



# Community Board 7

Borough of Queens

Bay Terrace, College Point, Beechhurst, Flushing,  
Malba, Queensborough Hill, Whitestone and Willets Point

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## **COMMUNITY DISTRICT NEEDS STATEMENT – FY 2013**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Community Board #7 is the largest in population and 5th largest citywide in acreage of all 59 Community Boards. It is composed of seven towns, Bay Terrace, Beechhurst, College Point, Flushing, Malba, Queensborough Hill and Whitestone, making up 12.7 square miles, and 285 miles of city streets. We are an extremely diverse community consisting of one and two family homes, suburban high rise apartments, 64 park locations, 30 Greenstreets, an intermodal transportation hub with 24 bus lines, the #7 train, and the L.I.R.R. In addition, we are the 4th largest retail area in the city, the second largest industrial area in the borough because of the College Point Corporate Park, and the 3rd busiest downtown behind Herald and Times Square. Our Board has the largest waterfront area running from Flushing Bay to Fort Totten.

Our diversity presents us with many challenges and problems, which we must address and resolve, if we are to maintain the level of our past accomplishments and improve our quality of life in the 21st century. These can be summarized along the following issues: zoning, parking, the environment, transportation, traffic, service delivery, waterfront development, in addition to maintaining the economic growth in downtown Flushing, College Point, Bay Terrace and Whitestone.

We are concerned about meeting the needs of our senior citizens, the proliferation of houses of worship, maintaining the viability of our parks, as well as our historical heritage. Our most immediate emphasis is concentrating on managing new developments within our board area, and the potential of its' impact on traffic, service delivery, and schools for our youngsters.

Evidence shows that Community Board #7 has experienced enormous building growth in both commercial and residential areas. For example, within only a four-mile radius of Downtown Flushing, the housing stock in the past 22 years has grown, and projects presently on the drawing board will bring in additional units of housing within the next several years (i.e., RKO Keiths, Muss Development, which is presently under construction, Flushing Commons and Willets Point).

With completion of the 2006 Census, our population was estimated to be approximately 259,000 people, and we are the largest population wise of all 59 Community Boards. Many census tracts in and around Downtown Flushing have experienced substantial population increases while some tracts in Bay Terrace, Clearview, College Point, and Whitestone have experienced moderate to high increase in population. The data confirms that the trend of sustained growth in our area has continued adding to the demand for new market rate and affordable housing, senior housing, classroom space, and city services.

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Due to the building and population growth in our district, we are concerned that this will create a shortage of classroom space for K-8. In addition, there is a serious shortage of space on the high school level. With the recent rezoning of Downtown Flushing, we are recommending that new housing developments be built with schools within their project. It is necessary to improve space management of existing schools and in addition, new buildings should be considered to deal with their additional needs. There has been a tremendous demand for community space; i.e., expansion of after school programs, community meetings, seminars, service programs, etc., and it is recommended that school buildings be utilized for this purpose. School buildings need to expand their role and serve a broader obligation to the residents of our communities.

In order to enhance the education of our youth, funding must be appropriated for construction of additional computer labs, and state of the art computer equipment.

## **BUILDINGS**

City Planning should review the need to examine appropriate zoning for Downtown Flushing – either a C4-4 or special district, due to the fact that because of the high water table, developers cannot meet the parking requirements.

We are happy that all of our neighborhoods have been re-zoned to meet the character of the area.

Presently, on any new large-scale development plans that come before the Board for a review, we are asking that the R-6 parking requirement be replaced with 100% parking on site. This helps alleviate much of the demand for on street parking from the surrounding community. In addition, developers must seriously look at an affordable housing component in conjunction with their large-scale developments. In addition, in order not to add to the congestion in our local schools, a K through 8 school must be seriously looked at during the development stage.

Presently, R-6 zoning has a 50% parking requirement. We have found that, developers are sub-dividing the lots which automatically eliminates the parking requirements. **This loophole must be eliminated.** Developers should not be allowed to circumvent this

because it impacts tremendously on the affected communities. If single family homes are requested to provide one parking spot per house, we should not allow developers to receive waivers for multi-unit developments.

On new construction, electrical and gas meters should be encased or protected from the outside elements. At present, they are left open with easy access, and in case of any emergency; i.e., explosion or fire, the Fire Department would not be able to evacuate people inside the premises.

Since all Building Department permits have to be posted, they should have the owners names and contact phone number, should an emergency arise during the construction process.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

As in the past, we continue to point out that Downtown Flushing has developed and thrived through private entrepreneurial investment and activity and thus did not require large infusions of city incentives and expenditures. Today we are faced with even greater amounts of development projects, both underway and planned, that are larger in scale than in previous times, and which continue to exacerbate uncorrected problems such as parking and infrastructure limits. Among these major projects are a major retail-residential center on College Point Boulevard and Roosevelt Avenue, and the Flushing Commons development on the Municipal Lot #1 site which is now in final approval stages, and the reopening of retail stores on the large site previously occupied by Caldor on Roosevelt Avenue. In addition, the north side of Northern Boulevard is now undergoing development with three projects underway, the largest of which will be the RKO Keith's property. We can add to this picture the approved plans for the redevelopment of Willets Point, which will further strain without question all of Downtown Flushing's current problems.

Our Community has supported most of these projects for the sake of economic development and jobs, notwithstanding that they will affect and are affecting our fragile infrastructure. Consequently, we need improvements to the #7 subway, further traffic flow improvements and monitoring in the downtown area and attention to be paid to our environmental issues, especially around Flushing River. We are especially concerned about the extent of remedial issues that will be required in relation to the Willets Point project and we need assurances that these will be supported and carried out.

With regard to the College Point Corporate Park, with the transition to a Special District, we need to insure that this final development of the Park includes maintaining the safeguards that are in place. We also need to be assured that the balance of development will address our community's quality of life, such as the preservation of the former Flushing Airport site for passive use.

The development by the Police Department Academy on the former auto pound site in the Corporate Park will have a substantial impact on the park infrastructure and the community. We consider this facility as exceeding our fair share of citywide facilities; consequently, every effort needs to be made to move capital projects away from the park and the immediate community. Otherwise, the economic health of College Point and Flushing will deteriorate.

#### **DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Flooding and ponding is a continuing problem in Community District #7. Additional funding is required for manpower and for the design and construction of storm sewers, sanitary sewers, combined sewers, catch basins and sewer regulators. Manpower is also needed to inspect the flood prone areas of the board to determine the appropriate solutions to the flooding and sanitary backups. Capital funding is needed to speed up the construction of sewer improvements once they are designed.

We must look at the implementation of Air Quality Monitoring in the area in and around downtown Flushing and the College Point Corporate Park, before any of the planned development projects commence. In order to create a "baseline" of the quality of air now and to remedy any sources of pollution, we must look at keeping acceptable levels during and after construction projects are completed and become operational.

Education on the proper control of storm water is needed. Multi-language educational efforts are needed to explain the proper procedures for handling of grease and fish water, and the protections required of the street catch basins throughout our District.

Additional inspectors are required in our District to ensure compliance with the Sewer Use Regulations, the Noise Code, the Air

Pollution Code, the Community Right-to-Know Law, and the Solid and Hazardous Waste Rules. A thorough survey of the facilities in the District needs to be performed in order to ensure all of them have the proper permits and are complying with the appropriate codes. This goes beyond just inspecting those facilities known to the DEP by their existing permits. The DEP must identify every facility that needs a permit and ensure compliance.

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

It is essential that all engine companies be staffed with five-man crews throughout Community Board #7 and especially in the downtown Flushing area. The need for this is due to several factors; increased urbanization, new high rise construction causing a heavier workload, the congestion of the commercial shopping area, and the various roadway reconstruction projects within the area, as well as the threat of terrorism due to LaGuardia Airport, U.S Tennis Center and Citifield Stadium.

The Department appears to be relaxing its enforcement powers in "Quality of Life" issues, and we feel this could lead to a serious safety issue. We would like to see more multi-agency Task Forces to address some of the Board's serious and often ongoing endless problems (ILLEGAL CONVERSIONS-STORES IN THE DOWNTOWN FLUSHING AREA BEING CONVERTED TO SMALL SCALE SUPERMARKETS, AND **ILLEGAL SOCIAL CLUBS, SROS IN 1 AND 2 FAMILY HOMES, ETC., PRIVATE DWELLINGS ILLEGALLY RENTING OUT BASEMENTS, MULTIPLE DWELLINGS ILLEGALLY RENTING CELLAR AREAS, RENTING ONE FAMILY APARTMENTS TO MULTIPLE FAMILIES, ILLEGAL VENDING WHERE PROPANE GAS IS USED FOR COOKING**).

A major concern developed with the City reorganizing the Fire Dispatcher's Offices. The call taker from the Fire Department is being replaced by a 911 unified call taker, which we feel will effect the response time for the Department, as well as not provide sufficient information on the response ticket which was previously provided by the Fire Department Dispatchers.

It is essential that our fire units be maintained at current manning levels or greater for the following reasons:

- 1) Increased population in Downtown Flushing, Malba, Beechhurst and eventually, the Willets Point area.

- 2) Increased business and residential construction in College Point, College Point Corporate Park, Malba, Beechhurst and eventually the Willets Point area.
- 3) Engine Company 274 has been designated by FDNY as a Haz Tech engine company and is being dispatched to hazardous materials incidents in the borough of Queens and possibly city-wide. Responses of this type will leave a void in the response district for fire, emergency and CFRD operations.

We are extremely pleased with the re-opening of the Queens Fire Marshal Base at Fort Totten. This base at Fort Totten when reopened provides the following:

- 1) Better response time to investigate suspected arson fires in CB #7 and surrounding areas,
- 2) Investigate terrorism threats especially at LaGuardia Airport, Citifield, the tennis center and other important landmarks in the district.

**Continued funding must be maintained in future years as not to let the base close again, as well as, maintaining sufficient manning strength.**

There is a need for:

- 1) The creation of a new fire battalion to alleviate the work load and response district of Battalion 52 and to provide the necessary chief supervision desperately needed in the northern quadrant of CB#7 district; namely, College Point, Whitestone, Malba, Beechhurst, Robinswood, Bayside and eventually Willets Point.
- 2) The creation of an FDNY summons enforcement unit who will assure that people are issued parking violations for parking on fire hydrants throughout the CB#7 district.
- 3) Additional ladder and engine companies need to be established since they are the essence to fire fighting.

#### **HOUSING PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT – H.P.D.**

Due to the shortage of inspectors, illegal rooming houses and illegal apartments have been on the increase in our area. One-bedroom apartments are being subdivided to accommodate additional families. A

law should be implemented disallowing this to happen, and should be part of the lease that is signed by the occupant. To preserve the housing stock, it is absolutely essential that Code Enforcement services operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The adjudication process needs to be streamlined to cut down on the time it takes to mitigate a complaint and determine a **FINAL** solution. Countless fines are going uncollected and recapturing these fines can only improve the fiscal outlook for the City. Additionally, Internal Revenue Service should also be notified of the potential of unreported income.

With the growing number of seniors in Queens, as well as our district, programs for Senior Citizen homeowners are in demand to address the varied needs of this growing population to ensure that they remain in their homes for the duration of their lives.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION – H.R.A./DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES**

The policy of discharging the mentally ill on the basis of they not being a danger to themselves or others is not working. Additional funds should be allocated to correct the problems of the homeless. They require speedy psychiatric evaluation, separating them from the general homeless population and into supervisory facilities that can properly care for them.

Outreach clinics to prevent homelessness should be funded in order to provide services to people prior to their wandering the streets and living in the parks. We suggest crisis intervention at its earliest stage and preventive counseling by the agency.

Seniors make up more than one-third of the population in our district; however, services must be increased and centers not closed in order to meet the growing demands of this population. New facilities are needed especially in College Point and the Downtown Flushing area, which is reachable by public transportation. Affordable housing with senior citizen services and recreation programs are necessary to accommodate them. Also, nursing care and transportation services must be improved. The present level of services offered is inadequate to address the needs of our large senior population.

Much of what is now available in terms of program centers is fragmented. The city should insure its related agencies are better coordinated to provide supplemental and required services to seniors.

Supplemental transportation modes in the form of minibuses on local levels should be explored so seniors can travel for shopping and medical purposes. More financial resources should be spent on expanding and introducing specialized geriatric services at our two local hospitals, Flushing and New York Hospital. Land use applications for senior housing should be supported, provided the surrounding residential communities are not adversely impacted.

## **PARKS**

Capital Projects for our parks must be accelerated in order to eliminate many hazardous conditions. MacNeil Park in College Point has been on the drawing board for reconstruction too long. The park is experiencing a deteriorated seawall, and crumbling paths, creating a liability to the agency and the city. Frank Golden Park has poor drainage, creating a terrible flooding problem, and at times an unusable field for the permit holders. The Margaret Carmen Green in Weeping Beech Park is in total disrepair, and certainly does not depict a fitting memorial for the person for whom it was named. This section of the park at times has become a haven for the homeless, as well as anti-social behavior.

Our 64 parks are extensively utilized and in need of additional maintenance, rehabilitation, spruce up and, in some cases, design and redesign. There is a need for additional maintenance, supervisory, recreational and seasonal personnel, as well as **Parks Enforcement Patrol workers who would be available in the evenings and weekends**. Overgrown grass and weeds, and refuse in the parks create an unsafe and unsightly environment, thereby, we require additional machinery; tractors, crew cab pickups, dump trucks, gravelies to cut grass, yazoos for sidewalk areas, leaf vacuums and Toro's are needed. In addition, the backlog of tree pruning is still critical. The Parks Department needs newer and better quality equipment, as the existing machinery is constantly breaking down. In addition, a pressure hose watering truck is needed to do deep root watering of street trees.

Full time gardeners are needed, as this district is the largest, greenest area in Queens. We have a number of center malls with shrubbery and flowers that need special attention, as they are constantly overgrown with weeds. Lack of maintenance creates a hazardous condition to motorists as well as an eyesore for the community. The district considers this ongoing beautification to be a quality of life related item. The City should enthusiastically encourage "Adopt-A-Park" or "Adopt-A-Garden" Program similar to the "Adopt-A-Highway" Program,



but not as a replacement for needed personnel. The backlog of tree pruning and removal is still critical especially in view of the recent fatalities, and we support funding **EARMARKED FOR QUEENS ONLY** in the City budget in order to deal with this problem expeditiously.

## **POLICE**

A majority of complaints in the areas are attributed to the 64 park locations, bars and clubs, and the attendant youth problems. Other sources of complaints are quality of life issues such as an increase in abandoned cars, street peddlers, graffiti, loud radios, drinking on the street, rowdiness and drag racing. With 285 miles of streets to cover, the precinct needs additional manpower to deal with the increase in quality of life issues. As our Asian population increases, our precinct desperately needs Korean and Chinese speaking officers. The Police Dept. needs to eliminate the "Rand Formula" when allocating Police to a precinct. While we are not a high crime area, the officers are constantly dealing with large numbers of quality of life issues that take a tremendous amount of time to resolve due to the large immigrant population.

There has been an increase in reported crime, especially in prostitution, drug activity, car thefts and burglaries. This may be attributed to the willingness and cooperation of victims who in the past were unwilling to notify the police of crimes. An expanded Morals Squad and Narcotic Task Force Program to address the related concerns as expressed by the community, is desperately needed. In addition, our district is heavily impacted with establishments that have liquor licenses and illegal vending. These restaurants/bars are impacting on the quality of life in our commercial hubs abutting residential communities. Illegal vending is on the rise, especially vending from motor vehicles. Numerous locations throughout our district have people selling anything from furniture to watermelons out of the back of a truck. Enforcement is necessary and must be on a continued basis. In addition, we need more enforcement of illegal commercial vehicles off route and to the overnight parking in residential streets. Compounding the problem of police presence is caused by the constant detailing of personnel to various special functions; i.e., USTA, Presidents' visits, parades, special details, etc. This precinct many times has been depleted of its personnel imposing a heavy burden on the remaining skeleton crew. This in turn has a major impact on the effective handling of quality of life issues.

The present geographic boundary of our district is large, and is burdened with increases in crime and minority populations. Particular

communities, such as College Point, Malba, Beechhurst, Robinswood, Whitestone and Bay Terrace, are receiving inadequate police protection in the form of radio motorized and foot patrols, which equates to less than adequate response times from the 109<sup>th</sup> Precinct.

With the development of many new large-scale developments in our district, a new police precinct needs to be built and established (i.e., 116<sup>th</sup> Precinct) in northeast Queens in order to satisfy the need for proper police protection and response times.

## **SANITATION**

Litter, especially in the downtown shopping areas, is a never-ending problem. Multi-language educational efforts are required to explain the various sanitation laws to the District's citizens and businesses. Enforcement is needed, but it must be fair and reasonable. We request that emphasis be placed on ticketing the litterbugs instead of where their litter falls. This will reduce litter now and in the future as this will also be an educational effort for those so ticketed.

Community Board #7 supports the recycling programs, and the outreach and education efforts must continue, and be increased to encourage vigorous participation by all citizens and businesses. Weekly recycling must continue, and additional new materials should be targeted for recycling, such as textiles, cooking oils from restaurants, office paper, etc. Multi-language educational efforts must target those areas with lower capture and diversion rates.

The towing of cars from Snow Emergency Streets during snowstorms must be improved to allow for better snow removal. Snow removal efforts have improved since they added the trucking of snow out of the congested areas and, where possible, the melting of snow to reduce the mounds of plowed snow.

With the anticipated reopening of the North Shore Marine Transfer Station, efforts must be started now to ensure that sanitation drivers from other community districts use only the approved truck routes coming and going from the MTS. Local streets are not through streets, and should not be so used.

## **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

### **1 – HIGHWAYS**

Our neighborhoods are facing many new challenges – we must learn how to protect them by seeking new approaches to achieve our goals. Federal, State and City funding is insufficient to meet the needs of our capital projects, which are necessary to provide desperately needed infrastructure improvements. The majority of our capital priorities has been, and will remain, transportation requests.

The commercial areas of Flushing, College Point, and Whitestone generate large numbers of trailer trucks. This puts an incredible strain on the streets and highways of these communities.

Capital construction should be accelerated to accommodate the increased volume of traffic and the deteriorated condition of the streets. Linden Place, our #1 Capital Project, is finally moving forward. This roadway, which has been closed for over 22 years, will have an ancillary road to relieve traffic backups on the Whitestone Expressway and along 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue. With the development of the Corporate Park and the new retail component, this roadway is a necessity.

Design funding for Phase IV of the Main Street Redesign, one of our top capital priorities, must be allocated. Phase IV will complete the street infrastructure repair in this highly utilized commercial area of our district. This reconstruction will enhance the Downtown Flushing rezoning project that was passed by our Board.

The agency needs to seriously look to move one of our capital projects that deals with one of our major roadways that connects Whitestone to College Point – 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue from the Whitestone Expressway service road to 130<sup>th</sup> Street.. The roadbed which is heavily utilized is uneven and has many ruts, as well as a serious drainage problem.

Some additional streets that need major roadwork are Ulmer Street from the Whitestone Expressway service road to 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and, the intersection of 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Ulmer Street.

Within the towns of Whitestone, Beechhurst, and College Point, the seawalls have been allowed to deteriorate, causing a severe and expensive restoration problem. This area has further been decimated by storms that occurred over 11 years ago. The various communities have requested Federal funding for immediate repairs. Capital projects from our Board have been initiated, but the financial crisis, has caused the restoration to be delayed by several years. The same applies to the Bridges, Ramps, and Flyovers. Preventive maintenance programs, by the

agencies responsible, must be initiated before a major disaster occurs. Of course, maintenance also pertains to the periodic cleaning of our Roadways, Highways, Bridges, and Tunnels, which has shown considerable improvement over the last few years.

## 2 – **TRAFFIC**

The results of recent traffic studies of Downtown Flushing conducted by various governmental agencies, while well intended, present findings and recommendations that often clash. We are happy that computerized controls are being installed within our board area.

The College Point Corporate Park has reached a stage of development that requires the Economic Development Corporation to act more responsibly particularly in the maintenance of its huge traffic generating facility. Money must be allocated for mitigation and remediation of traffic.

There is a need for more parking facilities around the Downtown Flushing area, as well as Whitestone, to help alleviate congestion due to drivers trying to find parking. In addition, we are happy with the installation of muni meters in our district. This will increase the number of parking spaces by 20%. Commuters who want to use the mass transit options at Main Street, shop at the numerous stores, or do business in the area, but use their cars to get into the Downtown Flushing area need to have ample parking available. If parking is not readily available, they will continue to drive out to the island for their shopping needs.

The agency needs to accelerate some of its basic maintenance issues, such as repainting of street markers indicating “Stop Ahead” , “Speed Bump”, School Crossing signs and the re-installation of street name signs or Stop signs. These delays generate many complaints from the community indicating that these are emergencies that cannot wait for many weeks or possibly several months.

## 3 – **TRANSIT**

We are concerned about expanding and improving our transit system. The Main Street subway station is the 10<sup>th</sup> largest subway in the city and the biggest transfer point between the busses and the subway. Relatedly, committed funding is required in order to meet continued

improvement of our infrastructure. The rapid growth of vehicular volumes in Community Board #7 during the past decade has only been matched by the frenzied growth of the local demand for public transportation.

With the takeover of bus transportation by the MTA there is finally an opportunity for a unified and coordinated effort to transport shoppers and commuters to their local destinations. There is, therefore, a very strong need for an orderly analysis of bus transportation needs, not only to make bus lines more efficient, but also to maintain services for the aged, the handicapped and school youngsters, not to cut services. Where the use of the tandem/articulated buses is unwelcome in our area, Jitney buses are recommended to make up the areas where we have lost service due to the loss of ridership or elimination of a specific bus line.

On a daily average, 85,000 people use the IRT #7 subway and 75,000 use the 24 bus lines in the Downtown Flushing community. Modern and innovated ideas should be pursued by New York City Transit Authority (minibuses vs. illegal vans), which would improve the reliability of bus schedules and loss of passengers in underserved and highly congested areas. In addition, three major L.I.R.R. stations are located in our district. Of equal importance, the Main Street station is not handicapped accessible and is in deplorable condition, and the upgrading of our LIRR stations to ADA guidelines is a must. In addition, the L.I.R.R. station that services Citifield and the Tennis Center should operate every day, and especially during the AM and PM rush hours. Presently it only operates when there are games at both stadiums. This would alleviate some of the traffic and parking congestion problems in Downtown Flushing. Also, MTA in order to accommodate this ridership should start some express trains at the Citifield Stadium station.

A sizeable percentage of the ridership comes from eastern Queens and now that the MTA is expanding the #7 route further west in Manhattan, it is time to give some consideration to expanding the line eastward in Queens. That would be another way toward eliminating congestion in Downtown Flushing. The current line was not built for 21<sup>st</sup> century travel within this part of the borough. It's time for the residents and businesses of East Flushing, Bayside, and maybe some parts of Douglaston to share in freeing Downtown Flushing from this growing problem.

All stations are in violation due to not having ramps or elevators to service the physically challenged. We are looking forward to the

construction of the light rail with the vision of a Downtown Flushing station. Tens of millions of dollars were spent on the upgrading and rehabilitation of the #7 subway station less than a decade ago. To date the escalators are still not 100% operable, and experience frequent breakdowns, forcing passengers to use the long descending staircases onto the platform level. In addition, the maintenance needs major improvement – escalators walls are filthy, debris on top of the information booth and newspapers strewn on the floor. The high volume and echo of the public address system makes the announcements inaudible.

## **YOUTH**

Since 1995, Community Board #7's youth population has suffered due to the funding cuts that resulted in the elimination of the position of youth Coordinator. In the past, Youth Coordinators have played a vital part in enabling Community Board #7 to effectively monitor youth programs, provide technical assistance to youth service providers and to guide youth program users. In addition to monitoring local programs, Youth Coordinators made sure that various programs funded by the Department of Education, Department of Youth and Community Development, Borough President and the Council Members are meeting the needs of our growing community. It has been over 16 years that Community Board #7 has been without a Youth Coordinator and as the years go by, it is more evident that this has had a negative impact on our youth population.

Since the elimination of the Youth Coordinator position, Community Board #7 has gone through tremendous changes and the need for this position has only been reinforced. The population growth currently experienced by Community Board #7 calls for comprehensive youth service programs to maintain community stability as well as to provide safe and nourishing environment for youth. Additional and expanded youth services programs in the following areas would enhance the lives of youth in our community.

1. Beacon programs are effective programs that offer positive youth development through educational, cultural and literacy programs. Currently, Community Board #7 only has 2 Beacon sites to serve the needs of 47,000 youths. Additional Beacon sites and increased funding is necessary to effectively meet the growing needs of Community Board #7.

2. Preventive programs are necessary to keep youngsters active and engaged in constructive programs after school. These programs should include educational and career choice counseling, high school drop out prevention and family support programs to create a safe environment.

3. Youth employment programs should be expanded to address youth unemployment and to develop jobs for youth. Employment and job training programs are essential.

4. Increasing the use of existing school facilities is necessary to meet the needs of youth for educational and recreational programs. Elimination of usage fees would ensure increased funding dedicated to programs and the increase in number of youths served.

5. Construction of a new middle school for College Point is essential. With the increase in population, and the only middle school closing decades ago, these youngsters need to travel to other communities either in Whitestone or Flushing.

In order to make certain that we are doing the best for our youth, the Department of Youth and Community Development and Community Boards must engage in cooperative planning efforts to ensure the most effective use of current youth programs as well as development of additional programs.

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