



COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 9

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STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY DISTRICT NEEDS – FY 2016

INTRODUCTION

Brooklyn's Community District 9 encompasses one of New York's first humanly inhabited areas. The area was once the home of the Mareckkawicks, a branch of the Canarsie tribal community, which occupied Kings County and parts of Jamaica. The area was colonized by the Dutch farmers from the Netherlands (Holland) in the early 17th century. Lefferts Homestead relocated to Prospect Park from its original location on Midwood Street and Flatbush Avenue, is a living reminder of this agricultural community which flourished in our district until the early 20th century.

Also of historic significance is Clove Road, snugly located in the middle of Montgomery Street/Empire Blvd/Nostrand Ave/New York Avenue, within Community District 9. A Phase 1A Archaeological Documentary Study of Clove Road, conducted by the RBA Group in 2002, found that Clove Road "... is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A based upon its association with the establishment of Kings County's 19th Century public institutions, the Alms House, Hospital, Asylum, and Penitentiary, an event that significantly contributed to the broad pattern of New York's urban history." Community Board 9 has submitted applications to the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission; as well as the NYS Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for this site to be evaluated for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

Present day Community District 9 includes a portion of the neighborhoods known as Crown Heights, Flatbush, Prospect Lefferts Gardens, and Wingate. Bordered by Prospect Park, Eastern Parkway and Lincoln Terrace Park, the district includes such prestigious cultural institutions as the Brooklyn Museum; the Brooklyn Botanic Garden; the Brooklyn Public Library; and the Jewish Children's Museum.

The district is also the home to other notable institutions including Kings County Hospital Center; one of the largest hospital complexes in the world, SUNY Health Science Center at Brooklyn; Kingsboro Psychiatric Center; Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center; the SUNY Downstate Advanced Biotechnology Incubator and the SUNY Parkside Dialysis Center. Collectively, these institutions form the southern-most boundary of the district.

Medgar Evers College of the City University of New York; four high schools; four intermediate schools; eleven elementary schools (including new small schools and charter schools) make up the District's public educational system. A significant number of private and parochial schools complete the educational picture.

Only minutes by car or public transportation from downtown Brooklyn, Community District 9 is home to numerous small and medium-sized businesses and the 98,429 residents (2010 census) who live along our tree lined residential streets. Our many religious institutions include a number of large Catholic churches, a number of the oldest Protestant churches in the borough, and the world headquarters of the Chabad Lubavitch Jewish Movement.

Families and institutions have thrived in Community District 9 for generations. Over the past five decades, this largely middle class community has undergone extensive demographic changes, creating a unique blend of people of American, Caribbean, European, Asian and Hispanic descent. This continued growth has brought with it a concomitant escalation in the need for vital municipal services.

Community District 9 has taken a critical look at our district's needs and has embarked upon the formulation of a 197-a plan which sets out our vision for a better future for this community, the objectives of which are to improve the quality of life for residents through the following:

- The promotion of community safety and the reduction of crime;
- Social and cultural development;
- Improved health and social services;
- Support for the preservation, expansion and physical integration of the public parks system and educational institutions;
- Promotion of employment and business opportunities through
 - The strengthening and expansion of existing retail commercial areas;
 - The improvement of local businesses and economic development
 - A local hospital jobs program.
- The promotion of new low-density/contextual residential development to provide both a humanly sealed built form and increased opportunity for neighborly social interaction;
- The guiding of future physical and human development programs to enhance the lives of the residents;
- Improved environment-neighborhood beautification and development of new open space resources.

We submit this Statement of District Needs to document the District's advocacy for the provision of acceptable levels of City services for the continued improvement in the quality of life for the people who live and work in this district. The restoration of services; the renovation and upgrading of school buildings, subway stations, and other public facilities; expanded economic/business opportunities, the acquisition of land for the creation and expansion of open space; and the implementation of a traffic calming study; are all vital to our overall goal for the restoration and preservation of this district.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

In the year 2014, it is absolutely unacceptable that the schools in this district are still not meeting the needs of our children. Not only is there major overcrowding in all the district's schools; but the buildings are in poor shape and do not provide the type of environment for learning that our children so desperately need. It should not come as a surprise, therefore, that there is such a high drop-out rate in our district; and in schools in general.

There is a litany of critical needs for all the schools; below we mention critical needs for a few of the schools:

Medgar Evers Prep (High) School – this is a relatively new building. This building does not have a Gymnasium nor does it have an Auditorium! The thinking behind this was that the high school would share Medgar Evers College's gymnasium and auditorium. As it turns out this arrangement does not work, has never worked and the children in this high school are the ones who are impacted. The children currently receive physical education instruction in the hallway of the basement of the school; on the sidewalk; or any available space to get their credits in. Physical Education credits are mandatory for graduation; this situation cannot be allowed to continue.

In addition, the school is over capacity. The school's capacity is 900 students; the current enrollment is 1,200 children. How are these children expected to learn in this overcrowded environment? Computers in the computer lab are obsolete, constantly malfunctioning; and insufficient to meet the needs of this large student body. There is an absolute need for upgraded, state of the art computer labs.

W.E.B. DuBois High School – this is another high school without a gymnasium that is hampering the fulfillment of physical education requirements for graduation.

Public School 161 – this is another school without a gymnasium; an auditorium that is in need of renovation; installation of additional bathroom stalls to meet the needs of the large student body. The entire school needs rewiring to not only be up to code, but to also enable the use of state of the art computer technology; as well as heating and air conditioning.

We have only listed these three schools in this statement. The situation is the same in all our district schools. These are the stumbling blocks that year after year our children endure to receive less than a first class education.

We cannot, in good conscience, allow this neglect of our schools to continue at the expense of our vulnerable children. Community Board 9 stands ready to work with our elected officials; the Department of Education; and the School Construction Authority to address these immediate needs in our schools.

DEPARTMENT OF SANITATION

Relocation of Community District 9's Sanitation Garage

It is widely known that 356 Winthrop Street is not a suitable location for Community District 9's Sanitation Garage, situated as it is within close proximity to Kings County Hospital Center; SUNY Downstate Medical Center; and SUNY Downstate Advanced Biotechnology incubator. In addition to the unsuitability of the location, is the fact that the building is not large enough to adequately house the agency's staff, as well as garage sanitation equipment. As a result, garbage filled trucks can usually be found parked on surrounding streets giving off their putrid smell. Coupled with this unacceptable situation; there is also no on-site apparatus for cleaning the equipment; and accommodation for agency staff is wholly inadequate.

The SUNY Downstate Advanced Biotechnology Incubator is a new multi-million dollar facility with significant benefits for Brooklyn. This facility allows our district and borough to compete with other cities in the United States and internationally in this market. This medical research facility is being expanded to provide additional laboratories and offices to companies conducting research into finding cures for diseases and for new state of the art medical equipment. The expanded facility will bring additional jobs to Central Brooklyn, thus helping to revitalize the area's economy. Addressing the problems created by the siting of a sanitation garage on the health care institutions will go a long way towards the revitalization of this section of the district.

Community District 9 has identified two possible sites for the relocation of the garage. These properties are currently under the jurisdiction of SUNY Downstate Medical Center. These properties would not only allow for the development of a state-of-the-art sanitation garage; but will also accommodate SUNY Downstate's need for adequate parking. Not only would we be finding a solution to these critical needs; but, it would also allow for the further expansion of Biotechnology Incubator; and the Parkside Dialysis Clinic.

Dirty Sidewalks/Litter Baskets/Illegal Postings

Dirty sidewalks on commercial strips; failure to clean sidewalks after snow-storms; littering; improper use of corner baskets; are all issues that plague our district and that require adequate enforcement. An increase in the number of enforcement agents, coupled with stricter enforcement is necessary to curb this blatant disregard for the community, the environment; and the sanitation codes. An increase in the number of sanitation litter baskets would go a long way towards reducing sidewalk littering along our commercial corridors; as well as residential streets and sidewalks that are within proximity to schools. There is also a need for an additional basket truck to effectively service the litter baskets in the district, especially along our busy commercial corridors

There has been a proliferation of illegal postings on light poles, street trees and traffic signal poles in the district. Community District 9 is requesting more enforcement efforts against these abuses that create blight in the community.

NYC POLICE DEPARTMENT

Garaging Police Vehicles

Community Board 9 again emphasizes the dire need for a facility to garage police vehicles and vouched cars. The current practice by agency personnel to overtake the streets around the local precinct with police cars, trucks and other equipment, including vehicles vouched by the precinct, is unacceptable. Double parked cars and sidewalk parking around the precinct increases danger for pedestrians; senior citizens; school children, parents with baby carriages; and the disabled. The Board has done a search of the area around the 71 Precinct and has identified property suitable for garaging precinct vehicles. Acquisition of these premises, whether by lease or purchase, will effectively eliminate the current congestion being experienced at Empire Boulevard and the New York Avenue.

Patrol and Traffic Enforcement

Shootings, murders, drugs, criminal street gang activity, among other crimes, continue on a frequent basis in the district. We continue to receive complaints from residents regarding the sale of drugs on street corners, bodegas, and apartment buildings. The community feels besieged by these unlawful acts; that is why the Board is asking for constant and visible police presence at problem locations, especially Flatbush Avenue; as well as aggressive enforcement to close down these known locations where drug dealing takes place.

The Board welcomes Mayor DeBlasio's Vision Zero initiative and the implementation of slower speed limits and increased enforcement efforts to curb speeding, double parking; and other dangerous traffic violations in the city. The installation of traffic cameras, especially in the vicinity of schools and main traffic corridors will have a tremendous impact and will send a serious message that the safety of our citizenship is of paramount importance.

Facilities/Equipment/Technology

The Board believes that the Police Department has an obligation to bring all of its precinct houses into the twenty-first century by upgrading facilities, equipment and technology. The 71 Precinct's physical plant has only seen cosmetic refurbishing. There is a definite need for a major rehabilitation of the Precinct to provide an environment that would improve the working environment for the members of the force. We have also identified the need for an increase of police officers in reassuring numbers throughout the district. The Board feels that a combination of improved facilities; technology; and increased civilian clerical support would allow for more police presence on neighborhood streets.

**DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION
DEPARTMENT OF CITYWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

Acquisition of Land for Open Space

There is a genuine need for more dedicated open space in our district. The 2010 Census population data shows that approximately 25.6% of our population is in the 19 and under age range; an additional 37.4% are between the ages of 18-44. The 45 and over population, including our senior citizen population aged 65 and over make up another 36.8%. Further data on our district shows that only 1.7% of this district is dedicated to Open Space/Recreation; looking at this ratio, one can see the huge discrepancy and the obvious need for additional open space in the district.

Community Board 9, through our 197-a Committee has identified several possible locations in the district for the addition of open space. These include the grounds of **Kingsboro Psychiatric Center**, the **property adjacent to Wingate Park**, a **Plaza Project for Clove Road**, the **Plaza at Flatbush Avenue and Empire Boulevard** and, the **Plaza at Parkside and Ocean Avenues**. These locations represent viable opportunities for the development of open space for the enjoyment and use of our residents.

**Bedford/Union Armory
Recreation Center**

This community, with its large youth population, has a critical need for a recreation center to address community youth needs, including health and physical fitness, youth development and delinquency prevention. The availability of the Bedford/Union Armory presents numerous possibilities for the eventual development of resources to fulfill much needed youth, recreational and entrepreneurial needs of the district. We look forward to continuing to work with the New York City Economic Development Corporation as they move towards selecting a developer for the Bedford/Union Armory. Input and participation from the community will hopefully assist the agency in making the best possible selection of a developer that will address the vast needs of the community for housing, economic development and youth educational/recreational support.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Park Reconstruction Projects

Hamilton Metz Park

The Board is pleased to learn that the exercise equipment has been installed in the park; we extend our thanks to our Council Member Mathieu Eugene for providing the funding for this amenity, a direct request from our constituents.

The Comfort Station at Hamilton Metz Park is still in need of reconstruction. This important amenity has deteriorated considerably from the heavy utilization by the people who

use this park. The Board will continue to advocate for the necessary funding to reconstruct this facility; thus completing reconstruction projects in the park.

Wingate Park

Wingate Park is one of the most heavily utilized parks in our district; heavily used by people from all over Central Brooklyn., as a consequence the park has deteriorated tremendously. We are pleased that reconstruction of the Playground is moving forward and that the contract for Phase II of this project is being addressed. We thank Borough President Adams for his infusion of capital dollars for Brooklyn Parks and hope that some of those dollars will be allocated to address the needs at Wingate Park.

Mount Prospect Park

Community Board 9 has been requesting funding for a Preliminary Design Investigation into the need for upgrade and reconstruction of Mount Prospect Park. We have even taken the initiative to have a design study done, pro bono, by faculty and students of the University of Virginia, to stimulate discussion and action on our request for a Preliminary Design Investigation. We have not been successful with this request and have seen no movement on harnessing the immense potential of this gem in our district, a potential this is currently being wasted due to inaction. As noted in the opening paragraph of this section of the Needs Statement, our district is greatly underserved by the lack of adequate open space. We continue to advocate for this need and look forward to working with the agency with the objective of resolving this status quo.

Prospect Park projects

Community Board 9 supports the on-going efforts to restore the structures and facilities in Prospect Park; among these are the Picnic House and Litchfield Villa. The Board is concerned about the time being taken to restore the Park's beautiful wrought iron fencing along the Flatbush Avenue side of the Park. The schedule for replacing the temporary mesh fencing that is currently in place needs to be accelerated so that the fence can be completely restored..

Maintenance of Parks, Playgrounds and Eastern Parkway Malls

Community Board 9 has long been an advocate for the provision of adequate funding to provide much needed upkeep of our parks and playgrounds. We are aware that adequate maintenance of our open space has been severely hampered by budget cutback; as a partner with our Parks Department, Community Board 9 will continue to advocate for maintenance funding as we strive for the improvement of park facilities within our district.

Tree planting/Pruning/Stump removal

The greening of our community district is an important aspect of our community beautification plan. Not only will the planting of new trees contribute to the beautification of our neighborhood streets, but will help with cleaning the air that we breathe, contributing to a healthier community. .

Tree pruning; the removal of dead trees; and stump removal are also of vital importance. Failure to address these quality of life issues in the district can lead to possible injury and loss of life, as well as property damage from falling trees and branches, especially during a storm.

ADMINISTRATION for CHILDREN'S SERVICES

With more and more families making Brooklyn their home, the tree lined streets of Community District 9's neighborhoods, have been attracting new families, many of whom are two-parent working families with the need for daycare, head start and pre-kindergarten resources. The Board applauds Mayor DeBlasio for recognizing this great need in the City of New York, and for advocating vigorously for the allocation of funding to provide this much needed resource for our families. We were happy to share and encourage our constituency to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to apply for funding to provide this valuable resource in our community.

Although this is a welcome infusion of funds to provide this vital resource, the need for daycare, head start and pre-kindergarten slots continues to be great. We look forward to a continued focus on these needs, to eventually eliminate the long waiting lists currently facing families wishing to place their children. As the district continues to be attractive to families, we anticipate that this need will continue to rise. We strongly advocate for the provision of funding to enable an increase in the number of daycare slots and vouchers; and the establishment of an additional head start center in the district.

DEPARTMENT for YOUTH and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

There is a tremendous need for a Youth Center in the district, as well as much needed after school and out of school time programs. The Board recognizes that there is a direct correlation between supervised recreational and educational resources leading to a well rounded successful youth population.

We ask that the district be provided with funds sufficient to meet our youth's needs and that non-profits be supported in providing free and low-cost out of school time programming in the neighborhood. We also ask that DYCD provide the funds and resources necessary to house homeless adolescents in our area. Finally, we ask that DYCD assist in providing programming for a growing population of impoverished children who lack the basic nutrition and resources to succeed in our area schools.

DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING

The senior population in Community District 9 continues to be underserved. In the face of this glaring reality, there is a need for more extensive outreach efforts to reach those seniors that are falling through the cracks and not receiving the benefits they deserve. Much improved outreach and access to services in the areas of health care; health insurance; transportation; senior housing; immigration; employment; nutrition and wellness; are needed to adequately serve our growing senior population.

DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

There is a critical need for additional Planning staff at this agency. The borough of Brooklyn is in the midst of a building boom, bringing with it unprecedented changes in the face of the districts where these building boom is taking place. The existing zoning in largely residential zoning allows for a vast discrepancy in the types of buildings that currently exist, allowing for tall skyscrapers right next door to one and two family homes. This crazy grabbing of land and unplanned building is creating much distress and anxiety to residents in the Brooklyn community.

Requests for rezoning studies to provide contextual building opportunities either go unanswered or take long years to complete due to the lack of staffing in the agency. Community District 9's own request for a re-zoning study of our small district, is being cut in half due to the lack of staffing.

While we are grateful that the agency has accepted our request for a zoning study; all of the issues behind our request cannot be addressed due to the lack of staffing. All of the issues raised by our constituency are important and needs to be addressed in a timely manner. We therefore, urgently request that funding be provided to the agency to allow for increasing the number of Planners in the agency.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

There is a critical need for affordable housing in this district. We are requesting that the agency enter into an agreement with the New York State Office of Mental Health for either a joint housing initiative on the grounds of the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center. In the absence of an agreement, we urge the Department of Housing Preservation and Development to begin discussion with the New York State Office of Mental Health to immediately transfer the property on the grounds of Kingsboro (the former Building 10 that was demolished) back to the City of New York, under the jurisdiction of the Department of Housing Preservation and Development. This would pave the way for the development of much needed affordable housing in the community. We look forward to working with HPD on this critical need.

DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS

Enforcement of building code and zoning violations in the district needs to be vastly improved. The follow-up procedures to ensure that there are cures and compliance with blatant violations are not in place, or are so lax as to put the lives of constituents in danger.

The community district needs more building inspectors to prevent a tragedy in the community district. In addition, non-conformance with a building's Certificate of Occupancy provisions and commercial uses in residential zones are on the rise. A more effective and efficient code enforcement operation is needed to address the building code and zoning violations that seriously hamper the safety and quality of life of our residents.

DEPARTMENT OF SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES

The revitalization of our commercial corridors is of great importance to our merchants and area residents. Particular attention must be given to the following:

- Nostrand Avenue between Eastern Pkwy & Clarkson Ave
- Flatbush Ave from Empire Blvd to Clarkson Ave
- Utica Avenue between Eastern Pkwy & Clarkson Ave
- Bedford/Rogers/Franklin Avenues between Eastern Pkwy & Clarkson Ave
- Empire Blvd between Utica & Flatbush Avenues

The reconstruction of the Kings County Hospital Center, SUNY Downstate Biotechnology Incubator, CUNY's Medgar Evers College, and the development of the Bedford Union Armory, will bring new economic opportunities to the district. Revitalizing Community District 9's commercial corridors increases economic activity that attracts more business and creates viable employment opportunities.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Board continues to request that our Firehouse be equipped with a back-up generator in the event of the loss of electricity to the city. An appropriately trained and equipped Firefighters and first responders is critical to supporting the safety and well-being of our community.

The Board sees a strong need for the provision of fire prevention and education programs for the community, especially training for children. The Child Fire Starter Program, which provides early intervention services; and has worked well in the city, will help to reach the large youth population in the district who may be at risk. This valuable training provided to children, will help to save valuable life and property.

We continue to support a strong Carbon Monoxide and Fire Detector distribution program in the district. This early warning system is so critical to preventing loss of lives.

Fire Marshals

There is a lack of fire marshals available to investigate the cause of fires in our community district. This district has a rich and diverse housing stock that dates back to the 1800's. Community District 9 is rapidly developing high density modern structures in heavily populated existing neighborhoods. We must increase the number of fire marshals currently available to adequately address mixed use, commercial, multi/single family, landmark, and park properties in our district. It is imperative to the public safety that we address the prevention of fires, quickly and efficiently investigate fires and property owners whole after fires in our community district.

HEALTH & HOSPITALS CORPORATION

Kings County Hospital Center is the primary health care facility, not only for Community District 9, where it is located, but for all of Central Brooklyn. We are pleased that low-cost, quality health care will continue to be provided by KCHC for the hard working families who rely on this hospital for their health care needs.

In order to continue to provide quality care services to the community, Kings County Hospital Center needs up-to-date, state-of-the-art equipment. The hospital is currently in need of the following equipment:

- Nurse Call System – the existing Nurse Call System is outdated and cannot be repaired or upgraded. That new system, at a cost of \$2,428,000, will improve accountability and will also have the capacity to generate reports and improve hospital-patient satisfaction scores.
- Operating Room Microscope – the Microscope currently in use is over ten years old and is not the current standard of care in Ophthalmic Surgery.
- Cardiac Ultra Sound Equipment – the Hospital is in need of four Ultrasound Systems to replace the current cardiac ultrasound equipment that are more than 10 years old; are completely outdated; and are no longer supported by the equipment manufacturer.
- Ultra Sound System for Department of Labor and Delivery – many high risk pregnant women are referred to this hospital for their care; quality ultra sound surveillance is required during the course of their pregnancy.
- NICU Transport Unit for the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit – many seriously ill newborns are referred to Kings County Hospital for care; the Transport Unit will fit into all ambulances and allow staff to safely transport the sick infants from other hospitals to Kings County Hospital.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Traffic Calming

It has been at least fifteen years since the Department of Transportation conducted a traffic calming study of Community District 9. There have been changes in the demographics within our community since that study was undertaken; and more than likely those findings would not be reflective of today's conditions as we see continued growth in the community with the arrival of new families.

Way before Mayor DeBlasio's Vision Zero initiative, Community Board 9 recognized the need to slow traffic in our community. Traffic safety is an ever present and continued concern for us, that is why we continue to request a traffic calming study of our entire district to avoid the piece-meal implementation of measures (like speed humps) that we have seen to date.

Traffic Congestion

Traffic congestion continues along the major corridors in the district: We continue to seek solutions to this growing problem and request a traffic study be conducted to help alleviate the traffic congestion issues.

Street resurfacing

There are numerous potholes throughout the district resulting from the difficult winters we have had recently; as well as the poor restoration following street excavations by private contractors and utility companies. The allocation of adequate funding for a consistent street repair/resurfacing program will effectively address this problem on a more consistent basis, benefitting all road users in the district.

Rutland Road between Flatbush and Bedford Avenues appears to be sinking mid-block; this street, a number of others should be considered for a capital reconstruction project.

Pedestrian Ramps/Curb Restoration

There are a number of locations within the district where curbs are either damaged and/or missing; one such location is in front of 888 Nostrand Avenue between President and Carroll Streets. In addition, there are a number of locations with the district where pedestrian ramps are missing. We are requesting that a survey of the district be conducted to identify all locations where these conditions are prevalent, and that adequate funding be allocated for a capital project for the construction/reconstruction of curbs and pedestrian ramps.

Restoration of Empire Boulevard

We look forward to working with the agency on the scope of work for the reconstruction of Empire Boulevard from Utica to Washington Avenues - HWK779W – this project includes the Community Board’s request for traffic and safety enhancements, as well as a complete resurfacing of the roadway. Empire Boulevard is a major thoroughfare in our district leading to major cultural institutions including Prospect Park, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, the Brooklyn Museum, the Brooklyn Public Library.

Reconstruction of Clove Road and Malbone St – HWK166

The reconstruction of Clove Road and Malbone Street – HWK166 - is one of the most important roadway reconstruction projects in Community District 9.

Given the historic significance of this roadway – which was found to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, based on its association with the establishment of Kings County’s 19th century public institutions, the Alms House, Hospital, Asylum, and Penitentiary – we have formally submitted applications to the Landmarks Preservation Commission, and the New York State Department of Parks and Historic Preservation, for consideration for national, state and city landmark status.

Community Board 9 has submitted a proposed scope of work for the reconstruction of this site that will transform it into a showcase for historic preservation efforts, complete with a historic marker, by a world renowned artist; as well as a beautiful passive space for the community to enjoy. We will continue to work with the agency and our elected officials to fully fund the reconstruction of this site with the appropriate amenities, that will be in keeping with its historic stature.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & MENTAL HYGIENE

Addressing the health care needs of this district is vital; health education and outreach is vital, especially to the district's growing immigrant population. Education on the benefits of childhood immunizations; the provision of health and wellness information; education and information on prenatal care to reduce infant mortality rates; for the prevention of teenage pregnancy; sexually transmitted diseases among all ages; kicking the smoking habit, and healthy eating to prevent obesity.

Rat Infestation

Our community is infested with rats. Dirty alleyways, backyards, sewers and subway tracks, all contribute to this scourge. These conditions are extremely prevalent in the warmer months and create serious health related problems for the community. An aggressive campaign that would include education and enforcement of violations of the health code in dirty alleyways and backyards; subway tracks, sewers, etc, is urgently needed to rid the community of these vermin.

NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT

Subways

With the exception of the Utica Avenue and Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum subway stations, which are relatively newly constructed stations; and the Parkside Avenue Station which is undergoing some refurbishment; all of the other subway stations in the district are in need of rehabilitation: Franklin Avenue, President Street, Sterling Street, Winthrop Street; Nostrand Avenue; Kingston Avenue. We are heartened to see an acknowledgement in PlaNYC that agrees that these stations are in need of major repairs/reconstruction. We look forward to discussing with the agency the plans and time frame for planned improvements to these stations.

The Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum subway station serves thousands of community residents, visitors from the five boroughs; and tourists from across the country and around the world who come to this community to visit our prestigious cultural institutions. The disabled cannot visit these institutions if they do not have access to appropriate transportation. We are pleased that the MTA/NYCT has acknowledged that this station meets the criteria for stations to be ADA compliant. We urge the agency and our elected officials to move forward with appropriate funding to bring this station into ADA compliance.

Buses


With the proposed plans to implement Select Bus Service on Utica Avenue, we highly recommend a post implementation review of the Select Bus Service (SBS) on Nostrand and Rogers Avenues. Vehicular traffic on these routes is stalled many times during the day resulting in increased air pollution in the district. The location of the SBS bus stops needs to be reviewed with the community. Residents complain of watching empty SBS buses go by as they wait for a local bus, which when it finally arrives is over-crowded. There is definite need for an increase in the number of local buses to service the community.

CONCLUSION

It is Community Board 9's belief that quality of life begins with good health and the nurturing of a built environment, set in aesthetically pleasing neighborhoods and reinforced with educational and economic development. We believe that there is much to be done to enhance the quality of life for current and future residents.

Our goal is to revitalize our neighborhoods to provide a safe and healthful setting, a place of tranquility and respite from the tasks of assimilation and striving to succeed. In order to accomplish these goals, the Board will continue to work with the City's agencies, elected officials and the community to address the needs identified herein.


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