 78.5% of the people are renter occupants and at least 31.1% of the residents are paying \$1,000 - \$1,499 per month in rent; 14.6% are paying \$1,500 in monthly rent and 46.5% pay even more than that. Residents are paying 35% or more of their monthly wages in rent alone. When placed next to the income statistics, it is a wonder people are able to function at all. The rising cost of food prices added to this equation paints a fairly grim picture. Now consider unemployment and that 33.7% are single parent households and you can see why it is imperative that this community district with the assistance of the City of New York's Mayoral initiatives work towards rectifying these economic concerns.

In 2012, the Pfizer Plant was purchased by Acumen Capital Partners, LLC which is one of the last bastions of land that can really impact the future economic development and employment opportunities in the northern section of Bedford-Stuyvesant. This company has a proven track record of redeveloping former single tenant manufacturing facilities in New York City into much-needed vibrant, job-creating light industrial and commercial buildings. We continue to advocate for manufacturing in Bedford-Stuyvesant. Funding to support the renovation of properties as well as initiatives to encourage new businesses that create jobs and propel the revitalization of manufacturing must be provided.

Just as there are prospects in the northern section of Community District 3 with the Pfizer site, there are also similar scenarios in the southern part of the district. There is a parcel of land on Atlantic Avenue [Block 1557, Lot #s 3, 4, 23, 26, 28 & 31-37] which totals 25,616 square feet. This parcel is not particularly large; however, if utilized appropriately, this parcel can provide much-needed commercial opportunities, leading to additional employment opportunities. Some preliminary conversations with community members, architects and planners have proposed projects such as an artist or food incubator, or something else fitting that can enhance the economic development of this underserved area of our district.

It is crucial to our district that this parcel of land be developed. This will create employment opportunities, increase revenue for the community and for the City of New York as well.

Another area of concern to this District is the MWBE contracts. This neighborhood has always had family owned businesses operating within its borders. The Department of Small Business Services should support our local businesses, merchant associations and BIDs. Small Business Services must endeavor to ensure that our small business community has access and utilizes their services. Also

Small Business Services must support and promote Energy Cost Savings Program at the same levels as exist in other neighborhoods.

## EDUCATION

Our schools continue to teach to the test. This is not adequate enough to prepare students to think critically, solve problems, or use the knowledge they have gleaned. In this we are failing our children and our country. Our drop-out statistics have begun to rise. As a nation, we cannot afford to have our progeny fall behind.

The process of co-locating schools in Community District 3 has created a division between traditional public schools and charter school parents. The traditional school community expresses concerns about being left out of the decision making process. School staff and parents should be partners with the Department of Education in this course of action. Once a charter school is co-located, there must be a facilitated process to encourage collaboration to ensure the needs of all students and parents are supported.

Charter Schools are popping up everywhere. While we applaud the charter school initiative, every child is not going to have access to one. Acceptance is usually done on a lottery basis and they can only accept so many students. How do we improve the struggling schools to insure that our young people are receiving quality education and meeting academic standards? What resources are available to develop and enhance the teachers' skills and capitalize on their experience? It is imperative that all schools afford the youth quality education and not just a select few.

There is a sense of urgency to address the academic needs of our grades K – 12 youth and ensure they meet the common core standards stipulated by the Department of Education. Less than 45% of third graders in Community District 3 are testing at or above grade level on the English Language Arts in 2010-11; approximately, 50% of third graders tested at or above in Math. In Community District 3, graduation rates, dropout rates, and college readiness of our youth are alarming. According to the Center for the Study of Brooklyn, there was only a 46.3% graduation rate (2010/11), 13.7% dropout rate; and a 14.3% college readiness rate. Within Community School District 16, only 2% of the students who graduated in 2011-2012 were college ready. The graduation rate for high school seniors in CSD 16 was only 44%.

- Open dialogue and identified resources for traditional public and charter schools.

We want to ensure that co-location of charter schools in traditional public schools are addressed in open forums to acknowledge and address any and all concerns of the parents, staff and students prior to final assignments. Where possible, collaboration should be encouraged and facilitated to create a supportive, academically enriched environment for all students. However, we want to monitor the academic scores and quality education of both traditional and charter schools to ensure standards of academic achievement are met and/or exceeded. Community Board 3 recommends a series of forums to discuss the issue of charter school and public school needs, academic achievement goals, and support.

- Comprehensive Approach to High Drop-Out Rates

We are still concerned with the high rate of early-leavers in our middle schools and high schools. This is the time to call for the development of a comprehensive plan to address these issues within our community. Strategies should include research on best practices, and the convening of a commission comprised of a broad base of stakeholders. We must utilize what is already in place. We need to develop and demand more comprehensive and effective programs that include, but not limited to, out of school time programs, academic enrichment, and extended day learning models.

Middle Schools in Community District 3 are in a crises state. High retention rates have students who are 15 and 16 years old still in middle schools. The Department of Education needs to develop a comprehensive plan to address the needs of this population of students so that they may have an opportunity to successfully complete high school.

- School Safety

Our children deserve to be safe in school! There has to be a comprehensive strategy to addressing violence such as gang (“crew”) activity, dating violence, alcohol/substance abuse, and bullying (cyber bullying) growing in our urban schools. We need to work closely with the Department of Education’s School Safety Division, local Police Precincts, city agencies and community based organizations to provide resources, training and opportunities to staff and young people. Identifying young people who need additional wrap around supports among a coalition of programs and education institutions is imperative for eliminating the negative and create safe and productive learning environment in and outside the classroom. However, administrative staff, teachers, parents and students must be aware of the legal, health and social ramifications of illicit behavior and safety strategies implemented.

- Parental Involvement

We need “teeth” in the parental involvement initiatives that have been set forth by the Department of Education. Our parents still feel set adrift in a monumental bureaucracy, where they feel powerless to make any changes even in their own schools. It is time for innovative models that draw parents into the decision-making process. It is apparent that the old approaches are ineffective in communities such as ours. There must be more attention paid to diverse cultures, mores, and history in order to develop initiatives that will make a difference. The supervisory design is still a mystery to many, with a superintendent who may, or may not be the evaluator of record for principals within the District. For example, where do parents and community go for assistance when schools do not work?

The Department of Education must provide technical support to Parent Associations and Community Education Councils. Parental empowerment is the backbone of our children’s academic success.

- Quality After School Programming

It is imperative that quality after school programming is offered and number of slots maximized for young people in elementary and middle school, in both public and charter schools. The additional time to provide academic programs, arts enrichment and sports fitness are needed during extended hours to ensure that our young people are well rounded and attain more support to meet academic standard. Community based organizations and school administrators need to work in partnership to leverage resources to meet the needs and challenges of our youth and their families. This goes beyond the scope of the school day but directly impacts the students’ achievements and progress. We must demand the 21% cuts by the Department of Youth and Community Development to Out of School Time programs is restored and more resources are allocated for extended day programming.

## Early Learning and Early Childhood Education

It is generally well accepted that early care (birth–5yrs.old) and early childhood education are fundamental building blocks for success. Research indicates that early childhood education and development programs that support infants, toddlers, and pre-schoolers help reduce dropouts, decrease delinquency, improve academic achievement, increase economic productivity, and achieve success in life (Barnett1993). These student outcomes also have broader social and economic benefits, such as reduced crime, lower utilization of social services and increased tax revenue beyond compensating for the costs of the programs (Committee for Economic Development 2006).

## Recommendations from Right to Learn (2012)

1. Ensure access to **early childhood and early learning** (birth - 5 years old) aimed at improving the quality of and expanded access to comprehensive early-learning programs. Comprehensive early-childhood systems support and strengthen families; provide health services that ensure children's healthy development; serve children with special needs; and guarantee that **students' home language and culture are encouraged and supported**. Also, high quality comprehensive early learning programs must have a uniform set of standards that evaluate quality and improvement; effective preparation programs for early-childhood professionals; financial investments that target communities and families of greatest need; and commitment to essential components of high-quality preschool. A recent study of the Education Trust (2009) identified the components of these programs: full day service extended until 6:00p.m.; curriculum geared toward school readiness; a qualified and certified teacher and assistant in every classroom; maximum class size of 15 students; adequate space and supplies; and supplemental services, such as, transportation, dental, health, and other social services.

### Early Learning:

- a. Allow school districts flexibility in the use of annual allocated Universal Pre-K funds.
- b. Allow school districts flexibility in the use of Universal Pre-K carry-over funds.
- c. Concentrate all Universal Pre-K funds to high need communities.
- d. Establish community based school registration sites to allow parents extended opportunities to register their children for school (concentrating on kindergarten registration).
- e. Explore the future financial payoff for reducing the compulsory education age to 5 year olds in New York State ( Researchers have shown on the national level that up to \$10 can be returned for every \$1 spent on early childhood education in subsequent savings in remediation and criminal justice expenditures, or in the form of higher earnings).

Administration for Children's Services has just completed processing the results of a new RFP called Early Learn. As a result thousands of former child care and Head Start children have been left with no child care programs. The organizations that have been providing services for years have been eliminated. Proven entities that has been child care and Head Start providers for as many as 40 years or more have been replaced by organizations with no connection to the communities they will be serving. Some of the organizations are not registered as charitable organizations with the IRS or Attorney General's Office and is not required to file reports to IRS or the Attorney General who regulate and monitor not-for-profit organizations activities. In addition, the cost of day care is becoming cost prohibitive and this must be addressed. This is a serious concern and the future of the community may be placed in peril if this is not looked at seriously. Community Board 3 is asking that the issues of funding are on the table, you not only look at the numbers but at the people you are serving and the future of the great City.

## **YOUTH SERVICES: OLDER TEENS AND DISCONNECTED YOUTH**

In Community District 3, programs and services for the older youth between the ages of 16 – 24 years old are minimal. For young people entering adulthood, there needs to more concerted efforts to support and/or develop resources and opportunities for young people in need of employment, health/physical care, mental health, social and personal development, safety, education, housing, and mentorship. According to the JobFirst NYC report, *Barriers to Entry*, 32.1% of young adults between the ages of 16 – 24 years old in our community or out of school and out of school youth. Over 20% of the young people are classified as “disconnected” youth which includes those youth who face tremendous barriers such as homelessness, court-involved, teen parent, or in/aged out of foster care. In addition, our young teen and adult males are commonly subjected to “stop and frisk”,

victims or perpetrators of violence, and lack positive male role models to shepherd them through the challenges of **transforming from** boys to men.

Too many of our young people are falling through the cracks and we need to act now to address their needs and create a comprehensive agenda that builds targeted programs and services to meet their needs. Our recommendations are as follows:

- We need to convene a YOUTH SUMMIT that serves as a call to action for all youth service providers who serve older youth in Community District 3. This Summit would identify the gaps in programs and services for older teens and disconnected youth and construct a comprehensive long term plan to best serve and meet the needs through collaboration and referrals among existing programs as well as encourage new initiatives to pilot in our community that addresses the gap areas.
- We need to provide professional development and technical assistance to quality community based organizations to allow them to be more competitive for funding and build capacity.
- Advocate for a One Stop/Safe Havens for teens that are open evenings and weekends that provide programs: recreation, social and counseling, similar to The Door in Manhattan.
- Work closely with The Department of Youth Development to insure that young adult workforce grants and Department of Probation programs for court involved youth are awarded to Community District 3's community based organizations.
- Develop leadership opportunities for young people to have their voices heard and included in overall policy and community decisions that impact their well-being.
- Increase the number of alternative to traditional education programs such as YABC, GED, transfer schools, etc.
- Support through funding and volunteers, Male Mentor programs for young men in the community in and out of school. We need to secure funding for Young Male and Fatherhood Initiatives in Community District 3.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The watermain and sewer system inspection schedule is presently inadequate. There should be an upgrade that will accommodate the increased density in the community. In heavy downpours/rainfalls or during extreme snow conditions, our storm drains cannot handle the water flow. The streets and sidewalks are flooding over and in some instances water is cascading into homes **most of which are 100+ years in age**, causing damage that is sometime irreparable to the residences. The storm drains wash down debris from the street that does not get cleaned via the Mechanical Broom, (i.e., Nostrand Avenue and Fulton Street) causing even more backup the very next time there is a deluge. Corners are rendered impassable for hours on end, waiting for the water to recede. There should be a schedule in place for cleaning out the storm drains, rather than waiting for someone to call 311 to say there is a problem. In the winter months after a significant snowfall, **many** corners become veritable pedestrian hazards. As the snow melts, there is no place for the



water to subsequently go, it freezes over and there is inadequate, slippery passage for persons attempting to cross the streets.

There are still major concerns about property being developed on land that has possible prior contamination. In 2010 there was a problem on Skillman Street regarding two such properties. When National Grid brought this to our attention, there were 22 other sites throughout the City that had similar problems. Then in 2012 a resident on Jewel McKoy Lane, between Troy and Schenectady Avenues/Cross streets are Herkimer Street and Atlantic Avenue, came to us with suspicions of possible contamination on their block. There must be better oversight on parcels that are being developed.

Bedford-Stuyvesant is asking that funding be put in place to have the environmental studies completed prior to allowing developers to build residences that may be upon potential hazards. Further, there must be diligent noise regulation enforcement by both DEP and the local Police Department; and air quality control continues to be important within our community. As the asthma rates continue to be high across the board, there really needs to be an increase in staffing levels for all agencies concerned to enforce their stated regulations.

## HEALTH CARE

The needs and goals of Bedford-Stuyvesant are unique in comparison to other communities. The issue for us is the disparities in the overall health of the residents of Central Brooklyn, Bedford-Stuyvesant in particular. We would like to ensure that every resident has access to quality health care, in order to help prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (i.e. HIV/AIDS) and cater to other medical requests that stipulate professional attention. Cancer continues to be one of the top health issues in Bedford-Stuyvesant, prevention and detection are tantamount. Obesity runs rampant in our community and has devastating complications such as: heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension. We are advocating for mental health facilities and clinics to treat depression and other chronic mental illnesses. The geographical location should not have any bearing on the healthcare of the citizens in a City as capable and diverse as New York.

We support offering incentives to local businesses which promote healthier habits. We believe this type of initiative would be more impactful in our fight to create a healthier lifestyle. Thus, through substantial exposure and common practices from our fellow citizens not only will we be healthier as a people but also more knowledgeable about new healthcare opportunities.

It is crucial that the residents of New York City have access to good medical care; even more so in Bedford-Stuyvesant where the percentages of persons without access to quality care are higher than the rest of Brooklyn and New York City at large. Much of our high death rates are due to people lacking a personal doctor for the management of treatable illness. In this Community, people utilize the emergency room for sickness as opposed to the intended emergency treatment. Health issues such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, prenatal care, and HIV can be managed with appropriate medical check-ups with a personal doctor for regular treatment.

It seems that the more things change the more they remain the same. We are still the epicenter of health challenges. The premature death rate in Bedford-Stuyvesant is 933 per 100,000 people in Brooklyn versus 754 per 100,000 in Central Brooklyn; and 718 per 100,000 in New York City. The primary causes of premature death are cancer (17%); heart disease (16%); HIV/AIDS (14%); and homicide which appears to rise as we speak.

Obesity continues to be a major health problem in Community District 3. It is a major contributor to diseases such as type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease. Additionally, corpulence also raises the risk of becoming asthmatic. Seven out of eleven Brooklyn neighborhoods have 20%



or more obese adults. The numbers are even more astounding when you consider those that are overweight but not yet obese. In Brooklyn 12% of the adults have diabetes as compared to 9% in New York City overall.

Unfortunately, we must again, repeat the call for more funding in these areas:

- HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment
- Expanded emergency room services
- Innovative preventive programs that address the high rates of diabetes, obesity and asthma
- Increased resources for training EMT personnel
- Expanded emergency mental health programs at Woodhull and interfaith Hospitals
- More accessible locations for flu vaccinations

## HOUSING AND LAND USE

As much as we would like to change everything in our Needs Statement, many things have not been addressed. This is the case with this particular section. We have finished the work on our re-zoning of the North. Our goal was to remain contextual with the rest of the district; hold on to our manufacturing areas and get them developed; and provide economic opportunities for retail spaces and affordable housing.

We would like the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development and Rebuilding to direct a study to assess the need and impact of active manufacturing in northern sections of Bedford-Stuyvesant. Clear opportunities for either the attraction of industrial manufacturing and/or the protection of areas for manufacturing should be identified. Additionally the study should include an assessment for the attraction of a green industry cluster appropriate and contextual to the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood.

The development of several parcels of land in the south eastern quadrant of Bedford-Stuyvesant, particularly on Fulton Street is crucial to the district and we know that there is ongoing discussion regarding those pieces. It is the understanding of Community District #3 that the parcels on Fulton Street under the purview of HPD are Block 1548, Lot #s 26-30 totaling 10,000 square feet; block 1549, lot # 407 totaling 8000 square feet; and block 1549, Lot #s 19-34 totaling 26,000 square feet. We view this as a marvelous opportunity for economic development, employment, and affordable housing. The demand for housing and the unemployment rate in Bedford-Stuyvesant certainly warrants this.

With a Needs Assessment in place that has community input, these parcels can be maximized to their fullest potential. With the Mayor's push for affordable housing, we can utilize these parcels of land as affordable housing with commercial/public space below. It would be in line with the zoning along the rest of Fulton Street which is R7D, and keep the street as a major commercial strip in Bedford-Stuyvesant throughout its entirety. A multi-use building with perhaps a mid-sized supermarket or bank on the ground level would be perfect. We must not forget that Bedford-Stuyvesant is part of the pilot program for economic development and greening. Commercial revitalization along Fulton Street will be a tremendous boost to this under-served area of Central Brooklyn. It will also connect the eastern portion of Fulton Street with the Bed-Stuy Gateway BID leading to a viable commercial corridor for the entire length of Bedford-Stuyvesant.

Again, we emphasize that the Department of Buildings (DOB) must have an adequate numbers of inspectors to enforce their stated guidelines. Complaints continue to come in and when we involve DOB, their replies are nebulous. DOB must be staffed to enforce their codes. A contractor/developer that has applied for permits should be held accountable to what has been attested to in their permit application. On occasion, that is not happening. **Each instance** of such infractions violates the quality

of life and can at times be hazardous to the public safety. Sometimes deviating from the specifications can cause major problems and even worse, possible injury or property damage to adjacent parcels of land. Once permits have been issued, there should be periodic inspections while the work is going on to ensure that the contractors are doing what they applied for. If more inspectors are needed, then we should push to get the funding for them. Laws, rules, and guidelines, were created for the safety and well being of all concerned. It is time to make people comply. Community District 3 is continuing to push for legislative action to give DOB more enforcement power that will help safeguard the City against unscrupulous developers and contractors who circumvent the proscribed methods and procedures that have been designed for the safety and care of all.

Our major need continues to be technical assistance from agencies such as City Planning and HPD, and elected officials, to help us make a comprehensive assessment of:

- The status of the urban renewal plans
- The coordinated development of the plans (how they fit together)
- How our housing needs have (or have not) been met by these plans
- Vacant land under the aegis of several city agencies
- How Community District #3's Affordable Housing Policy impacts all of the plans

Such a study will require time, staff, and commitment from agency staff and members of our Community Board, and other stakeholders but it needs to happen nonetheless. It is a project whose time is long overdue.

Housing development must address the needs of Community District 3 residents with disabilities and their families. The need for more "accessible" affordable housing is a given. However, utilization of "universal design" practices which go beyond the concept of "barrier free" living, is necessary to make living spaces accessible, safe, and practical for all residents. This will always remain crucial to Community Board 3.

## LANDMARKS

The Bedford-Stuyvesant Community Board 3 Landmarks Committee supports the preservation of the historic housing stock within the area. Diligent educational outreach by local community advocacy groups, elected officials, New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) and the Historic Districts Council represents the overwhelming support to preserve the charming blocks where historic architectural facades are predominant.

As of 2011, Community Board 3 is proud to be home to two of the 25 historic districts in Brooklyn. The two are Stuyvesant Heights (1973) and Alice and Agate Court (2009). These existing landmark districts consist approximately of 610 plus architecturally diverse row houses, two family and three-family residences, multiple dwellings and significant institutional structures, such as Our Lady of Victory Roman Catholic Church, Mount Lebanon Baptist Church and St. Phillip's Episcopal Church. The value that these districts contain and generate is a benefit to our residents and visitors. Across the city, historic districts have been shown to improve the economic performance of an area, enhance the community and the self-worth of its homeowners.

In 2012, New York Landmarks Preservation Commission held a hearing for the Bedford Historic District and in 2013, the LPC voted to designate Bedford-Stuyvesant Expanded Stuyvesant Heights Historic District. On August 19, 2013, the City Council has scheduled the vote to ratify Bedford-Stuyvesant Expanded Stuyvesant Heights Historic District. This district consists of 825 architecturally diverse row houses, two-family residences, small apartment houses and significant institutional buildings such as the Macon Branch of the Brooklyn Public Library, and Bethany Baptist Church.

To this end, we look forward to soon seeing the extension of Bedford-Stuyvesant Stuyvesant Heights Historic District, which will triple the size of the existing district, adding to the total number of properties throughout the city to 31,000 by Landmarks Preservation Commission. However there is more work to be done to preserve surveyed districts such as Bedford Historic District, Stuyvesant East, Stuyvesant West and Stuyvesant North.

#### Community Board 3 Landmarks Committee Concerns:

Major concerns in our ability to designate the remaining districts noted above are the up-coming change in government at City Hall, our new City Council Member and the continuous backlash from the pro-real estate, pro-development, lobbying associations against landmarks in New York City and Bedford-Stuyvesant in particular. These Political Action Committees are set to undermine the efforts of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. Under the Bloomberg administration the number of historic districts in New York City has doubled. Our existing City Council Member Albert Vann and Borough President Marty Markowitz have both been stellar supporters of historic designation in the Bedford-Stuyvesant area. With Mayor Bloomberg and Council Member Vann terms coming to a close in 2013, there is great uncertainty regarding the incoming mayoral administration and City Council member's support of historic designation.

#### Needs and Solutions:

- LPC should be awarded the opportunity to operate at a heightened level of efficiency by being supplied with adequate staffing. However, a decrease in funding would definitely impede their continuous progress to move forward with their programs.
- The CB3 Landmarks Committee believes that the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission should be granted an increase in funding. Since they are currently under-funded this presently forces them to work with a limited number of staff; therefore, encumbering the review process needed for the following programs and practices essential to LPC and this community.
- Additional funding will **improve** LPC's ability to review more Requests for Evaluations (RFE) ultimately allowing more historic districts to be considered. Additional funding to LPC will allow them to continue to regulate changes to landmark properties through the Fast Trak Permit Service Program which grants permits for minor work and issues Certificates of No Effect **as well as** Certificates of Appropriateness application.
- Additional funding to LPC **should be earmarked to** increase staff **in order to** complete the building documentation which **is** a very important step in the designation process. There is **also a** need for Inspectors to issue and enforce notices of violation for alterations to landmarked properties without a permit. **And lastly,** expedited reviews, hearings and more public meetings are needed to educate and inform the communities.

We also encourage the City to take action in the future to monitor over-zealous and uncaring developers' projects within the context of architectural, historical, cultural sites. These significant residential properties, characterized by their Queen Anne, Neo-Grec, Romanesque Revival, Renaissance Revival Styles and Beaux-Arts developed mostly during the 1880's through 1920's. Buildings built by noted Architects such as: Montrose Morris among others must be preserved. The strengthening the Landmarks Preservation Commission helps to protect this City's architectural, historical and cultural heritage.

## New York City Transit Authority

New York City Transit Authority (NYCTA) is showcased as the premier form of transportation in New York City. With all of the new upgrades to the NYCTA, we request that 911 intercoms and ETA monitors be placed in each of our subway stations within the district (A,C,G,J,M, and Z). Having a more efficient and secure subway system for our constituents is very important.

The subway system needs to have fully functional security cameras placed in all of our district's stations to help deter and reduce criminal activity, (i.e. fare beating, electronics theft and assault). Many of our stations are unmanned due to the removal of Token Booths and the reduction in NYCTA personnel; monitored cameras are a much needed safety measure.

Cleanliness is very important within any community. With that said, we would like more regular cleaning and maintenance of our bus shelters/stops and subway stations, in order to cut down on pathogens, rodents and the propensity to litter, not to mention to prevent future bio-hazards events from occurring. NYCTA Mobile Wash Units must power clean/wash at least twice a month the Franklin Avenue Shuttle, the Nostrand Avenue Station and the Utica Avenue Station (A/C line). Funding should be put in place for the Franklin Avenue Shuttle to maintain the façade and perform regular maintenance. There is peeling paint and rusting, which is an eyesore to the public. There are weeds growing up at the bus stops. Bus stops and shelters are not shoveled during the winter months forcing riders to have to stand in the street to await the bus. Transportation hubs like Franklin Avenue at Fulton Street, with the A, C line, the Shuttle and two bus lines (B48 and B49), should be monitored for cleanliness in the station, at the bus stops and in and around the perimeter of the facility. The same holds true regarding the Nostrand Avenue and Utica Avenue subway stations.

Bedford-Stuyvesant has a large aging population who frequently take the buses. We request city benches at the bus stops throughout the district.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

The parks and green spaces in Bedford-Stuyvesant are vital to the dynamism of this family based community. However, the vitality of these recreational landscapes is solely dependent on accessibility and functionality, which is still an ongoing process. With the help of Council Members Albert Vann and Darlene Mealy, in coordination with the Department of Parks and Recreation, several of our parks have been renovated and we are appreciative of all of the contributory efforts to beautify our green spaces. There are still areas of concern that carry over from previous years; Herbert Von King Park, Saratoga Park Monument, St. Andrew's Playground and Charlie's Place Playground are still in dire need of being completely renovated. These are just a few examples of projects where either work has commenced but it's been stagnated for an extensive period of time or absolutely no work has taken place. We are a community with a multitude of green spaces – from our parks, to our playgrounds and a vast array of trees, yet the level of upkeep and maintenance aren't keeping pace with the needs.

As the City invests in the recreational facilities in other communities, Community District 3 has two institutions that warrant such investments:

In the many years that the Sumner Armory has stood underutilized, the community has voiced its concerns and expressed its opinion that this property should be transformed into a cultural and recreational facility to service Community District 3. While we applaud the efforts of the Department of Homeless Services, the 245 Coast Artillery (Sumner Armory) is large enough to accommodate DHS and facilitate a variety of educational, recreational and economic programs for the amelioration of

the community. We have met with Borough President Marty Markowitz who recognized the potential and immediately pledged \$1 million. Senator Montgomery also realized how beneficial renovating the Armory would be and is willing to get onboard. This District is not trying to eliminate the wonderful services provided by the Department of Homeless Services, on the contrary we would like to be able to work with them. And we would like to see the development of permanent versus transitional housing for those who are currently homeless. There are so many vacant and abandoned buildings under the purview of HPD. It seems that some of those buildings could be better used by DHS and its designees as permanent housing. Utilizing these HPD properties will allow DHS to move transitional residents into permanent housing thereby grounding them in community. This allows the residents to have some investment into the communities in which they are being placed. In this way, the DHS housing that exists in the Sumner Avenue Armory will be a partner in growing a stabilized community; and those who live there temporarily can have an option to remain in the area and continue to take advantage of the cultural, recreational and economic programs which can exist in a renovated Sumner Armory. Surely we can envision and create a better use for such a spectacular structure than utilizing less than 20% of available space for a shelter. This is an opportunity to build upon and sustain a vibrant residential community.

The Kosciuszko Community Pool (K Pool/Marcy Pool) should be enclosed for year-round use. . A concept plan (contained within the EPA Smart Growth report) already exists for the enclosure and solar heating of the facility further promoting a greener district. We have witnessed the revitalization of Greenpoint's McCarren Park Pool and the City's support of Williamsburg's Metropolitan Recreation Center – the same is wanted for community District 3. Further, Councilmember Vann is supporting a feasibility study to have a recreational complex that will enhance Von King Park and the surrounding community. Marcy Pool and Von King Park are easily accessed by public transportation including the upcoming Nostrand Avenue Select Bus Service line.

We recognize Commissioner Jeffrey's efforts to prioritize the parks and playgrounds within our borders and that under the current administration many of our green spaces have received face-lifts. The Bedford-Stuyvesant residents continue to make active use of the community's park and it's acknowledged that they have come a long way towards meeting residents' needs, but the following needs remain:

#### Increased Maintenance of existing parks:

- Comfort stations, specifically at Saratoga Park and Taaffe Playground, are required. However, all of our parks/playgrounds which are heavily used and/or programmed parks need restrooms. Porta potties should be put in place in the interim.
- Better enforcement on the cleanup of animal waste. Excessive animal waste in parks impedes their use by neighborhood residents.
- More sites for trash collection and increased frequency of trash collection in heavily utilized or programmed parks.
- Better enforcement against illegal dumping in parks. Construction debris often ends up in city parks.
- Funding for an African American Cultural Center within the confines of Bedford-Stuyvesant. Funding for an adult exercise area similar to that which exists in the Chelsea, West Side Park. It is well documented that playground spaces are doing double duty as kid's play areas and adult work-out spaces. We can keep children safe by having designated exercise areas separate from the children's play area.
- Re-evaluation of the tree-pruning cycle for older trees and maintenance for younger trees. Higher temperatures have caused tree overgrowth and the death of some newly planted trees. Additionally, overgrown trees on city sidewalks are damaging curbs, sidewalks, and roadbeds, and a revamped program of root slicing is required or a widening of tree pits to accommodate the roots.



#### Expanded opportunities for recreation:

- Sumner Armory, a highly regarded historic building, should be redeveloped for community use. Bedford-Stuyvesant residents lack adequate indoor recreational facilities, and the Sumner Armory could accommodate an indoor track; tennis, basketball, volleyball, racquetball and paddle ball courts; a bowling alley; and a roller-skating rink.

We would like to see the Sumner Armory renovated for some recreational space.

#### **POLICE**

Community Board 3 like everyone in the City is concerned with the escalating gun violence here in Brooklyn and throughout the nation. There needs to be some control over the easy availability of firearms. According to the Mayor, 34 people are killed each day in this Nation from illegal guns. Children are able to put their hands on guns like they are toys and the seriousness of death and injury has escaped the consciousness of those that perpetrate the violence.

Community Board 3 is covered by two precincts, the 79<sup>th</sup> and the 81<sup>st</sup>. We have a close working relationship with both of them. However, they cannot deal with this problem alone. Some of our issues with guns are a result of rival factions feeling the need to claim territory that is not even theirs to own. PSA certainly needs to have more officers within the developments to handle problems and issues that arise. It is wonderful that NYPD and PSA work collaboratively, but to really get a handle on things, officers do not need to be spread thinly.

As we understand it, “the mission of the New York City Police Department is to enhance the quality of life in our city by working in partnership with the community and in accordance with constitutional rights to enforce the laws, preserve the peace, reduce fear, and provide for a safe environment.” Those are our goals as well.

A crime free community is not a fantasy, but a necessity.

We have Councilmember Vann’s Safety Task Force which works tirelessly in matters of community safety but they cannot do it alone. There are uncaring landlords that allow their properties to be hives of crime. A landlord should be held accountable for maintaining a clean, safe, crime free space; and the effect their properties have on the community. Accountability needs to be demanded.

The community affairs officers make great efforts to nurture police-community relations. We certainly appreciate all that they do; however, it is known that community relations is a top-down issue and must be dealt with that way. How directives are issued from 1 Police Plaza to the commands, affects how the officers carry out their responsibilities. The execution of the “Stop-n-Frisk” program is ineffective and offensive. It results in over aggressive and rude policing. We would like to see the re-institution of the CPR Program, Courtesy, Professionalism and Respect. Officers need to know the community they work in. If they know the people, there can be a level of trust fostered.

It is time our elected officials get on board and write legislation on the federal, state and local level that will effectively reduce the number of guns on the streets. Power, on a level higher than local enforcement needs to get on board and work seriously on this problem.

#### Community District #3 would like to have the following needs met:

- Funding for another Skywatch dedicated to Bedford-Stuyvesant
- Additional PSA officers in place especially in the areas of NYCHA
- Each precinct should have its own gang and gun unit answerable to the precinct commander. With designated units, there is a greater opportunity to be proactive rather than just reactive. The job is overwhelming in this present climate.

- The impact unit should be permanently assigned to their home precincts. Crime roams so we need to be ready in all sectors
- Funding for a Bedford-Stuyvesant Community Justice Center lets attempt to save some of the misguided youth and not make them career criminals.

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Preparedness is an arena that requires an intense study community by community. The CERT Teams need to be a requirement for each district. The City has taken steps in the event of an emergency with evacuation routes, centers for cooling and other types of emergency, but a true emergency will affect not just a portion of the community but more than likely all of it.

What will we do if a disaster strikes? How will the people of Community District 3 be mobilized? Is there a list of health care providers that can be readily called upon? Let us not forget the ever present danger of terrorism both local and foreign.

These questions and more will need to be answered succinctly. There must be a way to harness the needs in this genre. Is it possible for designated groups to begin to mobilize sections of each quadrant of the district? CERT teams need to become a priority. Can OEM manage without designated district assistance?

Community District 3 implores the City of New York to be proactive and not reactive when it relates to the state of preparedness of the residents of Bedford-Stuyvesant as well as, New York at-large.

## **SANITATION**

Once again, Community District 3 is still without our own Sanitation Garage! We have been making this request repeatedly since 1980, thirty-three years. The 59 Community Boards within the 5 boroughs are guided by the City Charter. Set within those pages are co-terminality guidelines. How is it that there is no compliance when it comes to Community District 3?

The designated site on Nostrand Avenue for our BK3 sanitation garage was acquired. There were multiple suits filed to prevent us from being able to utilize that site. We were successful in each of those litigations. Our garage is the most shovel ready project awaiting funding! Our demand is for OMB, the department, the Mayor's Office and the City Council to put the money back in the DSNY construction budget!

In this district, there are some concerns that we deem crucial. Illegal dumping, which runs rampant is now endemic. Sanitation does not have enough police to monitor and enforce infractions that are being committed. The DSNY police force must be increased so we can eliminate these problems. Illegal posting also contributes to the unsightliness of our streets. Enforcement is out there, but there is not enough being done to stem this tide, nor enforce appropriate fines to serve as a deterrent. Residents are forced to see postings on fences, light poles, even traffic sign rails, walls and any other surface they can be attached to. This is a serious quality of life issue.

Despite the fact that we have a lot cleaning division, there are many lots not under the purview of HPD. Those privately owned lots need to be cleaned and fenced. There should be some criteria that hold owners accountable for the maintenance of their property. If DSNY has to assume that responsibility, then the owners should have to accept the financial liability.

Private carting must be taken seriously. We have merchants that have no permits, which contribute to our commercial dumping issues. There should be an informational campaign to educate the merchants, in multiple languages and then a major enforcement blitz to show the seriousness of this



particular situation. Dumping brings a proliferation of health issues with it including but are not limited to rodents and other vermin.

We are aware that the signage division is no longer in existence however the need is even greater than before for signage. There needs to be creation of a new a signage division that serves multiple municipal agencies making it more cost efficient. Indeed we need to have manufactured/printed signs regarding canine waste, littering, and no posting.

Sanitation staffing should not be diminished but upgraded. Lot cleaning has had to take on more responsibility. They now have to cover some of the dumping issues as well as lots and this causes a time delay in both, when that was not evident prior to the cuts in staff. The storm drains are filthy. This was maintained by having the corners manually swept. Now debris washes down into the drain and causes flooding, permeating the air with foul smelling odors. Additionally, all of the mechanical brooms must use adequate amounts of water for their entire route.

## **SENIORS**

The senior population of Community Board 3 continues to be a major concern. This is another area where nothing has changed. Our newest issue is the fact that several of the senior centers have been closed, which is the **only** life-line some of our elderly have with the world outside of their homes. Seniors are being displaced because they can no longer afford to age in place. We need to have guaranteed steps to keep the people that helped build this community right here. They are unable to afford the rents or are unable to get into the senior housing in their very own neighborhood. Some of our golden residents cannot procure housing because they have too much income while others do not have enough. Some of our aged neighbors are ill and/or disabled and need some sort of assisted living facility within the confines of Bedford Stuyvesant. It is a travesty to have to move the seniors out of the neighborhood they have lived in their entire adult life, raised their children and grandchildren in. Not only are they struggling with placement, but also with being preyed upon by unscrupulous entities trying to take away their property and holdings.

- We need funding to create a facility sponsored by HUD and DFTA that will allow our seniors to age in place safely. Perhaps an incentive can be put in place for a developer to create the building and then DFTA can be its sponsoring agent.
- There are an increasing percentage of senior citizens living in poverty and we need to concretize supportive services targeted specifically for them. These would include Medicaid, SSI, Food Stamps, home delivered meals and the ever crucial housing subsidies.
- Information is the key to better informed decisions. Definitive, strategic, well- thought -out plans should be instituted to ensure that our older Americans receive pertinent information. This does not have to only fall on the municipalities but with appropriate training the responsibility can be shared with community-based, faith-based, religious institutions, block associations and other community entities to advocate on behalf of the elderly. Keep the advocates abreast of new and beneficial legislation that will impact the quality of life for our seniors.
- The Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption Unit must continue to be in place for our older citizens. The price of rent has sky-rocketed and those seniors that do not own their homes are at an impasse as to how to afford to continue living in their rental property. Income eligibility needs to be re-vamped, so more elderly are qualified to age in place without fear of increases that will force them to have to seek shelter elsewhere.

- Protective services need to be provided in order to safeguard seniors against crime and abuse. There should be training for all municipalities to recognize when the elderly have been victimized, sometimes even by their families.
- Assist with fuel and utility costs with programs such as HEAP and Weatherization.
- Another crucial matter when considering the elderly is making sure that our public, private and recreational spaces are senior friendly. They should be able to continue to go out and enjoy this city without worry that they cannot use the stairs, (i.e., subways), getting in public spaces and places like the theatres, restaurants, houses of worship and the like.

We are asking that our local elected officials continue to support DFTA with discretionary funding. This funding is heavily relied upon for space and transportation costs at senior centers. In addition, rather than cut funding, we are looking for additional funding for senior centers in fiscal year 2014. The funding that is still in place has shifted to different organizations there should be oversight to ensure that the senior citizens of this community are not disenfranchised.

## **SOCIAL SERVICES**

Community District 3 has worked diligently and continues to work to make sure that the homeless people that are placed in this community are treated fairly in their housing quest. There are many transitional facilities cropping up all over Bedford Stuyvesant in our residential community. Some of the homeless are being placed in unsafe conditions. We would like to work with the Commission on Human Rights once again, along with the Department of Homeless Services and our elected officials to see that these dangerous practices are curtailed.

The Department of Homeless Services and the City Council, at the urging of the community districts of Brooklyn, have taken a closer look at the present practices and deemed that there needs to be change. A pilot program is now in effect that instructs providers to refrain from making referrals to buildings that have registered complaints regarding occupancy violations, but have not been inspected by a City agency because the inspector was unable to access the premises - no access, no referrals. The issue of non access is crucial. Perhaps the new practice of multi-agency representatives doing the inspections has helped. We continuously ask that more inspectors are hired. At this time, it is obvious that we are still looking for guidelines that have teeth in order to ensure compliance to Buildings and HPD codes.

We continue to ask that strict attention be paid to the concentration of facilities that are placed in one geographic area. Bedford-Stuyvesant is largely a residential community and if we continue to make every vacant house a facility, at least, allow them to permanent housing as opposed to transitional. When persons are placed in an assisted housing environment, make it possible for them to have the dignity of knowing it is permanent and they will be able to stay. This way, the existing residents and the newly placed residents will all have ownership and we can continue to be a close knit residential community. We do not want to be known as a blighted ghetto of sheltering systems. Community District 3 is working toward building up this area, not allowing it to fall into a total state of disrepair.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

As with DEP, the Nostrand Avenue HWK1129 project, (the reconstruction of Nostrand Avenue from Flushing to Atlantic Avenues) has been in the budget of Community District 3 since 1989. Nostrand Avenue is a major thoroughfare that runs from the northern most end of our district straight through in a southerly direction. At last, the construction has begun.

Plans for NYC Select Bus Service along the Nostrand-Bedford corridors should include an impact study measuring effects on the local commercial strips and the identification of areas for dedicated parking along commercial nodes/intersections.

We have a number of roadbeds that are in hazardous/deplorable conditions. Broadway, which borders Community District 4, Bushwick, is so bad that cars have to actually travel in the opposite lane to avoid vehicular damage or an accident. Atlantic Avenue, which borders Community District 8, Crown Heights, also has a hazardous roadbed. This is not limited to those two roadways however; there are depressions and potholes in many of our streets. There seems to be no oversight for street excavations that inadequately close the streets after they have completed their work. The restoration compliance guidelines should require that work done on City streets been restored to their original state.

In addition, Halsey Street reconstruction from Tompkins to Broadway was initially supposed to be completed and it was not. The request was in for the 2004 budget requests. We would like to see that work done.

We would like to see bus shelters and or benches at all of our bus stops for the elderly and disabled especially. The bus stop areas need to be kept clean and snow-free. Some bus stops have debris lying around and weeds growing up out of the pits that the bus stop sign is in. There must be better maintenance at our bus stops and transportation hubs.

Another continuing problem with our roadways is that there is no consistent enforcement for big rigs that do not respect the truck routes but continually use the residential streets. These streets are not constructed to handle such heavy vehicles and they ruin the roadbed, not to mention the vibrations from these heavy vehicles also compromise the foundation of our historical building stock. Over time, this creates structural damage issues for the property owners.

## **SAFETY**

We are once, again, in the midst of another summer where shots ring out all during the day. Over the July 4<sup>th</sup> week-end, there were at least seven shootings in one precinct, alone. These shootings have become a routine part of the urban landscape within the boundaries of Community District 3. The summers have gained the attention of the media, but they in no way reflect the complexity of the problem. It is also dangerous for the residents of our district who must dodge bullets while sitting in a park or crossing the street.

In other sections of this document, we outline our needs in critical areas such as education, job training, and services for children and youth. Unless these concerns are addressed, in tandem, there is little hope for lasting redress from the criminal activity that is consuming our community. Collaboration is one of the hallmarks of Bedford-Stuyvesant, and groups all over the neighborhood are working together to bring about expanded youth services; better public schools, and additional job training opportunities. Umbrella organizations such as the Coalition for the Improvement of Bedford-Stuyvesant and the Bedford-Stuyvesant Youth, Education and Safety Task Force, and the Adelaide Sanford Institute have been the catalyst for research and long-term planning that lead to a better quality of life for our neighbors.

The 79<sup>th</sup> and 81<sup>st</sup> precincts and precinct councils have been vital partners. They assisted the YES Task Force and the Bridge Street Development Corporation in the development of a coalition of block and tenant associations that is moving into its third year. With funding from Council Member Albert Vann, the Bed-Stuy Works Alliance of Block and Tenant Associations have grown to over seventy member organizations. In a needs assessment that was taken last year, safety and youth were the top priorities that warranted attention. We are proud that our community is in the vanguard of

implementation of the revised Blockwatcher program, and over one hundred residents were signed up at a large omnibus training.

The efforts that will continue with the community must be fully supported by the New York City Police Department personnel at the highest levels. The commanders from both precincts have been steadfast in deploying officers in “hot spot” areas, and in making certain that impact zones actually cover these sectors of the community. However, there is only so much that they can do against this onslaught of illegal guns that are now readily accessible. Therefore, we see the following of the needs of District 3 in the area of safety:

1. A special working group, comprised of a broad cross-section of stakeholders should be convened to work closely with NYPD personnel from One Police Plaza on a comprehensive plan for improved safety within the District. While we are in the midst of a crisis, short-term, knee-jerk reactions do little good. There must be a long-term commitment on the part of NYPD.
2. In the short term, we need highly trained gang, drug, and gun units on the ground, and aggressively working to eliminate these scourges in the hot spot areas. It is not enough to send a gang unit in *after* a tragedy has occurred.
3. Funding should be provided for a Bedford-Stuyvesant Community Justice Center
4. All truancy programs should work in tandem, and more resources given to this area.
5. School safety officers should be trained to work more closely with school personnel.
6. Officers in each precinct should be retrained in techniques and strategies that begin to build confidence and demonstrate respect for our residents.
7. More support should be extended to the precinct councils, so that they can broaden outreach and implement creative programs.
8. Incentives should be given to precinct councils that develop and implement joint initiatives.
9. The Blockwatcher Program should be refined and expanded. There should be additional strategies that residents can adopt so that interest in the program is maintained.
10. Funds and support should be provided to block associations, merchant associations and civic groups which organize and execute programming that “take Back the Streets”. Positive activity on our stoops and streets are known to push out undesirable activities. The presence in and ownership of a space dictates what type of activities can occur within. Let’s empower our residents to take control of their space with innovative community building initiatives.
11. We are requesting the NYPD Highway department conduct a light survey along Tompkins Avenue. Tompkins Avenue is one of our wonderfully tree lined streets but that creates pockets of poorly lit areas which impede safe travel by pedestrians, bikers and drivers. We need lighting which better illuminates the sidewalks and streets.

## CONCLUSION

The dynamism with which Community District 3 exemplifies in its pursuit of elevating the quality of life for our constituents is unsurpassed. We are confident that our budgetary propositions will bestow prosperity on the future of Bedford-Stuyvesant in Fiscal Year 2015. We remain diligent and optimistic about the restitution of our resilient community. We are working in conjunction with the Mayoral Administration and will be able to accomplish our dream of having a flourishing and promising Bedford-Stuyvesant.

Respectfully submitted,

*Tremaine Wright*

Chairperson

*Henry L. Butler*

District Manager