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**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD SIX
STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY DISTRICT NEEDS
FISCAL YEAR 2015**

Community District 6 encompasses the East Side of Manhattan from 14th to 59th Streets, from the East River to Lexington Avenue and farther west in some areas to include all of Gramercy Park and all of Murray Hill. Additional well-known neighborhoods lie within the district boundaries: Sutton Place, Beekman Place, Turtle Bay, Tudor City, Kips Bay, Rosehill, Phipps Houses, East Midtown Plaza, Stuyvesant Square, Waterside, Peter Cooper Village and Stuyvesant Town. The district is a mixture of residential and commercial use with major office buildings, including the Citicorp Center and the Chrysler building, and retail shops lining the avenues. Community District 6 is home to the United Nations as well as hundreds of missions and diplomatic residences. There are several medical facilities, used by all New Yorkers, including Beth Israel Hospital, VA Medical Center, Bellevue Hospital, NYU Langone Medical Center including the Ambulatory Care Center and Center for Musculoskeletal Care, and NYU Hospital for Joint Diseases. Numerous substance abuse, mental health, and ambulatory care clinics as well as some facilities of the New York Eye and Ear Hospital are located in the district. The district includes Baruch College, including the Zicklin School of Business and its graduate business school facilities, the School of Visual Arts, the NYU School of Medicine, the NYU College of Dentistry and the Beren Campus of Yeshiva University, including Stern College and other facilities.

The assessed value of commercial and residential properties, the daily influx of workers, and tourists who shop and visit the district all contribute significantly to New York's economic base.

There are five Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) within the district or at our border: The Grand Central Partnership, 34th Street Partnership, East Midtown Association, Union Square Partnership and the Flatiron/23rd Street Partnership. We applaud these BIDs for continuing to improve the quality of life within the district. We encourage the city to continue to endorse new BIDs.

For some, the district is defined by the commercial energy of East Midtown and the sedate apartments on Sutton Place, the brownstones of Murray Hill and the charm of Gramercy Park, but in reality, the district is primarily a middle-income community that also has significant numbers of low-income residents and a large elderly population living on fixed incomes.

The most recent information indicates that the 30th Street Shelter has 14% of the sheltered male beds in the city (850 beds). The shelter at 215-225 East 45th Street has beds for one hundred and thirty women and ten churches and synagogues in the district have opened their doors as private shelters. In the past year, Community Board Six (CB6) worked with Department of Homeless Services (DHS) and operator Samaritan Village with the establishment of a 127 bed single adult men's shelter at 53rd Street. However, homelessness continues to be a major concern for the area.

The storm of October 29, 2012, referred to as Superstorm Sandy, had tumultuous effects on New York City and the entire region. A significant portion of Community Board Six district was especially hard hit and experienced an extended period without electricity and basic services. NYU Langone Hospital, Bellevue Hospital and the VA hospital were forced to close for a significant amount of time and took months to get back to full operations. Area businesses experienced significant losses in revenue. Severe flooding affected the Waterside, Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village developments and the surrounding public realm. While most services are now restored, planning for the contingency of a future storm as well as preparation for other types of emergencies is still under way. We are pleased that the city and community organizations are taking heed of the very real possibility of future disruptions in services and threats to the safety of our residents. This document can only take notice of some of the efforts that are underway and additional planning that is necessary. We look forward to ongoing work with various stakeholders in preparing for future emergency response.

To address the needs of this vibrant and diverse community, the Board has grouped our issues into five broad categories of major concern: 1) services for the most vulnerable, 2) a healthy and safe environment, 3) a livable city for all, 4) development for the future, and 5) continuing the commitment to district needs.

SERVICES FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE

Services for the Elderly

There are now just two city supported senior centers in the district. The Community Lounge, formerly located at 155 East 22nd Street, closed in December 2012. The Stein Senior Center has attempted to accommodate those who used the Community Lounge services. The reduction of service is clearly unfortunate since, according to the 2010 Census, 15.6% of the district population is age 65 or older. In CB6 there were 22,293 persons age 65 and over, a growth of almost 10% since the 2000 census, and of these, 10,179, or over 45% were 75 and older. The Community Board capital budget requests for additional senior centers and adult daycare services dating from a decade ago continue to go unmet.

It is vital that senior centers are located in modern facilities and have the funds to provide services, not just for the frail, but also for supportive programs for those who are not frail. Computer labs with Internet access provide a wide range of opportunities so today's more active senior may participate in healthy activities, keep informed of programs for seniors, and expand their skill set. With the closing of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services only walk-in center in New York City a few years ago, seniors lost a valuable opportunity for in-person assistance in obtaining and managing their benefits. Now seniors are increasingly expected to navigate the Internet to participate in prescription drug plans and manage their Medicare and Medicaid benefits but without the adequate facilities or tools to do so. Education on how to manage benefits online should lead to improved quality of life as well as greater use of the federal programs and less reliance on city funds. For many years now, the Board has included a Lifelong Learning Center in the Board's budget requests to accomplish just this. The Board would like to see this type of center placed midway in the district so that the entire district may have easy access to such a facility. Additionally, in order to encourage innovative programming and increase utilization of our senior centers, we urge the city to provide funding that looks beyond just the number of meals served and focuses instead on the services seniors seek for social and mental stimulation.

We are pleased by the Department for the Aging's efforts to introduce "innovative senior centers." However, none of the centers are located in Community District 6. The Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, located in Community District 8, is one of the centers and operates the Senior Center at St. Peter's Church in our district. However, it is not clear that the more than 3,000 members of the center at St. Peter's Church have sufficient access to the programming available through Lenox Hill. We urge the city to investigate the possibility of intergenerational centers where individuals of various ages could interact with and learn from each other.

We recognize that budget concerns may restrain new possibilities for senior centers in the next year. Furthermore, we were pleased to see that the 2014 budget did not have a drastic negative impact on senior centers in our district. However, we have been alarmed that seemingly every year the Preliminary Executive Budget threatens cuts that would severely hamper or even close one or more of our major senior centers. Community Board Six will be vigilant in its efforts to expand, not curtail, services to our senior population. Eliminating centers would not be acceptable even in the hardest financial times.

Services for the Disabled

Community District 6 has within its boundaries and in close proximity to it, numerous hospitals as well as specialty institutions for the hearing and visually impaired. In addition, over 15% of the district population is age of 65 or over and many of these residents are limited in mobility. Because of these factors, many persons with decreased mobility or disabilities travel through the district and have informed the Board that at times they face perilous, congested Midtown traffic conditions. Improvements must be made in traffic patterns, signage, enforcement, bus loading/unloading areas and pedestrian signaling devices to improve safety. Some advances have been made in updating standard crossing signals to become accessible signals. Additional accessible signals are needed throughout the district but especially in the hospital corridor and adjacent streets.

The reduction in public transportation options significantly hampers the movement of those who have reduced mobility to and from their treatment and social centers. Restoration and expansion of transportation for those of reduced mobility is critical for these residents of the community.

Superstorm Sandy provided a valuable lesson in the need to provide adequate emergency planning for the disabled community. Mobility and communication issues can hinder rescue, evacuation, or support for this at-risk group. Our concern extends also to our seniors and to individuals with acute or chronic health issues whether those issues are dealt with in a health facility or at home. We are heartened by the efforts taken since the storm to address this need and trust additional action will be taken.

Youth and Education

School overcrowding and insufficient afterschool and support services for children continue to be a problem in Community District 6. In September 2011, PS 116 remained at 120% capacity. The Board's ability to address overcrowding is hampered by the lack of adequate communication about proposed educational plans and resource allocation. For example, community-initiated petitions, resolutions passed by CB6 and the Community Education Councils, as well as input from city, state, and federal legislators on the subject of relieving overcrowding in PS 116 by incubating PS 281 were

ignored without clear explanation. Nonetheless, the Board looks forward to more productive relationships with all stakeholders in the school arena.

We are pleased that work is nearly complete on PS 281 for the anticipated opening in Sept 2013. Issues for the yet opened PS 281 have already arisen, including child safety concerns due to recent changes to traffic patterns and construction on the adjacent site, as well as the concerns about the anticipated lack of sunlight in the schoolyard and the potential degradation from overuse of St. Vartan Park directly across the street.

We urge the establishment of an accelerated timeline to remove dangerous PCBs from fluorescent light ballasts on three school sites within the district – PS40/IS104, PS47/247, and PS318. The production of PCBs was banned in the United States in 1979 because of their status as “probable human carcinogens.” PCBs have also been determined to cause a variety of adverse health effects on the immune system, the reproductive system, the nervous system, and the endocrine system. These effects are magnified in children. We believe all due speed is required to protect our children from undue risk of exposure to this toxic substances.

Community Board Six continues to hold a strong position that the current Police Academy location on East 20th Street should be considered a possible location for a school once the Police Academy is relocated. We urge the administration to include the Board, and the community at large, in any future planning for this site as is required by the New York City Charter.

The Board has a stated position that any future private charter schools not be placed in current public school facilities as this undermines the efficacy of these institutions. In addition, CB6 supports the establishment and continuation of a capital fund, similar to the funding provisions negotiated for the Solow site, to address the increased collateral needs, such as new schools, created by new residential developments in New York City.

The Board has started to engage more proactively with district parents and school administrations to better understand the state of our district schools. Based on our ongoing outreach, there are insufficient afterschool programs and other student support services in the district. The Board will continue to assess these shortcomings in the coming year and looks forward to productive and mutually beneficial relationships with all stakeholders in this matter.

Homeless Services

East Midtown is an area of the city with one of the lowest crime rates. Consequently, homeless people feel safe within the community, having little fear of being robbed of their few possessions as they sleep on the streets or in our parks. This community has demonstrated great compassion for the homeless in its midst, and is aware of the enormous demands for service needed by this population. Community input and involvement in DHS’ determination of the location of 9,000 units, comprised of 7,500 units for single adults and 1,500 units for families, under the New York/New York III program is essential to implementation of this objective. These units will be developed by New York City and New York State under the terms of this program and will be rolled out through 2016. In this regard, Community Board Six has worked with DHS and operator Samaritan Village during the establishment of a 127 bed single adult men’s shelter at 53rd Street. A Community Advisory Board has been established with local community groups to ensure that the shelter is able to address issues with its neighbors as they arise.

The 30th Street Homeless Men's Shelter, which occupies the former Bellevue Psychiatric Building, is operating at full capacity. DHS hopes to open an intake facility in Brooklyn and Manhattan, the two boroughs that contain the highest concentration of street homeless. The Request for Proposal (RFP) for redevelopment of the Bellevue site was temporarily abandoned. As a result, Community Board Six is working to create a community-based redevelopment that meets the guidelines of its 197-a Plan.

A HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITY

Health Facilities

There are several major hospitals in the district, used by all New Yorkers, including Beth Israel Medical Center, VA Medical Center, Bellevue Hospital, NYU Langone Medical Center, and the NYU Hospital for Joint Diseases. Numerous substance abuse, mental health, and other ambulatory care clinics as well as some facilities of the New York Eye and Ear Hospital are located in the district. We look forward to continued cooperation with these medical facilities as they expand and modernize their operations in the district. Several constituencies within our district would welcome a requirement that all hospitals have Community Advisory Boards to improve community communications.

For decades, Community Board Six has been advocating for a strategic plan to determine Bellevue Hospital's immediate and future health care and land use needs, especially prior to any disposition of property. No such study has ever been conveyed to the Board. Bellevue's requirements have intensified as a result of damage sustained from Superstorm Sandy and the measures being taken to prevent future damage as well as prepare for effective response under any emergency circumstances. The Board supports the essential mission of Bellevue as the city's premier public hospital. We will continue to support updated facilities and improved services at Bellevue.

The Community Board has taken note of the lack of high quality skilled nursing facilities in Manhattan and especially within Community District 6. Also, the number of hospice beds is woefully inadequate. The NYC Department of City Planning projects that Manhattan's elderly population, aged 65 and over, will grow by 57.9% between 2002 and 2030 adding 108,000 elderly persons. In Community District 6 we have seen an increase in the number of persons age 65 and over of 9.8% just since the 2000 census – and more than 45% of these individuals are 75 and older. We therefore must plan for the additional health and other support services needed by this population.

Consistent with the 197-a Plan, we are looking at development of health-related facilities within the area referred to as the "medical corridor." Among other options, we would welcome a sub-acute facility or multiple use facility that would allow for a continuum of care for seniors and others. Any non-medical related use within this corridor would be subject to the greatest scrutiny.

Pedestrian Safety

In our densely populated District, pedestrian safety must be an important concern. We are pleased with the initial efforts being made to install audible and countdown signals and urge a continuation in the effort to identify additional locations in District 6 for such devices, with particular attention to the medical corridor.

Left turn signals are absolutely necessary at several major intersections on Lexington Avenue due to double-digit pedestrian injuries, as documented by Department of Transportation and New York Police

Department statistics, resulting from left turning vehicles. The notable intersections are at 23rd Street, 34th Street, 42nd Street, 57th Street, 24th Street, 33rd Street, 36th Street, 50th Street, and 59th Street. In addition, Community Board Six asks the Department of Transportation to consider traffic calming measures, such as left turn signals, leading pedestrian intervals, speed bumps, all-red stop phase or other methods to improve safety for pedestrians crossing Second Avenue, particularly at East 53rd and East 49th Streets. For the sake of pedestrian safety, we would like to see traffic calming measures implemented on all of the district's wide avenues as soon as possible

An area of pedestrian safety that continues to be a major problem is protection from unsafe use of bicycles. With the implementation of the bike share program, the concerns of bicycle safety have become even more apparent. Community Board Six supports the development of appropriate bicycle pathways throughout the district. These pathways are now in place along First and Second Avenues and elsewhere. Additional street markings and various levels of bike paths have also been added to crosstown streets. However, we must recognize that pedestrians can be harassed and injured by inconsiderate, illegal, and unsafe bicycle practices. Principle among these are bicycles on the sidewalk, bicycles crossing intersections against the light, bicycles entering the crosswalk at the light, and bicycles traveling against traffic. We believe that much of this could be alleviated by enforcement of existing bicycle regulations. We recognize that the number of summonses for these infractions has increased, but we believe that the NYPD must step-up it's effort to correct these threats to public safety. We recognize that this additional enforcement puts a strain on the NYPD's limited resources and ask that the city rectify this situation by providing additional funding. We have also noticed that throughout the District bicycles are chained onto city trees, parking signs and other city property, at times making it difficult for pedestrians to safely navigate the sidewalks. Illegal bicycle parking also has a negative impact on the aesthetics of our neighborhoods.

Another area of concern is that of pedestrian-automobile incidents. Re-engineering has improved the conditions of the intersection at 24th Street and Lexington Avenue. However, other intersections remain problematic. The Community Board has heard from residents on 23rd Street concerning the intersection at 23rd Street and Second Avenue, which has had a substantial history of pedestrian-automobile incidents and at 23rd Street and Third Avenue which often backs up traffic and clogs streets. Over the last few years 57th Street and Second Avenue had the highest number of accidents in Manhattan and continues to be of concern. In addition, the area near the ferry terminal at 34th Street and the Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) Service Road is documented as having one of the highest accident rates in the district. We believe that these intersections require engineering attention.

Sanitation

The Board is pleased that the district's streets are relatively clean and thanks the District Superintendent and his crew for all of their assistance. However, we continue to note that additional enforcement of alternate sides of the street regulations is needed to facilitate regular maintenance. Some sidewalks in the district do not fare as well as the streets and are continuously littered. Existing litter baskets often fill to overflowing. Additional city litter baskets and a review of the frequency of pickups would be helpful. Commercial and residential garbage can sit on the street for many hours in advance of pickup creating an odor and unsightly mess that also attracts rodents.

Sub-Surface Infrastructure

The July 18, 2007 steam explosion that occurred on Lexington Avenue and East 41 Street and the steam explosion that occurred in Gramercy Park in 1989 are two of the most extreme examples in Community District 6 of serious threats posed by our aging infrastructure. The net effect of these and other events such as manhole explosions and fires on Second Avenue in the vicinity of 23rd Street in 2008 is that the members of the community are losing confidence in the basic safety of the city infrastructure. Considering the potential for street-closures, traffic diversions, injuries and even loss of life, the Board needs more information on the potential problems that have been identified and the remediation projects planned for our district. Additionally the Board would like information on the age of the general steam pipe system, the methods of inspection and an inventory of scheduled maintenance.

The administration needs to map the city's sub-surface infrastructure including both public and private facilities. The Board suggests that the city take a proactive inventory of all sub-surface infrastructures to determine its condition and develop maintenance schedules that would keep the infrastructure in good repair. Efforts should be coordinated with the utilities and telecommunications industries making sure that their assets are kept in good repair. We believe that the value of having this information would allow for better planning on various city and private projects and ultimately reduce construction time and costs.

Another infrastructure issue was identified in the Mayor's 2020 waterfront plan, prepared by Department of City Planning and issued in March of 2011. Aging infrastructure is affecting East River water quality. Stormwater runoff, which occurs when the sewage system is overwhelmed during heavy rain and forces untreated sewage into our rivers, is polluting our waterfront. Recently we partnered with others to create a comprehensive waterfront road map entitled The East River Blueway Plan. The plan includes alternatives for how we could better use our waterfront for public activities such as running, boating, fishing and swimming as well as certain additional commercial activities. Tidal surging and stormwater runoff make many of these activities unsafe for a period of time after a strong rainfall. We urge the administration to fund stormwater treatment options like those included in the East River Blueway Plan to make our waterfront healthy once again.

Construction Site Safety

New high-rise construction, while certainly a nuisance for immediate neighbors, generally does not present a threat to the community. These multi-million dollar projects are built by experienced contractors and are closely supervised by the Department of Buildings. However, the tragic crane accident at Second Avenue and 51st Street illustrates the need for constant oversight. We recognize and commend the response the Department of Buildings has made to improve safety at construction sites and emphasize the need to follow through on improvements in procedures and in expanding the inspection effort. We are also concerned that when construction is suspended at a work site without sufficient supervision to ensure for an extended period of time, the site should remain safe and any objects on site be secured to prevent injuries to persons and property nearby. Therefore, the Board asked for legislation that requires a developer to inform DOB when work on a site is suspended. This legislation requires that DOB conduct an on-site inspection, within a reasonable time frame, to ensure the site is safe and secure. We believe this effort needs to go a step further and ask that DOB provide community boards with the result of these inspections.

For many years, the Board has been concerned about the length of time sidewalk sheds surrounding buildings are allowed to stay up. In some instances these sidewalk sheds remain in place for 10 or more years. When these sheds are left for extended periods, questions over the sheds' stability, falling debris, street and sidewalk cleanliness, and failing or no under-shed lighting arise. The sheds also create a safe haven for illegal activities as reported by NYPD. The Board would like to see legislation passed that would require the timely filing and advancement of jobs with the DOB before an extension of a shed permit is issued.

Many building owners appear to disregard the permit process and building code regulations. Much work is done without any building permits, or with a permit that does not begin to cover the full scope of the work being performed. It appears that work is being done in the evenings and on weekends when the Department of Buildings has only a few inspectors to cover all five boroughs. Additionally, hazardous illegal uses and occupancies need to be addressed. We need more building inspectors to address all these issues.

A LIVABLE CITY FOR ALL

Parks and Recreation

Community District 6 has the least amount of parkland (especially parks designated as active use) of any community district in Manhattan. This disproportionate allocation is further exacerbated by its population being at the median of community district size for both Manhattan and all of New York City. Furthermore, recent census data shows a 30% increase in the population of very young children in Manhattan. For these reasons, the city needs to develop new active park space within the district. Community District 6, with its scarcity of parkland, should be a high priority in the development of new space.

Recently, legislation was passed allowing the alienation of Robert Moses Playground and creating a complicated mechanism that would fund the creation of an esplanade along the East River and other amenities. Some of the elements of this mechanism include the establishment of the Eastside Greenway and Park board ("EGAP"- the governing body for the overall process), replacement park space in the community (including park use conversion of Asser Levy Place), access to the esplanade, and other facets. Community Board Six looks forward to the creation of this new open space and is monitoring the design of the various elements, as well as the community's voice in planning and decision-making. A series of design charettes, competitions and forums were held to solicit ideas for the esplanade, resulting in ever growing interest.

Through the Board's discussions and efforts of our elected representatives, some of the parks in Community District 6 have been reconstructed. Recently, the city has made available additional funding for park workers. However, with all the capital improvements in our parks and recreation centers, we continue to emphasize the need for adequate maintenance, operation, and protection of our rehabilitated parks. We must emphasize that our parks are generally small in size and do not have the advantage of public donations for their maintenance such as are available through larger park conservancies. We also stress the importance of making our parks accessible to all our neighbors. We believe that all our parks, including the comfort stations in those parks, should comply with both the requirements of and the spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Even in instances where the city is not legally required to update certain facilities at this time, we urge that modifications be made as soon as possible. We also note that Asser Levy and the 54th Street Recreation Centers are two of the

three most heavily used centers in the city. Unfortunately, they do not have adequate personnel to meet the needs of the many people they serve nor do they have sufficient funds for maintenance and supplies. Asser Levy sustained significant damage from Superstorm Sandy. Among other projects at Asser Levy needing immediate attention, the center has only one working boiler, which is in dire need of replacement, and has windows that need replacing.

We are pleased by the resurfacing of the Robert Moses Playground, but it appears that the space is not available for all intended activities. Repair work on a portion of the Stuyvesant Square historic fence has begun and we will continue to push for the completion of this much-delayed project. Other long-standing capital priorities - such as the restoration of the Stuyvesant Square Park's comfort stations, repair of slate steps in Peter Detmold Park, and the rehabilitation of Glick Park, which includes restoration of the fountains, - remain unaddressed.

Open Spaces

Open space is of vital importance to the Board. According to a report conducted by an urban fellow and confirmed by the Department of City Planning, there are only 26 acres of open space within the district, including our public plazas. This means there are well over 5,000 persons per acre of open space, the highest density in Manhattan. These numbers do not take into account the thousands of people who commute to Midtown businesses, people shopping at our many retail establishments, or tourists coming to enjoy our attractions and institutions such as the United Nations.

We are encouraged by the efforts to add parkland and publicly accessible areas for recreation citywide through the plaNYC initiative, but we have not seen much attention yet to Community District 6. One of the stated goals of plaNYC is to create or enhance a public plaza in every community. A public plaza on the east side of 2nd Avenue between East 30th and East 33rd Streets ran into unexpected opposition. Nevertheless, we look forward to working with the city to establish appropriately sited public plazas throughout Community District 6.

We also have focused our attention on another type of open space: privately owned public space. We are particularly concerned about developed properties that were granted zoning "bonuses" in exchange for creating and maintaining such public space. A report prepared in 2008 by the Board's community planning fellow examined the 77 privately owned public spaces in the district and found 30 of those spaces to be out of compliance with applicable zoning requirements. Based on this survey, DOB has issued 13 violations, DCP has issued 9, and they have written letters to the property owners. The Board continues to work with DCP to monitor this situation.

Waterfront Development

The entire eastern boundary of Manhattan Community Board Six, stretching from 14th Street to 59th Street, is the East River. Superstorm Sandy had damaging effects on our waterfront areas. It is premature to evaluate the long-term planning now going on at all levels of government to prevent or minimize damage from future storms. Therefore, of necessity, this section is written with minimal reference to "resiliency" planning with the expectation that next year's statement will contain more detailed information on waterfront planning in a post-Superstorm Sandy world.

CB6 has long worked for development of a continuous esplanade along the waterfront as a highly desirable open space and its 197-a Plan, approved by the City Council in March 2008, provided the framework for development. Below are some of the critical issues that need to be addressed.¹

- The FDR Drive, with both elevated and at-grade highway segments along the entire length of the East River in CB6, creates physical and visual barriers to the waterfront. Other impediments to waterfront access are parking facilities, which should be relocated, the heliport, a difficult narrowing of the esplanade at 14th Street (see Blueway section below), and the absence of needed pedestrian bridges over the FDR in a number of locations. These issues represent challenges that CB6 will continue to pursue with appropriate entities.
- Connections are needed for major gaps in the pedestrian and bicycle segments of the existing East River esplanade, at East 34th to East 41st Streets.
- There are opportunities to incorporate major institutions (such as the UN, the United Nations International School, Solar One, Bellevue Hospital, NYU Medical Center and the East River Science Park) into a continuous esplanade, for example through construction of pedestrian bridges at 27th and 29th Streets.
- Ferry service and water taxis are increasingly popular and should be considered for expansion from the single terminal at East 34th Street to other sites such as at East 23rd and East 42nd Streets.

Building on this long effort by CB6, and with advice and assistance from CB6's locally elected representatives, in October of 2011 a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by representatives of New York City and New York State providing a legal and funding framework for the Eastside Greenway and Park project (EGAP) - stretching from the East 38th Street pier to the northern limits of CB6. The MOU addresses the need for a continuous esplanade, as well as the UN's longstanding need to expand and consolidate its operations in a single building being considered for construction at 41st Street. Some of the provisions of the MOU have already become activated (a \$3 million payment by the United Nations Development Corporation associated with Asser Levy Park has been placed in the EGAP Fund).

CB6 will continue to work with all agencies to ensure that current and future capital and expense budget requests for open space development, placement of pedestrian bridges, and other projects facilitating access to the waterfront will grow from the framework of the MOU. It is expected that the eventual reconstruction of the FDR Drive within CB6 will also play a critical role in esplanade design. Please consult the MOU for additional information.²

Among the major components of the Eastside Greenway and Park project are three sections, served by a number of potential upland connections:

- Waterside Pier, a City-owned existing structure between 38th and 41st Streets, was used by Con Edison until its lease expired in June 2010. As part of the lease provisions Con Edison paid \$13 million to the city to restore the pier to its original condition. EDC is currently assessing responses to its RFP for a team to design and rehabilitate the pier, expected to be constructed during the period 2013-2015. CB6 will work with the Parks Department – aided by a \$1.25 million grant from Councilmember Dan Garodnick – to design amenities

¹ The plan webpage (<http://cbsix.org/projects/197-a-197-c-plans/>) on our website, provides additional information about the 197-a Plan.

² MOU - <http://www.scribd.com/doc/67634613/Eastside-Greenway-and-Parkland-MOU>

for the pier's surface and its eventual use as a park. However, there is no upland connection at the 41st Street end of the pier, and funds for its creation are not expected to be available for some time. An interim solution will be sought. An upgrade of Glick Park also remains an issue.

- UN Esplanade – to be designed and constructed - would run outboard of the existing UN campus from East 41st through 53rd Streets. The approximate construction period is estimated to be 2020-2024.
- ODR Esplanade – To be designed and constructed from East 53rd-60th Streets, this northern section of the Esplanade will make use of in-water caisson structures that were retained from the Outboard Detour Roadway (ODR) reconstruction of the FDR Drive. The approximate construction period is estimated to be 2016-2018.

Public input will inform various stages of design for the future esplanade. CB6 and neighborhood groups have joined to form a community working group, first to seek ideas, then to provide feedback on potential design concepts.

The East River Blueway Plan is a separate study, alongside the Eastside and Greenway Park, covering the area from the Brooklyn Bridge to East 38th Street, and involves both CB3 and CB6. Funded by a New York State grant and administered through the office of the Manhattan Borough President, the study sought ideas for a series of sites along the East River where people can get into and onto the water for canoeing, kayaking, fishing, swimming (assuming water quality meets health standards), as well as environmental education, ecological restoration projects, storm tidal surge suppression and a number of other features suggested by the community. Here too, impediments to waterfront access were examined. The Plan was published in March of 2013.³ Included in the plan is a design for a pedestrian bridge at East 14th Street, which will solve the very narrow pathway (“pinch point”) at East 14th Street. It is currently unfunded. Manhattan Borough President Stringer and Assemblymember Kavanagh have applied for Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery Funds. One of the projects contained in the grant request is an intertidal salt marsh at Stuyvesant Cove as a bulwark against storms and to improve the recreational experience of all who come to the water's edge.

Library Services

The Grand Central Branch of the New York Public Library (NYPL) has been a well-appreciated expansion in services available to the previously underserved northern end of our district. We encourage the NYPL to consider making this a permanent facility, especially in light of the continued closure of the Donnell Library Center at 20 W. 53rd Street.

A recent survey by the Gates Foundation found that one-third of Americans now rely on libraries for computers and Internet access.⁴ New York Public Library Director Paul LeClerc testified on June 4, 2010, that one in four people say they have no alternatives to services like those they receive at NYPL. The city must increase the number of days the libraries are open and the number of hours they are open each day. We ask that funding for library services be expanded to keep up with the ever changing demands and opportunities provided in our electronic information society and so that resources are available to all members of our community regardless of their socioeconomic status. We also urge that

³ The East River Blueway Plan is available at <http://www.eastriverblueway.org/>

⁴ <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/Media-Center/Press-Releases/2010/03/Millions-of-People-Rely-on-Library-Computers-for-Employment-Health-and-Education>

the library branches are fully staffed with qualified professional librarians. Community Board Six strongly supports full service libraries at the Kips Bay, Epiphany, and Grand Central Branches.

Transportation and Community Mobility

Second Avenue Subway: Community Board Six has established the full-build Second Avenue Subway as a most urgent need. This District has only limited access to existing subway service and what is available suffers from extreme overcrowding. Our local streets are at or beyond traffic saturation during business hours. The Second Avenue subway is essential to alleviate the existing overcrowding on the subways and congestion on the streets. One of the most important ways to make access to jobs, shopping and housing in a rebounding economy is the prompt construction of the full-build Second Avenue subway. The announcement in July of 2009 of additional delays in construction is unacceptable. While we recognize that the primary authority for the construction is the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), we urge elected representatives and city agencies to do all in their power to see that construction is accelerated.

East River Pedestrian Bikeway (ERPBW): The development of an eastside bikeway and esplanade is also of urgent need. The promised ERPBW would provide a safe transit way for bicycle commuters and recreational riders. The bikeway and walkway at Stuyvesant Cove is excellent and represents the best along the East River. However, north of Stuyvesant Cove from 23rd Street to 59th Street there is often no bikeway and generally poor walkways. Bikers are often directed into dangerous traffic situations and have to share bus and delivery lanes. For example, the one block long southbound bike lane connector running on the FDR Drive Southbound service road between East 38th Street and East 37th Street shares a poorly marked roadway with speeding motorists. One possible solution at that location might be the installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of East 38th Street & the FDR Drive. The shared bike lane might also be improved with additional signage and pavement markings to alert drivers to the presence of bicyclists there. We urge the city to close the gap in the promised Manhattan Greenway and to review the placement of existing signage so that bicycle riders are not directed into some of the worst traffic conditions on the east side.

In addition, the East River Greenway bike path between East 25th Street & East 37th Street might be improved in the following ways: 1) complete the protected bike path adjacent to Waterside Plaza (it presently is Southbound, only); 2) address the unusual hazards of bicycling in the area of The Water Club; 3) improve the bicycle path (and pedestrian walkway) under the FDR Drive adjacent to the Heliport; 3) make better provisions for a bike lane at the 14th street and FDR Drive choke point.

Fixing these problems is now more important than ever with the implementation of the NYC Bike Share program. Community Board Six will be monitoring the Bike Share program to ensure that docking stations conform to DOT's specifications, that locations are appropriate and that the size of the docking stations are also appropriate and properly maintained, and that safety of both riders and pedestrians is of primary concern. We are pleased that police enforcement of the safe use of bicycles has increased, however this is an issue of great concern to the neighborhood and additional on-going enforcement efforts are required.

Bus Services and Traffic Issues: The Board welcomes the Select Bus Service as an attempt to speed up north/south public transportation in the eastern section of the district. However, the effects of cutbacks in cross-town bus routes must be reviewed and monitored to ensure that our residents continue to have convenient cross-town access. This is particularly critical for seniors, the disabled, and the less affluent for which options are limited. We are pleased that some cross-town service has been restored in response to neighborhood requests.

We are pleased, with reservations, about the implementation of Select Bus Service on 34th Street as an attempt to improve east/west travel times on this important cross-town corridor. We look forward to significant community involvement to ensure that the project does not result in negative impacts on the surrounding neighborhood. For example, as a result of Board and community experience, Community Board Six strongly urges the MTA and NYC Transit to restore the Lexington and Madison Avenues bus stops for both eastbound and westbound service on the 34th Street route.

One controversial issue facing the community is a proposal by the Department of Environmental Protection to place a water main in the East 50s or East 60s between First and Third Avenues. Community Board Six and local neighborhood organizations expressed serious opposition to the suggested routing, which would create additional problems for this already severely impacted neighborhood, including more years of construction and traffic congestion on the streets and the Edward I Koch 59th Queensborough Bridge. Community Board Six provided detailed information and irrefutable data that the proposed East 56th and East 58th street routes were not acceptable; multiple agencies have ignored both the data and community opposition and are planning to place the water main on east 58th Street. Community Board Six calls for a district wide analysis of the impact of the water main routes and the impact on traffic and public safety, and asks the respective agencies to respond to the demands of its citizens.

East River Ferry Service: Community District 6 has pressed for the aggressive development of expanded ferry service along the East River, including expansion and improvement of the 34th Street Ferry Terminal. Suitable, comfortable and attractive ferry terminals should be considered in the very near term for 23rd and 42nd Streets, with an emphasis on full mass transit intermodality, passenger convenience, and comfort. At the same time as urging expanded ferry service, we also trust that the city will invest in technology that will make the ferry boats as quiet as possible so not to disrupt the residents as the boats arrive and depart from the dock whether at 34th Street or additional east side locations.

Street and Highway Surfaces: The physical condition of our community's streets, including local tunnels and bridges as well as the FDR Drive from 14th to 59th Streets has declined in recent years. Driving and merely trying to walk across the street can be difficult or even dangerous. The corrugated surface of many streets is a menace to pedestrians and a threat to drivers. It is also destructive to vehicles using those streets. It is estimated that the unsatisfactory surface of city streets shortens the useful life of city owned vehicles by about ten percent. The financial impact to the city just considering police cars, fire trucks, ambulances, sanitation vehicles, and MTA buses must be significant. More frequent re-surfacing is necessary to keep the streets, highways, bridges, and tunnels in Community District 6 in minimum serviceable condition.

The Board has advocated for a traffic pattern study since the closure of a portion of East 14th Street and the FDR East 15th Street south bound exit. This closure has resulted in backups on the small East 23rd St south bound FDR exit and the exit now must be upgraded. Furthermore, the removal of left hand turns at the end of the north bound FDR Exit 7 ramp forces drivers to precede several blocks

north before they can go south. In response, drivers too often make illegal maneuvers. Before its closure near the FDR, this portion of East 14th Street began a major cross-town corridor. Now East 23rd Street has become over-utilized and we have an increase in illegal turns and hazardous conditions. These actions affecting traffic patterns have encouraged drivers to find other cross-town routes, including East 34th Street. With these considerations in mind, as well as repairs being made at the Midtown tunnel and the resulting traffic backups, frequent traffic backups in the area leading to the 59th Street Bridge, and the addition of numerous bike lanes throughout the district, a district wide traffic study is in order.

Parking and Traffic Enforcement: Much of Community District 6 suffers from severe traffic congestion aggravated by double parking, impermissible use of bus stops and bus lanes, obstruction of pedestrian crosswalks, and other similar violations. We believe that, to relieve the congestion and to protect pedestrian safety, a very much greater and sustained effort at parking and traffic enforcement in this district is necessary. In addition, portions of our district become a veritable parking lot for "Black Cars" and other livery vehicles in both prohibited and metered parking spaces.

According to complaints from neighborhood residents, the drivers of these cars do not seem to pay meter fees; they create noise, leave garbage on our streets and sidewalks, and use public spaces to urinate. Thus far there has been no systematic effort to address these problems or to improve the Taxi and Limousine Commission's (TLC) enforcement capability and standards.

Pedestrian Traffic Flow: Members of the Community Board spend a great deal of time carefully reviewing all sidewalk café applications and continue to work with DCA in making the review process more meaningful. Unfortunately, in several portions of our District, there is an increasing encroachment on sidewalk space meant for the use of pedestrians. The Board conducted a study that found many of our cafés, bars, and restaurants do not meet the eight foot clearance requirement in front of their establishments and the useable space requirements are not met, e.g. in regard to flush tree beds. As a result, pedestrians frequently resort to walking in the street. Sidewalk cafés should be permitted only when the remaining sidewalk space is sufficient for pedestrian traffic and is free of publicly or privately placed obstructions. The rules determining useable space should be reconsidered including expanding the definition of "obstruction" to include anything that blocks pedestrian passage whether privately or publicly placed.

34th Street Heliport: Community Board Six has long opposed the operation of a heliport at 34th Street. The noise, odors and air blast impacts have drawn criticism from local residents and necessitated replacement of costly air filtration equipment at NYU Langone Medical Center. Although CB6 has been successful in lobbying for a limit to the number of daily flights and the days on which it operates to weekdays, the heliport's continued operation has been judged by the city administration to be essential to the business community. CB6 will try to persuade the city to incorporate new operating regulations and methods of their enforcement as part of the lease renewal in 2015.

DEVELOPMENT FOR THE FUTURE

Before the recent economic turn down, Community Board Six saw rapid building growth, with over 2,000 additional residential units and several million square feet since the 2000 U.S. Census. Our community also saw expansive growth in commercial construction, with nearly 2 million square feet of new office space and over 100,000 square feet of new retail space. It now appears that New York City and perhaps our Community District, is poised for an upsurge in development.

Such rapid growth in the recent past and the potential growth in coming years have consequences on our existing infrastructure. And, a growing population requires additional open space for our residents, new schools for our children, rehabilitation of our existing roads and mass transit services, and more police officers and firefighters to serve and protect the community. There are several major developments and potential rezoning efforts pending in Community Board Six.

East Midtown Rezoning: The Department of City Planning seeks to rezone a 70-block area surrounding Grand Central Terminal identified as East Midtown. The area roughly extends from 40th to 57th Street between Lexington and Third Avenues, with an additional portion extending to Second Avenue from 40th to 48th Street. Community Board Six agrees with the stated goal of the plan, to preserve East Midtown's global competitiveness in the 21st Century. However, the Board has concluded that greater study and review of the current proposal is required to produce a more comprehensive, thoughtful strategy to strengthen the city's most important business district. The Multi-Board Task Force on East Midtown, comprised of Community Board Six and well as Community Boards 1, 4, and 5, considered the proposal. Community Board Six believes that the timeline for this proposed rezoning has been needlessly rushed despite multiple requests from elected representatives, community boards, and advocacy groups to slow the process down to allow for a more thorough, complete plan for the future of this vital office district.

A commitment to infrastructure, as represented by the building of Grand Central Terminal, is what allowed East Midtown to become the premier business district it is today. East Midtown's transit, pedestrian and surface transportation systems are currently at overcapacity. Before a change in zoning, the city needs to conduct a study of projected increases in pedestrian, transit, and vehicular traffic as well as a district wide traffic study. Additionally, upgrades and improvements to the area's sub-surface infrastructure (including utilities) will need to be thoroughly reviewed.

The plan also lacks specificity for public realm improvements, particularly widening of sidewalks along Lexington and Madison Avenues. Although the public realm was not addressed in the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) application, the Department of City Planning has commissioned a study that will result in a public realm plan for the area. At the time of this document's drafting, CB6 is participating in visioning sessions for the development of the plan.

Brookdale Campus/ Proposed Sanitation Garage

The Department of Sanitation has presented a proposal to rezone the property formerly occupied by the Brookdale Campus of Hunter College for the purpose of erecting a sanitation garage. The proposed rezoning would change the property from residential zoning to manufacturing zoning and would involve what many consider to be "spot zoning," an unfavorable use of zoning authority. The property is located between the Bellevue Hospital and the VA Medical Center and therefore is included in the area designated as a medical corridor in the 197-a plan approved by Community Board Six and the City Council in 2008. At a scoping hearing held in June of 2013, elected representatives,

representatives of Community Board Six acting in their individual capacities as members of the community, neighborhood advocacy groups, and individual residents testified against the proposal and asked that, at a minimum, the process of consideration be slowed down to take the many community objections into account. The ULURP process is expected to begin in the fall of 2013.

Micro Units Pilot Program: In 2012, the city issued a Request for Proposals for a pilot program to develop a new type of housing to address the city's changing demographics. The pilot was slated for 335 East 27th Street. The Department of Housing Preservation & Development (HPD) filed a ULURP application seeking CB6 approval for 1) designation of the site as an Urban Development Action Area Project as justification to sell city-owned property, 2) sale of City-owned property, and 3) a zoning map amendment to extend an existing commercial overlay from First Avenue to Mount Carmel Place to allow commercial use on the first floor of the proposed development. In order for the project to go forward, the development would require seven mayoral zoning overrides, which the Board found to be excessive. After several presentations by HPD and extensive deliberations by CB6's Land Use and Waterfront Committee, Community Board Six opposed the ULURP application for the Micro Units. Our opposition does not stop the project from going forward and the Community Board will carefully follow developments in hopes that should the project progress, the various objections raised by Community Board Six will be addressed.

New York University: NYU Langone Medical Center (NYULMC) has begun site preparation for its new Kimmel Pavilion on East 34th Street east of First Avenue, adjacent to the Tisch Hospital. The Kimmel Pavilion will be an acute care facility and include a lobby level concourse and common amenities shared with Tisch Hospital; united imaging and procedure floors; all private inpatient rooms; dedicated floors for a Children's Hospital; and a new energy building for co-generation.

NYULMC is planning a 14-story science building on East 30 Street east of First Avenue, primarily for research labs. The new structure will require the demolition of two existing NYULMC buildings. East 30th Street in this location does not appear on the official city map, thus is technically not a street. In the 2008 197-a plan, CB6 stated its desire to re-map this street. NYULMC has stated it has no objection as long as it does not affect the variances required to construct its new science building.

There is a new NYU School of Nursing building under construction at the southwest corner of First Avenue and East 26th Street. The new 11-story building will contain space for the NYU College of Nursing, NYU College of Dentistry, and the NYU Bioengineering Institute.

East River Science Park and the Bellevue Campus: For decades, Community Board Six has been advocating for a strategic plan to determine Bellevue's immediate and future health care and land use needs prior to any disposition of property; no study has ever been conveyed to the Board.

Phase I of the East River Science Park on the northern part of the Bellevue Hospital campus is complete. It includes three new buildings devoted primarily to biotechnology facilities and contains core research facilities, a library, local retail, parking and other uses including 300,000 square feet of biotech laboratory space. Phase II is on hold.

We welcome these research and technology facilities, the expansion of research facilities at NYU Langone and the creation of the Cornell NYC Tech Campus on Roosevelt Island, which, while located outside our Community District, may have a significant impact on our district. A study in 2001 estimated that the companies emerging from the city's academic research centers would generate a demand for approximately 1,000,000 square feet of space designed for bio-tech firms over the next few years, of which about 40,000 square feet is needed as incubator space for start-up firms. We are pleased

that these sources of highly skilled jobs and the economic stimulus they provide are located in and near our district.

Community Board Six continues to advocate for the redevelopment of the former Bellevue Psychiatric Building. Several years ago, the NYC Economic Development Corporation issued an RFP, and received proposals for the redevelopment of the building. No selection of the responses was made. The 2008 197-a Plan explicitly calls for scientific, medical, and institutional uses for this building. CB6 continues to advocate for these uses, and for the restoration of the building that is eligible for listing by the state as a landmark and contains numerous Works Progress Administration murals that are in need of restoration.

Con Edison / Solow Development Site: Several years ago, the New York State Public Service Commission mandated the divestment of many of Con Edison's assets. These included four sites along First Avenue between 35th and 41st Streets that collectively amount to 8.9 acres. Buildings on these properties have been demolished and excavation has been completed. One portion of the property has been used to build a new school, PS 281, scheduled to open in the fall of 2013. The remaining portion of the property is slated for an anticipated commercial and residential complex. That portion of the project is on hold.

CONTINUING THE COMMITMENT TO DISTRICT NEEDS

Communications between the city agencies and the Board need to be improved. Consultation on district capital projects is required by the NYC Charter but has always been an issue. Too often the Board is informed about decisions without appropriate advance consultation. As a result, the Board is unable to provide timely information to community-based organizations on some of the district's most important projects.

The Board is concerned about quality of life and safety issues that arise from the operation of some bars, nightlife venues, and restaurants in our district. There have been many concerns voiced by the community about the oversaturation of bars along Second Avenue and Third Avenue, particularly in parts of the East 20s, East 30s and East 50s. These areas are heavily congested and extremely noisy when patrons congregate outside the venue or leave the venue. Some owners allow for music blaring into the streets and far beyond their own establishments. Residents and community groups have found calls to 311 frustrating as law enforcement has up to 8 hours to respond to non-emergency complaints and, therefore, there is limited response to these issues when they are actually happening. There also is some concern about whether certain buildings, especially tenement buildings, are safe enough to host a bar or restaurant. Due to a lack of coordination between the State Liquor Authority (SLA) and DOB, a particular location could have multiple DOB violations and SLA may still issue or renew a license. We also are concerned about the increase in commercially sponsored "pub-crawls" in our district. Frequently organized outside of the district, advertised through social media, and starting early in the day, these pub-crawls can result in drunk and disorderly behavior and destruction of property. Pub-crawls have made portions of the district, even primarily residential areas, destinations for boisterous late night, and sometimes daytime, social activities.

Also in need of oversight are the many illegal "hotels" operating all over the district, primarily as a result of short-term sublets or simply short stay availability of furnished apartments. In addition to the potential of economic crime and personal safety issues to tenants and to condo and co-op owners, we believe these illegal dwellings also place the city's fire fighters and police officers at risk.

The Need for Better Statistical Data

Although demographic data on our residential population is fairly comprehensive, we have no statistics on the number of people who enter this district on a daily basis to work, to shop, and to visit our institutions. The relationship of the quantity of such populations to the number of service delivery personnel allocated to Community District 6 is crucial to its quality of life and should therefore be carefully analyzed by the city administration.

While there has been some improvement in the availability of citywide data, the city's community district-level budget data still needs improvement. Most agencies do not provide the sort of data that inform the Community Board of city efforts within the district. We would also like to see maps or documents that focus on local concerns such as dilapidated buildings, construction sites, and police incidents.

Funding for the Community Board Office

We were pleased that proposed cuts to the budgets of community boards were not implemented in the Fiscal Year 2014 Adopted Budget. In these difficult financial times, we acknowledge the need to do more with less. However, we still must point out that community boards are operating on budgets that have not had a noticeable increase in over 20 years and many previous cuts have never been restored. We have been forced to reduce administrative costs to a bare minimum and may have difficulty retaining professional staff. Each year that the budget is not increased, it is in effect reduced by the loss of purchasing power and an increased demand for services. We will continue to advocate for appropriate funding of the city's 59 Community Boards.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandro Sherrod

Sandro Sherrod,
Chair

Dan Miner

Dan Miner,
District Manager