



The City of New York Brooklyn Community Board 15



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BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 15 **STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY DISTRICT NEEDS** **FISCAL YEAR 2008**

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Community Board # 15 encompasses the neighborhoods of Sheepshead Bay, Kings Bay, Manhattan Beach, Gerritsen Beach, Plumb Beach, Madison, Homecrest, Kings Highway and East Gravesend. It includes three beach areas, recreational and tourist facilities, a fishing fleet as well as, commercial and residential areas.

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Our residents are ethnically and culturally diverse people, who live in peace and harmony. The housing stock historically consisted of one and two-family homes, but with the rise in real estate prices multi-family condos are being build all over our district. The increase in multi-family high-rise condos is inappropriate for our community. Several viable commercial strips are the backbone of the community and contribute to the economic health and stability of our neighborhood and the entire City. The district's unique waterfront is constantly undergoing redevelopment. The aggressive redevelopment of the bay includes the construction of new hotels, restaurants, and condos. Our parks are a source of pride and recreation for the community and the entire City. Recent rezoning of parts of our District, although a good first step should not be the last. We supported most of the proposals made by the NYC Planning, but strongly disagreed with the up-zoning of Kings Highway and two blocks of Coney Island Avenue which now encourages multi-family residential development. Those streets are essential commercial Avenues in our area and they must remain as such. We also believe that Emmons Avenue must be rezoned to protect the commercial nature of the Avenue and its beautiful view of the Bay. We believe that the only way to address those issues is by the careful rezoning of the district with effective input from the community.

Our community is undergoing a renaissance with an influx of new residents which have created an even greater need for community development strategies. Complicated issues affect our neighborhoods, they must be confronted in the immediate future.

The following needs statement is submitted to request support for efforts by Community Board #15 to provide essential services in the District in order to maintain the quality of life expected by our residents.

Buildings

The number of construction related complaints within Community Board 15 increases every year. Inspections and follow-ups must be done to curtail illegal activities. Additional plan examiners and inspectors are necessary to deal with the heavy load of complaints received daily by the Buildings Department. They should be provided with leading edge technology to assist them in their duties. Ongoing communication between the Department and the Community Board is vital to better the quality of life of our residents.

Economic Development

Small businesses are the backbone of our neighborhood. We are very concerned with the future of small businesses in our area. Now more than ever, we need to insure that appropriate commercial services, such as affordable eating establishments, groceries and clothing stores, are available in our district. We are looking towards you to help us in rezoning, developing new tax incentives, empowerment zones, loans and grants programs geared to small businesses in the neighborhood. We also feel that a better marketing campaign regarding existing programs be available to small businesses as needed in the area. We are concerned by the lack of available parking for customers around our shopping strips and welcome any suggestions on how to alleviate this ongoing problem.

Education

Improvement of our schools physical conditions and up-to-date technology is vital to our community. Therefore we request the necessary modernization of all schools within our district.

Kingsborough Community College continues its reputation as a premier institution of higher learning in the District and the leading provider of higher education for all New Yorkers. Over the years Kingsborough has also served residents by hosting numerous community events. Kingsborough needs support in its capital and expense budget in order to keep pace with the continuing growth of the community it serves.

School children are our future. We feel that an increase in funding for the "Magnet Program" is necessary to promote higher achievement in education. We join the effort with the New York City Department of Education to improve the schools within Educational Region 6 and 7. Better communication between the Department and the Community Board is essential in order to provide best possible education to our children.

Environmental Protection

Community Board 15 cannot overstate its concern with the continuance of the upgrading of the Coney Island Water Pollution Control Plant. In 2003 the plant operated at 87% capacity. With increase in building construction we are facing a real danger of the plant reaching its full capacity. Funding for regular cleaning of catch basins must be increased. Funding for contracts to repair street leaks and broken hydrants is also requested. The agency must increase the number of noise inspectors to be available 24 hours a day seven days a week to respond to complaints.

Fire

NYFD's program of detaching manpower when an Engine or Ladder Company is out for repairs is totally unacceptable and compromises the safety of our residents. The Board emphasizes that the NYC Fire Department must have all necessary equipment to avoid putting any fire fighters in danger.

Health and Hospitals

Funding for Coney Island Hospital, which services the southern part of Brooklyn, including Community Board #15, must be increased. The needs to modernize and upgrade new equipment, and add personnel to the hospital are of prime importance. Addition of a trauma center and Hospice facility is a must for our community.

Homecrest Health Station is an extremely active, intensely used public Health Facility. This facility is understaffed. Equipment and services need to be updated so that efficient care can be provided for eligible clients.

Libraries

Libraries provide residents from toddlers to senior citizens with a variety of services. The libraries in Community Board No. 15 included Gerritsen Beach, Gravesend, Homecrest, Kings Bay, Kings Highway and Sheepshead Bay. Funding to support service a minimum of six days per week with hours that meet the needs of seniors, students, and working adults alike must be made permanent and not to be used for political gain. Reading materials should reflect public demand, up-to-date reference materials, reliable electronic resources and materials in the languages spoken by our residents. All libraries must be handicapped accessible.

Parks

Community Board #15 has one of the largest beachfront areas in the City of New York, known as Manhattan Beach Park. Repairs to the promenade and guard-rail along the promenade area, as well as basketball courts are needed. In addition, eighteen smaller neighborhood parks, which are used primarily by the residents, are in dire need of rehabilitation. The Board once again demands immediate actions to be taken to safeguard Thomas Norton Memorial Park and Bill Brown Park. The District Parks have suffered because of the cut back in maintenance personnel. One of the main complaints

from groups and individuals regarding our parks and beaches is the insufficient enforcement of the existing laws, due in a large part to inadequate staffing. We urge you to immediately increase parks police funding. We urge an increase in funding for new plantings as well as tree replacement and pruning programs. Parks department must be assigned sufficient funds in the budget to maintain its vast properties.

Police

The residents' main concern is the number of police officers assigned to our precinct. With the increase in population in our district, our precinct has become severely overburdened addressing the many issues that arise. We urgently request an increase in the number of officers assigned to the summer beach details. We feel that it will require some additional personnel from other commands. Up to date anti-terrorism devices, police vehicles, radios and office equipment must be assigned to our precinct. We need additional light weight vehicles to patrol our numerous beaches, parks and shopping strips.

Sanitation

With the steady increase in population in our District additional personal and equipment are needed to provide sanitation services to our residents. The long promised construction of the sanitation garage in CB 13, which will house trucks from our District must begin immediately. Restoration of year round "basket truck program" is a high priority for our Board. We need an increase in sanitation police personnel to patrol empty lots, especially at night. We urge the City to restore "self help" sites, where individuals can dispose of their garbage. Our sanitation garage is in need of basic office equipment such as a copy machine, computers and other. We believe that in order for any city agency to function it must have this equipment.

Seniors

Our residents who reached their "golden age" are our prime asset. They gave so much over the years to the community, now they are in need of our assistance. We have numerous senior centers, and other institutions which cater to the special needs of our senior citizens. In order for our seniors to live full and fulfilling life the City must increase funding for their programs.

Transportation

Our number one priority is additional parking near our numerous commercial strips. We are urging DOT to conduct research and studies to come up with creative ways to alleviate our parking problem. Street light outages have become epidemic in our district. An overhaul of the entire process must be conducted with a goal of shifting full responsibility to one entity. Nostrand Avenue, Ocean Avenue, Kings Highway, Coney Island Avenue, Shore Boulevard and many other streets in our district need immediate reconstruction. We are requesting an increase in street resurfacing and sidewalk/curb replacement contracts within our Board. Maintenance and repair of our arterial highways has decreased in recent years, restoration of these services is urgently requested. More staff is necessary for HIQA unit to better inspect construction on city's streets.

Youth

We are urging the City to increase funding for youth programs. Increase of after school and evening programs is supported by the entire community.

Taxi & Limousine Commission

Over the past several years our district has experienced an increase in the number of base stations. Adequate enforcement is necessary to insure our quality of life.

Summary

Our community is a great place to live and work. In order for us to remain a viable and stable community our needs must be recognized and supported. These requests are all necessary and justified.

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa Scavo
Theresa Scavo
Chairperson

Ben Akselrod
Ben Akselrod
District Manager