THE CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 3
59 East 4th Street - New York, NY 10003
Phone (212) 533-5300 - Fax (212) 533-3659
www.cb3manhattan.org - info@cb3manhattan.org

Jamie Rogers, Board Chair Susan Stetzer, District Manager

District Needs Statement for Fiscal Year 2018

Introduction

Community Board 3 Manhattan spans the East Village, Lower East Side, and part of Chinatown. It is bounded by 14th Street to the north, the East River to the east, the Brooklyn Bridge to the south, and Fourth Avenue and the Bowery to the west, extending to Baxter and Pearl Streets south of Canal Street. This community is filled with a diversity of cultures, religions, incomes, and languages. Its character comes from its heritage as a historic and present day first stop for many immigrants. CB 3 is one of the largest board districts and is the fifth most densely populated board district, with approximately 152,453 people.[1] Our residents are very proud of their historic and diverse neighborhood, however, the very characteristics that make this district unique also make it a challenging place to plan and ensure services for all residents and businesses.

Demographic Change

The CB 3 population is changing in many ways. The 2000 census reported that 23% of our population, over 38,000 of our residents, required income support. By 2014, this number had jumped to about 41% of the total population, over 68,000 persons.[2] The number of people receiving Medicaid-only assistance also continues to increase, climbing from 45,724 in 2005[3] to more than 48,200 people currently.[4]

Our community is an example of the growing income inequality that is endemic in New York City. In a report by the Furman Center, CB 3 is ranked second out of the 59 boards in the City for a high diversity ratio between lower income and higher income residents.[5] The same report shows that approximately 30% of our residents have household incomes under $20,000 while nearly 25% earn more than $100,000.[6]

[1] Furman Center. (2016). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2015*. < http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/NYUFurmanCenter_SOCin2015_9JUNE2016.pdf>.
[2] New York City Department of City Planning. (2014). *District Profile*. <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/neigh_info/mn03_info.shtml>.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] U.S Census Bureau. *2010-2014 American Community Survey.*
[5] Furman Center. (2016). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2015*. <http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/NYUFurmanCenter_SOCin2015_9JUNE2016.pdf >.
[6] *Ibid.*

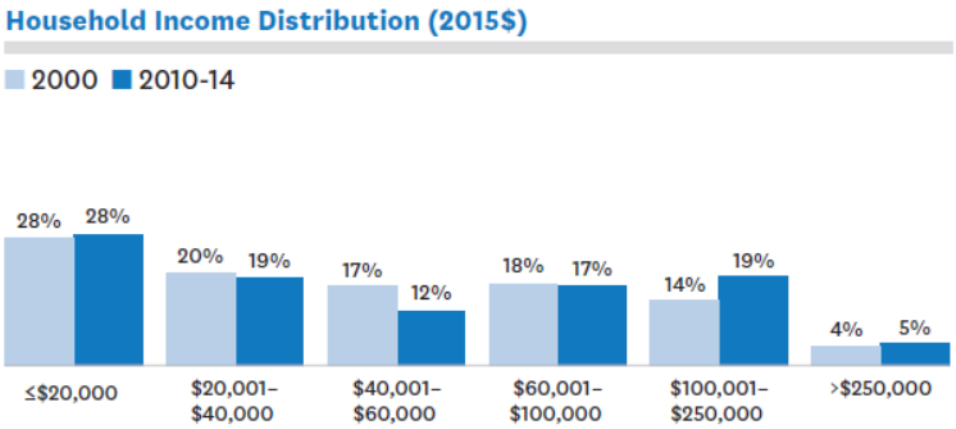

Figure 1. Household Income Distribution of Community District 3, 2010-2014

Higher-income households have continued to increase since 2000 (see Figure 1), a trend similar to that of lower-income households. Further, the income diversity ratio, which is the gap between incomes, has increased over the last two years from 7.5% to 8.4%.[7] Market rate housing and high-end retail continues to grow although many people within our community continue to live on the edge of homelessness and economic survival. An estimated 22% of people in CB 3[8], as well as approximately 36% of their children under the age of 18, and 31% of seniors are living below the poverty level.[9]

Income inequality is tied into the escalating rate of gentrification. When we look at gentrification indicators, we see rising incomes, changing racial composition, shifting commercial activity and displacement of original residents. The Lower East Side / Chinatown is the 3rd highest gentrifying District in the City. We have seen a 26.6% increase in average rent from 2010-2014, along with an 21% increase in average income. The demographics have changed to an increase of 56.3% in non-family households—young adults make up a growing share of the population.[10] These changes all create a new culture in the community alongside of middle and lower income residents

CB 3 is the fifth highest racially diverse neighborhood in the City, with a foreign born population of 36%.[11] We are approximately 36% White, 32% Asian, 23% Hispanic, and 7% Black or African American.[12] The percentage of White and Black residents has increased while the numbers of Latinos and Asians have decreased. These population increases and declines are the opposite of demographic changes seen in New York City overall, according to the Furman Report.[13]

Economic Change

CB 3 has worked to retain its affordable housing stock and its local businesses while still serving the needs of its newcomers. The displacement of long-time residential and commercial residents is a great loss to this community. Many small family-owned stores, especially those that serve local

[7] *Ibid.*
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] U.S. Census Bureau. *2010-2014 American Community Survey.*
[10] Furman Center. (2016). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2015.* <http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/NYUFurmanCenter_SOCin2015_9JUNE2016.pdf >.
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] *Ibid.*
[13] *Ibid.*

retail needs and arts businesses, have been replaced by an ever-growing number of bars and restaurants. Families have been displaced from their homes because they cannot afford increasing rents. Community-based organizations, which provide essential services for community residents, struggle to provide more services and fund themselves with fewer resources. The growing need to provide for our lower-income residents in a gentrifying district, as well as provide services for all residents, continues to be a challenge for CB 3.

Livable Neighborhood

The metamorphosis of this district into a nightlife destination has increased quality of life complaints. Year after year, CB 3 continues to lead or come in second among Manhattan community boards for the most NYPD commercial noise complaints (nightlife noise). CB 3 had 3894 311 nightlife complaints in the last fiscal year. This is the highest in the City and represents a 36% increase in the last fiscal year.[14] Nighttime noise from nightlife establishments and their patrons is the most frequent complaint to the community board office. These complaints are very difficult to resolve because no agency has sole jurisdiction over quality of life enforcement. Lack of planning for enhanced police enforcement during cabaret hours, as well as lack of sanitation and traffic infrastructure to support this unplanned nightlife district, further impairs our ability to maintain a livable neighborhood for both newcomers and longtime residents.

Resiliency

Thirty percent of residential units in CB 3 are located in FEMA preliminary floor hazard areas.[15] This caused the District to be severely impacted by Superstorm Sandy. A significant portion of CB 3 lost electricity for five days or more and flooding along the waterfront of the Lower East Side and East Village went inland several blocks. Residents of NYCHA were disproportionately impacted. Many small businesses lost all their inventory and days of business. There are several projects underway, listed below, in various stages, to address resiliency and recovery challenges.

- East Side Coastal Resiliency Project: $335 million federal award to improve resiliency and recovery measures from Montgomery St. to E. 23rd St along the East River (currently in research and community outreach phase)
- HUD's National Disaster Resiliency Competition of $176 million for Two Bridges area, in addition to a City investment of $27 million, totaling $203 million
- NY State's NY Rising Program: participatory recovery and resiliency initiative established to provide assistance to 124 communities severely damaged by Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene, and Tropical Storm Lee. Lower Manhattan community covers all neighborhoods south of 14th Street. Committee members voted on a variety of projects to address community planning and capacity building, economic development, including resiliency measures for small businesses, health and social services, housing, infrastructure and natural and cultural resources. (currently in procurement phase)

It is critical that all resiliency and recovery efforts make significant strides in the following areas:

- Engage with residents of CB 3 to solicit input into potential changes and improvements
- Engage with local stakeholders, including CBOs and NYCHA leadership

[14] City of New York (2016). *311 Service Request Map: July 2015 to June 2016.* <http://www1.nyc.gov/apps/311srmap/>.

[15] Furman Center. (2016). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2015.* <http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/NYUFurmanCenter_SOCin2015_9JUNE2016.pdf >.

- Ensure that all workshops include trilingual interpretation and materials are translated into Spanish and Chinese, in addition to English
- All three projects listed above include significant portions of funding for feasibility studies, with additional investments needed for implementation. It is crucial that all relevant City, State, and Federal agencies continue to invest in recovery and resiliency efforts to follow through on improvement plans.
- Ensure that all resiliency efforts are coordinated with City and State projects that impact the waterfront. Examples include ferry landing on Grand St., redesign of East River Esplanade, NYCHA resiliency efforts, etc.

Human Services

CB 3 is an economically and racially diverse district. It is imperative that initiatives to address the human services needs discussed below are culturally and linguistically appropriate in order to effectively serve this district's residents.

Youth Services

CB 3 is home to more than 20,200 children under 18 years of age.[16] The 2010-2014 American Community Survey found that approximately 36% of the population under 18 years had income below the poverty level and roughly 35% of family households with related children under 18 years of age were below the poverty level.[17] Over 25% of households received cash public assistance or food stamps/SNAP.[18] According to the 2015 Furman report, 28% of households residing within CB 3 have a household income of $20,000 or less[19], and many of these families rely on community-based programs such as Beacon community centers during after-school hours and on weekends and holidays.

Families and youth are in need of intervention services and support system programming. Agencies working with at risk youth populations agree that proactive programs are needed, such as employment, training opportunities, and programs in addition to sports. Community centers, after school programs, and employment opportunities are necessary to positively engage youth.

- **Expand Access to COMPASS Programming -** COMPASS funding for elementary school and high school students remains in high demand, and CB3 supports expansion of elementary and high school COMPASS funding to ensure that programs can be high quality and operate on a stable and consistent basis.

- **Increase Youth Employment & Job Training Opportunities -** Older youth, and at-risk youth in particular, need employment and job training opportunities such as the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) and the Young Adult Internship Program (YAIP), which helps produce critically important and positive outcomes, such as higher lifetime earnings and higher rates of high school attendance and graduation. According to a report

[16] U.S. Census Bureau. *2010-2014 American Community Survey.*
[17] *Ibid.*
[18] *Ibid.*
[19] Furman Center. (2016). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2015.* <http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/NYUFurmanCenter_SOCin2015_9JUNE2016.pdf >.

by the New York City Independent Budget Office, contractors including CB 3's Chinese American Planning Council and Chinatown Manpower will provide summer jobs opportunities for approximately 60,000 students citywide in summer 2016. While 60,000 is an all-time high for New York City, over 130,000 youth applied for summer jobs and many were turned away in 2015.[20]Youth unemployment rates continue to be at record highs in NYC. CB 3 is encouraged by the significant investment of SYEP slots by City Council funding for summer 2015, but supports SYEP funding to be baselined by the Mayor. In addition, there is a need to expand existing programs and/or to add new programs to ensure that our older and at-risk youth have the job training and employment opportunities necessary to succeed.

- **Provide Services for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care** - Teens in foster care often age out of care without having acquired the skills necessary for a successful transition to independence. According to NYC Administration for Children's Services, CB 3 was the third highest district of origin in Manhattan for foster care placements with 73 children in 2015.[21] While the majority of placements in CB 3 are age 5 and younger, 13% of CB 3's placements aged out of care.[22] According to the Children's Aid Society, many of these young people will exit the foster care system "without the knowledge, skills, experience, attitudes, habits and relationships that will enable them to be productive and connected members of society." Therefore, it is necessary that we maintain and expand programs to help this youth population make the transition from our foster care system to independence and adulthood.

- **Support LGBT Youth Programs** - Grand Street Settlement is home to ProjectSpeakOutLoud (Project S.O.L), a program for LGBTQ youth that offers a safe space for some of the city's most at-risk youth. CB 3 supports the continued funding of Project S.O.L. and a further expansion of comprehensive services for LGBTQ youth on the Lower East Side.

- **Baseline Funding for Cornerstone & Beacon Centers** - CB 3 currently has four Cornerstone Programs, which provide engaging, high-quality, year-round programs for adults and young people that enhance skills and promote social interaction, community engagement, and physical activity. These NYCHA-based community centers are run by CBO partners Chinatown YMCA, Henry Street Settlement, University Settlement, and Grand St. Settlement. In addition, CB 3 supports baselining of funding for the Cornerstone ensure that the programs operate in a stable and consistent manner and can continue to provide these critical services to the community.

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[20] NYC Department of Youth and Community Development. (2015). *SYEP Annual Summary* <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/downloads/pdf/2015_SYEP_Annual_Summary.pdf>.
[21] New York York City Administration for Children's Services. (2015). *Child Welfare Indicators Annual Report 2015.* <http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/acs/pdf/data-analysis/2016/CityCouncilAnnualReport.pdf>.
[22] 2013 ACS Community Snapshot report

Senior Services

According to the NYC Department of Aging and the U.S. Census Bureau:

- There are roughly 24,000 seniors in CB 3, which is approximately 15% of CB 3's population.[23]
- Over 70% of CB 3 seniors aged 60 and above are foreign born – the second highest ranking community district in Manhattan for percentage of foreign born seniors.[24]
- Approximately 26% of seniors speak Spanish and 42% speak Asian and Pacific Island languages. Roughly 77% of individuals speaking Spanish as well as Asian and Pacific Island languages reported speaking English "not well" or "not at all" according to the 2010-2014 ACS.[25]
- Approximately 7500 seniors (65+) in CB 3 are below the poverty line, which is approximately 31% of seniors in the district.[26]

In order to accommodate the district's vulnerable senior population, CB 3 calls for the continuation and strengthening of:

- Multilingual supports and services that allow seniors to remain in their homes and communities, such as congregate and home-delivered meals, case management and coordination, home care services (including non-Medicaid funding homecare), safe and reliable van transportation, physical and mental healthcare, recreational activities, programs like Visiting Neighbors that provide much needed companionship and assistance with essential activities such as shopping and affordable, accessible housing.
- Services such as Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORC) provide critical supports to help seniors age safely in their own homes, and funding for existing programs should be maintained, while the NORC programs in our community should be expanded.
- The loss of private senior centers, like the Salvation Army Chinatown Corps on the Bowery, puts additional pressure on public senior centers such as Meltzer and BRC which were almost lost a few years ago. This district cannot afford to lose senior centers, particularly since they are culturally sensitive to our diverse community and in proximity to so many seniors' homes.
- Accessibility for seniors and people with limited mobility, including:
    - Facilitation of easier and safer access to the bus by providing regular, ongoing enforcement at bus stops to prevent other vehicles from using the bus stop to park
    - A focus on safety concerns at various intersections, including those with nearby construction
    - Improvement of broken sidewalks located at the City's properties under the Manhattan bridge

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[23] U.S. Census Bureau. *2010-2014 American Community Survey.* <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_5YR_DP05&prodType=table>

[24] New York City Department for the Aging. (2013). *Profile of Older New Yorkers.* <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dfta/downloads/pdf/demographic/new_yorker_profile.pdf>.

[25] *Ibid.*

[26] U.S. Census Bureau. *2010-2014 American Community Survey.*

Emergency Preparedness

The nearest evacuation center is Seward Park High School.[27] Neighborhoods with aging populations face mobility challenges. In CB3 there are many residential buildings that have multiple floors and several residential developments containing elevators. CB3 supports continued emergency management plans that include providing information, in multiple languages, on emergency health care, medications, prescriptions, medical equipment, transportation considerations, safety, goods and services.

Homeless Services

Department of Homeless Services reports that the number one cause of homelessness for families with children in New York City is eviction (at 30%) and the number two cause is domestic violence (at 23%). There has been a dramatic increase of homelessness in NYC, DHS reporting over 57,000 individuals in shelters in addition to street homeless.

Community Board 3 is experiencing the largest number of complaints regarding homeless in the district than has been seen in recent history. There appears to be more homeless encampments and more substance abuse. Individuals receiving placement seem to be immediately replaced by more street homeless, so there is not any improvement in the homeless situation.

Previous CB 3 District Needs Statements advocated for all homeless to be on case management, which has been instituted. However, this problem has not improved. CB 3 hopes DHS will continue to look for additional methods of engagement with the homeless to improve the numbers accepting shelter and services. This should consider better coordination with NYPD regarding identification and follow up with people at identified locations and plans and coordination for this engagement. This should also involve coordination with DOH for services for mental health and substance abuse.

Community Board 3 is home to over 15 shelters, among the highest in the City. Most of these facilities are absorbed into the community without notice. Large facilities in CB 3 must continue to be accompanied by appropriate security for the safety of both shelter residents and neighbors as recently instituted by DHS.

- DHS should investigate making Kenton Hall into an in-house program that will not necessitate having residents go back and forth between Kenton and Third Street Shelter for meals, as this exacerbates the problem of crowds of people on the street, allowing for illegal or inappropriate behavior.

- Approximately 35% of clients in NYC homeless shelters suffer from a serious mental illness.[28]

We continue to see increased homeless adults in the area of the district north of Houston Street. Manhattan Outreach Consortium reports that on average, once an individual is added to caseload, it takes two weeks to get them inside and off of the street.

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[27] NYC Office of Emergency Management. *Evacuation Zones.* <http://www.nyc.gov/html/oem/downloads/pdf/hurricane_map_english.pdf>.

[28] City of New York. *ThriveNYC: A Mental Health Roadmap for All.* <https://thrivenyc.cityofnewyork.us/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/ThriveNYC.pdf>.

- In the last fiscal year, MOC has placed 225 clients into permanent housing and the retention rate is 92% after one year.

- CB 3 is the summer destination of young homeless travelers. There are many complaints of aggressive and inappropriate public behavior and drugs. The City now places this population in case management and offers services, but particular needs point to the necessity for a specific plan for these individuals. Many have animals and therefore cannot accept standard shelter, and many are much younger than the year-round homeless population.

CB 3 also supports additional efforts to combat youth homelessness. According to Safe Horizon, nearly 7,400 homeless people 24 years old and younger live in New York City.

- Approximately 40% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ, compared to 10% of the general youth population in the United States.[29] LGBTQ runaway and homeless youth face a unique set of challenges, from greater exposure to HIV/AIDS to being ostracized by their families and communities. Specialized outreach services are required to address these challenges. In FY 16, over $21 million was included in the City budget to address youth homelessness.[30] CB 3 supports the baselining of this funding and an expansion of programs to reach out to homeless youth, especially LGBTQ youth.

- Homeless youth identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer are more likely to commit suicide than other youth.[31] In order for the City to identify and address this vulnerable population, CB 3 supports the inclusion of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression in the DHS's Homeless Outreach Population Estimate.

Health

Much of the health data used by CB 3 is from the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) 2014 Community Health Survey. However, it should be noted that this information, while the most detailed we have, includes the following zip codes: 10002, 10003, 10004, 10005, 10006, 10007, 10009, 10038, 10048, 10280, and 10282. CB 3 only includes, 10002, 10009, most of 10003, and small portions of 10013 and 10038. Therefore, we do not have health data that is definitive for CB 3.

Specific Health Concerns

- **Mental Health** - Adolescents exposed to childhood adversity, including family malfunctioning, abuse, neglect, violence, and economic adversity, are nearly twice as likely to experience the onset of mental disorders and the risk to their mental health grows with additional exposures.[32] The adult psychiatric hospitalization rate in the Lower East Side

[29] Safe Horizon. *Homeless Youth Statistics.* <http://www.safehorizon.org/page/homeless-youth-statistics--facts-69.html>.
[30] The Council of the City of New York. (2016). *Report on the Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget.* <http://council.nyc.gov/html/budget/2017/ex/dycd.pdf>.
[31] Safe Horizon. *Homeless Youth Statistics.* <http://www.safehorizon.org/page/homeless-youth-statistics--facts-69.html>.
[32] City of New York. *ThriveNYC: A Mental Health Roadmap for All.* <https://thrivenyc.cityofnewyork.us/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/ThriveNYC.pdf>.

and Chinatown is higher than the rates in NYC overall.[33] CB 3 supports continued availability of convenient prevention, inpatient and outpatient mental health services for pediatric, adolescent and adults that accept various insurances including Medicaid and has accessible and multilingual resources to service diverse populations.

- **HIV/AIDS -** HIV / AIDS continues to be a serious health crisis in CB 3. In 2013, there were 3,281 people living with HIV/AIDS in the Union Square/Lower East Side United Hospital Fund district.[34] Of those individuals, 81% were male. The same report shows there were 41 AIDS diagnoses and 58 deaths in this district (which includes ZIP codes 10002, 10003 and 10009).[35] It is essential that our community continues to receive educational efforts and services, such as HIV testing services and access to needle exchange programs. Funding is needed to enhance existing programs and to develop better linkages between programs in order to reduce fragmentation of service delivery.

- **Alcohol -** The alcohol- related hospitalization rate in the Lower East Side and Chinatown is higher than the rates in NYC overall.[36] CB3 supports continued availability of convenient inpatient and outpatient alcohol detoxification and rehabilitation services as well as prevention services that accepts various health insurances including Medicaid and has accessible and multilingual resources to serve diverse populations.

- **Drug Abuse -** The drug related hospitalizations rate in the Lower East Side and Chinatown is higher than the rates in NYC overall.[37] CB3 supports continued availability of convenient prevention, inpatient and outpatient drug detoxification and rehabilitation services as well as prevention services that accepts various health insurances including Medicaid and has accessible and multilingual resources to serve diverse populations.

- **Diabetes** - continues to be a major health issue affecting communities within CB3 including in NYCHA, Section 8, low income communities along the East River. The rate of adult Diabetes within CB3 has been at 12%, nearly twice the rate of Manhattan (7%) and ranking higher in percentage of cases overall than the rate of New York City (10%)[38]. Funding is needed to increase education in low income and minority neighborhoods dealing with this disease to learn preventive measures such as affordable and healthy meal alternatives. To offset the development of Diabetes, awareness of overconsumption of sugary products and workshops to develop strategies to better manage sugar levels are needed to reach our high risk communities.

- **Asthma** - This community needs funding to reduce known asthma triggers, such as poor housing conditions and rodent and insect infestation, as well as funding to increase education and awareness of how to reduce these triggers and thereby reduce the incidence of asthma. The DOHMH 2013 Community Health Survey reported the Union Square/Lower Manhattan district ranking in the highest third of New York City for

[33] NYC Department of Health. (2015). *Community Health Profiles 2015 – Manhattan Community District 3.* https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/data/2015chp-mn3.pdf
[34] New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. (2013). *HIV/AIDS Annual Surveillance Tables*.
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] NYC Department of Health. (2015). *Community Health Profiles 2015 – Manhattan Community District 3.* https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/data/2015chp-mn3.pdf
[37] *Ibid.*
[38] *Ibid.*

residents having an asthma attack in that year.[39] New York State Asthma Hospital Discharge data by ZIP codes (from 2010-2012 data) shows variation in asthma rates by age in CB 3; of the population 65 years and older, 10002 is among the highest rates (73.6 per 10,000 population). In the population 17 years and younger, the discharge rate per 10,000 people was 19.8.

- **LGBTQ-Specific Care** - CB3 supports continued funding for organizations that provide LGBTQ-affirming health care services such as personalized primary care, initiation and maintenance of hormone replacement therapy, and care management.

- **Access to Health Care** - Community District 3 is a federally designated health professional shortage area in the fields of primary care, dental care, and mental health.[40] With the closure of Rivington Houses, a long standing health facility that provided jobs on the Lower East Side and health care to hundreds of patients, access to health care and health facilities are continually diminishing. According to the CB 3 Urban Planning Fellow report, The Role of Safety-Net Providers in Manhattan Community Board 3, there is a need to increase the number of Chinese-speaking providers. This report also recommends working with existing providers to create more urgent care locations.[41]

Rivington House

- Rivington House was an AIDS/HIV nursing care facility, housed in a former public school, until 2014. The facility had a deed restriction to remain a not-for-profit nursing home in perpetuity. In 2014 it was bought and New York State Department of Health transitioned the facility to a 219-bed general nursing facility. Because the community had recently lost two nursing homes, Cabrini[42] and Bialystoker[43], Rivington House and Gouverneur Medical Center became the only two nursing homes serving the District. In 2015 the deed restriction was inappropriately and very wrongly lifted due to various problems including lack of transparency and accountability and other still unknown issues, and the building is now privately owned and slated for luxury housing.[44]

- Community Board 3 and the community remain very strongly committed to keeping this facility and the 219 nursing home beds. Although there are many needs in the District, including affordable housing as a continuing top priority, nursing home beds are also a top priority with increasing importance because of the increasing senior population. New hospital protocols that require patients to be released early also require nursing home beds for subacute care. Community Board 3 is resolute in its commitment to keep Rivington House and its 219 nursing home beds as a much needed community facility. The need to restore these 219 nursing home beds to this

[39] New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. *Epiquery: NYC Interactive Health Data System - Community Health Survey 2013*. <http://nyc.gov/health/epiquery>
[40] Health Resources and Services Administration. (2016). <https://datawarehouse.hrsa.gov/tools/analyzers/Hpsafind.aspx>
[41] Yang, A. (2015). *Phase Two: A Preliminary Inventory and Assessment of Health Care Facilities within Manhattan Community District 3.* http://www.nyc.gov/html/mancb3/downloads/fellowship/Safety%20Net%20Providers%20in%20CB%203_Final.pdf
[42] Litvak, E. (2012). Elected Officials Release Statement Confirming Nursing Home Closure. *The Lo-Down.* <http://www.thelodownny.com/leslog/2012/03/elected-officials-release-statement-confirming-nursing-home-closure.html#>.
[43] Berger, J. (2011). Closing a Nursing Home, and a Chapter of New York History. *New York Times*. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/12/nyregion/bialystoker-home-for-aged-to-close.html?_r=0>.
[44] New York City Department of Investigation. (2016). *Examination of the City's Removal of the Deed Restriction at 45 Rivington Street in Manhattan.*

community cannot be met by funds or by considering other priority needs. Other priority needs should be considered in addition to this nursing home that cannot be replaced.

While 93% of residents in the Union Square-Lower Manhattan district have some form of health insurance coverage, approximately 10% of residents in the district did not get medical care at some point in 2014 when they needed it.[45] Considering that over 21% of residents reported that they were in fair or poor general health in the 2014 Community Health Survey[46], it is essential that there is equitable access to health care services, particularly since most medical facilities are clustered around Union Square and Chinatown (see Figure 2 below).

In 2014, 241,126 people in Manhattan were identified as having Medicaid only as income support. Of those, 49,405 are identified in Manhattan Community District 3.[47] CB 3 supports continued and expanded availability of prevention, wellness, inpatient and outpatient health care services that accept Medicaid.

Figure 2. Health Care Facilities In and Around Community District 3[48]

[45] New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. *Epiquery: NYC Interactive Health Data System - Community Health Survey 2015*. <http://nyc.gov/health/epiquery>
[46] *Ibid.*
[47] NYC Department of City Planning. *Community Portal.* <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/planning/community/community-portal-1.page?cd=mn03>.
[48] Yang, A. (2014). *A Preliminary Inventory and Assessment of Health Care Facilities within Manhattan Community District 3.*

Education

Community District 3 is home to 44 public schools (31 in Community School District 1 (CSD1) and 13 in CSD2)[49] and 5 charter schools. In addition to all day Pre-K offered in every K-5 or K-8 CSD1 school, 16 community-based organizations also offer Pre-K.[50] Over 12,000 students were enrolled in CSD1 schools in the 2015-2016 academic year. Demographically[51]:

- 42% identify as Hispanic or Latino, 21% as Asian or Pacific Islander/Other, 17% as Black or African-American, and 17% as White
- 69% live at or below the poverty level
- 9% are English Language Learners
- 20% are Students with Disabilities

In addition to these statistics, the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness found that over 2000 students in Community District 3 were homeless in School Year 2013-2014, second highest among the twelve community districts in Manhattan and eleventh highest among all NYC. This was a 23% increase from School Year 2010-2011.[52]

Reduce Class Sizes

According to DOE data, 4 CSD1 school buildings, housing 6 schools, are over-utilized.[53] Additionally, more than 1,000 new students are projected in Pre-K through 8th grade in CSD1 over the next 5-10 years, with another 3,000 students expected for the same grades in CSD2.[54] However, no new seats are provided for CSD1 in the 5-year Capital plan.[55]

Reduce School Overcrowding

85% of CSD1 schools share a building with one or more schools, resulting in reduced access to gym, arts and enrichment, science labs, and acceptable hours for school lunch. With 1,000 new apartments slated for Essex Crossing by 2024, there is a need for a new K through 8th grade school, as demonstrated by CB3 in 2014.[56]

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[49] NYC Department of Education Elementary and Middle School Directories.

[50] NYC Department of Education. (2015). *Pre-K for All. New York City District Schools and Early Education Centers.* <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/1F829192-ABE8-4BE6-93B5-1A33A6CCC32E/0/2015PreKDirectoryManhattan.pdf>.

[51] NYC Department of Education. (2015-2016). *Demographic Snapshot.* <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/schools/data/default.htm>.

[52] Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness. (2016). *On the Map: Community Snapshots.* <http://www.icphusa.org/index.asp?page=17&asset=385>.

[53] NYC Department of Education. (2015). *Space Overutilization in New York City Public Schools.* <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/FC61395C-B1F6-427D-9575-42DDFA6C8B0A/0/OverutilizationReport35_15_FINAL.pdf>.

[54] Grier, E. & Grier, G. (2013). *Enrollment Projections 2012-2021 New York City Public Schools.* <http://www.nycsca.org/Community/CapitalPlanManagementReportsData/Demographics/2012-2021GrierPartnershipReport.pdf>.

[55] NYC Department of Education. (2015). *Proposed Five Year Capital Plan FY 2015-2019.* <http://www.nycsca.org/Community/CapitalPlanManagementReportsData/CapPlan/05072015_15_19_CityCouncilBased.pdf>.

[56] Manhattan Community Board 3. (2014). *Essex Crossing School Position Paper.* <http://www.nyc.gov/html/mancb3/downloads/planning/CB%203%20Essex%20Crossing%20School%20Position%20Paper%20(FINAL%206.11.14).pdf>.

Restore School Budgets
In Fiscal Year 2015 alone, there was a shortfall of $2.5 billion of outstanding state aid to New York City schools.[57] This has devastating impacts, particularly in our CB with its many high-poverty schools.

Address the Lack of Accessible Schools
No new buildings have been constructed in CSD1 since long before the passage of the ADA, resulting in very few wheelchair accessible schools.[58] The need for access for the disabled to schools extends to students, parents, staff and teachers, and many community uses, including as a place to vote.

Socioeconomic School Integration
Student subgroups (e.g., students with Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs)), English Language Learners (ELLs); Black, Latino, Asian, and economically disadvantaged students) are generally highly concentrated within particular schools in CB3. A district-wide student assignment policy would equalize the distribution of high-needs subgroups in district schools and raise achievement by reducing student achievement gaps.[59]

CSD 2 Middle Schools
District 2 covers an extremely large area of Manhattan up to the Upper East Side. It is vital that the need for convenient public middle school seats including those for students with special needs be assessed.

Specific CSD2 Need: Serving English Language Learners
CSD2 advocates for supportive services for English Language Learners specifically to address the issue of students arriving in the school system at middle-school age or higher.

Transportation

Accessibility and Safety
Accessibility and pedestrian safety are a Community Board 3 priority, especially with nearly 8% of residents reporting ambulatory difficulty[60]:

- Curb cuts are essential to make the sidewalks accessible for people who rely on wheelchairs for mobility. Currently they are forced to travel in the street in some locations. An expedited schedule for the remaining curb cut installations is an essential priority.
- Many existing curb cuts need repair. NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) should prioritize identification and repair of curb cuts that do not meet smoothly with the street bed.

[57] NYC Department of Education. (2015). *Fair Student Funding and School Budget Resource Guide.* <http://schools.nyc.gov/offices/d_chanc_oper/budget/dbor/allocationmemo/fy14_15/FY15_PDF/FSF_Guide.pdf>.
[58] NYC Functionally Accessible Schools, As of September 2015. <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/C726DECA-2C56-48B1-81A0-919641302846/189142/Manhattan_September_2017.pdf>.; Letter from U.S. D.O.J. to NYC Department of Education, December 21, 2015. <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/file/801161/download>
[59] N Reardon, S.F. (2015). School Segregation and Racial Academic Achievement Gaps. (CEPA Working Paper No.15-12). Retrieved on June 27, 2016 from *Stanford Center for Education Policy Analysis*: <http://cepa.stanford.edu/wp15-12>.
[60] U.S. Census Bureau. *American Community Survey 2010-2014.* <http://factfinder.census.gov>

- All crosswalks should be clearly marked and curb cuts should be well-defined in the pavement.
- Ponding makes it difficult for pedestrians to cross some streets in the district. The source of ponding on streets must be identified. Such sources may include uneven street grading, impervious surface cover, storm drain blockage or the fact that much of the district is located in a flood zone. NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) should correct these ponding problems by increasing pervious surfaces such as bioswales and continue regular maintenance of catch basins.
- Improved accessibility of bus stops is necessary for seniors and the disabled.
- Construction sites on both sidewalks and streets diminish the navigability of the pedestrian network.
- Navigability of wide corridors with high traffic volumes need pedestrian safety improvements. In 2012 the Delancey Street Pedestrian Safety Plan improved safety along the corridor significantly. Other corridors, such as Essex Street are also in need of pedestrian safety improvements and traffic calming measures.

Additionally, new patterns of sidewalk and street usage associated with increased cycling have created the following needs:

- Increased NYPD focus on enforcing traffic laws regarding dangerous cyclist behavior: riding against traffic, on sidewalks, through red lights and without yielding to pedestrians. This, along with designing bicycle and pedestrian facilities that encourage traffic calming, will help reduce pedestrian-cyclist conflicts.

Curbside Management

Local businesses need adequate loading/unloading zones for commercial delivery. Curbside parking regulations need to balance competing demands of pedestrians, businesses and motorists.

- Commercial delivery needs must be considered by DOT when DOT assigns on-street bus stop locations through the intercity bus permit system. Existing truck loading zones should not be eliminated if this threatens the continued operation of existing local businesses. An increasing residential population makes the commercial loading and unloading on the west side of Allen Street problematic for the increased pedestrian activity. The intercity bus loading further exacerbates the problem and creates congestion at the curb and on the sidewalk.

Bus Management

- The Intercity bus permit system has not been effective because there is not a means to enforce compliance and collect violations. Because the buses are registered in other states, the Department of Finance has not been able to follow up on summons as they have not been adjudicated. It appears that bus companies have realized this and stopped applying for permitted stops.
- There are frequent complaints of buses laying over and picking up and discharging passengers illegally. This occurs in MTA bus stops and results in buses not being able to discharge and pick up passengers at the curb. This in turn does not allow buses to use their accessibility ramps. People with walkers and wheelchairs are not able to have access at the stops. Additionally, people must navigate traffic to board and leave buses in traffic lanes.
- CB 3 has received many complaints from small businesses that bus companies continually using illegal stops interfere with their businesses. This is generally because of large crowds blocking sidewalks and entrances to businesses and sidewalk cafes. These buses also take

up parking spaces needed by small businesses for customers picking up goods or companies delivering goods.

Public Transportation

Community Board 3 is underserved by public transportation, though 55% of workers aged sixteen and over use public transit to commute to work[61].

- The eastern and southern-most residents of the district will continue to be without public transportation until the MTA/NYCT restores or extends cross-town bus routes.
- Despite the district's density, many of our residents are poorly served by the subway system and 15% live more than half a mile from the nearest subway stop[62].
- There is a need for more east/west bus service south of 8th Street. The ease of East/West travel has been diminished by the elimination of the Grand Street Bus in the early 1980's and by the limited number of M14A's.
- The City should take strong, creative measures in the district to reduce traffic congestion, which contributes to a vicious cycle of reduced ridership and reduced service. The MTA/NYCT will reduce service after ridership on a bus route drops below a certain threshold. Service cuts have a severely negative impact on vulnerable populations, including the disabled, who rely on public transportation.

Policing

- The rising demand for and supply of heroin within Community Board 3, in particular in the East Village which has become a magnet for heroin sellers and purchasers, requires increased police resources. The NYPD should dedicate greater local and citywide enforcement resources toward reducing the availability of heroin, and the violence that accompanies its sale, in our community. These additional resources should be targeted and personnel-based, and not rely upon police towers and electronic monitoring technology.

Rodents

Community Board 3 has seen an increased rat problem in the last year. The failure rate for rat findings has increased from 8.3% in 2014 to almost 13% currently according to the Department of Health Indexing.[63] The serious rat infestation problem in Community Board 3 is a public health and safety issue:

- CB 3 is among the worst of all community boards in Manhattan for failing rat inspections
- In FY 2016, CB 3 ranked second lowest among Manhattan community boards for percentage of acceptably clean streets.[64]
- CB 3 is an unplanned destination nightlife district, but does not have the sanitation infrastructure to accommodate this. DSNY litter baskets often overflow. The Department of Health has stated that the number of eating/drinking businesses contributes to this problem, but there is no plan to deal with the problem. Sanitation needs to have more basket pickups on weekends to prevent garbage on the streets that attract rats.
- Sidewalk "rat-restaurant" baskets need to be replaced with rat-proof litter baskets.
- CB 3 is very densely populated. There are many old tenements without access to indoor storage or compactors. Increased curbside refuse and recycling pickup service are needed.

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[61] U.S. Census. *American Community Survey 2010-2014.* <http://factfinder.census.gov>
[62] *Ibid.*
[63] NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. *Rat Indexing.*
[64] NYC Mayor's Office of Operations. *Scorecard/Street Cleanliness Rating.* <http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/operations/downloads/pdf/fy2016_201606_bcb.pdf>.

Environment
Community District 3 has few city resources allocated to reduce significant and persistent impacts from the traffic and infrastructure of:

- Three bridges (300,000 average daily vehicles and the J,M,Z,B,D,N,Q,R train lines)
- Major Transportation corridors (i.e. FDR drive; 135,000 average daily vehicles)
- Vehicles approaching bridges on the east or tunnels on the west side
- New and pending large scale developments
- Vehicle idling, and widespread curb side bus operations
- The expanded 14 Street con Edison fossil fuel power plant

These cause disparate air, water, noise, and light pollution and are major risk factors for asthma, a leading cause of childhood hospitalizations and missed school days.[65]

Worsening this is widespread concrete and asphalt land cover, which makes up our district at a rate significantly above the NYC average of 72%.[66] This intensifies the impacts of our heavy traffic and development burden by making it harder to manage stormwater, neutralize airborne and waterborne pollutants, dampen light and noise pollution, and foster a healthy, diverse environment.

Solutions employed in the Outer Boroughs where negative environmental impacts of urbanization are mitigated by building out green infrastructure near impacted areas are very much needed and relevant to our community character. Therefore, to improve the quality of air: water, local ecology and health jeopardized In Community District 3:

- Green street side development of trees, rain gardens, bioswales, and also blue and green roofs needs to be prioritized and planned to manage our disproportionate burden of particulate materials, polluted runoff, stormwater flooding, light and noise pollution.
- A wide array of native plantings needs to be used to enhance resiliency and biodiversity for our street trees, other plants and local ecology.
- Idling regulations need to be strictly enforced by the NYPD.

Two neighborhoods within our district are plagued with nearly incessant, deafening noise caused by subways traversing the East River by bridge: the Lower East Side with respect to the Williamsburg Bridge, and Chinatown with the Manhattan Bridge. While this level of noise - which negatively impacts the health and quality of life of those who live, work, and attend school in those neighborhoods, including many young children - has become a sad fact-of-life for these communities, it need not be. The City, working alone or in conjunction with the MTA, should take affirmative steps to mitigate the noise from subways using these bridges so as to lessen its adverse effects on the residents of Community Board 3.

Development and Construction
CB 3 is experiencing another development boom and the lack of accompanying planning has resulted in negative impacts. Infrastructure support, including more garbage pickups and traffic planning, is urgently needed. The construction has created pedestrian safety issues and caused traffic backups in locations where staging is limiting the effective street and sidewalk width. There is a need for more sanitation services near newly developed housing, additional traffic safety officers near construction sites and the installation of traffic calming measures along major

[65] NYC Department of Health. *Asthma.* <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/asthma.page>
[66] NYC Department of Environmental Protection. <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/stormwater/index.shtml

corridors. As the neighborhood becomes more densely populated there will also be increased demand for first responders

Landmarks

Although there is no formal process for expression of district needs for the Landmarks Preservation Commission, the Committee would like to comment, especially in light of the recently passed legislation (Intro 775A) imposing strict deadlines on the designation process.

CB 3 is rich in buildings of historic, cultural, and architectural significance. LPC should expedite designation of historic districts and individual landmarks in a community under threat of inappropriate development.

Some of the areas in need of immediate action are:

- Extension of the East Village/Lower East Side Historic district
- Extension of the East 10h Street Historic District to include the area surrounding Tompkins Square Park
- An historic district south of Delancey Street
- A Chinatown historic district

The LPC should follow the law allowing designation of buildings of historical and cultural significance, including buildings on the Bowery.

Given the recently-passed City legislation known as Intro 775A, which imposes onerous deadlines between the time of calendaring and that of designation for both individual landmarks (one year) and historic districts (two years), the Landmarks Preservation Commission requires an increased budget and additional staff in order to complete its work on the above proposed historic districts within the required time limits. Without such increases, it is likely that historic districts and individual landmarks worthy of designation will not be calendared in time to prevent their destruction due to rampant development in CB 3.

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Economic Development/Business Diversity

For many years now, Community Board 3 has experienced a sustained loss of independent "mom-and-pop" stores due to exponentially increasing costs of doing business and increased competition from chains, banks and destination bars and restaurants.[67] As the local economy becomes more and more homogenous, and the availability of local goods and services continues to decrease, residents must increasingly leave our community or shop online in order to affordably meet their basic needs.

The rapid growth of chain stores is also of great concern, as their growth has contributed to rising rents in the neighborhoods and has displaced the independent, and often immigrant-owned, "mom and pop" shops that for years have been a part of the fabric and unique appeal of our community.[68] Chain stores are altering the character of the Lower East Side by shifting purchasing power to mass-market retailers and constructing facades out of place with the rest of the community.[69] The Center for an Urban Future's "State of the Chains" report identified the East Village as one of the neighborhoods most burdened by the growth of national chains.[70] In 2014 and 2015, zip code 10003, of which the Lower East Side is part of, registered over 160 chain stores, the second highest total in Manhattan. Additionally, zip code 10009 has seen a 20% increase from 2014 to 2015 in the number of chain stores opened there.[71]

The tremendous and unplanned proliferation of nightlife destinations in the District has not only pushed out other local small businesses, it has also created numerous quality of life issues. This trend toward nightlife-centric businesses has also created an unattractive retail environment for existing and potential new stores by decreasing daytime foot traffic and creating a barren street wall of lowered gates and closed storefronts during prime daytime hours. Many of the liquor licensed businesses are largely clustered in certain areas and threaten to exacerbate quality of life issues in those areas.

CB 3 has attempted to address these issues for many years by performing research, conducting surveys, reaching out to landlords, creating resources for small businesses, and more, yet the issue continues unmitigated. In March 2016, CB 3 passed a resolution stating that it would not approve liquor license applications that are subject to the 500-foot rule (within 500 feet of three

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[67] DeStefano, M. (2012) *Preserving Retail Diversity in Community Board 3.* <http://www.nyc.gov/html/mancb3/downloads/fellowship/Preserving%20Retail%20Diversity%20in%20Community%20Board%203.pdf>.

[68] Chin, A. (2014). East Village Clings to a Colorful Past by Alan Chin. *New York Times.* <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/14/realestate/the-east-village-clings-to-a-colorful-past.html?_r=0>.

[69] East Village Community Coalition. (2015). *Preserving Local, Independent Retail.* <http://evccnyc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/2015_Preserving_LocalInd_Retail.pdf>

[70] González-Rivera, C. (2015). State of the Chains. *Center for an Urban Future.* <https://nycfuture.org/pdf/State-of-the-Chains-2015-5.pdf>.

[71] *Ibid.*

or more full on premises licenses) unless they meet the high standard of being in the public interest – public interest defined as:

- provides a good or service that is needed by the local community,
- provides unique goods or services not already in the local community,
- provides a cultural benefit or increases in retail diversity,
- enhances the quality of life of the residents, or
- includes a conscientious business owner who would act as stabilizing force in the community

The board concluded that in considering a 500-foot rule applicant and whether the granting of a license is in the public interest, the Board will consider the impact of another license on the strength and diversity of the local economy, and specifically whether it would impact the existing retail mix and diversity in the specific area where the license would be located.

Previous surveys by CB 3 have shown local vacancy rates above 10%, and liquor-licensed uses taking up over 35% of storefronts along major retail corridors. A 2014 survey by the East Village Community Coalition found that drinking and food service establishments made up 36% of all East Village storefronts and storefront vacancies are at 11%.[72] A map of all currently licensed establishments in the district is shown in figure 3.

Figure 3. All On-Premises Licenses in Community District 3 Manhattan

[72] East Village Community Coalition. (2014). *East Village Ground Floor Use Survey*.

Also in early 2014, CB 3 collaborated with Columbia University to study retail trends in the East Village from 2004-2012.[73] The final report confirmed that the area is a City- and region-wide destination for eating and drinking and has a local economy that is becoming increasingly homogenous. It confirmed years of resident complaints and numerous other CB 3-initiated studies that showed the displacement of small businesses by liquor-licensed establishments and chains.

Retail stores that do survive in our community, often operated by individuals living in and vested in the community, are threatened by rising costs of rents, utilities and taxes – identified as major challenges to small business survival in several CB 3-initiated surveys of local businesses. Property taxes have risen dramatically over the last nine years as well, and they are largely passed on to businesses by property owners until they must relocate out of the District or close up altogether – leading to a continued cycle of storefront vacancies, suppressed daytime foot traffic in the District, and nightlife business proliferation. The effect of property taxes is also visible for Off and Off-Off Broadway theaters as the rise in the tax has endangered these smaller, local theaters who are often not-for-profit and renting space.

Commercial Rent Tax (CRT) is also a barrier to small business survival in CB 3. This tax, up to 6% of the base rent, is charged to tenants who occupy or use a property for commercial activity in Manhattan south of 96th Street. Tenants are subject to the CRT if the annual or annualized gross rent paid is at least $250,000 and they do not meet any other exemption criteria, such as short rental periods, residential subtenants, use for theatrical productions, or not-for-profit status.[74]

Merchant Organizing

CB 3 is represented by the following Business Improvement Districts (BIDs):

- The Chinatown BID: Broome to Worth Street and from Allen to Rutgers;
- The LES Partnership: Orchard Street and currently seeking to expand to include a large section of the Lower East Side with Houston Street as its northern border;
- The Village Alliance: 8th Street and some surrounding blocks; and
- The Union Square Partnership: 14th Street and the Union Square area.

Despite the presence of these organizations, many merchants are still under-supported in a substantial portion of the District.

Opportunities for City Support

As our community continues to gentrify and remains burdened by a high cost of doing business, Community Board 3 has identified several ways that the City can help us grow and strengthen our local economy:

[73] Chernomorets, O.; Chu, Y.; Jiang, H.; et al (2014). *Avenue A Retail Analysis.* <http://www.nyc.gov/html/mancb3/downloads/calendar/2014/AveARetail_FinalReport.pdf>

[74] NYC Department of Finance. https://www1.nyc.gov/site/finance/taxes/business-commercial-rent-tax-crt.page

- **Support for Merchant Organizations** – Continued financial support for our local community-based organizations, such as East Village Independent Merchants Association (EVIMA), that are dedicated to creating and maintaining a vibrant, diverse and sustainable local economy. There are currently emerging business organizations in our District that can help retail businesses organize and provide representation to those businesses that require support. There are also opportunities for continued financial support in the form of sustained funding for the Avenue NYC Grant program, which funds strategic commercial revitalization initiatives.

- **Support for a Special District** – A Special District recognizes the historic and unique character of the neighborhood and uses a variety of zoning requirements as a means to limit the proliferation of chains and nightlife establishments

- **Simplification of Regulations and Reduction of Fines** – In its 2015 Small Business First report, the City recommended that the City's laws be simplified by repealing or modifying rules and regulations that are not consistent with modern business practices, are overly complex, or are obsolete.[75] The City can continue its current efforts to streamline the regulatory environment, reduce the punitive impact of fines for minor violations that do not impact public safety or quality of life, and come up with creative ways to support small businesses. This includes revising the commercial rent tax and providing support to businesses that must make expensive alterations due to their being located in areas at risk of future climate events.

- **Business Incubator** - To help diversify our local economy, attract daytime office space, and reduce vacancies, CB 3 would welcome the establishment of a business incubator in the District, and would welcome opportunities to discuss this with the Economic Development Corporation.

- **Roll Back of CRT** – Given that Commercial Rent Tax (CRT) is a barrier to small business survival in CB 3, we recommend a roll back of CRT to support local business development.

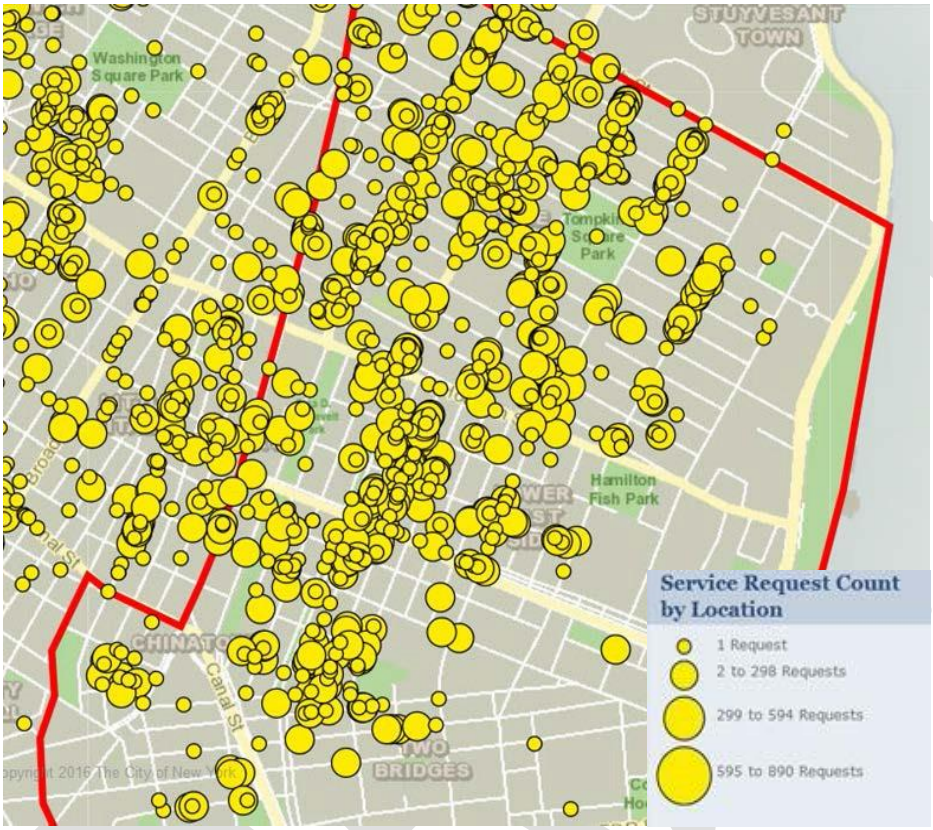
- **Disaster Response** - The 2nd Avenue tragedy in 2015 - in addition to Irene and Sandy before it - illustrated the need for well-developed disaster response plans for impacted businesses. The City – and SBS specifically - was incredibly helpful and responsive following this tragedy, but additional resources should be identified and set aside in the event of future need. These should include a well-funded small business disaster fund, increased staffing at SBS, and the continued availability of low-interest loans.

[75] City of New York. (2015). *Small Business First.* http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/smallbizfirst/downloads/pdf/small-business-first-report.pdf

Nightlife and Licensing

CB 3, a primarily residential district, is among the highest of all Manhattan community districts in number of 311 commercial noise complaints year to year, regularly registering more than 2,000 in each of the past four (4) years (see Figure 4).[76]

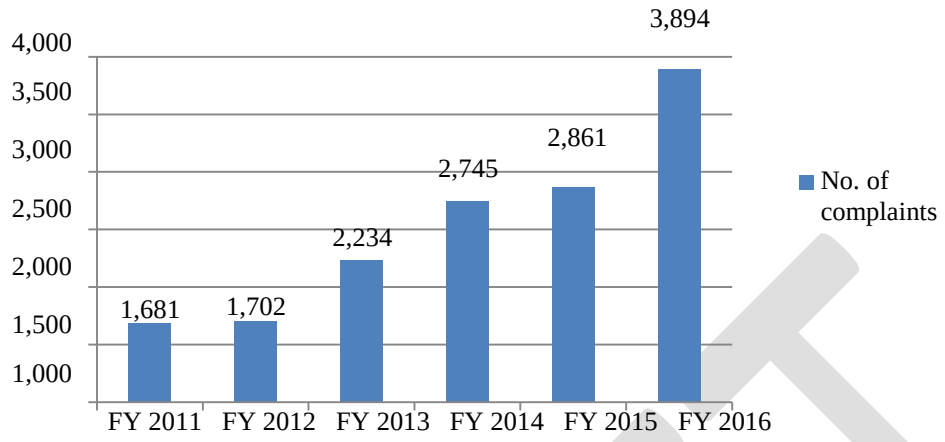
Figure 4: Service Request Count By Location



In the past fiscal year, CB 3 had the highest number of 311 NYPD commercial noise complaints in Manhattan. Even though there has been a decrease in the number of new liquor license applications in the past year in CB 3, the number of 311 commercial noise complaints related to licensed businesses has increased by 36% percent (see figure 5).[77]

[76] City of New York (2016). *311 Service Request Map: July 2015 to June 2016.* <http://www1.nyc.gov/apps/311srmap/>.
[77] New York City 311 Service Requests. (2016). *NYC Open Data.* <https://nycopendata.socrata.com/>.

Figure 5. Total 311 Commercial Noise Complaints in Community District 3



While we do not know the cause of the decrease in new applications, it is clear that there has been a complete saturation of licensed businesses. Consequently, CB 3 has been discouraging liquor license applicants from occupying vacant storefronts to those storefronts to increase retail diversity for the benefit of community residents.

The continuing increase of 311 noise complaints despite the decrease in applications for liquor licenses demonstrates that the City is increasingly unable to enforce quality of life complaints. The SLA, which has jurisdiction over compliance with the Alcohol Beverage Law, does not inspect businesses or enforce this law for quality of life issues impacting our residents and other businesses Further, our precincts must make responding to quality of life complaints a lower priority than responding to criminal activity, as well as other non-SLA related quality of life issues. Large loud crowds are a constant result of the saturation of bars but this is not against the law and there is very little the police can do in response to noise and crowds on the streets and sidewalks. Consequently, ameliorating these conditions must be accomplished by planning the number and location, hours, and types of liquor licenses.

The Community Board office now allocates the majority of its time to addressing SLA-related complaints rather than the many complex issues of the District because of the overwhelming number of complaints.

CB 3 has several recommendations to mitigate the negative impacts of nightlife proliferation:

- The City needs to utilize existing tools to address increasing quality of life complaints that result from the oversaturation of eating and drinking establishments and more effectively use its limited police resources, for example, better using the "6 in 60" legislation that was enacted in 2010 which allows police to refer businesses to the SLA when they do not comply with stipulations, violate noise laws, fail to control unruly crowds and repeatedly draw police attention six or more times in sixty days. The use of this tool should be expanded.

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- With the ever increasing volume of people and vehicles in this district, vehicular and pedestrian traffic and horn honking continues to be a major complaint. TLC and NYPD traffic police should perform targeted horn honking enforcement operations.

- The City should provide a sufficient infrastructure, such as rat proof baskets and extra sanitation pickups, to address the growing health issues caused by an increased rodent population and greater garbage output because of the numerous eating and drinking establishments in CB 3. Because many of these businesses do not open before 5 p.m., the garbage in front of these businesses is allowed to accumulate during the day. While there has been some City Council funding directed toward this effort, funding should be increased to address all nightlife areas with serious rodent violations within CB 3

Sidewalk Cafes

Sidewalk cafes enhance street vitality but also create congestion and noise by extending businesses to otherwise public sidewalks. Sidewalk cafés also push waiting patrons into smaller areas of public sidewalk, forcing pedestrians to navigate around patrons, often into the street. Permittees often illegally increase the footprint of their cafes and allow wait staff to serve customers from the sidewalk, which encroaches on public sidewalk space. Lack of DCA staffing has resulted in the loss of much needed routine, night and weekend inspections for permit compliance and creates the necessity for residents to police their sidewalk cafes.

Community Needs to Address Sidewalk Café Issues:

- DCA should create rules to distinguish between sidewalk cafes that are bars and those that are restaurants. This would allow communities to identify appropriate locations where sidewalk cafes will not conflict with residential living.

- DCA should create rules for evaluating sidewalk cafe applications that would examine the clearance needed at the proposed location in relation to the existing sidewalk congestion, as well as the 8-foot sidewalk clearance, including locations near subway entrances or bus stops, to ensure sufficient sidewalk access for pedestrians and people in wheelchairs.

- The City needs creative methods, such as flex time and rotating shifts, to monitor and enforce existing sidewalk café regulations at times when violations are most often occurring, such as on weekends and in the evenings.

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Housing and Land Use

The crisis in affordable housing in Community Board 3 continues to worsen:

- The percent change in average rent from 1990 to 2010-2014 has increased over 50%.[78]
- The median rent for all renters in our community district increased by 12% between 2005 and 2014, from $881/month to $987/month.[79] During this time, the median rent for all renters in NYC as a whole increased by just 9%.[80]
- Although the average household income in gentrifying neighborhoods such as the Lower East Side and Chinatown has gradually increased since 1990 a higher share of the population is still below the poverty line compared to the citywide average of gentrifying, non-gentrifying, and higher income neighborhoods.[81]
- With an average rental vacancy rate of 3.5% from 2010-2014[82], 1% higher than the average in 2005-2009, units are very hard to come by and affordable units even harder. This phenomenon is attributable to a number of factors including (bullet points below are from last year—but not documented)
    - Government cut-backs in subsidized housing and rent vouchers;
    - Increasing rents in New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments; and
    - The expiration of restrictions on former Section-8 and Mitchell- Lama housing.

Significant governmental action is necessary to curb the alarming change in the community's profile from the most historically important immigrant community in the country – where low-income people from every corner of the world were able to gain a foothold – to a neighborhood that is increasingly stratified and upper income. The income gap is growing:

- CD 3 has the second highest income diversity ratio in the city.[83]
- The 2015 Furman Center report indicates that recent movers into the district pay nearly double the monthly rent amount compared to renters who have been in the area longer.
- Since 2010, the percentage of rent-burdened households in the district has grown; 37.8% of renter households are severely rent burdened and low income.[84]

We call for all of the following actions to slow the growth of gentrification and to ensure that long-term residents can remain in decent affordable housing:

Increase the Stock of the Subsidized Affordable Housing

Over the last decade, federal, state and local government have drastically reduced funding available for the construction or renovation of new affordable housing. CB 3 was once a prime beneficiary of new subsidized low-and moderate-income housing, but, despite the planned 500 units of affordable housing in the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area (SPURA),

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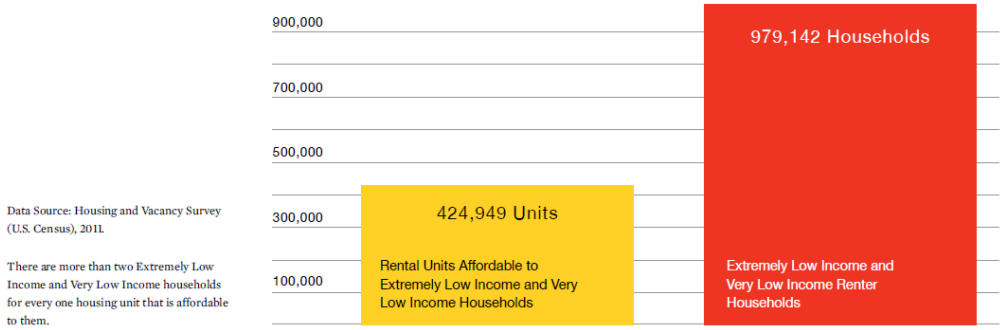
[78] Furman Center. (2016). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2015.* <http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/NYUFurmanCenter_SOCin2015_9JUNE2016.pdf>.
[79] U.S. Census Bureau. *American Community Survey 2010-2014.*
[80] *Ibid.*
[81] Furman Center. (2016). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2015.* <http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/NYUFurmanCenter_SOCin2015_9JUNE2016.pdf>.
[82] *Ibid.*
[83] *Ibid.*
[84] *Ibid.*

the rate of this production has slowed. Other than SPURA, the only affordable housing being built is in 80/20 buildings; there are none being built that are totally affordable. Of the 1000 units to become available in the developing Essex Crossing, with residential leasing slated to begin in 2017, only 500 will be affordable. Virtually no new Section-8, public housing or Mitchell-Lama housing has been built to replace lost housing stock. The almost complete elimination of Section-8 vouchers has also made it vastly more difficult for low- income and homeless families to find decent affordable housing on the private market. As shown in Figure 6 below[85], this is a citywide trend affecting extremely low and very low income renter households. In CD 3, which has a poverty rate two to three times greater than that of neighboring Community Districts 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6[86], increasing the supply of affordable units is a priority.

Figure 6. Supply and Demand among Extremely Low Income and Very Low Income Renter Households



Preserve Existing Affordable Housing

CB 3 has historically been a neighborhood where affordable government assisted housing has been welcomed. We have several major Mitchell-Lama developments and probably the largest concentration of small limited equity cooperatives, also known as Housing Development Fund Cooperatives (HDFCs), of any district in New York City. The HDFCs were formed as an affordable alternative ownership model for abandoned buildings which went into City ownership and then sold to low and moderate income residents largely through HPD's Alternative Management Programs. Because of economic pressures resulting from gentrification, escalating operating costs, the lack of affordable refinancing, and lax government oversight both Mitchell-Lama and HDFC cooperatives apartments are now being converted to market rate housing at an alarming rate or being lost to foreclosure. The City must take strong action to avert these trends in order to assure that this low and moderate income housing resource survives.

For Mitchell-Lamas such actions should include:

- More aggressively work with developments before they begin privatization efforts to negotiate subsidized refinancing plans
- Tighten the existing rules regarding privatization to discourage expedited conversions

[85] NYC Department of Housing and Preservation. (2014). *Housing New York: A Five-Borough, Ten-Year Plan.* <http://www.nyc.gov/html/housing/assets/downloads/pdf/housing_plan.pdf>.

[86] Furman Center. (2016). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2015.* < http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/NYUFurmanCenter_SOCin2015_9JUNE2016.pdf >.

For HDFCs such actions should include:

- Developing and implementing stronger and clearer resale restrictions including sales price caps
- Clearer definitions of income maximums for purchasers
- More rigorous support to avert financial failure
- Enhanced supervision to ensure compliance with restrictions

Reverse the Trend of Deregulating Rents

The Furman Center reports show that since 2002, the percentage of rent-regulated units in CB 3 declined from 55.8% of the rental stock[87] to only 42% in 2011.[88] That loss of affordable housing has tremendous repercussions because, in CB 3 alone, the median market rent in 2011 was $2,680/month, while the regulated rent was less than half that amount at $1,205/month.[89] The loss of this housing stock has a profound effect on our community. We must reverse the deregulation that has been seriously eating away at our stock of affordable housing since 1993.

Upgrade Enforcement of Housing and Building Codes and Fund Community-Based Housing Organizations

Because affordable housing is as threatened as it is, we must fully utilize available governmental enforcement tools to assure that existing housing is maintained adequately and that developers do not alter the housing stock in ways that threaten existing tenants or force them from their homes.

- For every 1000 privately owned rental units in CB 3, over 36 units have serious housing code violations.[90] NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development (HPD) and Department of Buildings (DOB) must vigorously enforce the Housing, Building and Zoning Codes. HPD needs to ensure that residential structures are adequately maintained and safety standards are met at all times, and that threats to children's health from asthma triggers, lead and vermin are eradicated.
- DOB must make sure that buildings are not overdeveloped beyond the legal limits and fire safety regulations are not side-stepped when additions are built on tenement buildings.
- Effective plan examination and increased enforcement with tools to enforce regulations is necessary so that non-compliant development does not go unchecked.
- Follow up on Environmental Control Board (ECB) and DOB violations to ensure that all violations, including those overseen by the ECB, are corrected and the fines are not merely absorbed by developers as part of their cost of doing business.
- Legislation is needed to increase these fines to a level that makes them a real deterrent to over-development as well as other tools for enforcement.

[87] Furman Center. (2006). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods.* <http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/SOC2006_CD303.pdf>.

[88] Furman Center. (2013). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2012.* <http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/SOC2013_Manhattan_03.pdf>.

[89] Furman Center. (2011). *Rent Stabilization in New York City*. <http://furmancenter.org/files/publications/HVS_Rent_Stabilization_fact_sheet_FINAL_4.pdf>.

[90] Furman Center (2016). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2015.* < http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/NYUFurmanCenter_SOCin2015_9JUNE2016.pdf >.

- Federal cutbacks in Community Development Block Grant funding, which has long been used to support HPD and DOB enforcement, will diminish these essential code enforcement services and further threaten our housing stock. These cuts must be reversed.

Provide Adequate Funding to Community-Based Non-Profit Housing Advocacy and Legal Organizations

This is essential to safeguard existing affordable housing. These groups provide essential assistance to tenants who are fighting the lack of basic services, building code violations, and threatened evictions. Without the work of these community-based organizations, harassment of rent-regulated tenants will be unchecked and long-term residents displaced. The city must increase funding of these groups that provide the first line of defense to community residents.

- Housing groups in CB 3 are in need of more funding for organizing, since it is the most effective way of addressing the serious issue of harassment and displacement, which has resulted in the deregulation of thousands of apartments over the past decade. A modest investment in the staffing capacity of housing groups has a large payoff in terms of preserving affordable housing. Legal service groups such as Urban Justice Center and Manhattan Legal Services will only work with organized tenant groups, many of which are brought to them by housing groups such as Cooper Square Committee, CAAAV, GOLES and AAFE.

Provide Support for Tenant Anti-Harassment Enforcement

The Department of Homeless Services has reported to CB 3 that the number one cause of homelessness in NYC is eviction (at 31%). This further underlines the need for more affordable housing as well as funding for HPD and community groups to enforce anti-harassment laws.

Ensure Affordable Housing is Accessible

The Department of City Planning's proposed Quality and Affordability Text Amendment intends to make affordable housing easier to develop. DCP should strengthen the affordability requirements to fulfill this goal and work with agencies to create tax incentives or other incentives for accessible ground floor apartments to provide needed affordable housing for seniors and for people with mobility disabilities, especially in walk-up buildings located in residential streets. Additionally, the City should provide improved outreach to educate and enforce regulations regarding reasonable accommodation that would create more accessible housing. Finding local nonprofits to partner with would be an effective means of outreach.

Make Buildings Green

City policy needs to provide greater incentives to low-income housing providers to reduce energy usage. NYC's 2030 plan sets the goal of reducing greenhouse gases by 30%[91] and since buildings account for 94% of electricity use[92], energy audits can identify retrofits to reduce waste in lighting, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems. Federal

[91] NYC Mayor's Office of Sustainability. *About PlaNYC Green Buildings and Energy Efficiency.* <http://www.nyc.gov/html/gbee/html/about/about.shtml>.

[92] American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy. (2014). Greening a City's Building Codes: The NYC Green Codes Task Force. *ACEEE Summer Study on Energy Efficiency in Buildings.* <http://aceee.org/files/proceedings/2014/data/papers/6-921.pdf>.

weatherization funds have been cut drastically in recent years, leaving the weatherization program unable to serve many low-income applicants. The City should provide matching grants to low-income HDFCs to encourage energy upgrades that will reduce energy costs for low-income buildings, thereby preserving affordable housing while also reducing carbon emissions.

New York City Public Housing

The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) owns and manages over 14,000 units of low-income housing in CB 3[93], and the preservation of these apartments as viable, secure, publicly-owned housing is vital to ensure that our community remains diverse and economically integrated. For more than a decade NYCHA has been threatened by chronic disinvestment from every level of government, and this situation is now at a crisis point. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has a primary obligation to provide sufficient capital and operating funds to support NYCHA, but state and city officials must do their part to preserve this resource without regard to political influence. We are pleased that for the past 2 years, the city has not charged NYCHA for police services[94] and has also committed to eliminating the PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) payments[95], but the practice of charging such fees should be permanently eliminated.

NYCHA has acknowledged that its buildings require more than $16 billion of urgent capital improvements[96], but the agency lacks funds to tackle these critical needs. In CB 3, where NYCHA properties were especially hard hit by Superstorm Sandy, promised resiliency funding which is thoughtfully planned in coordination with projects proposed by other sources, is key to the preservation of our developments. Storm conditions faced by residents in public housing and Section 8 call for increased efforts towards Emergency Preparedness, especially for the young, elderly and disabled.

Building maintenance has dramatically deteriorated as repair wait-times have become intolerably long and staff has been drastically cut.[97] NYCHA residents are physically threatened when elevators are in dangerous condition, unrepaired roofs cause mold, and the grounds and entranceways are unsecure because of faulty lighting, inoperative or non-existent cameras and broken doors. Residents have very legitimate quality of life concerns as rats run rampant in developments, sanitation services are poor, and open space and play equipment are under-maintained and often inaccessible. All too frequently, residents report that developments (i.e. Campos Plaza and Baruch Houses) suffer from chronic sewage problems where standing water backs up without proper drainage.

CB3 is pleased that NYCHA has attempted to develop a comprehensive plan for its long-term survival and to document this plan through the recently-issued "NextGeneration NYCHA" report.[98] That document clearly lays out the NYCHA's dire predicament and suggests some

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[93] NYC Housing Authority. (2015). *Property Directory, Political Districts Guide.* <http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/nycha/downloads/pdf/PoliticalDistrictGuide_2015.pdf>.
[94] NYC Housing Authority. (2015). *Finance Division Briefing Paper.* <http://council.nyc.gov/html/budget/2016/Pre/nycha.pdf>.
[95] NYC Housing Authority. (2015). *NextGeneration NYCHA.* <http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/nycha/downloads/pdf/nextgen-nycha-web.pdf>.
[96] *Ibid.*
[97] *Ibid.*
[98] *Ibid.*

bold strategies to avert disaster. Before implementation of any of the major undertakings suggested, we call on NYCHA to engage residents fully, with an emphasis on youth, in community visioning around the plan. The process for implementation must not be rushed, and it must be transparent and participatory. This is particularly important with regard to any disposition or redevelopment of NYCHA land, which should only happen through a ULURP-like process and which must emphasize the creation of senior and affordable housing, not market rate apartments. We fear the growing trend toward privatization of NYCHA properties and attempts to shift rent and amenities costs to residents who already struggle to keep up with the high cost of living. As the cost of living is not "one size fits all," we encourage NYCHA, wherever possible, to push for HUD's funding formula in order to ensure that housing in any given community is representative of the particular needs of that community's residents. Increased development should address the shortage of affordable housing, jobs, and community space for local residents seeking to stay in their communities. These residents are, in many cases, doubled up, overcrowded, and among the most vulnerable: elderly, youth and disabled and underscore the call for broader engagement and recruitment for Section 3 opportunities within NYCHA and surrounding community.

Additionally, Cornerstone Community Centers' needs for providing safe and high quality programming include adequate funding for operating and maintaining facilities to ensure effective staffing, programming, which offer greater flexibility, and access to community space.

Parks/Recreation

Community Board 3, like most districts in New York City, is underserved in terms of open space because it has less than 2.5 acres of open space per 1000 residents[99].

- Median ratio at the Citywide Community District level is 1.5 acres of open space per 1,000 residents[100] – CB 3 is slightly below that average at 1.2 acres[101]
- While nearly 97% of residential units in CB 3 are located within ¼ mile of a park[102], not all parks are easily accessible or maintained at an acceptable level[103]
- Open space is not evenly distributed throughout the district, with the area west of Avenue A and the Chinatown area lacking adequate open space.

Some Parks Department buildings in our community are used as store houses for citywide Parks operations. CB 3 already has so few community facilities, our local park houses should not bear this unfair burden for other neighborhoods.

[99] NYC Mayor's Office of Sustainability. (2016). *City Environmental Quality Review.* http://www.nyc.gov/html/oec/html/ceqr/open_space_maps_manhattan.shtml
[100] NYC Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination. (2014). *CEQR Open Space.* http://www.nyc.gov/html/oec/downloads/pdf/2014_ceqr_tm/07_Open_Space_2014.pdf
[101] New Yorkers for Parks. (2009). *The Open Space Index.* http://www.ny4p.org/research/osi/LES.pdf
[102] Furman Center. (2016). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2015.* < http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/NYUFurmanCenter_SOCin2015_9JUNE2016.pdf >.
[103] NYC Department of Parks. *Parks Inspection Program.* https://www.nycgovparks.org/park-features/parks-inspection-program

- Three out of four Parks buildings in Sara D. Roosevelt Park are used for Citywide Parks storehouse and supply centers, and one is used as a central communication center. This is not an equitable distribution of resources and burdens for our District.
- One of these buildings, the Stanton Street building at Sara D. Roosevelt Park is being used for a storehouse and should be transitioned to a community facility for community programming, where it would provide much-needed all-weather program space[104].
- The "White House" in Baruch Houses is not operational and is in need of capital repairs so that it can be used as a community facility

Recreational Use

Lack of park space is compounded by lack of recreational sports fields. This is further exacerbated by permits allocated to groups from outside the community. While CB 3 does not seek to exclude outside groups from our parks, the Board had taken the following positions:

- Priority should be given to local groups, particularly non-profit youth leagues.
- NYC Parks must review and modify the existing grandfather policy for CB 3 recreational fields to allow for new community groups.

Community Gardens

Even though CB 3 has the highest number of Greenthumb gardens, there remains limited open green space in the community.

- All community gardens under Parks should be mapped and designated as permanent parkland to protect them. A Community Garden District will offer a measure of protection for the gardens. Currently gardens can still be sold as they are not legally parks property. Since all community gardens have the same maintenance and resource needs as public parks, all gardens under NYC Parks jurisdiction should receive funding through Greenthumb and be provided with adequate infrastructure, such as available water spigots, ongoing topsoil renewal, wrought iron fencing, and electricity/solar lighting where applicable.

Maintenance

Constant maintenance by trained DPR professionals is required. Although staffing citywide has increased compared to the previous year, DPR's operations and maintenance budget has not kept up with the demands to maintain parks and playgrounds. The number of gardeners, tree pruners and other maintenance staff is still inadequate, based on inspection results, and results in cleanliness and overall conditions that are deemed "unacceptable" by the Parks Department[105] Out of 57 rated Park's properties, 17 were rated unacceptable for litter. This documents the need for better maintenance.

Rodents in Parks and Community Gardens

The Community Board 3 district as a whole has the highest failure rates for rat inspections in Manhattan, and the failure rate currently is higher than the previous year. The NYC

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[104] Asian Americans for Equality & Hester Street Collaborative. (2012). *Adaptive Reuse of Public Park Buildings on the Lower east Side.* https://docs.google.com/a/nyu.edu/file/d/0B-orGtfIJH4JTUd3SjlkQVlQOVE/edit

[105] NYC Department of Parks. *Parks Inspection Program.* https://www.nycgovparks.org/park-features/parks-inspection-program

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene initiated a pilot study in the district, known as the "rat reservoir," to concentrate abatement efforts on the most heavily infested parts of the district. Tompkins Square Park and SDR Park are in this pilot program, as are some community gardens. CB 3 Parks and Greenthumb gardens have ongoing rat problems, and the more severe cases include Columbus Park, Tompkins Square Park, Sara D. Roosevelt Park, and Seward Park.

- All rat-proof wastebaskets, including big-belly wastebaskets, are needed. It is also vital for DPR to work with food vendors and providers to ensure clean up, as garbage cleanup is a frequent problem throughout the district

Tompkins Square Park Events

Tompkins Square Park is popular for loud events, but is the only park in NYC with a concert area in close proximity to residents. In FY 2015, over 100 complaints were filed in 311 for park noise.

- NYC Parks is working with police and DEP to monitor noisy events in TSP. This has not proven successful and DEP does not always have inspectors to participate. Parks Dept. needs to make a serious effort to coordinate with agencies and issue violations to groups that refuse to comply. Some Parks Enforcement Police have been trained with decibel meters to monitor and enforce the noise code in parks, but CB 3 has not been able to access this enforcement. PEP trained with decibel meters should be assigned to cover some Tompkins Square Park concerts.

Comfort Stations

Toilets in CB 3 parks, recreational fields, playgrounds and park buildings with park programming are badly needed. Funding is still needed for comfort stations in other parks throughout the district such as Baruch Playground, Sara D Roosevelt Park, Columbus Park, McKinley Playground, Tompkins Square Park, and the East River Park. Underground water pipe access to the existing comfort station in East River Park must also be repaired to ensure reliable supply of water to the facility.

Wireless Access

CB 3 asks that NYC Parks consider establishing free wireless access in all public parks, such as the network available in Tompkins Square Park, to allow all residents who cannot afford their own wireless connectivity to use their laptops and other devices in parks.

Waterfront

Pier 42 has received funding for the first phase of rehabilitation, but at least $50 to $60 million more is still needed. CB 3 strongly urges and expects that the relevant City agencies will raise the necessary funding, fast track, and complete this improvement and stabilization, so that Pier 42 will never be lost as a crucial amenity to this community.

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New York City Libraries

A study conducted by the Center for an Urban Future found that across the city, although library visits, book circulation and program attendance have consistently increased in the past decade, our libraries are open fewer hours than the state's largest counties and trail behind cities throughout the nation.[106] Community Board 3 has five branches of the New York Public Library (NYPL) system: Chatham Square, Hamilton Fish, Ottendorfer, Seward Park, and Tompkins Square.[107]

The branches in Community Board 3 have amongst the highest numbers of visits in the NYPL system. Of all the branches in the NYPL system the Seward Park branch is 9th in terms of visits and 11th in terms of circulation. The Chatham Square branch is 10th of all branches in visits and 9th in circulation. Hamilton Fish, Ottendorder, Seward Park, and Tomkins Square have all seen significant increases in the number of visits during FY16.

According to NYPL statistics, in Fiscal Year 2016 the libraries in CB 3 had 1,046,197 visits.

NYPL Branch	Number of Visits	Circulation
Chatham Square	294,972	338,990
Hamilton Fish	174,396	127,864
Ottendorfer	131,519	151,173
Seward Park	302,925	327,275
Tompkins Square	142,385	132,899
TOTAL	1,046,197	1,078,201

- The NYPL received baselined funds of $18.860 million in operating funding in the FY17 city budget. Across the three library systems, the libraries advocated for $65 million in restored expense funding for FY17, which would have restored funding to FY08 levels. The three systems received a total of $43 million.
- Through the baselined funding six-day service will be restored for FY17 and doors will be able to stay open longer.
- The libraries are especially necessary to our many low- and moderate-income residents who depend on the libraries for access to books and film and as the only quiet place to read or do homework or other work.
- The arts and cultural programming along with English for Speakers of Other Languages in this neighborhood are extremely important to many residents, particularly families with children and seniors, who cannot otherwise afford access to commercial alternatives. The baselined funding allows branches to invest more funding into programming and collections.
- In FY18 the three systems hope to receive significant capital funding to continue to support the critical needs of branches across the city.

[106] Giles, D. (2015). Library Funding is Behind the Times. *Centure for an Urban Future.* <https://nycfuture.org/data/info/library-funding-is-behind-the-times>.
[107] New York Public Library. (2016). *NYPL Statistics for Fiscal Year 2016 in Community Board 3*

Arts & Cultural Affairs

Our district has historically been an incubator of the performing and visual arts, with a higher concentration of artists and arts organizations than most districts.

- The arts serve as an important means of expression, preservation and exploration of our diverse community and cultures.
- District arts venues, including libraries, community gardens and parks, balance the scales of gentrification by providing local, often low cost, access to arts expressions.
- Cultural venues have a powerful synergistic relationship with neighborhood small businesses and are economic drivers to our local neighborhoods.
- Fourth Arts Block estimates that their member arts organizations generate more than $24.8 million in annual economic benefits for local restaurants, shops, and support services. Across the Lower East Side, the economic impact of neighborhood arts groups is over $50 million.
- Funding to turn these linkages into viable projects cannot be further reduced without negative consequences for artists, youth, seniors, the educational system, small businesses, visitors, and others.

Community Board 3 supports the continued efforts of the Department of Cultural Affairs, the City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, and the Cultural Equity Group, to foster a healthy creative sector by advocating for:

- City agencies to include commercial and nonprofit arts venues and organizations in their economic planning and development.
- A Citywide Cultural plan
- Financial incentives for outreach made available to local venues to promote partnerships with local community-based organizations & the use of space to increase public & resident benefits.

Difficult economic times cannot justify threatening the creative arts. The arts community needs to have a healthy, balanced and open-minded society with support for creativity and activities that inspire the human spirit.

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