

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 third most densely populated board district, with approximately 166,335 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 population 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 to 49,405 in 2014.³

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 fourth out of the 59 boards in the City for a high diversity ratio between lower income and higher income residents.⁴ The same report shows that approximately 30% of our residents have household incomes under \$20,000 while nearly 20% earn more than \$100,000.⁵

Household Income Distribution (2014\$)

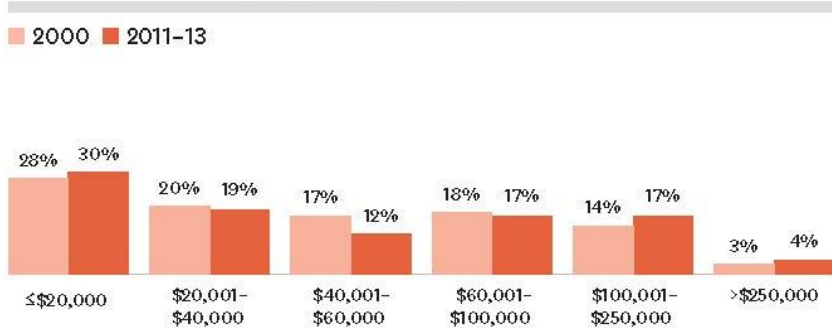


Figure 1. Household Income Distribution of Community District 3, 2011 –

¹ Furman Center. (2015). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2014*. <http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/NYUFurmanCenter_SOC2014_HighRes.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 Furman Center. (2015). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2014*. <http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/NYUFurmanCenter_SOC2014_HighRes.pdf>.

⁵ *Ibid.*

Higher-income households have continued to increase since 2000 (see Figure 1 above), a trend similar to that of lower-income households. Further, the income diversity ratio, which is the gap between incomes, has increased since last year from 7.5% to 8%.⁶ 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 26% of people in CB 3, approximately 36% of their children under the age of 18, and 34% of seniors are living below the poverty level.⁷

CB 3 is the third highest racially diverse neighborhood in the City, with a foreign born population of 36%.⁸ We are approximately 31% White, 33% Asian, 25% Hispanic, and 7% Black or African American.⁹ 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.¹⁰

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 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). 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

CB 3 was severely impacted by Superstorm Sandy. A significant portion of CB 3 lost electricity for five days or more, 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.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ U.S. Census Bureau. (2013). American Community Survey.

⁸ Furman Center. (2015). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2014*.

<http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/NYUFurmanCenter_SOC2014_HighRes.pdf>.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

- 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)
- 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 St. 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)
- There is also close to \$9 million allocated for the study of resiliency measures starting at Montgomery St. heading south the Battery Park City.

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

- 1) Engage with residents of CB 3 to solicit input into potential changes and improvements
- 2) Engage with local stakeholders, including CBOs and NYCHA leadership
- 3) Ensure that all workshops include trilingual interpretation and materials are translated into Spanish and Chinese, in addition to English
- 4) 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.

Transportation

Accessibility and Safety

Accessibility and pedestrian safety are a Community Board 3 priority.

- 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.
- All crosswalks should be clearly marked and curb cuts should be well-defined in the pavement.
- Ponding and storm drain blockage make it difficult for pedestrians to cross some streets in the district. NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) should identify and correct these ponding problems.
- There is extreme sidewalk and street congestion on the west side of the block of Allen St below Hester St, related to the commercial loading/unloading practices of fish, fruit and

vegetable wholesale businesses that supply restaurants in Chinatown. These distributors keep pallets of food and mechanical equipment outside on the sidewalk for many hours, obstructing pedestrian traffic and forcing delivery trucks to double-park. The increasing numbers of intercity buses loading and unloading passengers on Allen St exacerbates the sidewalk and street congestion. There is a need to educate the businesses on state regulations, and make sure they have the tools to comply.

New patterns of sidewalk and street usage associated with increased cycling has created the following needs:

- Increased NYPD staffing to enforce traffic laws regarding dangerous cyclist behavior: riding against traffic, on sidewalks, through red lights and without yielding to pedestrians.
- DOT should maintain reduction of pedestrian-cyclist conflicts as a design priority.
- DOT should increase bicycle parking facilities to reduce inappropriately chained bicycles that contribute to sidewalk congestion.

Bridges

The approaches to/from the Williamsburg and Manhattan Bridges are particularly dangerous for pedestrians.

- The Williamsburg Bridge is very confusing and dangerous to both pedestrians and cyclists. There should be a self-enforcing design to prevent the continuous conflicts between pedestrian and cyclist movements.
- Cyclists often use the dedicated pedestrian walkway of the Manhattan Bridge, even though there is a physically separated bikeway on the other side of the bridge. Enforcement and design changes are needed to encourage cyclists to use the correct bikeway.
- In 2012, the Delancey Street Pedestrian Safety Plan did improve safety along that corridor. Similar safety improvements are needed on other traffic corridors, such as Essex St, which is part of the traffic patterns related to the bridges.

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.

- Businesses should be encouraged to report needs so that loading zones can be sited, allowing small businesses to comply with regulations.
- 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.

Bus Management

The new intercity bus permit system, along with the increased number of "Chinatown bus" companies, has resulted in layover and staging problems on the streets in Chinatown and the surrounding neighborhoods. Permitting of stops is being done on a case-by-case basis that is driven by individual applicants. Many bus companies without permitted stops continue to operate at these stops and at other unpermitted locations. This process ignores accompanying issues of staging and layover:

- This should be addressed with a DOT plan to study and locate bus stops and layover

zones.

- Legislation was created to manage and control buses and allow for compliance. However, violations issued by police have not proven effective—there are still very many noncompliant buses paying violations as a cost of business. Effective enforcement is necessary. Options that should be investigated is dedicated enforcement staff from NYPD and new methods of enforcement such as higher fines, towing, and suspension of business operation. There needs to be coordinated information sharing between NYPD enforcement and DOT licensing so that "bad actors" are penalized when permits are issued.

Public Transportation

Community Board 3 is underserved by public transportation. The eastern and southern- most residents of the district will continue to be denied 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 live more than half a mile from the nearest subway stop.
- MTA/NYCT should restore the discontinued Grand Street bus route.
- The City should improve the environment for public transportation within CB 3 by taking strong, creative measures 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 severe negative impact on vulnerable populations, including the disabled, who rely on public transportation.

First Responder Services

CB 3 opposes any cuts to first responders and any potential firehouse closures.

- The neighborhoods of the Lower East Side and Chinatown are some of the most densely populated areas of the city and contain hundreds of tenements over a century old that are structurally vulnerable.
- The response areas of 9 fire companies in 4 battalions currently serve CB 3.
- We support the Auxiliary Patrol Units (APU) and the Auxiliary Patrol Support Units (APSU) as necessary to supplement first responder emergency services. The APSU are specialized Rescue Units which cover multiple precincts in support of the NYPD Emergency Service Unit (ESU).

Rodents

Community Board 3 has seen an increased rat problem in the last year. The failure rate for rat findings has increased from 7.75 % to 8.3% according to the Department of Health Indexing. The serious rat infestation problem in Community Board 3 is a public health and safety issue:

- CB 3 consistently ranks in the top two or three worst community boards among community boards in Manhattan for failing rat inspections and is rated as "urgent action required."
- CB 3 ranks third lowest among all NYC community boards for percentage of acceptably clean streets.
- 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 a very densely populated. There are many old tenements without access to indoor storage or compactors. Increased curbside refuse and recycling pickup service are needed.

Environment

CB 3 has few City resources allocated to reduce air pollutant exposure and asthma triggers despite a disproportionate amount of air pollution sources from the expanded 14th Street Con Edison fossil fuel power plant and from the vehicular congestion caused by its three bridges, transportation corridors, vehicle idling, and curb-side bus operations.

- DEP and NYPD should enforce idling regulations. Follow up of DEP violations for idling shows that these are often dismissed.
 - Air pollutant exposure is compounded by the heat island effect of roads, artificial turf, and bare roofs, which raise temperatures and elevate ozone levels. Impacts of Private Development without Infrastructure Planning

CB 3 is experiencing another development boom, and the lack of accompanying planning for sanitation and traffic has resulted in negative impacts.

- This is particularly true in the LES section below Houston. An extreme example can be seen on the Ludlow block below Houston where there are two new hotels with accompanying destination traffic, and a large new residence. Traffic has come to a standstill, businesses and hotels do not have appropriate loading / unloading, which further congests traffic.
- There is not enough garbage collection, at one residence, bags are held in the curb lane, which exacerbates rodent problems, and moved in and out of the street as parking / loading is needed.
- Infrastructure support, including more garbage pickups and traffic planning, is urgently needed.

Housing and Land Use

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

- The median rent for all renters in our community district increased by 14.3% between 2005 and 2013, from \$854/month to \$977/month (2014 inflation adjusted).¹¹ During this time, the median rent for all renters in NYC as a whole increased by just 9.9%.¹²

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

- With a rental vacancy rate of 4%¹³, units are very hard to come by and affordable units even harder. The 2013 Furman Center report ranks this board's vacancy rate 17th out of 51 community districts – a jump from 26th place in 2012.¹⁴ This phenomenon is attributable to a number of factors including:
 - 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 in this country – to a neighborhood that is increasingly stratified and upper income. The income gap is growing; CD 3 has the 4th highest income diversity ratio in the city.¹⁵ The 2014 Furman Center report indicates that recent movers into the district pay nearly double the amount of monthly rent compared to renters who have been in the area longer. Concurrently, since 2010, the percentage of rent-burdened households in the district has grown; 37.9% of renter households are severely rent burdened and low income.¹⁶

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), 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. 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 1 below¹⁷, 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 6¹⁸, increasing the supply of affordable units is a priority.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

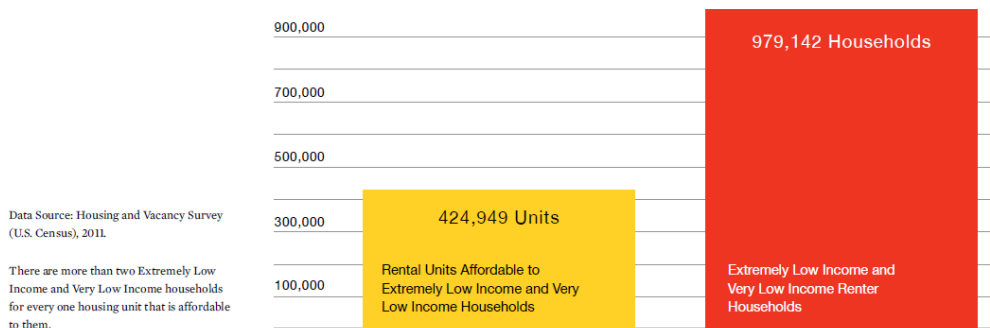
¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ 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>.

¹⁸ Furman Center. (2015). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2014*. <http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/NYUFurmanCenter_SOC2014_HighRes.pdf>.

Supply and Demand among Extremely Low Income and Very Low Income Renter Households



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 stock¹⁹ to only 42 % in 2011.²⁰ 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.²¹ The loss of this housing stock has had 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.

- 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 that buildings are not overdeveloped beyond the legal limits and fire safety regulations are not side- stepped when additions are built on tenement buildings.

¹⁹ Furman Center. (2006). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods*. <http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/SOC2006_CD303.pdf>.

²⁰ Furman Center. (2013). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2012*. <http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/SOC2013_Manhattan_03.pdf>.

²¹ Furman Center. (2011). *Rent Stabilization in New York City*. <http://furmancenter.org/files/publications/HVS_Rent_Stabilization_fact_sheet_FINAL_4.pdf>.

- 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.
- 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.

Legal Reforms to Increase Privately Developed Affordable Housing

Although CB 3 is now located in the economic exclusion zone of the 421-a tax abatement program, we continue to support revisions to the 421-a program that would produce more affordable housing. We believe that the program should be altered to:

- Require 30% low income housing in 421-a eligible developments
- Mandate that all affordable units be required to be built on the same site as the development receiving the tax exemption
- Mandate that the number of affordable units created on-site cannot be counted towards other affordability programs

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. Funding local nonprofits to partner would be 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% and since buildings account for 94% of electricity use, energy audits can identify retrofits to reduce waste in lighting, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems. Federal 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.

Parks/Recreation

Community Board 3, like most districts in New York City, does not meet the City Planning Commission's guidelines for per capita open space according to the Governor's Open Space Report based on the 2010 Census.

- Open space/population ratio is approximately 0.66 acres per 1,000 people.
- The Governor's Report recommended 2.5 acres per 1,000; and NYC averages 1.5 acres.
- 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.

- 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
- 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
- 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
- The Seward Park building, as detailed in the Hester Street Collaborative report, should be utilized for community programs since it provides an all-weather round program space.

Recreational Use

The permitting procedure for recreational permits has improved in having fields accessible to local groups and for fair distribution. However, Community Board 3 asks that Parks increase transparency in the permitting process, as well as revisit public procedures for reviewing and re-approving light usage for

night use of fields. CB 3 asks that Parks continue to maintain this fair distribution of park permitting time for local groups.

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 we do not seek to exclude outside groups from our parks, we do feel that:

- Priority should be given to local groups, particularly non-profit youth leagues.
- Emphasis on local groups should include a re-examination of Park Department policies that restrict the use of parks and play areas during daytime hours.
- NYC Parks must review and modify the existing grandfather policy for CB 3 recreational fields.

Community Gardens

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

- For sites not transferred to Parks, the City should transfer them to Parks or local community land trust organizations to maintain the locations as permanent open community space.
- Community gardens under Parks should be mapped and designated as permanent parkland, and the City should support CB 3 resolution to designate them as a Garden District
- Since all community gardens have the same maintenance and resource needs as public parks, all gardens under NYC Parks jurisdiction should receive funding 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. The City decreased funding to the Parks budget in the FY 2016 Executive Budget, and while 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 staff playgrounds. The number of gardeners, tree pruners and other maintenance staff is still inadequate.

Rodents in Parks and Community Gardens

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

- More full-time experienced extermination and staff to maintain and clean the parks is necessary to protect the health and public safety of the community.
- 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, and in ZIP code 10009, X out of the Y complaints filed in this past fiscal were for Tompkins Square Park. Just over 100 complaints were filed in ZIP 10009 in FY 2014.

- 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.

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, 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.

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 (Giles, 2015). Community Board 3 has five branches of the New York Public Library (NYPL) system: Chatham Square, Hamilton Fish, Ottendorfer, Seward Park, and Tompkins Square. According to NYPL statistics (Figure 1 below).

Figure 1. NYPL Statistics for Fiscal Year 2014 in Community Board 3
Source: New York Public Library, 2015

The branches in Community Board 3 have amongst the highest numbers of visits in the NYPL system and visits across the district are up 4% from the previous fiscal year. Of all the branches in the NYPL system the Seward Park branch is 5th in terms of visits, 6th in terms of circulation, and 3rd in both programs offered and program attendance. The Chatham Square branch is 6th of all branches in visits and 7th in circulation. Ottendorfer, Hamilton Fish and Chatham Square have all seen significant increases in the number of visits during FY14.

According to NYPL statistics (Figure 1 below), in Fiscal Year 2014 the libraries in CB 3 have had 1,074,270 visits.

NYPL Branch	Number of Visit	Program Attendance
Chatham Square	300,877	21,957
Hamilton Fish	162,873	7,460
Ottendorfer	138,452	13,091
Seward Park	326,264	38,807
Tompkins Square	145,804	12,688
TOTAL	1,074,270	94,003

- The NYPL received an increase of \$10 million in operating funding in last year’s City Budget, but that funding was not baselined and was not included in the Mayor’s Proposed FY16 Executive Budget. Across the three library systems, the libraries have asked for \$65 million in restored expense funding for FY16, which would restore funding to FY 08 levels.

- CB 3 branches have the highest levels of use in the City, and preserving library openings to six days a week and restoring full operating hours is an utmost need.
- 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.
- Residents who have laptop computers but cannot afford internet fees use the library for internet access.
- Our libraries need funding for expansion of collections, automation, staffing, and programming.
- The arts and cultural programming along with English for Speakers of Other Languages and Out-of-School Time programs in this neighborhood are extremely important to many residents, particularly families with children and seniors, who cannot otherwise afford access to commercial alternatives.

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.
- The City should create 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 and activities that inspire the human spirit.

Human Services

CB 3 is an economically and racially diverse district. It is imperative that initiatives to

address the human services needs discussed below must be culturally and linguistically appropriate in order to effectively serve this district's residents.

Youth Services

CB 3 is home to more than 21,600 children under 18 years of age.²² The 2009-2013 American Community Survey found that approximately 36% of the population under 18 years had income below the poverty level and roughly 32% of family households with related children under 18 years of age were below the poverty level.²³ Nearly 25% of households received some form of emergency food assistance.²⁴ According to the 2014 Furman report, 30% of households residing within CB 3 have a household income of \$20,000 or less²⁵, and many of these families rely on community-based programs such as Out-of-School Time (OST) and 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, out of school time after school programs, and employment opportunities are necessary to positively engage youth.

- **Expand Access to COMPASS Programming** CB 3 currently houses three Beacon programs, operated by Grand Street Settlement, University Street Settlement, and the Chinatown YMCA and over ten COMPASS programs. Recently, Mayor deBlasio has made significant investments in baselining and expanding afterschool programming, particularly for middle school students. 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 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 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 50,000 students citywide in summer 2015. Unfortunately, over 100,000 additional youth applied for summer jobs but many were turned away in 2014. 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

²² U.S. Census Bureau. (2010). *Census. American Fact Finder*.

²³ U.S. Census Bureau. (2014). *2009-2013 American Community Survey*.

²⁴ *Ibid*.

²⁵ Furman Center. (2015). *State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2014*. <http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/NYUFurmanCenter_SOC2014_HighRes.pdf>.

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 75 children in 2014.²⁶ While the majority of placements in CB 3 are age 5 and younger, 13% of CB 3's placements aged out of care.²⁷ 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. CB3 supports the continued funding of Project S.O.L. and a further expansion of comprehensive services for LGBTQ youth on the Lower East Side, many of whom often do not have anywhere to go to have their identities accepted and affirmed.
- **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. Two of these NYCHA-based community centers are run by Chinatown YMCA (one in Rutgers and one in Two Bridges Community Center), University Settlement runs one program in Campos Plaza II, and Grand St. Settlement runs one program in Riis Houses. In addition, CB 3 has 3 Beacons, community centers based in public schools, run by Chinatown YMCA (MS 131), Grand Street Settlement (Martha Valle Campus) and University Settlement (East Side Community HS) CB 3 supports baselining of funding for the Cornerstone and Beacon programs to ensure that the programs operate in a stable and consistent manner and can continue to provide these critical services to the community.

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.²⁸
- 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.²⁹

²⁶ New York City Administration for Children's Services. (2014). *Placement Statistics by Community District*.
<http://www.nyc.gov/html/acs/downloads/pdf/statistics/Placement_Stats_District_2014.pdf>.

²⁷ The 2013 ACS Community Snapshot report

²⁸ U.S. Census Bureau. (2014). *2009-2013 American Community Survey*.

²⁹ 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>.

- Approximately 23% of seniors speak Spanish and 43% speak Chinese. Roughly 59% of people over 60 years old reported speaking English "less than very well" according to the 2010-2012 ACS.³⁰
- Approximately 8000 seniors (65+) in CB 3 are below the poverty line, which is approximately 33% of seniors in the district.³¹

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 senior citizens 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 grocery 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 this past year. Although the senior centers that were slated to close in June 2014 will remain open, the funding allocated to senior centers in our district will only keep them open until June 2015. 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.

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 31%) and the number two cause is domestic violence (at 22%). There has been a dramatic increase of homelessness in NYC, DHS reporting over 60,000 individual in shelters in addition to street homeless.

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. However, the Third Street Men's Shelter and Kenton Hall continue to have ongoing impacts on the community, including drugs and loitering and reported aggressive behavior on the street.

- Large facilities in CB 3 must be accompanied by appropriate security for the facilities for the safety of both shelter residents and neighbors.
- DHS must supply increased security, including DHS peace keepers, for these facilities and have security on the street at all times.
- 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 illegal or inappropriate behavior.

³⁰ 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>.

³¹ U.S. Census Bureau. (2014). *2009-2013 American Community Survey*.

We continue to see increased homeless adults in the area of the district north of Houston Street. Current outreach targets chronically homeless (homeless over two years) with case management.

- 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.
- In the last fiscal year, MOC has placed 222 clients into permanent housing and the retention rate is 92% after one year.
- Since not all of the homeless fit into the "chronic homeless" category, they are not followed with case management. Therefore, CB 3 believes the current policy of conducting outreach to only chronically homeless individuals should be reassessed to allow for true outreach to all homeless.

CB 3 is the summer destination of young homeless travelers. There are many complaints of aggressive and inappropriate public behavior and drugs.

The City needs to create and fund programming that will effectively outreach to this population. Currently they do not fit into "chronically homeless" category and fall outside outreach and services.

CB 3 also supports additional efforts to combat youth homelessness. According to Safe Horizon, nearly 20,000 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. 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, and require specialized outreach services to address these challenges. In FY 15, almost \$16 million was included in the City budget to address youth homelessness. CB 3 supports the baselining of this funding and an expansion of programs to reach out to homeless youth, especially LGBTQ youth.
- Homeless youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer are more likely to commit suicide than other youth. In order for the City identify and address youth in 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) 2013 Community Health Survey. However, it should be noted that this information, while the best 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.

Mental Health

According to DOHMH, over 76% of residents in the Union Square-Lower Manhattan neighborhood reported using counseling or a prescription medication for a mental health problem, compared to about 43% of New York City residents as a whole.³² The same area ranks in the highest third of NYC communities for a history of depression.³³ There is a significant need in this district for culturally competent mental health services for residents, particularly with training for our Chinese and Latino populations, as well as an expansion of the limited services currently available for pediatric and adolescent populations and for the LGBTQ community. CB 3 was pleased to see that, after including requests for support for the "Children Under Five" Mental Health Initiative currently provided by University Settlement in several of its prior District Needs Statements, funding was baselined beginning in FY 15.

Specific Health Concerns

- **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 Use** The Union Square/Lower Manhattan district ranked in the top third citywide for binge drinking, defined as 5 or more drinks for men or 4 or more for women on one occasion in the last 30 days.³⁶ Nearly 27% of respondents reported binge drinking, compared to 18% for New York City overall.³⁷ This survey also showed that heavy drinking, defined as an average of more than 2 drinks per day for men and more than 1 drink per day for women, was higher in the district than the citywide average – nearly 9% compared to about 5%, respectively.³⁸ Funding for a more comprehensive public health effort targeted at CB 3 is needed to address the interaction of multiple factors to reduce the incidence of alcohol-related problems.
- **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 residents having an asthma attack in that year. New York State Asthma Hospital Discharge data by ZIP codes (from 2010-2012 data) shows variation in asthma rates

³² New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Epiquery: NYC Interactive Health Data System - Community Health Survey 2013. <http://nyc.gov/health/epiquery>

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. (2013). *HIV/AIDS Annual Surveillance Tables.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Epiquery: NYC Interactive Health Data System - Community Health Survey 2013. <http://nyc.gov/health/epiquery>

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

by age in CB 3; of the population 65 years and older, ZIP code 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** CB 3 has a growing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community. As this community continues to live and grow throughout our community, there is a growing need for organizations that provide LGBTQ-affirming health care services, such as personalized primary care, initiation and maintenance of hormone replacement therapy, and care management. CB supports continued funding for LGBTQ-affirming health care service providers, and an expansion of these services to meet the increasing need of this growing population in our community.
- **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. While 84% of residents in the Union Square-Lower Manhattan district have some form of health insurance coverage, approximately 9% of residents in the district did not get medical care at some point in 2013 when they needed it.³⁹ Considering that nearly 20% of residents reported that they were in fair or poor general health in the 2013 Community Health Survey⁴⁰, 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 1 below).

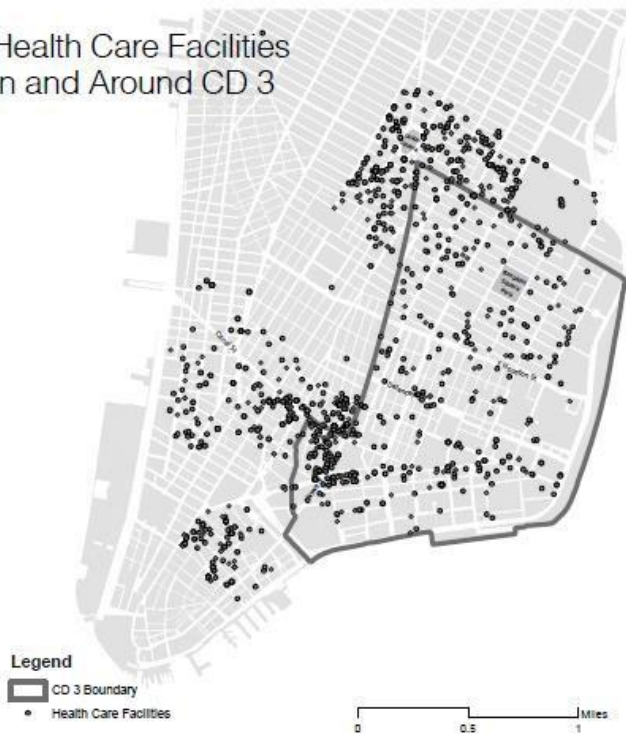
Figure 1. Health Care Facilities In and Around Community District 3⁴¹

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 *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Yang, A. (2014). *A Preliminary Inventory and Assessment of Health Care Facilities within Manhattan Community District 3.*

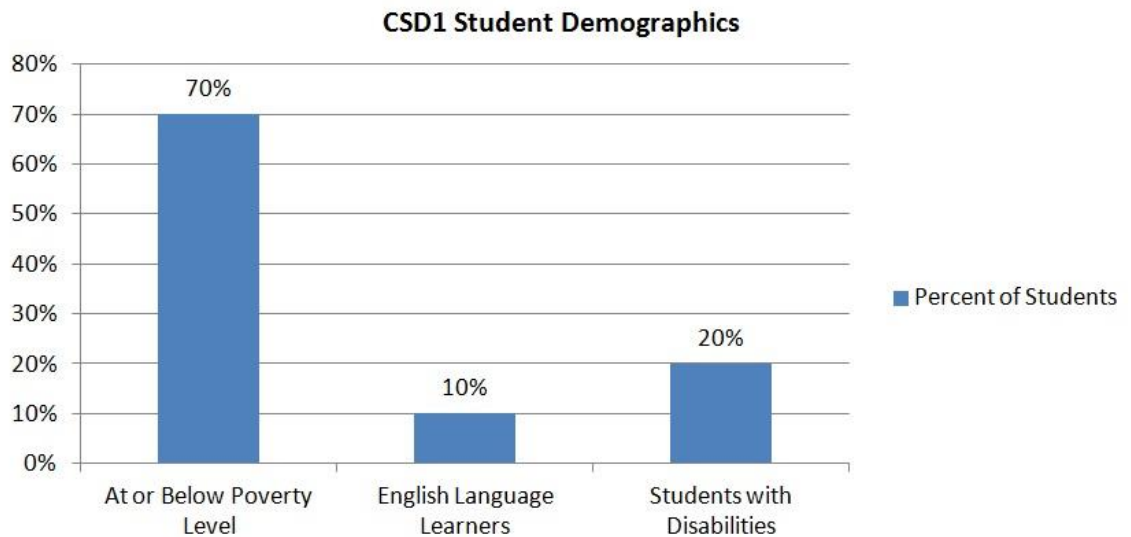
Health Care Facilities In and Around CD 3



▪ .

EDUCATION

- Community District 3 is home to 50 public schools, including 5 charter schools. Of these, 36 are located in Community School District 1 (CSD1) and 14 are located in Community School District 2 (CSD2). Additionally, 17 schools and 18 community-based organizations offer pre-k in the district. (should put this list in appendix
-
- More than 12,000 students were enrolled in CSD1 schools in the 2014-2015 academic year. The largest population of students in CSD1 identifies as Hispanic or Latino (41%), followed by Asian or Pacific Islander/Other (23%), Black or African American (17%) and White (17%). Seventy percent CSD1 students are living at or below the poverty level, 10% are English language learners and 20% are students with disabilities.



Source: NYC Department of Education, Demographic Snapshot, 2014-2015

-
- **Reduce Class Sizes**
- According to DOE data, 3 CSD1 elementary school buildings, housing 6 schools, are over-utilized. Additionally, more than 1,000 new students are projected in CSD1 over the next 5-10 years. However, no new seats are provided for CSD1 in the 5-year Capital plan.
- **Reduce School Overcrowding**
- Many CSD1 schools – 85% – 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, as common areas in these shared schools are over-programmed. The 1.9 million square foot Essex Crossing development threatens to exacerbate this problem, with 1,000 new apartments slated for the Lower East Side by 2024. In June of 2014, CB 3 issued a policy paper detailing the need for a new K through 8th grade school at this site. CB 3 continues to advocate for new school construction to alleviate overcrowding. (cb office—give link)
-
- **Restore School Budgets**
- In Fiscal Year 2015 alone, there is a shortfall of \$2.5 billion of outstanding state aid to New York City schools⁴². One result is that schools struggle to fund specialized and enrichment courses, as well as to provide materials and basic school supplies for their students. This need is exacerbated in CSD1, where a majority of families have lower incomes and may have difficulty purchasing school supplies for their children.
- **Increase Access to Enrichment Activities**
- Due to the decrease in discretionary school budget funding and a rising emphasis on state testing, enrichment activities – including art, music, theater and foreign

42

http://schools.nyc.gov/offices/d_chanc_oper/budget/dbor/allocationmemo/fy14_15/FY15_PDF/FSF_Guide.pdf

language - have been reduced or cut completely. CB 3 supports increased funding that will allow schools to provide access to enrichment activities for students of all ages.

-
- **Provide Facilities for Physical Education and Activity**
- Since a 2013 survey of the physical education and activity facilities in 31 CSD1 schools revealed that the playgrounds are in poor condition or have no facilities or equipment for play, several improvements have been budgeted and planned for. However, many needs remain. For example, five buildings, serving nine CSD1 schools, are not equipped with gyms, and others are unable to accommodate regulation high school games due to their small size. Need to name these
-
- **Address the Lack of Accessible Schools**
- No new buildings have been constructed in CSD1 since 1975 – over 15 years prior to the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act – and most schools are inaccessible or only partially (first-floor) wheelchair accessible. CB 3 supports increased accessibility at current and future school buildings, which will allow students, parents and faculty with disabilities to access our schools. citation
-
- **Specific CSD1 Need: Diversity Conscious Admissions**
- A 2014 UCLA Civil Rights Project study revealed that the East Village and Lower East Side have the highest levels of separation along racial and economic lines in Manhattan, south of Harlem⁴³. This affirmed a [2013 CSD1 study](#) that detailed how DOE policies have [increasingly stratified CSD1](#) schools by race, class, and academic performance. CEC1 has recently led community workshops that have built consensus around defining the shared value of diversity⁴⁴. CB 3 supports policies and programs that would affirmatively increase diversity in our schools.
-
- **Specific CSD2 Need: Serving English Language Learners**
- Serving English Language Learners is a priority for CSD2, particularly with respect to students arriving in this country at middle-school age or above. The CSD2 community also needs supportive services to address various emotional and adjustment issues of its students, some of whom are raised abroad and move to the United States when they are school-age.
-

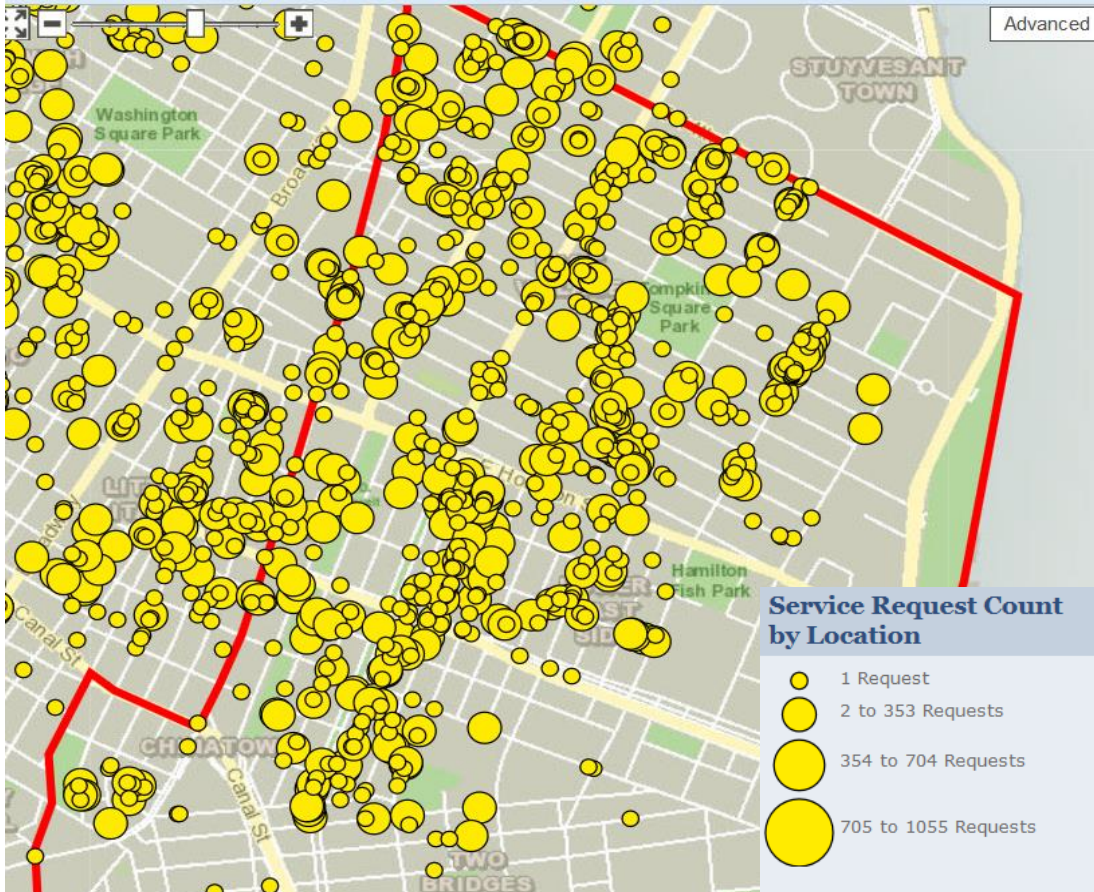
⁴³ <http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/ny-norfler-report-placeholder/Kucsera-New-York-Extreme-Segregation-2014.pdf>

⁴⁴ <http://tinyurl.com/qde7mmm>

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, regularly registering more than 2,000 in each of the past four (4) years (see Figure 1).⁴⁵

Figure 1: Service Request Count By Location



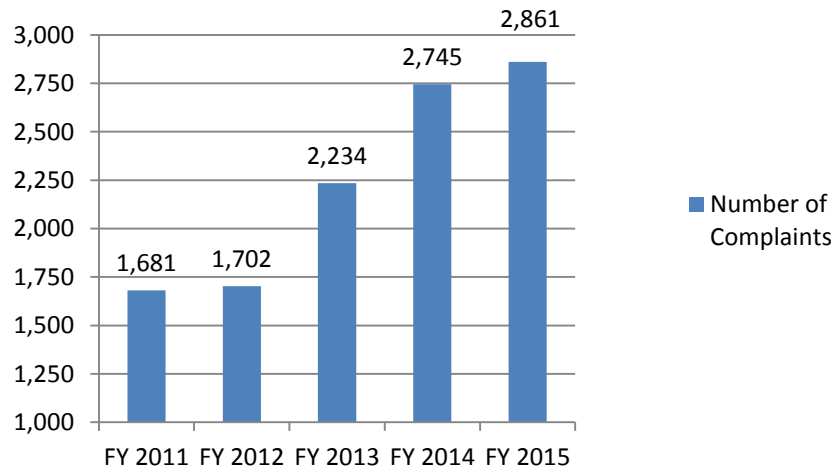
In the past fiscal year, CB 3 has had the second highest number of 311 NYPD commercial noise complaints in the City. Even though there has been a decrease in the number of new liquor license applications in the past year in CB 3, the number of 311 commercial noise complaints related to licensed businesses has increased by 4% percent (see figure 2).

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 in favor of using those storefronts to reclaim greater retail diversity for the benefit of community residents.

⁴⁵ City of New York (2015). *311 Service Request Map*. <<http://www1.nyc.gov/apps/311srmap/>>.

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. NYPD precincts have lost their specialized cabaret units that had been so successful in addressing these and other issues associated with licensed businesses. Generally, they are also no longer using effective tools such as decibel meters or training new police officers to use decibel meters.

Figure 2. Total 311 Commercial Noise Complaints in Community District 3



Source: New York City 311 Service Requests, 2015

The Community Board office 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.

Community Needs to Address Nightlife Issues:

- All CB 3 precincts need the restoration of specialized cabaret units to more effectively address the rising number of complaints each year, enforce conditions of liquor licenses to insure that business noise is not emanating to the street and assist businesses with managing their sidewalks. While we appreciate the return to community policing, this does not replace the technical knowledge of trained cabaret police officers.
- 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. The "6 in 60" legislation that was enacted in 2010 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. One Police Plaza, however, has not provided guidance to precincts in using this tool. The high number of commercial noise complaints in CB3 clearly shows the need for more effective quality of life enforcement and the need to use this available tool.
- Increasing numbers of hotels are being developed that include destination nightlife businesses that create more nighttime traffic and noise. Some offer rooftop and other outdoor areas that also add to the noise impacting residents. Outdoor nightlife in residential areas should be restricted to early hours so that the quality of life of residents is not impacted.
- 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 an 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 CB3. 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.
- While CB3 appreciates the motivation of the City Council in seeking to decriminalize violations such as public urination and open container, CB 3 urges the City Council to consider the impact decriminalizing quality of life offenses will have on communities where those offenses are being committed by nightlife patrons. The NYPD needs to maintain its tools for addressing these quality of life offenses.

Sidewalk Cafes

Sidewalk cafes add to vitality of street life 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, both of which further encroach on public sidewalk space. Lack of DCA staffing has resulted in the loss of much needed routine and night inspections for permit compliance.

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 8-foot sidewalk clearance, as well as existing sidewalk congestion, such as locations near subway entrances or bus stops, to ensure sufficient sidewalk access for pedestrians and people in wheelchairs.
- The City needs to 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.

Landmarks

For the first time, the CB3 Landmarks Committee puts forth “district needs.” A preliminary discussion produced some points to be refined and approved at the July meeting of the committee.

- The City should provide funding for sufficient LPC staff so that there is no need for actions such as the recent proposal to de-calendar properties without public input.
- LPC should recognize that CB3 is rich in buildings of historic, cultural, and architectural significance and is 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 10th Street Historic District to include the area surrounding Tompkins Square Park
 - A new historic district south of Houston Street.

The LPC should follow the law allowing designation of buildings of historical and cultural significance, including buildings on the Bowery significant to the anti-slavery movement.

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.⁴⁶ 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. This trend could cause a decrease in local employment opportunities.

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 problematic issues in those areas.

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.⁴⁷ 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.⁴⁸ In 2013 and 2014, 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 25% increase in the number of chain stores placed there since 2009.⁴⁹

Previous surveys by CB3 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%.⁵⁰ A map of all currently licensed establishments in the district is shown in figure 1.

⁴⁶DeStefano, 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>>.

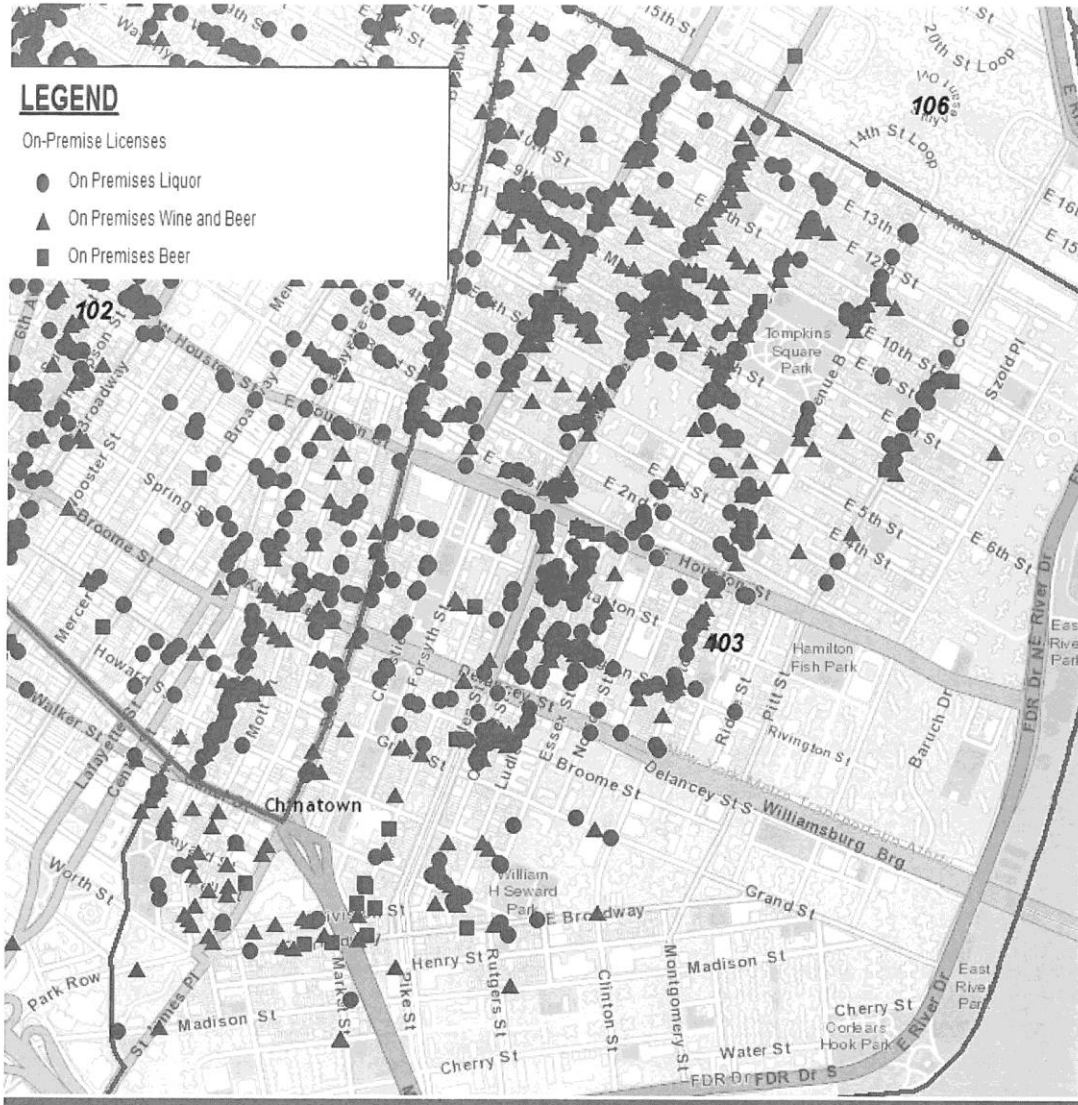
⁴⁷Chin, A. (2014). East Village Clings to a Colorful Past by Alan Chin. *New York Times*. <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/14/realestate/the-east-village-clings-to-a-colorful-past.html?_r=0>.

⁴⁸ González-Rivera, C. (2014). State of the Chains. *Center for an Urban Future*. <<https://nycfuture.org/pdf/State-of-the-Chains-2014.pdf>>.

⁴⁹ East Village Community Coalition. (2015). *Preserving Local, Independent Retail: Recommendations for Formula Retail Zoning in the East Village*. http://evccnyc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/2015_Preserving_LocalInd_Retail.pdf.

⁵⁰ East Village Community Coalition. (2014). *East Village Ground Floor Use Survey*.

Figure 1. All On Premises Licenses in Community District 3 Manhattan



Source: New York State Liquor Authority Mapping Project (NYS LAMP) - as of July 2015

Also in early 2014, CB3 collaborated with Columbia University to study retail trends in the East Village from 2004 – 2012.⁵¹ 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 CB3-initiated studies that showed the displacement of small businesses by liquor-licensed establishments and chains.

Retail stores that do survive in our community are under threat from rising costs of rents, utilities and taxes – identified as major challenges to small business survival in several CB3-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.

Below are just two recent examples of property tax pass-along increases reported by local businesses:

- A business on Avenue A had their property tax burden increase from \$8,700 in 2006-2007 to \$28,553 in 2009 – a more than tripling of the amount of tax owed in a few short years.
- A business on Orchard Street experienced an increase from \$1,170 in 2004-2005 to \$36,373 in 2010-11, a burden that grew 31 times higher in just 6 years

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 BID: 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 local economy continues to grow increasingly homogenous and burdened by a high cost of doing business, Community Board 3 has identified the following as ways that the City can assist us in growing and strengthening our local economy:

- Support for Merchant Organizations - Financial support for our local community-based organizations 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 additional support, such as funding of effective programs such as Avenue NYC.
- Partnership with DCP – Assistance from the Department of City Planning is requested to undertake a joint study of the District to explore what zoning and other mechanisms can be employed to mitigate the negative trends described herein and strengthen the District's local economy and neighborhoods.

⁵¹ 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

- Simplification of Regulations and Reduction of Fines – 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, CB3 would welcome the establishment of a business incubator in the District, and would welcome opportunities to discuss this with the Economic Development Corporation.
- Disaster Response - The 2nd Avenue tragedy - 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 relevant agencies including SBS, and the continued availability of low-interest loans.

This section was drafted at committee but not voted on by committee, and therefore must be moved from the floor for vote.

Public Housing

The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) owns and manages over 14,000 units of low-income housing in CB 3, 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 federal government 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 and has also committed to eliminating the PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) payments, 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, 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.

Building maintenance has dramatically deteriorated as repair wait-times have become intolerably long and staff has been drastically cut. 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 developments (i.e. Campos Plaza and Baruch Houses) suffer from chronic sewage problems where standing water backs up without proper drainage.

CB 3 is pleased that NYCHA has attempted to comprehensively develop a plan for its long-term survival and document it through the recently issued "NextGeneration NYCHA". That document clearly lays out the Authority's dire predicament and suggests some very bold strategies to avert disaster. Before implementation of any of the major undertakings suggested, we call on NYCHA to fully engage residents, with an emphasis on our youth, in community visioning of the plan. The process for implementation must not be rushed, and 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 must emphasize the creation of senior and affordable - not market rate housing. We

fear the growing trend toward privatization of NYCHA properties and attempts to shift rent and amenities costs to residents already struggling to keep up with the high cost of living.