



Community Board No. 10 - Manhattan

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FISCAL YEAR 2013 DISTRICT STATEMENT OF NEEDS

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10

PREPARED BY
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10

Manhattan Community Board 10 2013 District Needs Statement

Manhattan Community Board 10 encompasses the neighborhoods of Central Harlem, an area of approximately 1.5 square miles of relatively flat land. Three of the District's four major boundaries are natural features: Harlem River to the north, Central Park to the south and the Fordham Cliffs to the west. The District's eastern border, Fifth Avenue, is its only boundary that is not a natural feature. According to the 2010 Census Data, Central Harlem has a population of approximately 118,000, an increase of about 11,000 over the past 10 years.

Harlem has witnessed a phenomenal amount of social and physical change over the past few decades. The development of hundreds of vacant lots and buildings has brought a more diverse population to the community. Presently, African Americans make up approximately 63% of the District's population, followed by Hispanic at 22%, White at 10% and Asian at 2%.

Due to its long history as a center for arts, culture and social and political activism, Harlem is regarded as the cultural center for African Americans throughout the world, and one of New York City's top tourist attractions.

HOUSING

Homelessness

The Department of Homeless Services ("DHS") works tirelessly to address the critical needs of our community. Manhattan Community Board 10 has been the recipient of housing programs for the homeless for a number of years. Thousands of families have been relocated within the City's hotel shelter system within Central Harlem. This has resulted in the District being over saturated with housing for the homeless that are not accompanied by adequate social service support. The City and DHS should work to ensure that the City's Fair Share policy includes the placement of such homeless facilities, and ensure that funds are allocated to provide adequate social service support.

The existing programs in Manhattan Community Board 10 require continuing budget allocations for social services including adult and family service along with prevention, policy and planning.

Affordable housing

The City and its Department of Housing Preservation and Development ("HPD") has worked with local non-profit community development groups and the private sector to finance and develop thousands of affordable housing units throughout the City. As existing units expire, the City must continue to create more affordable units at varying rates of affordability to offset the loss of units and ensure that long time residents of the community can afford to stay in Harlem.

Mitchell Lama

The Board supports the preservation of affordable units in the Mitchell-Lama program. Thousands of units are at risk for expiration. The continuation of this program depends largely on the extension of rent stabilization legislation. The Board supports Albany in these efforts.

421-A and J51

The Board requests that these programs be continued /extended to developers who build in Community District 10.

Housing Stock Preservation

The housing boom in Central Harlem is evidence that private, public and non-profit developers recognize the unique quality of Harlem's neighborhoods. Current issues of concern that affect housing conditions in Central Harlem include:

- lack of preservation, stabilization of the residential fabric and housing stock
- limited homeownership opportunities, and
- limited affordable housing opportunities

Home Ownership Opportunities and Preservation

A key source of home ownership opportunities for Harlem residents is based on the transfer of formerly city-owned properties to the residents. This is facilitated through two related programs run by HPD known as the Tenant Interim Lease (“TIL”) and Housing Development Fund Corporation (“HDFC”). Under the TIL program, residents get the opportunity to self-manage their buildings. After certain thresholds are met, the building is transferred to home-ownership under the HDFC program at a modest cost.

While HDFCs offer an important means of access to home ownership for low- and moderate-income residents, this access to home-ownership is at risk for many buildings in Upper Manhattan. In contrast to traditional market-rate cooperatives and condominiums, the HDFCs often do not have the budget to hire a professional external management company as well as skilled superintendents and staff. Oversight and operations are heavily reliant on the volunteer activities of the co-op board and proactive tenants who may be overburdened with responsibilities or lack critical skills. While HPD does provide a project liaison to interact with the HDFCs and address their issues, the staffing and skill of these liaisons are often inadequate to address the property management and board oversight needs of the HDFCs. When problems with the HDFCs become critical, with limited alternative avenues for help, many of these organizations in Harlem turn to Community Board 10 for help in resolving their problems. The District Manager and the Housing Committee of Community Board 10 are responsible for responding to the community’s housing concerns, and it is evident that a growing number of these HDFCs are at risk of failing. Once deemed no longer independently viable, the buildings would be taken over by HPD and potentially subject to disposition, thus ending this valuable path to home ownership for Harlem families.

We perceive that the challenges faced by HDFCs in Central Harlem may also apply to other HDFCs in Upper Manhattan and Citywide. It would also be valuable to know how the issues faced by HDFCs in Harlem differ from issues faced in other neighborhoods and whether lessons can be applied across neighborhoods.

Community Board 10 believes that it is imperative to devise strategies to strengthen the long-term viability of HDFCs in Harlem. We see the following key areas of the scope of work:

- Quantifying and documenting the scale of problem;
- Convening key stakeholders including the HDFC property owners, city agencies, elected officials and non-profit service providers;
- Identifying and documenting best practices among successful HDFCs; and
- Require at least 1 officer of the HDFC attend and become certified as a property manager.
- Recommending actions for HDFCs at risk of failure, including adopting best practices of more successful HDFCs and/or exploring innovative new solutions.

Housing Recommendations:

1. Preserve, stabilize and enhance the existing residential fabric:
 - A detailed plan for assessing all blocks in Central Harlem should be developed to determine the potential for development and to guide targeted development activities. The City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) should preferably use the Tenant Interim Lease Program and Homeworks for housing development, and as alternative measures, Community Board 10 will consider with critical support the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) and Neighborhood Entrepreneur Program (NEP).
 - The City should strictly enforce laws relating to the sale of drugs on streets and in buildings throughout the District.
 - Ensure that urban renewal plans generate the maximum amount of new construction as possible.
 - Encourage new contextual residential development on vacant lots along side streets to reflect the existing traditional and physical characteristics of the neighborhood.
 - Eliminate the use of low-rise residential buildings, especially those on the side streets, for any type of special needs housing.
 - Establish a program to stabilize rather than demolish brownstones with structural defects.
 - Identify at-risk buildings and determine how abandonment can be prevented.
 - Seek out every opportunity for new housing construction to ensure variety in age of Central Harlem's housing stock.
 - When consistent with the plan's retail strategy, require all residential construction along major streets (i.e. 116th, 125th, 135th, and 145th streets and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., Malcolm X, and Frederick Douglass boulevards) to include ground floor commercial space, non-profits or other residential amenities.
2. Ensure that Community Board 10 plays a key role in the decision-making process:
 - City agencies should consult Community Board 10 prior to issuing an RFP or RFQ for special needs housing projects. Community Board 10 should be given the opportunity to evaluate such RFPs or RFQs to determine if it complies with the Board's goals and that of the City's fair share policy. The Board would take into account federal, state and private facilities as well as city-funded facilities in its own fair share analysis.

- Community Board 10 should have maximum participation in decisions relating to the HPD housing programs, especially as it relates to the selection of managing organizations.
3. Increase affordable homeownership and housing opportunities for low and moderate-income residents of the district:
 - Transfer abandoned City-owned brownstones and develop them into middle income condos. Ensure that at least 51 percent of the buildings are made available to current Central Harlem residents. Sale prices should be based upon current physical condition. Central Harlem residents should be targeted for mortgage readiness programs, which could make it possible for residents to borrow construction loans from local banks.
 - Develop a program to assist Harlem residents to qualify for financing for homeownership in the community.
 - Increase the availability of quality affordable housing for low, moderate and middle-income individuals and households as well as senior citizens that currently live in Central Harlem.
 - Encourage the development of homeownership units (i.e. the rehabilitation of brownstones for sale as fee-simple purchases, the rehabilitation of apartment buildings to create affordable condominiums and cooperatives, the new construction for homeownership and expansion of limited equity cooperatives).
 - Ensure at least 50 percent of all housing units developed by HPD or non-for-profit organizations be reserved for Harlem residents and ensure that Community Board 10 be provided with documents to confirm that the 50 percent target is met.
 4. Address the Single Room Occupancy unit housing stock in Central Harlem by providing studio apartments.
 - Streamline the process for converting brownstones that are now classified as SRO units and return City-owned brownstones with existing SRO units back to their original design as single-, two-family or multiple-dwelling buildings (up to 4 dwelling units per building).
 - SRO housing should be developed primarily for the elderly population and in buildings that are structurally suited for SRO such as hotels.
 - Provide SRO livable housing in Harlem using existing structures classified as hotels (both occupied & vacant).

The origins of Harlem's struggle to maintain affordable and decent housing are rooted in dynamic social and economic forces that have brought a range of public and private interests into the housing arena. Today, a slower, yet enduring rate of deterioration, coupled with the current trends of investment and revitalization, characterize the fundamental forces currently effecting housing conditions and population change. Critical to achieving neighborhood stability in Harlem will be housing policies that encourage a new income mix among residents, while providing opportunities for existing low and moderate income residents to acquire residency in the new housing stock being built in Community Board 10.

Additionally, there is a need to increase the rate of homeownership among community residents. A way must be found to preserve the physical character of the area, while recognizing the needs of Central Harlem's growing population.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

HEALTH

As reported in a recent 2011 Department of Health study, Central Harlem has the highest death rate in the City. Central Harlem ranked first in the City for cerebrovascular diseases, has the second highest rate of cancer deaths, third highest rate for drug-related deaths and sixth for HIV. The death rate in Central Harlem remains higher than both Manhattan and New York City overall with cancer, heart disease and HIV-related illness as top causes of premature death. Other key health issues include smoking, obesity/physical activity, health insurance/ access to care, mental health and drug abuse.

Manhattan Community Board 10 continues to support the 'Take Care New York' health policy (TCNY). Its goals mirror the Harlem Hospital Community Needs Statement from December 2010. Both examine the health needs of the community and emphasize the unique challenges facing this diverse community.

The key to surviving cancer is early detection. Women in Community District 10 are slightly below the target for breast cancer mammograms and nearly meeting the TCNY target for PAP tests for cervical cancer. Early screenings provide opportunities for treatment. Unfortunately, only 50% of residents aged 50 and older have had a colonoscopy in the past 10 years.

Risk factors for cardiovascular disease include hypertension, diabetes, high cholesterol, cigarette smoking and poor diet. Community District 10 has an alarming prevalence rate of all these health issues. Diagnostic and treatment services are mostly long-term management programs and require continuous funding and expansion due to the growth of the neighborhoods.

Wide disparities exist in HIV across New York City communities. Sadly, HIV diagnoses and rate of people living with HIV/AIDS in Central Harlem is twice that of New York City overall (NYCDH, 2004). Statistics from the Office of Minority Health indicate racial and ethnic minorities accounted for almost 71% of the newly diagnosed cases of HIV and AIDS in 2008. With African Americans and Hispanics comprising approximately 86% of Central Harlem the expense of this special population places a huge burden on Harlem Hospital and the AIDS Service/Community-Based Organizations.

The obesity epidemic in Central Harlem has been exacerbated by the lack of healthy food choices, largely due to access and cost. Community Board 10 continues to support the City's efforts to address food deserts. The Board supports farmer's markets and the City's efforts to provide affordable healthy food options, and encourages the City to continue to explore creative options, like the recently launched FRESH Bodega initiative. In addition, we implore the community to participate in and the City to support innovative programs such as Central Harlem Health Revival, Hip Hop Healthy Eating and Living in Schools, Harlem Healthy Living, Harlem Walk it Out and Shape Up NYC.

As evidenced by the Community Board's 2011 resolution on Harlem Oil Boiler Conversions, we are passionate about the respiratory health of our children. We strongly urge the City to work on a program that will eliminate the old No. 4 and No. 6 oil burning boilers from all City-owned

properties. In addition, the expansion of Child Health Clinics (school and community based) is vital to maintaining the health of Manhattan Community District 10 children.

Narcotic and drug abuse in Central Harlem has been a problem for decades. While the death rate due to drugs and alcohol has dropped, the rate is still more than twice as high in Central Harlem as in Manhattan and NYC overall. The same holds true for alcohol and drug related hospitalizations. Drug treatment centers have long been part of the Harlem community. However, proper oversight and management is required to ensure a high quality of life for those residents living next to these facilities.

Teen pregnancy rates have declined over the past few years, however the birth rate to teenage mothers remains higher in Central Harlem compared to other NYC communities. Therefore, the demand for obstetrical resources remains. Programs that provide education and prevention of early and unwanted pregnancies must be funded. Family planning services are also needed to identify appropriate foster families and adoption options. In addition, prenatal care is imperative to the prevention of low birth weight and infant mortality.

The health needs of the elderly are great and the percentage of elderly within Community District 10 is 33% of the population. A greater percentage of this population lives below the poverty line, limiting the accessibility of health care to Medicaid and Medicare. The wide spectrum of services delivered to this population is essential. The Department for the Aging and the Human Resources Administration require sufficient funding in order to continue home-care, housekeeping and nutrition programs to this growing cohort.

HUMAN SERVICES

The state of the economy has had a harmful impact on the overall quality of life for the communities in District 10. Unemployment rates are far greater than the national and state average. Currently, one of every three persons in the district is receiving some form of public assistance. The Board is committed to working with agency partners to ensure that there are adequate health and human services to address the needs of Central Harlem residents. An extraordinary number of families that have relocated to Harlem through the City's shelter system/social services programs are in need of social services.

The Welfare Reform Act of 1996 turned over primary responsibility for administering the welfare system to the states. It required recipients to find jobs within two years of first receiving welfare payments and limited welfare payments for a total of no more than five years. In addition, states are allowed to establish "family caps" that prevent mothers of babies born while the mother is already on welfare from receiving additional benefits. These federal mandates have placed a higher responsibility on State and City funded programs to provide relevant job training, job placement and childcare options.

There are nineteen senior centers operating within Community District 10, including a new nursing home and a 200-bed long-term rehabilitation center. This new facility relocated from Roosevelt Island and occupies part of what was once North General Hospital. Many senior centers have comprehensive programs for Central Harlem's senior population. Outreach efforts need to be expanded to offer these home healthcare, exercise & social activities, home/shelter assistance and nutritional and support to qualified senior citizens whom don't yet benefit.

THE ELDERLY

In 2000, 11 percent of Community District 10's residents were age 65 and older. More than one-third of this population of Harlem has incomes below the poverty line. Accessible and affordable health care is an important service for this sector of the population, as they tend to be on fixed incomes. There is a need to increase the total spectrum of services delivered to this population through the Department for the Aging and the Human Resources Administration, including home care, housekeeping and free meals programs.

Eighteen senior centers operate within Community District 10. Most have comprehensive programs to address a variety of needs within Central Harlem's senior population. Other smaller centers specialize in specific programs such as nutrition or emotional support. There are also a number of residential health facilities and senior housing facilities, many of which are Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly.

Improved outreach efforts are needed to identify senior citizens who are living in relative isolation and without their basic needs being met, such as adequate shelter, nutritional and utility support, are necessary. According to reports from senior services providers, there remain a significant number of elderly persons in Central Harlem who are eligible for available services but do not take advantage of them. Identification of this "at risk" population is of critical importance.

Housing services for seniors has diminished due to the needed focus on housing for middle and upper income families in Community District 10. As a result, the need for housing for the elderly is becoming more pronounced.

Approximately 33% of the elderly are living alone; the need for home care has increased. We support alternative private and public programs to fill this need.

YOUTH

Community District 10 has suffered tremendously from the selection process and general disorganization of the Summer Youth Employment Program. The number of slots that Community District 10 has received for summer jobs underestimates the number of children in this community who could benefit from this program. Furthermore, the Board feels that the children should have been accommodated on a "first come, first serve" basis, rather than a lottery system.

As you know, children in Central Harlem are in desperate need of the experience, money and job training that summer employment provides, and this program is a lynchpin to their efforts to obtain that employment. Among youth between ages, 16-25, the rate of unemployment is greater than 50%. The alternative to the positive experience of employment is far too often a "lost summer" for our youth, spent on the streets engaged in idle behavior that will invariably lead to criminalization for many of them.

SOCIAL SERVICES:

Adequate social services continue to be a need in Community District 10. A large percentage of

the population is unemployed, more than twice the borough rate and twice the City rate. Currently, one of every three persons in the District is receiving some form of public assistance.

Support and distribution

Many of the people who relocated to the Harlem community through the City's social services programs are not from the community, thereby distorting the numbers and increasing the need for social services. The extraordinary number of families relocated to Harlem through the City's shelter system has created a pressing need for additional social/support services in the area.

Most of these families continue to face many of the same problems, which led to their homelessness: anti-social behavior, substance abuse, inadequate incomes, new overcrowdedness, and battered spouse syndrome. Simply re-housing these families does not solve their complex social problems. In order to meet the needs of these families, additional resources must be committed. Other communities must bear their fair share of relocated families and all communities must receive an increased funding for social programs to support relocated individuals and families.

Federal Mandates

An estimated 38,000 people are scheduled by mandate to be terminated from the federal welfare rolls. Neither, the City or State has created a supportive net that must be in place to avert a social disaster. It is imperative that programs be put in place to provide counseling, meaningful and relevant job training, and job placement. This District has a large population that will be impacted by the Welfare Reform Act.

Foster Care Support

Resources must be made available for preventative family assistance to stem the flow of children into foster care. Programs that provide education and prevention of early and unwanted pregnancies must be funded. Programs to work with families to remove their children from foster care must be given priority. In addition, programs that work with children and families, especially adolescents and their children must be supported.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

While Harlem has a significant economic base, the economic potential of the area is not maximized. Harlem is predominantly zoned for residential development with limited commercial overlay. The high level of unemployment in the area is unlikely to be addressed if Harlem remains a "bedroom community" for the rest of Manhattan. The Economic Development Corporation of the City of New York measures the total existing commercial development in Harlem as 4.8 million square feet, which makes it one of the smallest major business districts in New York City. Even with the limited commercial zoning that exists, the economic potential of the area has not been optimized. The area suffers from limited public sector investment, untapped retail potential, a dearth of non-retail for-profit businesses rental rates on the predominant 125th Street corridor that are prohibitive to local businesses and a chronically high unemployment rate. The severe economic recession of 2008 to 2010 has increased financial pressure on families and small businesses in Harlem.

A significant portion of the commercial office space in Harlem is occupied by non-profit organizations and government agencies, which are unlikely to experience significant growth in

job creation, and in fact are exposed to long-term job reductions. New local businesses in Harlem, particularly small businesses, are an important source of new job creation. Successful economic development of Central Harlem requires the addition of new dynamic business clusters. Potential areas of new business development include media and technology, health related sectors, as well as green jobs (particularly weatherization of local housing stock).

In the past, going "Uptown" meant an evening spent at a nightclub listening to jazz at legendary clubs such as The Cotton Club or The Savoy. At present, the existing attractions still draw evening crowds and interest in area is improving with recent additions such as Red Rooster and Harlem Tavern. With its heralded history, access to mass transit, iconic cultural institutions and its existing and emerging attractions, Central Harlem has the potential to recapture its former position as a premier arts and culture destination in New York City for both local residents and tourists.

Following discussions with various community stakeholders, Community Board 10 has identified the economic development needs of the District as follows:

- A coordinated effort by City and local development agencies, in collaboration with the business community, to document and market the continued untapped retail potential in Harlem;
- Addressing the low public investment in Harlem relative to other commercial districts in New York City;
- Creation of a critical mass of new for-profit businesses through initiatives such as the establishment of a City-sponsored small business incubator, which has been successfully accomplished in other areas of Manhattan;
- Re-establishing the prominence of Harlem's grand avenues and the creation of a critical mass of local businesses; and
- Development of an overall Harlem tourism promotion strategy to maximize potential tourism revenues.

Addressing the Deficit in Public Investment

The stimulation of economic development in Harlem will require both additional public and private investment. In recent decades, public investment in Harlem has focused on improving the housing stock and transitioning abandoned buildings and property back to the private market. As the inventory of vacant housing has declined, it is critical that the public sector focuses on stimulating local commercial development. While recent efforts have been made to spur job creation in Harlem along the 125th Street corridor, with plans to rehabilitate the former Taystee Bakery Complex, Mart 125 and the Corn Exchange Building, there are no major commercial developments being contemplated in Community District 10 outside of the 125th Street corridor. The overall area continues to lag in development relative to other commercial districts in New York City. This fact is shown clearly in data recently compiled from the New York City Economic Development Corporation:

<u>Business District</u>	<u>Existing Commercial Development (sf)</u>	<u>Public Investment</u>
Harlem	4.8 million	\$25MM
Long Island City	7.4 million	\$50MM
Downtown Jamaica	2.8 million	\$80MM
Downtown Brooklyn	22 million	\$300MM

Hudson Yards	13.8 million	\$14 Billion
Lower Manhattan	100 million	\$34 Billion

Tapping the retail potential

The data from Social Compact's Harlem Drilldown Analysis conducted in 2008 provides clear evidence of the untapped retail potential in Central Harlem. It is important to note that the Social Compact's analysis exists beyond the precise boundaries of Community District 10, but the analysis is representative of the economic trends in the District. The analysis estimates the aggregate neighborhood income in Greater Harlem at \$8.4 billion dollars, a 37% increase over the 2000 estimates of \$4.7 billion dollars. The analysis estimates roughly \$766 million in retail leakage – money that is spent outside the neighborhood on retail purchases. With respect to full-service grocers alone, the analysis estimates annual grocery leakage in the amount of \$178 million, enough to support roughly 520,000 square feet of additional grocery retail space. With respect to restaurants, the analysis estimates annual economic leakage in the amount of \$130 million, enough to support roughly 550,000 square feet of additional restaurants.

Another valuable analysis of the untapped retail potential in Harlem is available in the "Retail Analysis of North-South Corridors, Central Harlem", conducted in Fall 2008 by the Urban Technical Assistance Project ("UTAP") of Columbia University. The study evaluated the expenditure potential in the area bounded by Malcolm X Boulevard and Frederick Douglass Boulevard, between West 124th and West 135th Streets, and made the following conclusion:

“As a result of \$158,673,738 of total trade area's projected household expenditure and \$85,096,916.73 of the estimated amount of revenue, total projected household expenditures in the trade area exceed the estimated sales in the corridors by at least \$73,576,822.01. This indicates that 54% of the projected expenditure by trade area households is captured locally, while the remaining 46% of expenditures are spent outside the study corridors.”

Despite this underutilization of the area's economic base, there remain significant levels of retail vacancy. The UTAP study identified 72 vacant storefronts in the area: with 43.1% of the vacancies occurring on Malcolm X Boulevard; 37.5% on Adam Clayton Powell and 19.4% on Frederick Douglass Boulevard. These high levels of retail vacancy occur despite availability of important public infrastructure, including extensive public transportation service from subways and buses as well as attractive wide avenues.

To address the untapped retail potential in Harlem, it would be valuable to have a coordinated strategy to market the area by local and Citywide development agencies in collaboration with local small business networks.

Supporting the development of small businesses

The economic revitalization of Harlem has focused on attracting large established retailers. While the success of these initiatives has been critical to addressing the chronic lack of services in the community, we believe that large retailers will not be the primary source of business and job creation over the next decade for a number of reasons:

- Historically, small businesses are the leading source of job creation in New York, as well as nationwide;

- Small businesses produce a higher economic impact on the local neighborhood than regional chains, as the income and profit generated is more likely to circulate in the neighborhood, creating an economic multiplier effect;
- There is a declining number of suitable sites for big box retailers, particularly with the development already completed or planned along the 125th Street corridor; and
- The current economic crisis has hit large national retailers hard and it will likely be a significant period of time before these companies generally return to an aggressive national expansion strategy.

The availability of cost-effective real estate for small business owners and emerging entrepreneurs is critical to the progress of job formation in the Harlem marketplace. Even with the recent economic contraction, the commercial real estate market in Harlem is still cost-prohibitive for small businesses. In order to develop a diverse for-profit business base in Harlem, it is critical to establish an innovation-centered Harlem incubator. Despite successes in many other parts of the country, the only other existing local incubator is the NYC Economic Development Corporation's recently established kitchen incubator in East Harlem's La Marqueta, which leaves a broad range of Central Harlem business opportunities available. The Bloomberg administration's commitment to diversifying the New York economy is bearing fruit as in 2010 New York exceeded Massachusetts in attracting internet venture capital and the venture capital deals and dollar gap between the two cities has become smaller. Finally, there is a growing sense in the Harlem community that the time has come for a new Renaissance, not only in residential development but across a range of commercial and economic development activities. The City needs to establish an innovation-centered Central Harlem small business incubator.

Strengthening Harlem's Grand Avenues

Much of the focus on the commercial development of Harlem has focused on the 125th Street corridor, but little development attention has been placed on Harlem's historically grand avenues. The 125th Street corridor is a regional shopping and commercial street and serves as a cross-borough thoroughfare that provides direct connections to major regional transportation arteries. 125th Street was rezoned in 2008 with an increase in the residential and commercial density, particularly in the central core between Malcolm X Boulevard and Frederick Douglass Boulevard. The economic potential of the 125th Street Corridor is well established in the marketplace, and consequently, its premium rental rents are generally unaffordable to local businesses. Other areas in Central Harlem with significant commercial zoning include the other East-West corridors of 116th, 135th and 145th Streets. These corridors have also experienced increased economic activity in recent years and are achieving a critical mass of businesses.

The grand avenues in Central Harlem have fallen from their historical prominence in part due to limited public investment. Currently, the commercial potential of the avenues is not being realized. The avenues offer the most significant potential for small business formation. Frederick Douglass, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., and Malcolm X Boulevards, as well as St. Nicholas Avenue are widely recognized as some of the most striking avenues in New York City. Their revitalization would be a significant benefit to the neighborhood and the City. Most avenues have a C1 commercial overlay designation, with a few exceptions. The C1-2 zoning designation is designed to accommodate the retail and personal service shops needed in residential neighborhoods. As a consequence of the zoning, the avenues are mainly comprised of

residential buildings with ground-floor commercial space. Some existing building types along the corridors are not designed with retail space and thus serve as gaps to the corridor's retail continuity.

The low density of commercial development coupled with the limited amount of ground-floor retail available (average size of 600 square feet per store) positions the avenues to accommodate local neighborhood goods and services that are geared toward the local resident population. The avenues are also generally more affordable for small business owners than major east-west corridors. Recent business launches have highlighted the economic potential of the avenues, including the introduction of new commercial landmarks of the Red Rooster on Lenox Avenue and Aloft Hotel and Harlem Tavern on Frederick Douglass Boulevard. However, sizable vacancies continue to exist on the avenues and further work needs to be done to increase the visibility of the existing businesses on these corridors to local and citywide consumers.

Maximizing small business visibility and traffic

In discussions with local small businesses, the Economic Development Committee of Community Board 10 has heard consistent feedback regarding the difficulty of small businesses on the avenues in garnering visibility from local residents as well as other New Yorkers and tourists. In order to increase traffic and visibility of small businesses along the avenues, key strategies need to be developed including streetscape improvements and neighborhood marketing.

- While Frederick Douglass Boulevard is emerging as the primary north-south commercial corridor, there has been little public investment in upgrading the streetscape. While a business improvement district (“BID”) exists on 125th Street to strengthen the commercial corridor, it is unlikely that a BID can be created for the Frederick Douglass Boulevard corridor due to the limitation of commercial development to only the ground floors of predominantly residential buildings. It is also incredibly difficult for individual property owners to make streetscape improvements given the complications resulting from major subway lines running close to street level. Public investment can play a critical role in giving visibility to Frederick Douglass Boulevard as a commercial destination and hub for emerging local businesses. Investments could include the following:
 - Improved street lighting and façade illumination;
 - Repair and replacement of broken sidewalks;
 - Filling out gaps in tree planting along the sidewalk and improving landscape maintenance;
 - Median improvements;
 - Improved pedestrian safety signals and signage;
 - Pedestrian-friendly street furniture; and
 - Neighborhood markers, including flag posts.

While the density of commercial activity along the avenues of Central Harlem is not adequate to support the formation of a business improvement district, the potential for neighborhood marketing can be best facilitated through the formation of district marketing organizations to support these corridors, similar to the Meat Packaging District Initiative and the Soho Partnership. Community Board 10 played a formative role in the creation of Harlem Park to Park, which supports and markets small businesses south of 125th Street, but more work remains

to be done. Programs of the Department of Small Business Services, such as Avenue NYC, should be leveraged to create an overall marketing plan for Harlem's great avenues.

A Strategic Plan for Tourism

Tourism in Harlem remains an untapped opportunity to grow local small businesses. The tourism industry is one of the largest industries in New York City, generating in excess of \$28.2 billion dollars of spending in 2009 alone. Yet even though Harlem is one of the most visited neighborhoods in New York City, it receives only "1/10 of a penny" of tourism spending according to the 2005 study by Columbia University students entitled "Tourist City - Social City? A Community Tourism Plan for Harlem." The low level of tourism spending can be partially explained by the lack of lodging facilities in the neighborhood to anchor tenants to the local economy. The opening of the Aloft Hotel in winter 2010/2011 was the first new hotel development in Harlem in decades. Due to the lack of an established lodging infrastructure, it is not surprising that tourists generally traverse the area by tour buses, but do not get off the bus or only do so briefly at a few well-known destinations.

In addition to the deficit of lodging facilities, the reasons for low levels of tourism revenues for the area also include retail spatial fragmentation and a lack of tourism-related business coordination and visibility. A focus on the revitalization of Harlem's grand avenues would also serve to maximize tourism revenue to Central Harlem, as it would attract visitors to walk through the neighborhood in addition to visiting the iconic cultural anchors of the Apollo and the Studio Museum of Harlem on 125th Street or the Schomburg Center on 135th Street.

While it is helpful that plans for a new tourism information center are included in the redevelopment of Mart 125, we think it is critical that a robust strategic plan be developed, articulated and implemented to optimize the tourism potential of Harlem. While NYC & Co. has increased its coverage of Harlem, more work remains to be done to promote the neighborhood in local and international markets. Incentives for development of a local hotel industry could include an abatement of the lodging taxes for hotels north of 110th Street for a term long enough to stimulate new hotel construction.

POLICE

Manhattan Community Board 10 supports community policing and would like to see more police officers on the streets, not only on the commercial post on West 125th Street but also patrolling to eradicate the pockets of persistent drug trafficking and usage.

The narcotics problem contributes to a high rate of violent crimes including robberies, burglaries and assaults. While the crack cocaine epidemic appears to have subsided, the quality of life problems associated with dependent populations still exist. Community Board 10 is extremely concerned about the reemergence of heroin sales on the Frederick Douglass Boulevard from 114th Street through 127th Street and on Manhattan Avenue in the area between 115th and 118th Street.

The 28th, 32nd, PSA5 and PSA6 precincts need additional manpower and updated technology to provide the community with adequate police services. Many officers have retired, transferred

out, or left for other reasons, while not being replaced. Now that we are experiencing rapid development and growth with new residents, businesses and tourists, a need for more police officers is necessary.

Listed below are some of the problems that need immediate attention, especially on and within the vicinity of our major economic corridors.

- Grand Larceny Theft of Property
- Loitering by Methadone clinic clients
- Illegal cigarette selling and bootleg items on 125th Street.

There has been an increase in the following that also warrants immediate attention.

- Grand Larceny Auto
- Robberies
- Burglary
- Felonious Assault

Community Board 10 requests that additional officers be assigned to the 28th and 32nd Precincts to deal with the new challenges this community is being faced with. We are in need of additional officers for all shifts, especially the 8am – 4pm and the 4pm – midnight. In addition, the installation of more cameras and an increase in the number of impact zones would be greatly beneficial to deterring and solving crime.

SANITATION

Street Pickup

With the redevelopment of City-owned properties and an increase in population, the Community Board believes that Sanitation staffing has not kept pace with the need to process the additional waste tonnage. Staffing allocations must be increased to adjust for the increases in population, as well as increased basket service.

Many of the complaints received by the Community Board concern the condition of the District's streets, particularly during the weekends. Area residents, churches and other community organizations continue to complain about the excessive street litter and overflowing litter baskets, which they witness on Sundays, especially. Additional pickups are needed, in the high tourism / commercial areas to accommodate increase foot traffic as Harlem's visibility grows evermore and as a common sense means of addressing the ongoing rodent problem. Therefore, increased basket service is strongly recommended.

Vermin Control

The Department of Health has made drastic cuts in its Pest Control Unit and has only two Health Inspectors for the entire borough of Manhattan. This is unacceptable. The rodent problem in residential and commercial areas has become unbearable. The department must assign additional rodent control resources to address the issues impacting the residents of Community District 10.

There must also be a coordinated effort on the part of Department of Health, Department of Buildings and the Department of Sanitation to maintain the vacant properties, and issue fines to neglectful landlords. Often debris/trash is allowed to sit on pavement in front of vacant lots/

buildings for long periods of time. The Department of Citywide Administrative Services must be allocated additional funds to fence City-owned vacant property to prevent illegal dumping, vehicle abandonment and unhealthy conditions.

Many fences that are in place have been destroyed or are in a state of disrepair exacerbating illegal dumping at vacant lots they are meant to protect. Better efforts between agencies are needed to clean these lots and repair broken fences. This condition also creates breeding grounds for rodents and other vermin, thereby creating a serious health problem for the community.

The Board also supports the following:

- Additional sanitation workers to operate mechanical sweepers
- Additional basket and dump trucks
- Motorized litter patrol
- Additional pest control inspectors.
- Additional Sanitation enforcement officers.

PARKS AND RECREATION:

In the last decade, there has been an increased understanding of how green spaces improve the environmental quality and public health in densely populated, heavily constructed communities like Central Harlem.

The foliage from trees captures and breaks down air pollution—particulate matter and toxins that both cause and exacerbate our chronic issue of asthma. Trees and vegetation in parks and along sidewalks also reduce ground surface temperatures in summer, thus helping to reduce the heat island effect. Parks and gardens also provide a needed network of recreational and learning spaces for our youth that has an alarming rate of obesity, diabetes and asthma. Finally, trees and green spaces help to reduce storm water surges and flooding that plague parks and boulevards in Community District 10.

Most Community District 10 residents come from moderate to low income families who must make the most use of their local parks. Harlem is surrounded by six major parks: Central Park on the southern border, Morningside Park, St. Nicholas Park, Jackie Robinson Park and Highbridge Park on the western border, and Marcus Garvey Park on the eastern border. In addition to these parks, Central Harlem has 13 playgrounds, five sitting areas, two sandlot ball fields. In addition, there are several informal parks, such as Success Garden on 134th Street near P.S. 175—this usage serves as an excellent model for unused vacant land located near schools. While Community District 10 does have 23.6 acres of parkland, we cannot ignore the fact that it still ranks 34th in the City in terms of its open space ratio (open space acres per thousand residents).

TRANSPORTATION:

Harlem is located at the center of a very vital transportation network and has the basic facilities and infrastructure for an efficient transportation system. However, many of the elements of the transportation system in this district continue to suffer from lack of maintenance and show signs

of deterioration that now warrant the investment of capital funds for their improvement.

Harlem is well serviced by subway transportation including the 6th and the 8 Avenue lines, the IRT Lenox / Broadway lines and the IRT Lexington Avenue lines.

Bus shelters are needed throughout this heavily traveled community. Proposed cut backs on bus services are a serious concern of Community Board 10, since many of the local residents who work within the community ride the busses to and from work at staggered hours during the day and evenings. Also, many elderly residents use the buses to run errands, seek medical treatment, and access other City services.

The Department of Transportation must allocate funds to the Bureau of Engineers office. The replacement of bus stops, parking spaces, and street signage is necessary. Drastic cuts in this area have caused parking problems, and inconveniences commuters and visitors. There is a need for additional personnel for traffic studies to assess the conditions and determine the need of additional traffic signals as the neighborhood continues to be developed.

We are also requesting that the Department of Transportation and the Department of Design and Construction include in their budget ongoing extermination and pest control measures for the major construction projects that are underway or proposed.

The issue of truck traffic enforcement has long been neglected by the City's enforcement agencies. Community Board 10 calls on the DOT to limit the number of truck routes in Community Board 10, particularly on West 110th Street and also on Manhattan Avenue. Limiting truck traffic should have a net impact of moving vehicular traffic along while reducing the particulate pollution, which contributes to the high incidence of asthma in Central Harlem.

Transportation and Infrastructure Recommendations:

- Improve access and amenities near subway and bus services.
- Address infrastructure deficiencies.
- Improve residential and commercial parking availability.
- Improve vehicular circulation.
- Control the flow of commercial traffic and reduce air pollution.
- Increase pedestrian safety.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION:

The newly formulated Region 10 holds two Community School Districts—Districts 3 and 5, which serve Central Harlem. School District 5 mostly serves Community District 10; the area north of 122nd Street, while a small portion of School District 3 covers 122nd to 110th streets. The majority of Community District 10's schools are located in School District 5. In addition to 20 public schools, Central Harlem has two charter schools, nine private and parochial schools.

The schools that fall within the boundary of Community District 10 now comprise the newly formed Region 10 (parts of District 3 and District 5). However, with the influx of the new students relocating into the district, the schools need to increase its effectiveness to attract the students and reclaim its original standing for academic excellence.

The vast majority of Community District 10 schools are included in this school district. Among the capital needs of schools in Central Harlem is the restoration of unused school buildings for the increased student population. Community Board 10 supports the efforts of the local school district to obtain funding for additional classroom space. We also support after school programs and the use of schools for afternoon and evening community use.

Recommendations:

- Set aside small buildings and land for use as early learning centers, private schools, business ventures and technical learning centers to address the needs of the community.
- Identify space in the District to be set-aside for college collaborative efforts.
- The District will encourage major established colleges and universities, along with new qualified groups to address the issues of low college attendance of the residents of Central Harlem.
- Pre-kindergarten and nursery schools should be available for every child in the District. Adequate space can be provided through Department of Education leases along with present space in available schools.
- Buildings and land should be identified for the provision of quality alternative programs for parents who choose to send their children to schools in the neighborhood for special educational programs.

LIBRARIES:

Community Board 10 urges the restoration of funding to library services 6 days a week. The four neighborhood library branches need to remain open at least six days a week to provide learning opportunities to an already underserved population. Manhattan Community Board 10 supports the request for an increase in funding for books, materials and electronic databases, and computer networks.

With the increase in housing and population, there is a critical need to provide full spectrum library services. The libraries play a vital role in complementing the educational environment of residents in the community. Libraries serve as educational and cultural centers that often are the only resources children have to go after school. They are the knowledge base of the community and the future.

There is a need for sufficient hours of public service more mornings and evening hours, adequate levels of staffing, a safe and clean library environment and security for library materials and facilities at all times. Community Board 10 continues to recognize its branch libraries as important educational resources in the district. We support capital budget requests, which include funding for the site selection for a full size replacement branch for Macombs Bridge Library. The present facility is only 685 Sq. feet.

W. Franc Perry
Chairman

Paimaan Lodhi
District Manager