



*The City of New York*  
*Borough of Queens*

**Community Board 8**

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Chairman, Alvin Warshaviak

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**Statement of Community District Needs and Priorities FY 2008**

Community Board 8, Queens is a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, overwhelmingly residential area with several local commercial strips. The 143,000 residents of the district are mostly middle class, who own their own homes, co-ops or renting, who are concerned with quality of life issues, personal safety and security, education and maintaining their fair share of city services.

Community Board 8 includes the communities of Briarwood, Flushing Suburban, Flushing Heights, Fresh Meadows, Hillcrest, Hillcrest Estates, Holliswood, Jamaica Estates, Jamaica Hills, Kew Gardens Hills, Utopia and West Cunningham Park. Within its boundaries are major facilities such as Queens College, CUNY Law School, St. John's University, Queens Hospital Center, Cunningham Park, and many public and private schools.

The variety of residences is great---from one and two-family homes and garden apartments to large apartment buildings such as the Fresh Meadows Development, co-ops such as Electchester, Hilltop Village, and Pomonok, a New York City Housing Authority complex.

**Police**

Community Board 8 has consistently designated the funding of additional police personnel as its top Expense Budget Priority. An additional 15-20 officers are needed for the 107th precinct. Not taken into account when police personnel are allocated to precincts is the fact that Community Board 8 has over 40 private/public schools and institutions within its boundaries, including St. John's University, Queens College, CUNY Law and Queens Hospital Center. We have many churches, synagogues, mosques and temples. When people go to worship on their holy days, they are entitled to worship in peace and know they are protected from terrorists. The population of CB8 has greatly increased and additional officers are necessary.

There are approximately 170 auxiliary police in the Auxiliary Police Program. A van is needed to assist in many community events including National Night Out, Big Apple Circus, the New York Philharmonic and Metropolitan Opera. Bullet proof vests are vital.

The 107th has been very effective in enforcing the laws regarding liquor sales to minors, graffiti and bias attacks. We commend the men and women who work so diligently and put their lives on the line every day on our behalf.

TRANSIT BUREAU DISTRICT 20—To keep our subways safe, we require an additional 20 officers and supervisors. For the administration area new computers are requested.

### **Sanitation**

Although Community Board 8 has relatively clean streets, there are still several Sanitation issues that require more attention:

1. Streets that are not covered by Street Cleaning Regulations need to be cleaned regularly.
2. The paved center malls require year-round cleaning and seasonal weed-control.
3. Retain the five day-a-week pick-ups at public schools and extra pick-up at Pomonok Houses.
4. Sanitation Police are needed for night patrol to discourage illegal dumping.
5. A CB8 dedicated seven-day a week pick-up truck for litter baskets in commercial areas.
6. Increased enforcement of Sanitation regulations along the commercial strips.

### **Parks**

One characteristic that has attracted residents to Community Board 8 is its suburban character, which is derived from the open space of its parks and street trees.

1. Hire personnel or contractors to maintain, prune, and remove dead trees, both in the parks and streets.
2. Park Maintenance Workers are needed to provide security and to protect the City's capital investments in renovated playgrounds.
3. Cunningham Park is Community Board 8's major park and as such very heavily utilized. Working in conjunction with the Friends of Cunningham Park, we have prioritized our requests for the rehabilitation of Cunningham Park.

- Erosion control throughout the core area
- Landscaping throughout the core area, shrubs, trees, hardy perennials and bushes
- Reconstruction of paths throughout the park's core interior especially around the oval and restoration and/or construction of bicycle path from Francis Lewis Boulevard overpass of Vanderbilt Motor Parkway to the underpass at the Clearview Expressway
- Reconstruction and restoration of ball fields 1-5 including backstops
- Redesign picnic area (including signage) Location maps and directional signs at major entrances and additional flora identification signs for trees
- Seeding, sodding and an underground irrigation system for the core area
- Catch basin on entrance from Francis Lewis Boulevard to correct serious flooding
- A 16 cubic yard packer truck
- New fence along Avon Road from 188 to 193 Streets

### **Environmental Protection**

1. Hire sufficient personnel for regular catch basin cleaning and repair work.
2. Increase funding for trench restoration and sewer reconstruction to repair impaired lines and streets.

### **Fire**

Community Board 8 is concerned about the adequacy of fire protection, not only within its boundaries but also throughout the entire Borough of Queens. There is an urgent need to educate the public on fire prevention and to expand the Fatal Fire Reduction Program and Mobile Fire Safety House.

We support five-person staffing for all engine companies, restoration of Fire Marshals dedicated to Queens and having a generator in each firehouse in the event of another blackout or emergency.

### **Highways**

We continue to request increased asphalt allocation for street resurfacing. Some areas would benefit from Contract and Engineered Resurfacing projects. The service roads of the Van Wyck Expressway, Grand Central Parkway, Long Island Expressway and Clearview Expressway must be maintained and cleaned on a regular schedule.

### **Housing/Buildings**

Much of Community Board 8's housing stock is residential, with many one-family homes. Additional Buildings Department inspectors and plan examiners are necessary to enforce existing regulations and quality of life violations. Illegal construction and occupancy continue to be a problem.

Since the late 1970's and early 1980's non-eviction co-ops were running rampant in Queens. Now that we are in 2005, more than 25 years later, there are very few rent stabilized and/or rent controlled apartments left. There is an admitted housing crisis in New York City and Community Board 8. The lack of affordable regulated housing has caused larger numbers of homelessness, overcrowding in neighborhoods, illegal apartments and not enough seats or classrooms for our children in all levels of education. Government must start to build affordable housing immediately. Everyone should have the right to a home, be it private, co-op, condo or an affordable apartment.

Pomonok Houses, although one of the better housing developments in the city, has several issues that have to be addressed. The infrastructure has to be upgraded continually. Residents need the ability to transfer to a larger apartment if they have children of different sexes. A family resource center that will offer educational programs, job training and placement services as well as support programs to help residents achieve self-sufficiency would be welcome.

### **Human Services**

Community Board 8 has many human service needs, particularly among the elderly, single parent families, youth, unemployed and recent immigrants. Some issues that need to be addressed are education, outreach and preventive programs dealing with domestic violence, AIDS, parenting skills, family preservation and affordable day care.

### **Youth**

Youth programs and services have always been one of the top priorities of Community Board 8. The Beacon Schools are a welcome oasis providing many after-school and evening recreational programs and activities. Additional funding is required for summer youth employment positions.

Services to address youth unemployment and develop job programs to serve youngsters from middle-income families are also needed. The problem of gangs, youth substance abuse and truancy affect youngsters in the district.

### **Seniors**

There are several excellent Senior Centers in Community Board 8 that provide nutritious meals and socialization. A program of transportation, home care, and Meals-On-Wheels for homebound "frail elderly" is administered by the Northeast Senior Assistance Center. It is vital that we maintain the delivery of a daily hot meal for our seniors. An intergenerational program would benefit both seniors and youth.

### **Health & Hospitals**

We will continue to monitor development on the Queens Hospital Center campus.

### **Libraries**

We support increasing the services and hours of the six branches of the Queens Borough Public Library located within Community Board 8--Briarwood, Hillcrest, Hollis, Kew Gardens Hills, Fresh Meadows, and Pomonok. It is imperative that all of our libraries be open six days a week to service the needs of our community. To serve the needs of the community and for those people who don't have computers at home, increasing the number of computers at each library is vital. The Briarwood and Kew Gardens Hills buildings need expansion or new buildings.

### **Education**

Community Board 8 is within Region 3. Good schools are vital to CB8. We will continue to advocate for new schools and quality education.

### **Community Board**

Mayor Michael Bloomberg has shown his support for community boards and we continue to thank him for all that he does for community boards. We are often the first line of communication for community residents to New York City agencies. We cut through red tape and bureaucracy, functioning as a little City Hall located in the community--a one stop shopping center where residents can access numerous City services. We monitor the delivery of City services, resolve thousands of complaints each year, and hold public hearings on zoning, ULURP and budget matters. We publish a monthly Newsletter that is widely distributed throughout our community and fulfill all of our charter-mandated responsibilities.

Our budget covers payroll, office supplies, telephone, postage, meeting space, office equipment, etc. We are requesting that our already small budget not be cut and the telephone bill expense be removed from our budget.

### **Conclusion**

Community Board 8 faces several challenges in the future. We are fighting for our fair share of City services that must be provided to safeguard the quality of life for all the residents within our district.

*Alvin Warshaviah*

Chair

*Diane Cohen*

District Manager

July, 2006