



COMMUNITY BOARD # 4Q

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STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY DISTRICT NEEDS

FISCAL YEAR 2013

Community Board # 4Q (CB#4Q) is a culturally diverse community that encompasses the areas of Corona (south of Roosevelt Avenue) and Elmhurst. The total land area of Community Board # 4Q is 2.4 square miles, bounded by Roosevelt Avenue to the North, Flushing Meadow Corona Park to the East, Horace Harding Expressway to the South, and New York Connecting Railroad (CSX) to the West.

According to the 2000 Census the population of CB #4Q is 167,005 a 21.9% increase from the 1990 Census. With the steady growth in population over the past twenty years and the vast amount of new building permits issued, the actual population count may be approaching or surpassing the 200,000 mark. Service levels are based in part on Census information. In order to provide adequate service to the residents of CB # 4Q, service agency budgets must be increased to keep pace with our growing population.

Older housing stock, which consists mainly of one and two family homes are being demolished and replaced with new buildings that house three, four, and in some instances more residential units on the same site where one or two families once resided. The current levels of service and infrastructure can no longer absorb the additional housing units. In order to secure the future stability of CB #4Q, careful consideration must be given to the rezoning of our community.

Our youth population is being short changed, schools are overcrowded, after school programs are limited, and libraries are used beyond capacity. Children are the future of this country we must provide them with all the resources necessary so that they can grow into responsible adults.

We will continue to advocate for a safe, affordable, and well balanced environment for our residents.

The following is a statement of needs and priorities focusing on improving the quality of life for all of the residents in the Community Board #4Q district.

DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING (DFTA)

According to the population counts of the 2000 Census, 19.5% (32,600) of the residents in the CB #4Q area are 45 to 64 years old and 8.3% (13,913) are 65 years and over. These numbers are sure to be greater taking into account the steady growth in population witnessed in the CB #4Q area. Senior citizens are in need of special services, such as meals on wheels, homecare, and help with shopping and home cleaning. Our senior population is also in need of social activities and programs that are supplied by senior citizen centers. Community Board # 4Q is in need of at least two additional senior centers, one to be located in the area of Corona Avenue and 108th Street and one to be located in the Lefrak City area to address the needs of the current senior population and be prepared to address the needs of the future senior population. With the vast wealth of life experiences that seniors have to offer they could act as mentors to our youth in intergenerational programs. Let us not forget the caregivers. The caregiver requires some relief from their daily responsibilities. An increase in services is necessary for this segment of the population. The Department for the Aging must also monitor all senior programs to insure that the services provided are in the best interest of our senior population.

DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS (DOB)

While regulations have changed and fines increased, the DOB must follow through on inspections and violations. In order to perform inspections and enforcement in a professional and timely manner, the hiring of additional qualified personnel is a necessity.

New building permits should be issued only after it is determined that the existing infrastructure can accommodate an increase in new housing units. New Building permits and applications for major alterations and enlargements must not be issued until all prior violations and payments of fines are answered.

DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING (DCP)

Community Board # 4Q is being overdeveloped at an alarming rate. While we are not against progress, we question why our older housing stock, which consists of primarily one and two family homes are being razed to make way for new buildings that are out of character with the existing buildings in the neighborhood. Where once a one or two family home stood now stands a multiple family dwelling with anywhere from three to fifteen and, in some cases, more units.

The infrastructure of CB #4Q was built mainly for low-density housing. The addition of housing units places an undo strain on our infrastructure. As a result, streets are overcrowded with traffic, leaving very limited parking. The Sanitation Department is overwhelmed with the increase in trash generated by the new units. Police and Fire department response times are up due to the increase in traffic clogging our roads. Schools and hospitals are stretched beyond capacity. Reports of flooding and sewer backups are increasing.

Community Board #4Q is requesting that The Department of City Planning evaluate the current zoning in CB #4Q. Identify residential areas in need of down zoning and areas where affordable housing can be built must be identified. New zoning regulations must include off-street parking provisions for each unit built.

The development along the commercial strip of Queens Boulevard needs close attention. Existing commercial one story buildings are being replaced with high density buildings. A planned balance between residential and commercial buildings along the boulevard is necessary so Queens Boulevard does not end up being a boulevard of haphazardly placed buildings.

We look forward to working with DCP to achieve the above goals.

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS (DCA)

The streets of CB #4Q are plagued with “cars for sale” parked on our street corners. Cars are parked without plates or with out-of-state plates that are moved from car to car and a telephone number is written on the vehicle’s window advertising the vehicle for sale. When the vehicles without plates are tagged by the Department of Sanitation as derelict vehicles the so-called owners move the vehicles to a different location to avoid the tow. These second hand car dealers are using our streets as their showrooms. We call on the Department of Consumer Affairs to enforce the second-hand-dealer regulations in our district.

Careful consideration should be given to issuing licenses to street vendors. Vendors should not be located where they impact the operations of a store. Store owners have high overhead paying, rent, utilities, wages, and taxes. It is an injustice to a store owner when a vendor sets up in front of or adjacent to their establishment selling the same goods that they stock in the store at a lower price.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (EDC)

The proposed Pedestrian Plaza located at Corona Plaza (Roosevelt Avenue, National Street to 104th Street) is for some unknown reason stalled. The proposal to convert the plaza to a pedestrian mall was presented to a joint committee of CB #4Q’s Land Use, Transportation, and Parks Committees on April 15, 2008. The proposal was then presented to the full membership of CB #4Q on June 03, 2008. Additionally there were other meetings with the local councilperson regarding the conversion. We call on the Economic Development Corporation and the Department of Transportation to move this project forward.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DOE) **SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY (SCA)**

Although New York City as a whole will experience a downward trend in school enrollment in the next ten years, the school district encompassing CB # 4Q will see an upward trend in enrollment. Schools can not be built fast enough. We will continue to support the Department of Education and the School Construction Authority in their efforts to identify additional new sites for schools.

The High School for Arts and Business (Q456) located at 105-25 Horace Harding Expressway is in need of a renovation. The facility is currently lacking recreation space and windows of any type. In order to provide a suitable learning environment for the students a rooftop atrium and window/skylight installations are requested for the facility.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (DEP)

An aggressive campaign to upgrade the water delivery and sewer system needs to be undertaken to address the additional demands placed on the system due to the overbuilding of our community.

From the time a request for service for a collapsed and/or broken catch basin is logged to the time the actual repair is performed needs to be shortened.

Additional inspectors and repair crews are necessary to relieve the back log of service requests.

Queens Boulevard from the Long Island Expressway to the CSX Line has experienced an inordinate amount of development. High rise commercial and residential developments have replaced the typical low rise development along Queens Boulevard and many new high rise developments are in the planning stages. Business owners and residents have reported flooding that is progressively worsening each year. The sewer drainage system currently in place is not able to process the demand placed on it. A complete study, reconstruction, and upgrade of the existing sewer infrastructure should be implemented. Our residents and business owners must be relieved of the stress and economic loss caused by the constant flooding.

Junction Boulevard from the Long Island Expressway to Roosevelt Avenue, 57th Avenue from Queens Boulevard to 99th Street, W/B Horace Harding Expressway from 108th Street to Queens Boulevard. The above areas flood on a routine basis, which is progressively worsening each year, especially in the Lefrak City area (Junction Boulevard, W/B Horace Harding Expressway, 99th Street, and 57th Avenue). A complete study, reconstruction, and upgrade of the existing sewer infrastructure should be implemented.

111th Street from Corona Avenue to Roosevelt Avenue: Numerous reports of flooding from residents along 111th Street with flooding conditions worsening every year. A complete study, reconstruction, and upgrade of the existing sewer infrastructure should be implemented.

FIRE DEPARTMENT (FDNY)

A budget increase for the Fire Department is necessary to meet the additional demands placed on our fire companies due to an increase in population. The Fire Safety Education Outreach unit provides valuable information on fire safety to our residents. This program must be maintained and funding for the purchase of additional Smoke Detectors and Carbon Monoxide Detectors for distribution should be provided. Illegal conversions have caused a number of fires in the CB #4Q District; FDNY should be part of a task force with DOB, NYPD, and DOH that investigates illegal occupancies and unsafe building conditions.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & MENTAL HYGIENE **(DoHMH)**

The department is doing the best it can with the limited resources allocated to it. Complaints concerning mobile food vendors and rodent infestations are escalating. Mobile food vendors are increasing and inspections should be held to the same standards as restaurants. Careful consideration should be given to issuing licenses to mobile food vendors. Vendors should not be located where they impact the operations of a store. Store owners have high overhead paying, rent, utilities, wages, and taxes. It is an injustice to a store owner when a vendor sets up in front of or adjacent to their establishment selling the same goods that they stock in the store at a lower price.

While we thank the agency for its help, additional personnel are needed to maintain consistent levels of inspections. We support the continuation and enhancement of programs that address the health needs of our growing population.

QUEENS LIBRARY

CB #4Q is one of the most ethnically diverse communities in the country. Library budgets must reflect the growing demand of our diverse population. We will continue to support the expansion of operating hours necessary to accommodate the needs of the public.

We will continue to support the rebuilding and expansion of the Elmhurst Branch. CB #4Q requests construction of a new reference library in the vicinity of 108th Street and Corona Avenue, which will help service the South East portion of CB #4Q which is currently lacking Library services.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION (DPR)

Trees are a vital component of our environment.

At the very least maintain the recently approved seven year pruning cycle and restore pruner and climber positions to the DPR. Additional funds are needed in order to reduce the pruning cycle to five years. A five year pruning cycle will produce stronger, healthier, and better looking trees. CB #4Q receives many complaints of dead and/or diseased trees, branches breaking, and branches that are low to the ground forcing pedestrians to walk around the trees. Tree pruning needs to increase, with an emphasis on emergency service. We support an increase in DPR's budget to allow for a five-year pruning cycle.

We look forward to the final design, construction, and completion of the new restrooms at Elmhurst Park on the former site of the Keyspan Gas Tanks.

A number of the parks in the CB #4Q area are, also, in need of re-design and renovation including, but not limited to, Veterans Grove (ID #Q013), Newtown Playground (ID #Q041), and Louis Simone Park (ID #Q474).

We will continue to support the completion of the renovations to the five remaining Center Islands located on 111th street between 45th Avenue and Corona Avenue, in front of Flushing Meadows Corona Park.

The US OPEN at the USTA National Tennis Center and NY MET'S baseball games at CitiField, need to be coordinated. There should not be any home games scheduled for the NY MET'S when the US OPEN is at the USTA National Tennis Center. The surrounding communities can not absorb the traffic impact of the two events at the same time.

POLICE DEPARTMENT (NYPD)

Currently the 110th Precinct is housed in an antiquated building with no facilities for parking of police vehicles. A new Precinct house along with adequate parking is a necessity. We will continue to support the relocation and building of a new precinct house for the 110th Precinct, which should be located as close as possible to the geographic center of Community Board #4Q. After the opening of the new Precinct, the existing Precinct house could be utilized for NYPD special operations.

With the limited resources allotted to the 110th Precinct, the agency is doing a great job protecting the public. The population of CB #4Q is growing daily, additional funding is necessary in order to increase staffing levels in the 110th Precinct to keep pace with our ever-growing population.

The 110th Precinct is not coterminous with CB # 4Q; the precinct covers Willets Point (CB # 7Q) and Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Flushing Meadows Corona Park is home to the NY METS at CitiField, the USTA National Tennis Center, Queens Theater In The Park, The Hall of Science, The Queens Zoo, The Queens Museum, and the Aquatic Center to name a few. The Park is also host to many large cultural events and it is used by the residents of Queens on a daily basis, with weekends seeing the largest concentration of park visitors. According to New Yorkers for Parks from April 2008 to March 2011 Flushing Meadows Corona Park registered 173 major Felony Crime Complaints second only to Central Park. In order to protect New York City's investment in this park permanent Police presence must be established to serve Flushing Meadows-Corona Park and Willets Point exclusively.

DEPARTMENT OF SANITATION (DSNY)

DSNY is doing a great job cleaning our streets, removing trash, and snow, however DSNY must have budget increases that reflect the increase in housing units in the CB #4Q area.

Establish and or enhance the education component for recycling. Many residents in CB #4Q do not understand the components of recycling, residents should be educated in recycling regulations before being summoned.

Night and weekend Sanitation Police patrols are needed at to curtail illegal dumping and drop offs. An increase in education and enforcement of DSNY regulations on commercial streets should be addressed.

The budget was cut for Street Liter Basket collections and must be restored. Regular pick ups are necessary to keep our streets and sidewalks clean.

TAXI AND LIMOUSINE COMMISSION (TLC)

While For-Hire Vehicles are necessary to fill the small gap not covered by public transportation, CB #4Q is well served by train and bus lines. Community Board #4Q is saturated with For-Hire Vehicles; they are everywhere competing for street hails. Street hails as they exist must be stopped; they are a danger to the passenger and the public. Many of these driver's constantly violate Vehicle & Traffic Laws, cutting off other motorists, making illegal u-turns, going through Red Lights & Stop Signs, and harassing other motorists, to name a few. We have witnessed drivers sleeping overnight in their vehicles, and throwing trash out of their vehicles onto our streets. These actions must cease, enforcement must be consistent and enhanced.

Yellow Cab service is almost non-existent in Queens. If FHV's cannot or will not abide by TLC and NYS Department of Motor Vehicles regulations, perhaps incentives could be given to Yellow cabs to stay and work in Queens.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DOT)

Due to the rapid increase in population CB #4Q is experiencing comes an increase in traffic. Staff increases are necessary to keep pace with the repair requests generated by our heavily used roadways.

Increase and maintain funding for the curb and sidewalk replacement program.

Increase Staff for Roadway Maintenance (reconstruction and pothole crews).

Reconstruction of Streets:

41st Avenue from 72nd Street to Broadway including 78th Street, 79th Street, & 80th Street from 41st Avenue to Roosevelt Avenue are in need of reconstruction.

Reconstruct streets bounded by 57 Avenue, Long Island Railroad, Grand Ave. and Queens Blvd.
Milling and repaving on Broadway from Queens Blvd. to Baxter Avenue.

CB #4Q will continue to support the installation of a pedestrian mall/plaza at Corona Plaza, (Roosevelt Avenue, from National Street to 104th Street). The proposed Pedestrian Plaza located at Corona Plaza is for some unknown reason stalled. The proposal to convert the plaza to a pedestrian mall was presented to a joint committee of CB #4Q's Land Use, Transportation, and Parks Committees on April 15, 2008. The proposal was then presented to the full membership of CB #4Q on June 03, 2008. Additionally there were other meetings with the local councilperson regarding the conversion. We call on the Economic Development Corporation and the Department of Transportation to move this project forward. We look forward to working with the Department of Transportation and the Economic Development Corporation to achieve this goal.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MTA)

Due to the population increase in the Community Board #4Q district, the IND E, F, and R lines are heavily used. An increase in service must be implemented to meet the demand. CB #4Q also requests the reopening of a train station on the LIRR Port Washington line on Broadway in Queens.

YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (DYCD)

The 2000 Census states that within CB #4Q resides 38,770 (23.2 % of our population) children under the age of 18 years. This reflects a 21.9 % increase in our youth population since the 1990 census. The need for additional youth services, such as, After School Programs, ESL courses, Day Care Centers, Intergenerational Programs, Graffiti Prevention, and Gang Activity Prevention has never been greater. An increase in the budget for youth services is necessary to meet these additional demands. Community Board input into the funding process for these programs must be re-established.

NEW YORK STATE LIQUOR AUTHORITY (SLA)

While the State Liquor Authority is a New York State agency, an increase in enforcement of SLA Regulations in New York City is a necessity. While additional investigators have been hired in FY 2011, additional investigators must be hired to address the growing demand for SLA licenses in NYC. Currently any establishment that is applying for or renewing an on-premise liquor license must notify Community Boards via Registered Mail Return Receipt. The SLA should also be required to provide written explanations to Community Boards of their decisions that are not consistent with those of the Community Board.

INFORMATION, TECHNOLOGY, & COMMUNICATIONS (DoITT)

In order to help Community Boards better manage their districts the 311 Call Center must be required to notify individual Community Boards of all service requests and complaints it receives, by type of request and location. Community Boards should be able to access, by location, individual requests and complaints so we can identify trends and areas that our attention.

As always the Chairperson, District Manager, Members, and Staff of Community Board #4Q wish to thank all of our agency representatives for their help in resolving many of the issues encountered during the year.

Sincerely,

Anthony R. Moreno

Anthony R. Moreno
Chairperson

Richard Italiano

Richard Italiano
District Manager