



# Community Board No.2

43-22 50th Street

Woodside, New York 11377

(718) 533-8773

Fax (718) 533-8777

**Joseph Conley**  
Chairman

**Debra Markell-Kleinert**  
District Manager

## **STATEMENT OF DISTRICT NEEDS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Community Board 2 encompasses the areas of Sunnyside, Woodside, Long Island City and a portion of West Maspeth. The district is bounded on the north by Queens Plaza North, the northern property line of the Sunnyside Rail Yard and Northern Boulevard; on the east by the Con Rail property; on the south by Calamus, Maurice and Maspeth Avenues and Newtown Creek; the East River to the west.

Community Board 2 is a very diversified district consisting of one, two family homes as well as large number of multiple dwelling complexes; commercial strips, manufacturing and industrial areas; mass transit systems and is accessible by a number of arterial highways, bridges and the Queens Midtown Tunnel.

Board 2 is home to the Citicorp Tower, Silvercup Studios, Paris Studios, DeVry Institute, LaGuardia Community College and the LaGuardia Performing Arts Center, P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Museum, the Museum of African Art, Thalia Spanish Theatre, sculpture parks, the Van Dam Correctional Facility and the Borden Avenue Veterans Residence. Met Life relocated to Long Island City in November 2001, and the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) has temporarily relocated to Long Island City during renovation of the Manhattan site.

An example of the diversity of this district is the Special Planned Community Preservation District known as Sunnyside Gardens, and the industrial portion of Maspeth with some of the largest trucking and distribution firms in New York City. **Hunters Point**, in Long Island City, a special mixed-use district, has a high concentration of industrial and manufacturing uses mixed among residential units. Recently, the Department of City Planning rezoned portions of Long Island City that will allow for commercial development along Jackson Avenue and created a Hunters Point Sub District. Further rezoning will permit varied development throughout the Long Island City area. Also, Community Board 2 is working with the Department of City Planning to establish an In Place Industrial Park zoned area to accommodate businesses that may be displaced due to the recent rezoning of Long Island City.

The Queens West Waterfront Development Plan in Long Island City includes over 6,000 housing units, some senior citizen housing units, commercial and retail space, a hotel and convention center and open accessible public spaces.

In 1997, the first stage on Parcel 10 was completed. This structure, known as City Lights At Queens Landing, is 42 stories with 522 co-ops, 12,000 square feet of retail space and a 527 space parking garage. The building also houses P.S. 78; an early childhood learning center operated by the New York City Board of Education.

Construction of Parcel 11 began in October 2000 and opened for occupancy in 2002. This 32 story residential tower known as Avalon Riverview has 369 market rate rental apartments, a 369 space parking garage and 10,000 square feet of retail space. Included in this parcel is an 80 apartment senior citizens' facility built by the Foundation for Senior Citizens, a not-for-profit corporation.

Construction on Parcels 8 and 9 will be phased in over a three-year period. The General Project Plan specifies that Parcel 8 will be constructed with 104 apartments and 35,000 square feet of retail space. Parcel 9 will have 435 apartments, 30,000 square feet of retail space and a 360 space parking garage. However, CB2 has learned that Queens West is in discussion with a developer to revise prior planned development on Parcels 8 and 9.

Board 2 meets periodically with representatives of the Queens West Development Corporation to keep abreast of each phase of the project and the development of open public accessible waterfront space.

Further, Long Island City has been slated for the construction of the 2012 Olympic Village. If New York is chosen as the "host city" in 2005, the Olympic Village will include 3,500 units of housing units on the southern portion of the waterfront, as well as other improvements to this area.

*The following is a list of Community Board 2's requests.*

#### **DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING:**

Community Board 2 is home to one of the largest populations of senior citizens. This Board conducted a survey and identified that seniors in this district are in need of affordable housing, around the clock home care, health care and transportation services.

In addition, attention has been directed to a need to expand the Meals-On-Wheels Program to the homebound residing in the area and an increased demand for skilled nursing to conduct home visits to the growing frail elderly population residing in Board 2.

Presently, seniors within the boundaries of Community Board 2 are serviced by Catholic Charities (Woodside Senior Assistance Program) in Woodside; Sunnyside Community Services in Sunnyside; and St. Mary's Senior Center in Long Island City. With the increasing number of participants seeking services, Community Board 2 supports increased funding levels to senior centers in order to meet the needs of our senior citizen population.

In addition, the Korean American Senior Center, formerly located in Woodside was forced to seek new space. In 1994, this senior program, with funding sources from the Queens Borough President, temporarily relocated to a site within Community Board 3. It

is important to identify permanent space in CB2 to house the Korean American Senior Center and return these much needed services to this district.

## **CITY SERVICES:**

### **Livery Services**

The number of base stations and livery car services operating within Community Board 2 continues to be a major source of concern. Because of the district's proximity to major arterial roadways, and the mass transit system, this area has become a prime location for livery companies. Currently, there are approximately thirty-five (35) base stations housed within this district.

Despite the fact that livery drivers claim to be dispatched from off-street parking locations, they routinely roam local roadways, and they utilize on-street parking spaces at metered areas along Queens Boulevard and Roosevelt Avenue. Moreover, the Board is regularly presented with inadequate, and often questionable, leases or other documentation of licensees' off-street parking facilities.

Complaints related to livery drivers who double park, obstruct hydrants and crosswalks are frequently generated to Board 2. The noted issues create a minimum number of on-street parking spaces for patrons shopping at local businesses, and unsafe conditions for pedestrians and motorists throughout the community.

This Board has benefited from TLC Enforcement programs that have been addressing complaints. Further, Community Board 2 continues to review TLC applications, makes recommendations on base station requests, and notifies the agency of problematic operations in the district.

Community Board 2 welcomes increased enforcement, on a continuous basis, of licensees utilization of metered spaces, particularly at 61st Street at Roosevelt Avenue and at Queens Boulevard at 46th Street. In addition, the Board would like to see greater TLC verification and oversight with respect to the leases and other documentation tendered by licensees for off-street parking facilities.

## **LIQUOR LICENSING:**

The New York State Liquor Authority issues liquor licenses to establishments throughout the City of New York. However, this agency (with a minimal number of inspectors for New York State) is not empowered with the responsibility to enforce the laws of both the state and city. Local precincts have, and continue to conduct inter-agency inspections of local businesses that serve alcoholic beverages.

The Board has frequently requested information from the NYS Liquor Authority and invited SLA representatives to meet with CB2, without response. More significantly, the Board regularly submits comments, and occasionally objections, with respect to the granting and/or renewal of certain SLA licenses, without response from the SLA as to its action on such applications or renewals. This occurs even under circumstances where the SLA is required by law to make a finding that the granting of such a license "is in the best interest of the community" and delineate its reasons for such a finding. The New York State Liquor Authority needs to pay more attention to community concerns and issues, prior to approving liquor licenses.

## **SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT:**

Residential curbside recycling and source separation was implemented in this District in 1993. The current recycling program should be reviewed in approximately six months to determine if there is a need to implement a weekly recyclable pick-up schedule.

## **DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION:**

### **Air Quality**

Air pollution continues to be a matter of great concern in Community Board 2. This mixed-use district consists of a vast number of manufacturing, industrial and commercial operations with several waste transfer stations that are expanding their facilities; issues that warrant air monitoring. These concerns as well as Board 2's proximity to several arterial highways and major thoroughfares (i.e. Brooklyn Queens Expressway, Long Island Expressway, Queens and Northern Boulevards, Roosevelt Avenue, etc.) contribute to this district's focus on air quality. Plans to replace the existing air monitoring equipment at Queens College, and at other sites in this borough requires continued support by our Environmental agencies.

### **Noise**

Loud noise raises blood pressure, disturbs sleep and causes hearing loss. New York City government has recently recognized the negative impact of noise on the health of its citizens. The city should continue to restrict loud noises, including truck and automobile horns, loud mufflers, helicopters and other aircraft, and should enforce laws governing loud music.

Also, there have been increasing complaints within the Community Board 2 district of noise emanating from within bar's and other establishments, as well as outside such establishments from patrons congregating for the purpose of smoking. The Board would like to see greater enforcement of existing regulation of such conduct, rather than the enactment of additional restrictions such as the proposed Cabaret Law and Noise Code changes.

### **Sewers**

Community Board 2 is served by storm, sanitary and combined sewer systems. Many of the sewers now in use throughout out district are among the oldest in the City and are unable to handle the increased volume caused by plans for higher density residential development and business expansion and growth. The City must continue to provide improved systems and participate in the planning for new development.

### **Sludge Management**

The beneficial reuse of sludge continues to be a priority concern since the City signed the Ocean Dumping Ban Act. The heavy metal content of city sludge must be abated and environmentally conscious programs and technologies must continue to be studied, and disposal techniques developed

### **Water Supply**

The construction of Water Tunnel 3, which runs through Community Board 2, is expected to improve the distribution system in western Queens. Once constructed, a

study should be completed to insure the delivery of an adequate supply of pure, affordable water to our area. Board 2 has been approved by Percent for Art to develop open space at 73rd Street, north of 51st Avenue at the water tunnel construction site in our district.

## **EDUCATION**

### **Schools**

For a number of years Community Board 2 has requested improvements to existing schools located in School Districts 14 and 30 serving this area's youths. Many of our schools have outstanding work orders for repairs to broken windows, inoperable doors and faulty plumbing. School structures should be maintained in top condition to insure the safety of the student enrollment. The Board of Education and the School Construction Authority need to review procedures for repairs to school facilities and streamline the process to allow for repairs within a reasonable timeframe.

Board 2 has identified a need for new schools to alleviate overcrowding and additional classroom space. We must continue to advocate for funding to construct new educational facilities and expand existing schools. Community Board 2 looks forward to working closely with the noted agencies to assist in identifying suitable sites for the construction of new schools.

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT/PUBLIC SAFETY:**

Firehouses and Battalions servicing this district and adjoining communities should be kept open to insure the safety of the public. In addition, with the on-going development of the Long Island City waterfront, the NYC Fire Department must review the current services in south-western Queens to insure manpower levels and equipment are adequate for the safety of the Long Island City community.

We must continue to work with the NYC Fire Department's Emergency Medical Services to identify permanent sites throughout the district for their equipment.

The Board's area also lacks adequate EMS ambulance coverage on a 24-hour basis. The boundaries of the Community Board are spread out and the recent traffic safety changes along Queens Boulevard appear to have added to EMS response times, which exceed citywide averages. The Board would like the number of 24-hour ambulance tour shifts currently serving our community increased to no less than five such shifts.

## **HEALTH ISSUES**

Southwest Queens lacks a primary care medical facility and outpatient clinics to serve the medical needs of Community Board 2's increasing population. In the past, this Board spoke the Queens Borough President on the concept of construction of a major medical complex in western Queens. Currently, Queens' residents travel to Manhattan or to Nassau County to receive specialized medical services.

The Long Island City area is severely underserved by the City's public health network. There are only two small private clinics serving over 25,000 residents. In a health care survey, by the Floating Hospital of New York, Long Island City was found to be one of the most critically underserved communities in New York City. The area has one of the

highest rates of child and HIV-AIDS caused diseases in Queens County. The nearest city supported full service health care facility for low-income families is either in Manhattan or Western Queens. A full service health clinic needs to be established in the Long Island City area.

In addition, there is a dramatic need for a low-income child daycare center within Community Board 2. In the last five years, in the Sunnyside/Woodside area, the birth rate has averaged over 1,500 live births per year; 85% were births to foreign born mothers, and 65% to mothers on Medicaid. This high rate of births (4th highest CB rate in Queens County) and high rate of mothers on Medicaid (3rd highest CB rate in Queens County) calls for affordable child daycare for the 76,000 minority residents in Board 2.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

The 108th Police Precinct presently located at 5-47 50th Avenue, Long Island City, is in the southwestern most portion of our district, just two blocks from the East River.

The existing building was dedicated in 1904 and is surrounded by attached row homes and manufacturing firms to the west and is east of Vernon Boulevard. The stationhouse is too small to accommodate the number of police officers assigned to this precinct. There is a lack of ample facilities for female officers and the building is deficient in adequate space for support services of the 108th Police Precinct.

The 108th Precinct lacks off-street parking areas to accommodate staff vehicles, as well as official vehicles assigned to the precinct. Due to the lack of space, parking around the precinct is a nightmare; resulting in obstructed sidewalks, driveways and long-term use of DOT metered locations.

Community Board 2 requests site selection and acquisition of property to construct a new centrally located stationhouse, to include increased floor area, with ample off-street and on-street parking sites. This Board looks forward to working closely with the involved agencies in identifying suitable sites for this project.

Commitments to increase the 108th Precinct's manpower levels, remains a critical issue. Despite the on-going assignment of new officers to the 108th Precinct, manpower still remains low due to reassignments, transfers, retirement, etc. It is imperative for the City to assign at least 25 new officers each graduating class to enable adequate response to emergencies as well as quality of life complaints.

### **Quality of Life Issues**

Vandalism in the Parks and of cars; substance abuse and noise pollution in our open public space, abandoned cars; double parking; sidewalk and hydrant obstruction; illegal truck traffic and speeding conditions are making ever-increasing demands on the current manpower of the 108th Precinct. We want to improve the quality of life in our community and this can only be accomplished by increasing the present manpower levels at the 108th Precinct.

The District is home to the Van Dam Correctional Facility that draws from our precinct's manpower. There are three major bridges, the Queens Midtown Tunnel, Long Island Expressway and Brooklyn Queens Expressway that connect with other boroughs. Community Board 2 also has a large portion of the City's Rapid Transit system running

through our district, as well as the Sunnyside Rail Yards. Manpower is drawn from the 108th Police Precinct whenever an accident or major incident occurs at any of these locations; as well as for large citywide events.

### **Enforcement**

There is a proliferation of auto body shops and car service establishments throughout the board area. Many of these businesses utilize on-street parking spaces to accommodate their day-to-day operation. Consequently, our sidewalks and streets are constantly obstructed by illegally parked cars/trucks. Traffic Enforcement must continue to monitor the district and execute City laws.

### **Traffic Control Agents**

This district continues to experience a marked increase in traffic congestion and poor air quality due to the number of reconstruction projects currently underway (i.e. Long Island Expressway, Queensborough Bridge painting contract; Midtown Tunnel, BQE, 37th Avenue Sewer Project as well as several TA projects) with a projection for additional projects in the near future. We continue to express a need for Agents on a daily basis in our community to insure adequate flow of traffic.

## **DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

With less than 20 acres of parkland, Community Board 2 is greatly in need of further development of open spaces into parks. Pocket areas of vacant and unused properties that lay dormant are acquired and developed into open space under the "Greenstreets Program" and other programs, to provide recreational areas for our diverse population.

Open space and waterfront access continues to be a priority of this Board. Development of the Long Island City Waterfront must provide adequate recreational space to accommodate the planned growth of that area while incorporating the needs of the existing residential community, manufacturing firms and businesses surrounding and adjacent to the waterfront project.

Constant use of our parks necessitates daily clean-up and maintenance of the parks sites in Community Board 2. Overflowing trash baskets combined with piles of litter throughout the parks attract vermin and rats, which are detrimental to our residents and discourage use of our precious open spaces.

### **Forestry**

Trees, both in our parks and along our streets minimize the effects of pollutants in the air. This Board continues to request funds for continued tree planting in the district.

Through the years, CB2 has found that requests to address diseased trees, pruning of existing trees, and the removal of dead trees are severely backlogged. This is due to the on-going budget cuts the Parks Department has faced. Funds must be restored to the Parks Department to allow for the hiring of additional manpower to address the backlog of complaints submitted to the Forestry Division.

## **DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH SERVICES**

Community Planning Board 2 lacks available space and available funding for Youth Service programs. A multi-service youth center is needed and has been a priority of Board 2 for many years. It is imperative that our young people be provided with structured programs at no cost, in safe environments. Programming needs to include recreation, counseling, health services, substance abuse prevention, conflict resolution, job training and placement mentoring, college options, internships, peer leadership, etc. This type of multi-faceted programming would benefit both the “at-risk” population as well as those young people who function well but need support.

The recent restructuring of the Department of Youth and Community Development has left the young people of our District in a particularly vulnerable position. Our one free program targeted to teens, one that has been in existence for over 20 years, has lost its funding. The delay in the issuance of a new RFP has made it impossible for any CBO to apply for new DYCD funding. At this point in time, over 200 local teens will be without the support services of a neighborhood Teen Center during the coming school year.

Special needs continue to be increasingly evident in our community. The need to address immigration issues continues to be a priority in our multi-ethnic neighborhoods. Also, with the increase of parents in “welfare to work” programs, as well as the increase in parents working two or more jobs, there is a significant increase in “latch-key” children. Additionally, schools and youth servicing agencies are reporting increases in child abuse and neglect cases. There also appears to be a growing number of teen parents. Parenting skills programs need to be included in any strategic planning.

In light of the fact this district lacks a multi-service youth center, at this time, and until we acquire one, maximum use of available space must be considered. Public school buildings should be utilized for extended day, evening and weekend programs. This includes the establishment of a Beacon program within the Queens Community Board 2 boundaries. Our young people deserve programs that they can walk to. Safety issues preclude traveling to distant locations. Additionally, the opening fees and custodial fees being charged to community-based organizations need to be lifted in order to allow the greater use of school facilities.