



# Community Board 7

## Borough of Queens

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

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### COMMUNITY DISTRICT NEEDS STATEMENT – FY 2016

#### INTRODUCTION

Community Board #7 is the largest in population and 5<sup>th</sup> largest citywide in acreage of all 59 Community Boards. It is comprised of seven towns, Bay Terrace, Beechhurst, College Point, Flushing, Malba, Queensborough Hill and Whitestone, making up 12.7 square miles, and 285 miles of city streets. We are an extremely diverse community consisting of one and two family homes, suburban high rise apartments, 64 park locations, 30 Greenstreets, an intermodal transportation hub with 26 bus lines, the #7 train, and the L.I.R.R. In addition, we are the 4<sup>th</sup> largest retail area in the city, the second largest industrial area in the borough because of the College Point Corporate Park, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> busiest downtown behind Herald and Times Square. Our Board has the largest waterfront area running from Flushing Bay to Fort Totten.

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

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

Evidence shows that Community Board #7 has experienced enormous building growth in both commercial and residential areas. For example, within only a four-mile radius of Downtown Flushing, the housing stock in the past 24 years has grown, and projects presently on the drawing board will bring in additional units of housing within the next several years. Recently Flushing Commons broke ground on the old Municipal parking lot #1, the Hyatt Place Hotel opened on Prince Street between Roosevelt Avenue and 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This hotel is within the Fulton I development site which is not fully constructed and the anticipated Fulton II, a mixed use development, is on the drawing board directly across the street on 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue and will have access to Prince Street and College Point Blvd.

With the completion of the 2010 Census, our population was estimated to be approximately a quarter million documented persons, making us the largest population wise of all 59 Community Boards. Many census tracts in and around Downtown Flushing have experienced substantial population increases while some tracts in Bay Terrace, Clearview, College Point, and Whitestone have experienced moderate to high increase in population. The data confirms that the trend of sustained growth in our area has continued adding to the demand for new market rate and affordable housing, senior housing, classroom space, and city services.

### **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

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

In order to enhance the education of our youth, funding must be appropriated for construction of additional computer labs, and state of the art computer equipment. In addition, there are quite a number of concerns that have been raised with regard to the previous Mayor closing schools without input from

the community, lack of parental involvement, lack of teacher input, the appointment of unqualified Principals from the leadership Academy and age differential within the same school building involving grades 6-12. This all needs to be changed, and we must look to the elimination of Mayoral control of our schools

## **BUILDINGS**

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

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

Presently, R-6 zoning has a 50% parking requirement. We have found that, developers are sub-dividing the lots which automatically eliminates the parking requirements. **This loophole must be eliminated.** Developers should not be allowed to circumvent this because it impacts tremendously on the affected communities. If single family homes are required to provide one parking spot per house, we should not allow developers to receive waivers for multi-unit developments.

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

Since all Building Department permits have to be posted, they should have the owners names and contact phone number (not the contractor) should an emergency arise during the construction process. Right now complainants are required to call 311.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

We continue to point out that Downtown Flushing, which has and continues to be developed through private investment, requires municipal

attention and funds to improve its infrastructure. Major projects are the Flushing Commons project on Municipal Lot #1, and the Fulton I and II as examples, reflect the long standing trend that Downtown Flushing is a vibrant location for investment and opportunity. However, we now face a major development project at Citifield as the first phase of the Willets Point project. This will have considerable impact on the need for improvements to the infrastructure involving transit, parking and sanitation as it relates to Downtown Flushing. Not to mention that it will add a competitive element to the existing shopping centers in the area. Our current problems relating to congestion, traffic and pedestrian flows, sanitation, air and open space quality, etc. will only be strained further with this adjacent development.

Our Community has supported most of these private projects for the sake of economic development and jobs, with the recognition that they do affect our fragile infrastructure. The development support we give always comes with the hope that the city will do its share to improve our fragile infrastructure along the way. This does not seem to happen. We need improvements to the #7 subway, further traffic flow improvements and monitoring in the downtown area. We need to have attention paid to our environmental issues, especially around Flushing River. We are especially concerned about the extent of remedial issues that will be required in relation to Willets Pont, and we need assurances that these will be supported and carried out.

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

The Police Department Academy on the former auto pound site in the Corporate Park is already having a substantial impact on the park infrastructure and community. This facility has exceeded our fair share of citywide facilities; consequently, every effort needs to be made to move capital projects away from the park and the immediate community. Otherwise, the economic health of College Point and Flushing will deteriorate.

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Due to the increased urbanization, new high rise construction causing a heavier workload, the congestion of the commercial shopping area, and the various roadway reconstruction projects within the area, as well as the threat of

terrorism due to our closeness to LaGuardia Airport, U.S Tennis Center and Citifield Stadium, it is essential that all engine companies be staffed with five-man crews throughout Community Board No. 7, but, especially in the downtown Flushing area.

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

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

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

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

We are extremely pleased with the Queens Fire Marshal Base at Fort Totten. This base provides the following:

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

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

There is a need for:

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

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

Due to the shortage of inspectors, illegal rooming houses and illegal apartments have been on the increase in our area. One-bedroom apartments are being subdivided to accommodate additional families. A law should be implemented disallowing this to happen, and should be part of the lease that is signed by the occupant. To preserve the housing stock, it is absolutely essential that Code Enforcement services operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The adjudication process needs to be streamlined to cut down on the time it takes to mitigate a complaint and determine a **FINAL** solution. Countless fines are going uncollected and recapturing these fines can only improve the fiscal outlook for the City. Additionally, Internal Revenue Service should also be notified of the potential of unreported income.

With the growing number of seniors in Queens, as well as our district, programs for Senior Citizen homeowners are in demand to address the varied

needs of this growing population to ensure that they remain in their homes for the duration of their lives.

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

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

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

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

Much of what is now available in terms of program centers is fragmented. The city should insure its related agencies are better coordinated to provide supplemental and required services to seniors. Supplemental transportation modes in the form of minibuses on local levels should be explored so seniors can travel for shopping and medical purposes. More financial resources should be spent on expanding and introducing specialized geriatric services at our two local hospitals, Flushing and New York Hospital. Land use applications for senior housing should be supported, provided the surrounding residential communities are not adversely impacted.

### **PARKS**

Capital Projects for our parks must be accelerated in order to eliminate many hazardous conditions. MacNeil Park in College Point has been on the

drawing board for reconstruction too long, and we are happy to see that money has been allocated for the deteriorated sea wall and that many of the paths have been repaired. Frank Golden Park has poor drainage, creating a terrible flooding problem, and at times an unusable field for the permit holders. The Margaret Carmen Green in Weeping Beech Park is in total disrepair, and certainly does not depict a fitting memorial for the person for whom it was named. This section of the park at times has become a haven for the homeless, as well as anti-social behavior.

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

Full time gardeners are needed, as this district is the largest, greenest area in Queens. We have a number of center malls with shrubbery and flowers that need special attention, as they are constantly overgrown with weeds. Lack of maintenance creates a hazardous condition to motorists as well as an eyesore for the community. The district considers this ongoing beautification to be a quality of life related item. The City should enthusiastically encourage "Adopt-A-Park" or "Adopt-A-Garden" Program similar to the "Adopt-A-Highway" Program, but not as a replacement for needed personnel. The backlog of tree pruning and removal is still critical especially in view of the recent fatalities, and we support funding EARMARKED FOR QUEENS ONLY in the City budget in order to deal with this problem expeditiously. While we supported the previous Mayor's million tree program, additional money must be allocated to deal with the existing trees in our board area. The present pruning schedule is unacceptable. Continuous maintenance of our trees is a must. Our district has had several deaths related to trees that may not have been properly maintained.

A majority of complaints in the areas are attributed to the 64 park locations, bars and clubs, and the attendant youth problems. Other sources of



## **POLICE**

loud radios, drinking on the street, rowdiness and drag racing. With 285 miles of streets to cover, the precinct needs additional manpower to deal with the increase in quality of life issues. As our Asian population increases, our precinct desperately needs Korean and Chinese speaking officers. The Police Dept. needs to eliminate the “Rand Formula” when allocating Police to a precinct. While we are not a high crime area, the officers are constantly dealing with large numbers of quality of life issues that take a tremendous amount of time to resolve due to the large immigrant population.

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

The present geographic boundary of our district is large, and is burdened with increases in crime and minority populations. Particular communities, such as College Point, Malba, Beechhurst, Robinswood, Whitestone and Bay Terrace, are receiving inadequate police protection in the form of radio motorized and foot patrols, which equates to less than adequate response times from the 109<sup>th</sup> Precinct.

With the development of many new large-scale developments in our district, a new police precinct needs to be built and established (i.e., 116<sup>th</sup>

Precinct) in northeast Queens in order to satisfy the need for proper police protection and response times.

## **SANITATION**

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

Community Board #7 supports the various recycling programs, and the outreach and education efforts must continue, and be increased to encourage vigorous participation by all citizens and businesses. Weekly recycling must continue, and we are happy to see new materials targeted for recycling, such as textiles. Multi language educational efforts must target those areas with lower capture and diversion rates.

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

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

## **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

### **1 – HIGHWAYS**

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

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

Capital construction should be accelerated to accommodate the increased volume of traffic and the deteriorated condition of the streets. Linden Place, which has been our #1 Capital Project, is nearing completion of Phase I; however, we need to see Phase II accelerated since this street will be used during the reconstruction of Ulmer Street, which must be closed in order to be properly surcharged. Traffic could then use Linden Place as the alternate. This roadway, which has been closed for over 24 years, will eventually with Phase II connect to 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue, thus relieving traffic backups on the Whitestone Expressway and along 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue. With the development of the Corporate Park and the new retail component, this roadway is a necessity.

Design funding for Phase IV of the Main Street Redesign, one of our top capital priorities, must be allocated. Phase IV will complete the street infrastructure repair in this highly utilized commercial area of our district. This reconstruction will enhance the Downtown Flushing rezoning project that was passed by our Board. Also with the redevelopment of downtown Flushing, the city must go back and re-evaluate Main Street, which was Phase I. It is now in total disrepair, and needs a capital reconstruction since the roadbed is completely deteriorated.

The agency needs to seriously look to move one of our capital projects that deals with one of our major roadways that connects Whitestone to College Point – 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue. It should be extended to College Point Boulevard from the east side of the Whitestone Expressway service road. The roadbed, which is heavily utilized, is uneven and has many ruts, as well as a serious drainage problem. With the building of a hotel and supermarket complex at the intersection of 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 127<sup>th</sup> Street and prior patch work from 130<sup>th</sup> to 127<sup>th</sup> Street failing, it would be prudent to extend the repairs to College Point Boulevard, as well as 127<sup>th</sup> Street between 14<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenues. The City recently resurfaced 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue; however, with its heavily utilization of cars, trucks and buses, the roadbed will not be able to be sustained, and will eventually begin collapsing.

We must look at the feasibility of widening 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue from 135<sup>th</sup> to 138<sup>th</sup> Streets to accommodate the increased traffic coming from the new residential developments plus commercial establishments in College Point. This narrow roadway cannot handle the present volume of traffic.

Within the towns of Whitestone, Beechhurst, and College Point, the seawalls have been allowed to deteriorate, causing a severe and expensive restoration problem. This area has further been decimated by storms that occurred over the past several years. The various communities have requested Federal funding for immediate repairs. Capital projects from our Board have been initiated, but the financial crisis, has caused the restoration to be delayed by several years. The same applies to the Bridges, Ramps, and Flyovers. Preventive maintenance programs, by the agencies responsible, must be initiated before another major disaster occurs, such as Irene or Sandy. Of course, maintenance also pertains to the periodic cleaning of our Roadways, Highways, Bridges, and Tunnels, which has shown considerable improvement over the last few years.

## 2 – TRAFFIC

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

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

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

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

### 3 – TRANSIT

We are concerned about expanding and improving our transit system. The Main Street subway station is the 9<sup>th</sup> largest subway in the city and the biggest transfer point between the busses and the subway. On a daily average, 85,000 people use the IRT #7 subway, and 75,000 use the 26 bus lines in the Downtown Flushing Community. Relatedly, committed funding is required in order to meet continued improvement of our infrastructure. The rapid growth of vehicular volumes in Community Board #7 during the past decade matches the increased local demand for public transportation.

There is a strong need for an orderly analysis of bus transportation requirements. With the takeover of bus transportation by the MTA there is an opportunity for the New York City Transit Authority to utilize modern and innovative ideas, not only to make bus lines more efficient, but also to maintain services for the aged, the handicapped, and school children. We are not happy with the Tandem/articulated buses in our area since the streets are way too narrow to handle their maneuverability. Jitney/Mini buses are recommended for areas that are highly congested, and where service has been lost due to the elimination of a specific bus line.

Three major L.I.R.R. stations are located in our district. The Main Street station is not handicap-accessible, and is in deplorable condition. All stations are without ramps or elevators to service the physically challenged, so the upgrading of our L.I.R.R. stations to ADA guidelines is a must. Presently, the L.I.R.R. station that services Citifield and the Tennis Center is only in operation when there are games at both stadiums. To alleviate some of the traffic and parking congestion problems in Downtown Flushing, that station should be in operation every day, and more so during the AM and PM rush hours.

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

Tens of millions of dollars were spent on the upgrading and rehabilitation of the Main Street station less than a decade ago. To date, the escalators are still not 100% operable and experience frequent breakdowns, forcing passengers to use the long descending staircases onto the platform level. Although there has been some improvement in general maintenance, escalator walls remain filthy, and the removal of trash cans on the platform level has threatened maintenance improvements. The high volume and echo of the public address system makes announcements inaudible. In addition, the platform needs to be extended further west to accommodate the riders who have now moved west of Main Street. At present the platforms are unable to accommodate them during rush hours, and create a very serious congestion problem

## **YOUTH**

Since 1995, Community Board #7's youth population has suffered due to the funding cuts that resulted in the elimination of the position of youth Coordinator. In the past, Youth Coordinators have played a vital part in enabling Community Board #7 to effectively monitor youth programs, provide technical assistance to youth service providers and to guide youth program users. In addition to monitoring local programs, Youth Coordinators made sure that various programs funded by the Department of Education, Department of Youth and Community Development, Borough President and the Council Members are meeting the needs of our growing community. It has been over 19 years that Community Board #7 has been without a Youth Coordinator and as the years go by, it is more evident that this has had a negative impact on our youth population.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

On a final note what is needed for the board is the re-issuing of the parking pass for the chairperson of the board. The chair is a volunteer who gives the city a great deal of time, but now must dig into his or her personal pocket to expend money either at meters or parking garages in order to attend scheduled meetings for the board. This small "perk" was a necessity, not a privilege, and must be given back to them.

Sincerely,



Marilyn Bitterman  
District Manager