

District Needs Statement

Community Board 7/Manhattan

FY2013



Manhattan Community Board 7 serves the residents, institutions, businesses, visitors, and other stakeholders of Manhattan's Upper West Side. We hold as our guiding context:

INCLUSION: to value diversity, consideration of others, and promotion of the common good.

QUALITY OF LIFE: to value the availability and continuous improvement of resources, infrastructure, public space, programs, services, and economic, socio-cultural, and educational opportunities that foster safe and active healthy living for all.

SUSTAINABILITY: to value those who came before us, and those who have yet to arrive; to embrace policies and practices that are economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable for generations to come.

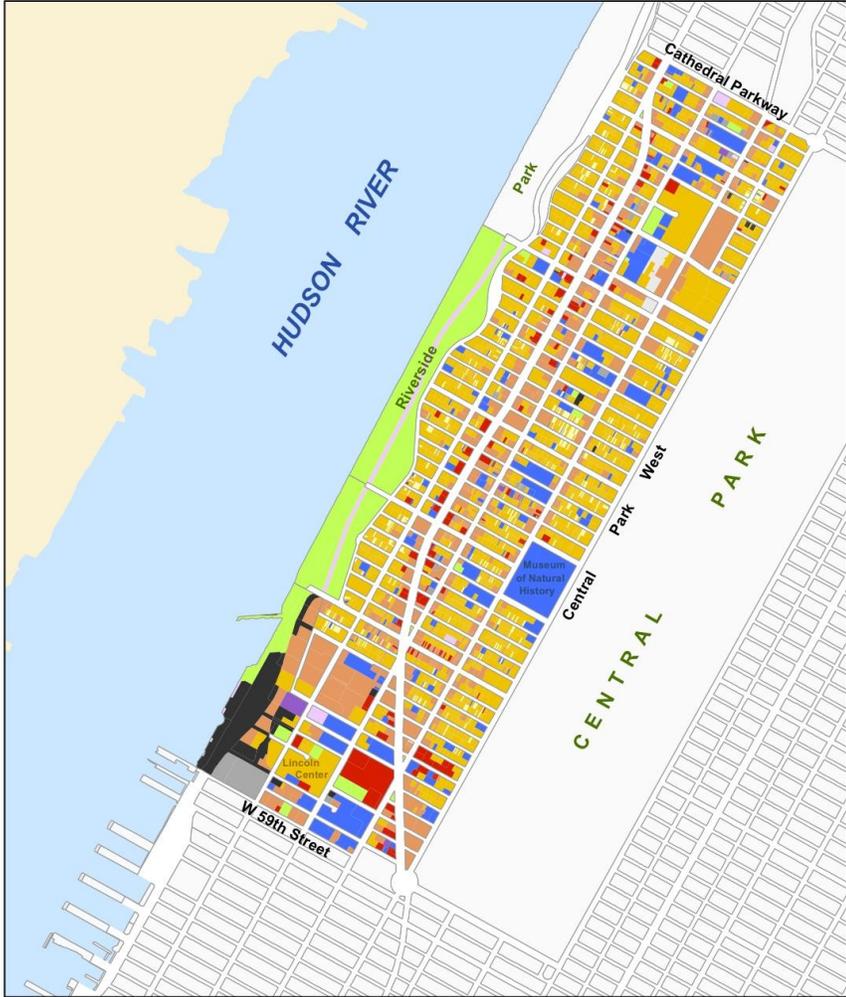
INTERDEPENDENCE: to value our place in the world, recognizing that our interests, resources, and actions connect us with communities and ecosystems across the globe; to embrace policies and practices that allow all communities to thrive.

PARTICIPATION: to value honest, transparent, responsive, and democratic governance, collaborative engagement, and the right of every person to be informed and heard, even in the context of respectful disagreement.

1.0 Geography and Demographics

Manhattan Community District 7 encompasses Manhattan’s Upper West Side, from 59th Street to 110th Street, Central Park West to the Hudson River, and includes approximately 1.9 square miles (1222 acres) of prime New York City real estate. The district is home to 211,073 people, supporting approximately 50% more people per acre than the average for Manhattan, and four times more people per acre than the average for New York City.

Manhattan Community District 7



© Copyright 2011
 NYC Department of City Planning
 Source: MapPLUTO™ Release 11v1

<p>Residential Land Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One & Two Family Buildings Multi-Family Buildings Mixed Residential and Commercial Buildings 	<p>Non-Residential Land Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial / Office Buildings Industrial / Manufacturing Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Public Facilities and Institutions Transportation and Utility Parking Facilities Vacant Land All Others or No Data
---	---

In addition to the residents who live in District 7, the Upper West Side attracts millions of visitors each year who come to enjoy its cultural institutions, parks, retail offerings, and architectural diversity. Central Park, the American Museum of Natural History, Lincoln Center, Time Warner Center, NY Historical Society, and Riverside Park are popular destinations.

Central Park



American Museum of Natural History



Lincoln Center



Time Warner Center



New York Historical Society



Riverside Park



2.0 Countervailing Trends: Rapid Development and Service Cuts

Since the 1980's, the Upper West Side has seen tremendous economic growth and development. Several factors, including easy access to transit (Subways 1,2,3,B,C,D and multiple bus lines), proximity to parks (Central Park and Riverside Park among others), strong public schools, and engaging street life make the district especially attractive to families, seniors, and people who want a short commute to Manhattan's business centers downtown.

During the economic upsurge of the mid-90's and early-00's, developers seized the opportunity to develop housing for a seemingly insatiable demand. Low-density buildings were replaced by luxury towers. Multi-apartment brownstones were consolidated into single-family homes. Vacant lots (what few remained) were purchased and developed into large-scale, mixed-use complexes. Most recently, plans were approved in December 2010 to develop the last open lot in the district (at 59th and 11th Avenue) into Riverside Center, a 3 Million SF mixed-use complex with 2500 residential units, a hotel, commercial facilities, playgrounds, and a 100K SF school, which will likely increase district population by 3-4% (not reflected in this report).

Brownstone Conversions



New Construction



In certain areas, the average price per square foot increased from \$300/SF in 1990 to more than \$1000/SF in 2010.

2.1 Population Density

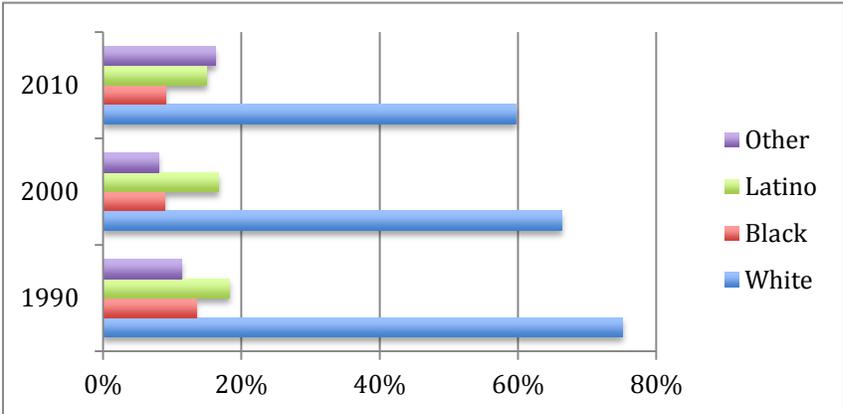
Although population has remained fairly stable over four decades, the geographic distribution of residents has shifted. According to census tract data, approximately 6% fewer people live in the central part of the district (74th St. to 96th St.), while new development in the southern and northern ends of the district attracted enough new residents to counter-balance that loss. Almost half (49%) of the occupied units in the district are one-person households.

Total Population	1980	1990	2000	2010
# of Residents	206,671	210,993	207,699	211,073
% Change	--	2.1	-1.6	.7

2.2 Population Distribution

Although population has increased a modest .7% over the past decade, more notable shifts occurred in the socioeconomic mix of the neighborhood. The decade saw a reduction in the proportion of Caucasian residents (66% to 60%) and a corresponding increase in mixed-race residents (8% to 16%), while the proportion of Black residents remained at 9%, and the proportion of Latino residents dropped slightly (17% to 15%).

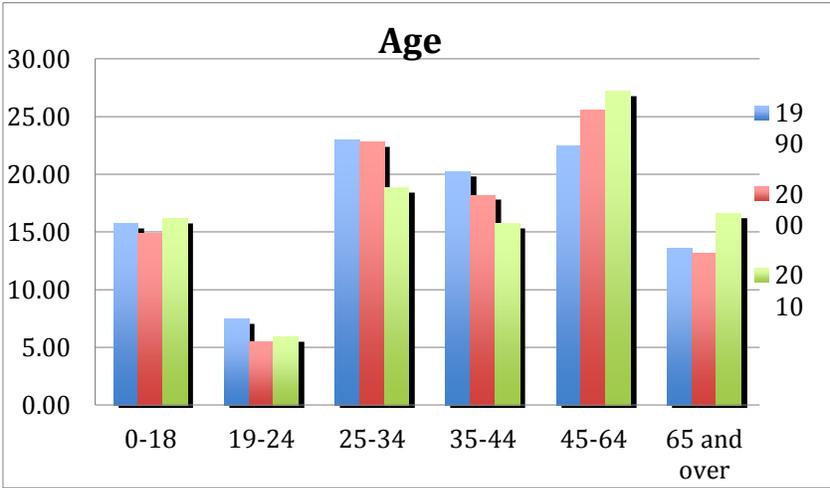
Race



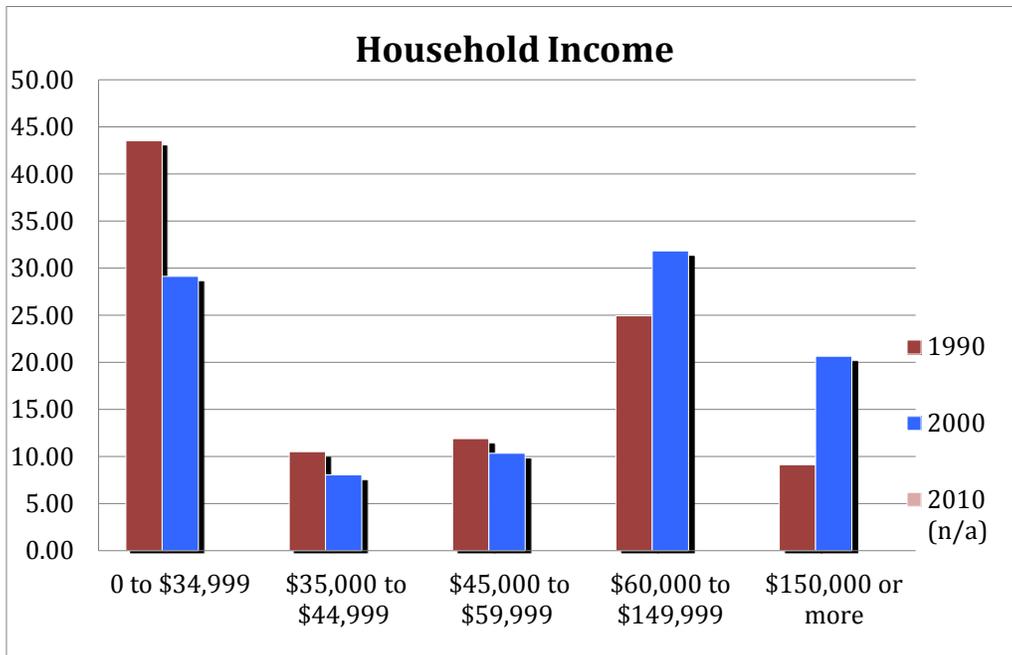
Similarly, there was an overall decrease (-6%) in age adults of working ages 19-64, but a growing population (+17%) of children and seniors.

	< 18	19-24	25-34	35-44	45-64	> 65
1990	15.75	7.45	22.98	20.23	22.42	13.58
2000	14.84	5.47	22.80	18.19	25.57	13.14
2010	16.14	5.92	18.80	15.73	27.20	16.59

Age



Income data from the 2010 census is not yet available, however, the period from 1990 to 2000 showed a growing income gap, with lower income residents losing considerable ground and higher income residents gaining income at a faster rate. 2010 data will likely bear out this trend.



2.3 Service Cuts

As budget pressures increase at Federal, State, and City levels, efforts to reduce debt and cut discretionary expenditures have resulted in fewer real funds for pre-schools, senior centers, and support for those living in poverty and/or challenged by illness. Similarly, municipal personnel (teachers, police, fire, sanitation) that not only ensure quality of life, but provide a safety net for vulnerable populations, have also been reduced. Over the past decade, New York has seen:

- The largest income gap in US -- top 20% earn \$371,754, bottom 20% earn \$9,845.
- An increase in homelessness from 31,000 to 41,204.
- An increase in the poverty rate from 18% in 20007 to 21.3% in 2009

MCB7 awaits 2010 data on income by census tract to confirm the economic picture for Manhattan’s Upper West Side. However, most residents would likely confirm observable differences in income disparity, homelessness, and growing pockets of poverty.

3.0 Impacts and Opportunities

While rapid economic growth added high-end housing capacity, increased commercial activity, and improved quality of life for many in the district, it has also produced challenges. Resources, support systems, and opportunities for youth, seniors, and low- to middle-class residents have actually declined. Various impacts and recommendations are outlined below.

3.1 Housing

The increase in demand for larger, higher-end housing not only attracted large-scale real estate development, but it also motivated existing landlords to upgrade their buildings and/or increase rents. Building conversions and higher rents reduced the number of housing units available for the lower/middle income families, including a growing elderly population. Furthermore, as higher income residents displace lower income families, landlords have greater capacity and incentive to continue the self-reinforcing cycle of displacing the poor to areas outside of the district.

	Total Units	Occupied	Vacant	%Vacant	Median Price \$M	%Change
1990	125,807	115,703	10,104	8%	\$1.45	333%
2000	121,834	114,262	7,572	6%	\$2.95	103%
2010	122,145	110,246	11,899	10%	\$5.54	84%
20-Yr Trend	-2.9%	-4.7%	+17.8%		282%	

Of 110,246 occupied units, 34,555 (31.3%) are owned and 75,691 (68.7%) are rented, of which 66% (or 50,078 units) are subject to some form of rent regulation. As housing values have increased, so has the median income of the occupants. Median household income had risen to \$102,640 in 2008—about 80 percent higher than the median for New York City. Interestingly, despite high incomes, a significant number of both renters and owners spend more than 50% of their income on rent or maintenance fees.

Affordable Housing. New York City’s affordable housing programs recognize the strength and stability brought to our communities through economic diversity. A broad spectrum of housing stock tends to enhance the character, mix, and sustainability of a neighborhood. Without local affordable housing, the commercial sector relies increasingly on shopkeepers, service providers, and employees that commute from other boroughs or states. Similarly, goods and services that might be generated locally must be imported, which exacerbates traffic congestion, air pollution, and infrastructural wear and tear.

Although accurate historical data is difficult to obtain, there is a palpable experience that the stock of affordable housing in the district has decreased at an alarming rate. Policy changes that introduced “luxury” decontrol—the elimination of rent protections for occupants whose rent reaches \$2,000 and whose income reaches a threshold amount—make no allowance for the age of the tenants. As tenants reach the height of their earning power, they may lose their rent protection.

However, once retired, they would be unable to sustain market rents, or become first-time co-op or condo purchasers because lending policies take into account future earnings.

Furthermore, luxury decontrol virtually ensures that: 1) regulated rents are unavailable to most new renters, with insignificant exception; and 2) that lower- and moderate-income tenants in rent-regulated apartments face escalating rents that will make their apartments increasingly unaffordable. MCB7 urges that housing programs, including Mitchell Lama, Tenant Interim Lease (TIL), 80/20, LISC, and other collaborative private/public relationships be strengthened and expanded. In addition, MCB7 calls for repealing the Urstadt Law, thereby allowing NYC to assume direct responsibility for managing its affordable housing crisis.

Public Housing. CD7 is home to three developments managed by the New York City Housing Authority: Amsterdam Houses and Amsterdam Addition, Fredrick Douglas Houses, and Wise Towers, with a total of 6,166 units. NYCHA and its residents face a myriad of challenges, including the need for improved security, facility repairs, resident services, and programs that support youth and elderly. Furthermore, lack of accessible and accurate data make it difficult to consistently address problems in a timely manner.



MCB7 urges the City to develop an effective data collection and response system for NYCHA developments. Funding is also necessary to sustain programs for (1) DFTA's senior centers and NORCs, (2) Space for after school and child care programs, and (3) Community Center programming. Finally, MCB7 urges the City to convene a federal/state/local task force to address comprehensively NYCHA's persistent structural deficit.

SRO Buildings. The Upper West Side is home to more than 200 single room occupancy (SRO) buildings with 13,364 dwelling units, most of which do not contain a kitchen or bathroom. These units are typically the most affordable alternative for young singles, older veterans, chronically ill, formerly homeless, and hardcore poor. Using the low-income benefit categories of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid identifies, at least 25,000 people (over 10%) of the district population qualify for SRO housing. However, economic growth has motivated many SRO owners to convert their buildings (often contrary to zoning regulations) from affordable permanent dwellings into transient hotels that serve an increasing number of tourists in search of budget lodgings. Recognizing that existing regulations are not universally enforceable in the current economic environment, MCB7 would welcome new ways to create and preserve affordable single room housing units while also meeting the demand for budget hotels and other types of supportive housing in the neighborhood.

3.2 Public School Capacity and Quality

- More than 25,000 students are enrolled in 15 elementary, 11 middle, and 13 high schools
- Six elementary and middle public schools are overcrowded
- 36 private/parochial elementary and secondary schools
- 5 colleges and post-secondary institutions.

Overcrowding. The increasing proportion of younger residents in the district has resulted in serious overcrowding of public schools. PS 199, 87, 9, 166 and 165 operate at or above 100% of their rated capacity. PS 452, opened in September 2010 to relieve overcrowding, will soon itself operate at or near 100% capacity. Demand for kindergarten seats exceeds the supply at many of these schools. PS 9 recently lost its long-standing "Gifted & Talented" program due to the demands for in-zone kindergarten placement and space limitations. The need to reserve spaces in schools not currently overwhelmed by in-zone kindergarten demand has also complicated admissions to other public schools in the district, particularly at PS 191, 75 and 163.



Furthermore, budget cuts to all New York City schools from FY2008 to FY2012 have more than erased any net gains from the Court-ordered increases in funding required to provide students with the sound basic education guaranteed by the New York State constitution. Schools have been forced to maintain class sizes significantly above State-mandated targets, eliminate or curtail enrichment programs in art, music, science and languages, and reduce support services. Even in this context, the DoE has confirmed to the Panel for Educational Policy that the overcrowding and over-enrollment trend on the Upper West Side is not temporary, and is expected to continue into the foreseeable future.

Middle Schools. While overcrowding is currently most acute in the elementary grades, the Department of Education projects a shortage of middle school seats within the next two fiscal years, and demand for certain types of middle school programs already far exceeds supply. The shortage of middle school seats will become even more pronounced when out-of-district

students admitted to charter schools located within the district become eligible for placement in local middle schools.

High Schools. The closing of Brandeis and Martin Luther King High Schools, and the use of those facilities to house several smaller high schools serving distinct populations, creates need for additional support and coordination of resources. The co-location of a charter elementary school in the Brandeis High School building will prevent the placement of additional high school seats in the district, will physically segregate high school students within their own building, and will create a hierarchical preference for elementary students. Given its admissions priorities, it is unreasonable to expect the charter elementary school to relieve any significant portion of the overcrowding in the district.

Beacon High School operates in leased space, and is expected to relocate to new space outside the district within the next few years. This move will further reduce the in-district options for high school aged students. Beacon High School's continued presence in the district must be secured either through a long-term lease extension or the purchase of the current or an adequate replacement facility. The new smaller high schools must be supported in a collective and collaborative fashion so they can enjoy the economies of scale experienced by larger schools.

Vulnerable Students. Despite the documented negative correlation between poverty and student achievement, the DoE and the Panel for Educational Policy recently adopted changes in the formula for allocating per-capita funding for students that significantly reduced supplemental funding for students eligible for free/reduced price lunch, and only restored a portion of that funding for demonstrated need for academic intervention services, effectively creating a net loss of funding to struggling students. Moreover, since need for academic intervention services is often driven by test scores not available for students in the early grades, the change in formula calls for reduced funding in early childhood at the time that such interventions can do the most good.

Similarly, the per capita funding system has been modified to reduce supplemental funding for certain ages of special needs students. The explanation that the prior metric was based on an assumption that special needs classes such as ICT were not operating at full capacity, and the adjustment to that assumption, ignores that most such programs, especially in the overcrowded portions of the district, already run at full capacity, and thus have no means to recapture the funds needed to sustain those programs. This amounts to a dead-weight cut in funding on our most vulnerable students.

3.3 Local Commerce

As the Upper West Side becomes a "must visit" destination for tourists, and home to wealthier residents, it also attracts national retailers interested in building/maintaining their brand. Storefronts on Manhattan's Upper West Side are seen not only as lucrative high-traffic locations, but also as prime advertising spaces. Consequently, Broadway, Columbus, and Amsterdam Avenues have seen a major shift in commerce, from a diverse mix of local and regional retailers to a parade of outlets for national chains.

Banks and drug stores, in particular, are battling for supremacy over their competitors on these streets. In this context, landlords have great incentive to vacate and combine smaller retail spaces into larger spaces that attract national chains that tend to homogenize commercial offerings and deaden street life. Everyday amenities such as shoe repair shops, hardware stores, laundries, and small delis, are losing their footing in the face of high rents and stiff competition from national stores.

Local Businesses



National Franchises



Efforts to stem the loss of local businesses and maintain the rich commercial fabric of the district include streamlining regulatory burdens on smaller businesses, developing local business networks, discouraging the “warehousing” of small vacant storefronts, and encouraging special zoning that maintains a diverse and vibrant streetscape.

3.4 Health and Human Services

- 8 food pantries.
- 27 programs for seniors, including 9 senior centers.
- 2 nursing homes; 15 ambulatory health facilities; 10 chemical dependency services; 20 mental health programs; 10 programs for people with disabilities.
- 16 residential facilities/supportive housing for adults and families

Hunger. Low- and fixed-income neighbors are struggling to keep up with steeply rising food prices. Healthy foods in particular are more expensive and not readily accessible in many parts of the community. Meal programs and food pantries have seen a sharp increase in demand, and a corresponding decrease in government funds and donated foods. The pantries are only able to supply clients with enough food for three days a month.

Use of the food stamp program has also increased. One food pantry in the community, West Side Campaign against Hunger, saw a 49% increase over the year in people who had never come for emergency food or services before. This made for a 27% increase in households, 18% increase

in clients, and 18% increase in the food provided for meals. The greatest increase was in seniors (24%), followed by parents with children (22%). The requirement to provide fingerprints in order to apply for food stamps has made many potential clients hesitant and must be eliminated.

Support for Homeless. While the local homeless population seems to have diminished in recent years, the Upper West Side still has a not insignificant number of homeless people with medical and mental health problems, addiction issues, or difficulties functioning in society. Additionally, many formerly homeless people living with AIDS, many living in supportive housing programs, now receive little support. MCB7 urges the city to ensure that this population has the support of case manager to mitigate the risk of vulnerable people returning to the streets.

Seniors. The Upper West Side is home to three NORC's (Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities), which receive funds targeted to aging populations. While budgets for the NORCs have been reduced, the Academy of Medicine initiated a pilot project to explore ways in which the city can be friendlier to those growing old. Senior citizens have offered recommendations to improve the safety and comfort of the district. Benches, liberally scattered around the area, would encourage those unable to walk for a distance to feel more comfortable going outside and socializing with their neighbors. Stores accessible to wheelchairs and walkers would also encourage more activity among seniors.



Despite improvements, older members of the community continue to face challenges:

- Senior Centers have had to cut offerings of food and transportation.
- Extended In-Home Services to the Elderly Program, which provides homemaking for vulnerable homebound seniors not eligible for Medicaid, has been drastically cut.
- Adult Social Day Services program, which provides therapeutic environments for disabled seniors (many with Alzheimer's) and respite for family caregivers, has been eliminated.
- Elder Abuse Prevention Programs and Geriatric Mental Health Initiatives have been cut.

Youth Employment. The Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) is a significant resource for teens living at or near the poverty level, offering both a financial incentive as well as access to job-readiness skills, bankable work history, a source of accomplishment and self-esteem, and relief from inactivity and doldrums. In Summer 2010, funding for SYEP dropped, reducing the program from 57,000 positions to 35,000 positions. Over 100,000 eligible applicants were not placed. Cuts to SYEP have the dual effect of shrinking other summer programs that rely on SYEP for staffing. Not only do teens lose the opportunity to work, but their younger counterparts lose the opportunity to participate in the camps staffed by SYEP participants. Refocusing the budget process to make this a priority at both the State and City levels is the only certain path to restoring this important resource.



Day Care and Head Start. Available statistics of such need can be misleadingly understated, but the need for at least one full Head Start class and a like number of child care "slots" remain unmet, and the need is growing. These programs are not only limited by the city budget, but the condition is exacerbated because DYCD targets additional or supplemental funding to zip codes identified as containing heavy need or demand. Since the zip codes of the Upper West Side do not meet the criteria for enhanced funding, the likelihood that these needs can be met remains stagnant despite the existence of pockets of extreme need.

The most immediate effect may be the inability of a parent or guardian to work outside the home, thus compromising the paths to independence and success for the working poor and those who aspire to gainful employment. In addition, especially with respect to Head Start, children denied the opportunity to participate in the program will be at a school-readiness disadvantage as compared with students who begin kindergarten having been exposed to these programs. MCB7 calls for a system-wide increase in the funding for these programs as well as the formal recognition and provision of support for pockets of unmet need that may be overshadowed or lost when juxtaposed with the balance of a zip code or area.

After-School Programs. After-school programs provide a range of educational, social and recreational services in a supervised community-based setting, and is essential for many working families. Limited funding prevents service providers from meeting all needs in the district. While many private afterschool programs accept and welcome families unable to pay all or a portion of their program costs, current estimates continue to show hundreds of families otherwise eligible for placement who are unable to find a space. Once again, this condition is exacerbated by the fact that pockets of extreme need are located within zip codes with high median incomes, thereby disqualifying the area from additional support.

The inability to find suitable afterschool placement directly affects parents' ability to find and keep gainful employment. The need to pick up children at the end of the school day consigns some parents to part-time positions that provide less compensation, and often no benefits such as health insurance. Lack of placement also deprives children of meaningful use of afternoon time for either recreation or skill-building that can translate to a healthier lifestyle and greater

success in school. MCB7 calls for a system-wide increase in the funding for these programs as well as the formal recognition and provision of support for pockets of unmet need that may be overshadowed or lost when juxtaposed with the balance of a zip code or area.

Public Libraries. CD7 has three NYPL branches (2010 circulation of 893,785) and the Performing Arts Library at Lincoln Center (circulation 634,967). The boom in new residential units throughout the district has resulted in increased demand for library services. Further, local demand is increasing for a variety of library services, including internet access for communications, demand for job-search resources in print and over the internet, and self-improvement and skill-building options. The recent spike in demand for library services makes the reinstatement of fully-staffed 6-day service at our branch libraries essential. Although renovation of the St. Agnes Branch library expanded service in the central part of CD7, the anticipated increase in demand at Columbus Square, and the age and wear on the existing facility, demonstrate the need for a phased renovation and reconfiguration of the Bloomingdale branch library as well.

3.5 Transportation

- 193.6 lane miles of paved streets.
- 6 North-South Bound Avenues + Broadway Boulevard.
- 51 East-West Streets.
- Six bike paths.
- 14 NYCT bus routes.
- Seven subway routes; 14 stations.
- In 2010, 2030 vehicular accidents in the 20th Precinct; 1334 in the 24th Precinct.
- 64% of CD7 workers travel by mass transit.

Street and Sidewalk Conditions. Considerable automotive traffic, combined with an unusually high number of utility cuts, and a high volume of sleet and snow over the past few years have culminated in poor street conditions on the Upper West Side. A recent survey of east-west streets indicates that many of our blocks are riddled with ruts, potholes, faded striping, and poor curbs. These conditions present unsafe conditions for vehicles and pedestrians. On average, DOT resurfaces approximately 13 of the 193.6 lane miles in CD7 annually. There were 620 pothole complaints and numerous reports of holes in pavement that collect water and restaurant garbage run-off. MCB7 recommends a significant increase in resurfacing of streets and curb lanes.



Similarly, sidewalks are in need of repair, especially at street corners where water tends to pond. Many sidewalks carry violations, especially near sidewalk vaults along Amsterdam Avenue and Broadway. The replacement of a sidewalk vault requires special engineering and can be costly. MCB7 recommends that another method be sought to skim-coat existing sidewalk surfaces over vaulted areas, when sidewalk replacement isn't feasible.

Shared Streets. As driving becomes increasingly expensive on the Upper West Side, a growing number of residents have begun to use bicycles for everyday transportation. Having encouraged construction of a protected bike lane along Columbus Avenue, MCB7 is now challenged to balance the needs of cyclists, motorists, pedestrians, and local businesses on the street. While the lane is a great benefit to cyclists (and to gardeners thrilled to tend the tree pits that punctuate the lane), it has elicited two main concerns among local businesses and residents: loading/unloading and customer parking.



Curbside space for loading/unloading was curtailed in order to accommodate “mixing” lanes that allow cars to safely turn left across the lane. Some have proposed that increasing the price and timing of metered parking would ameliorate this challenge.

Shared Sidewalks. As sidewalks become congested with tourists and visitors, street vendors have become increasingly eager to take advantage to new markets. The proliferation of food trucks and sidewalk vendors has many Upper West Siders frustrated by the lack of enforcement and/or licensing limits. Additionally, street furniture (newsstands, bus shelters, bike racks, news boxes, pay phones, mail boxes, benches, etc) and sidewalk cafes have begun to over-crowd the sidewalks. MCB7 encourages a more comprehensive approach to optimizing shared use and management of sidewalks, perhaps including a coordinated street furniture franchise.



Efforts are also being made to minimize permanently enclosed sidewalk cafes, especially after they have become vacant. Except in rare circumstances, enclosed cafes unduly narrow the sidewalk and cause pedestrian congestion. MCB7 would likely some kind of bonding mechanism to guarantee the removal of cafe structures when they change ownership.

Traffic Congestion and Safety. Increases in population density and vehicular traffic congestion cause safety concerns throughout CD7. The NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) recently completed a comprehensive traffic study from West 57th to 86th Streets. Three areas of particular concern are:

- Safety at Bow Tie, Broadway/Columbus Avenue/West 63rd-66th Streets.
- Safety at Broadway/Amsterdam Avenue/West 70th-74th Street.
- Truck traffic along West 59th Street Corridor, West 57th-61st Streets.

MCB7 is also monitoring traffic resulting from the newly opened of the 72nd Street connection to Riverside Boulevard, and has called for the full construction of Riverside Boulevard to West 59th Street, linking Riverside Drive and Route 9A and reducing traffic on West End Avenue. Concurrently, MCB7 suggests continued measures to ensure pedestrian safety along Riverside Blvd.

Signage. MCB7 urges the installation of "Stop Here on Red" signs for the Broadway Malls (similar to the Park Avenue Malls) to alert motorists that they may not turn from Broadway heading east or west without stopping to observe the E/W traffic lights; signage for West End Avenue to stop speeding traffic; and "Don't Honk" signs in areas where commercial and residential neighborhoods have conflicts.

MCB7 appreciates DOT's installation of countdown timers at Broadway/Amsterdam Avenue/West 71st Street, and hopes many more will appear in CD7 very soon. It is obvious that these timers give pedestrians knowledge and safety, far more than the flashing pedestrian symbols.

Red Light Cameras. Pedestrians safety is compromised when drivers do not follow traffic signals. To discourage traffic from jumping the red light, MCB7 recommends red light cameras at Central Park West & 63rd Street, adjacent to the Ethical Culture School; at West End Avenue & 72nd, 79th, & 96th Streets, at 66th Street & West End Avenue, near Lincoln Towers.

Parking. The issue of whether CD7 has too much or too little parking has vexed the community for decades. There is contradictory data concerning garage occupancy rates and automobile ownership/usage. There are conflicting positions as to whether additional parking will ease traffic congestion or encourage more automobile use. Many residents urge the city to issue residential permits for street parking, which could generate revenue and mitigate pollution caused by drivers constantly "hunting" for vacant spots.

Subways/Buses. CD7 is served by two major subway lines with seven different routes. Along Broadway, the IRT #1 serves local and express stations and the #2,3 serve express stations. Along Central Park West, the B/C lines serve local and express stations, and the A/D serve express stations, such as 59th Street/Columbus Circle - a major junction where the two subway

lines intersect. On the IND Central Park West line, more local trains during "shoulder" periods - immediately after "rush hour" - would alleviate long wait times and congested trains. Recent service cuts have caused most off-peak trains to resemble rush hour trains in crowding conditions. Countdown clocks have received rave reviews by subway riders and would be welcomed on the Central Park West line as soon as possible.

Subway Stations. CD7 has 14 subway stations along the IRT and IND subway lines. Two major station renovations are underway:

- 59th Street/Columbus Circle complex. This station is an important transfer point for five lines, as well as a destination station for thousands of tourists and workers, and is a gateway to the Upper West Side. Renovations underway include handicapped access, improved rider circulation (including a new route between the uptown & downtown #1 lines), and new arcades and retail.
- 96th Street/Broadway (1,2,3). MCB7 welcomes the many improvements to the station, not the least of which is handicapped accessibility and the expansion of the Broadway Malls. Traffic concerns still remain, and DOT continues to work with MCB7 to address these issues.

Bus Service. Bus service throughout the district could be improved, especially after the 2010 service cuts. MCB7 supports "on-street" supervision of bus service to improve NYC Transit's response to actual operating conditions, especially on weekends.

- M104 service was truncated at Times Square, which affected thousands of riders who rely on the one-seat ride to Grand Central and the United Nations.
- M11 service levels are insufficient to handle growing demand, especially among elderly people.
- The M60 bus, connecting the Upper West Side to Central Harlem and LaGuardia Airport is a major success story for the MTA, and should be extended further south to the Broadway/96th Street area.
- The articulated buses on the M79 and M86 lines require longer headways, which can cause buses to "clump up" and cause huge gaps in service.

3.6 Public Safety

- 3 NYC Police Precincts (20th, 24th, and Central Park), PSA6, and Transit Districts #1 and #3
- In 2010, 232 reported crimes in the 20, down 28% YTD; 212 in the 24, down 16%.
- Uniformed police officers: 134 in the 20th; 126 in the 24th; 85 in CP.
- Civilian Employees: 15 in the 20th; 22 in the 24th; 13 in CP.
- 5 Fire Stations: In 2010, 887 fires and 10637 emergencies, with a response time of 4:38 minutes.
- 24.8% recycling diversion rate.

New York Police Department. NYPD tracks seven major crimes as a primary indicator. Overall, major crime statistics in CD7's precincts, PSA6 (public housing division), and Transit show a continuing downward trend. Six officers of the 20th Precinct are dedicated NYCHA's Amsterdam Houses and Addition. MCB7 encourages NYPD to implement this approach at Frederick Douglass Houses and Wise Towers.

Staffing: NYPD has moved to a data-based deployment and response system that utilizes specialized units and task forces. Consequently, the number of uniformed officers in precincts has declined over the past 5 years. In the 20th and 24th Precincts, the number of uniformed officers (134 and 126, respectively) and civilian personnel (15 and 22) have continued to decline. PSA6, whose officers are responsible for NYCHA developments in eight precincts, has 127 uniformed officers. However, actual staffing levels are lower, due to homeland security assignments, military service, and sick leave. Recruiting, retention and civilianization are essential.

Illegal drug dealing: The 24th Precinct, PSA6 and Manhattan North Narcotics continue their initiatives to reduce illegal drug sales on the streets and in buildings. Drug sales were reduced, but community concerns about drug dealing continue as several major dealers are coming out of prison. One special narcotics unit (module) at the 24th is essential; a second is needed to root out dealers and the organizations that support them.

Fire Department. CD7 is located in the 9th and 11th Battalions and has 3 Engine and 2 Ladder Companies. In FY10, the Department responded to 4,463 medical emergencies and 4,751 non-medical emergencies, and 616 structural and 327 non-structural fires. The number and size of fires has decreased because of new construction and renovations of occupied and vacant buildings. It does take more time to get to a fire in the new high rise buildings. Average response time to structural fires was 4:17 minutes; ambulance response time to life-threatening emergencies was 6:54 minutes.

Engine Company 74 on West 83rd Street is slated for a much needed renovation. Several houses do not have emergency electric generators, which are needed to charge radios among other things. The houses that do have generators find they are often not maintained and may not function in a blackout.

Department of Sanitation. MCB7 supports the goals of the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP), including that Manhattan should assume as much responsibility as possible for its waste. MCB7 looks forward to working on plans for an environmental impact statement for West 59th Street.

In FY2010, DSNY collected, on average, 205 tons of household garbage per day. CD7's residential garbage continue to be transported to New Jersey by truck, which has a negative impact on air quality, roadways, vehicles, and worker productivity. Annually, MW7 collects 14,600 tons of paper and 7,781 tons of metal, glass and plastic, for a diversion rate of 24.8% of the waste stream. Over 2,464 recycling summonses were issued. More effective outreach and education could increase the diversion percentage and further reduce residential tonnage.

In addition to the use of barge transfer at the MTSs, MCB7 believes Manhattan's commercial waste could also be addressed through (1) expanded commercial waste source separation, (2) use of anaerobic digesters, (3) a targeted lifting of the ban on commercial waste food waste disposers, and (4) a rapid conversion of the commercial carting fleet to less polluting and quieter alternatives.



DSNY plays an important role in keeping sidewalks and streets clean. In FY10, 94.8% of the streets and 99.5% of the sidewalks were rated 'acceptably clean'. Enforcement agents issued over 4715 health and administrative summonses, most for dirty sidewalks and failure to clean 18 inches from the curb. MCB7 recommends funding for 7-day coverage, which would also support rat control.

DSNY completed 99.9% of its mechanical broom routes on 93.6 miles of roadways and serviced over 1,000 street litter baskets with two pick-ups per day. The three business improvement districts and the Doe Fund help by removing and replacing bags while many local businesses and residents misuse baskets meant for litter by discarding their garbage in them. MCB7 finds enforcement of rules prohibiting household and business use of baskets and more frequent service, especially on weekends and holidays, are needed.

3.7 Parks and Open Space

- Major Public Parks
 - Riverside Park - 267 acres
 - Riverside Park South – 23 acres
 - Theodore Roosevelt Park – 17.5 acres
 - Central Park (shared with CB 8, 10, 11 and 5)
- 11 Public Playgrounds
- 59th Street Recreation Center
- 6 Small Parks and Broadway Malls

CD7 is fortunate in having immediate access to two of the City's great parks: Central Park and a substantial portion of Riverside Park, including the new 23-acre Riverside Park South. Outside the active recreation areas in these parks, the district has 11 playgrounds.

In addition, CD7 has 35.5 acres of parkland distributed throughout the district. The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) maintains this parkland with 10 full-time workers, including a full-time horticulturist, seasonal workers and job training participants, all essential to maintaining the parkland.

Commercialization of Parks. The drive to increase city revenue has prompted an expansion of concessions in the parks. Year-round tennis, horseback riding, high-end food vendors, carnival rides, trapeze lessons have all been proposed. While potentially excellent revenue producers, these concessions would raise the financial threshold to visiting the parks. MCB7 continues to request a formal process for public review of proposed new concessions for all parks.



Loss of Rear Yard Open Space. New development is not limited to large buildings, but continues to consume smaller open spaces in rear yards where existing religious, educational or community facilities exist; and between existing towers in the park, such as Park West Village. Using the open space in the center of a perimeter block or the open space around or between apartments affects the character, privacy and view corridors of existing dwellings. Furthermore, there is inadequate protection against rear yard developments that encroach upon precious

open space and permeable surface area. MCB7 continues to explore ways in which private open space can be effectively valued and managed to the benefit of the community and the environment.

Open and Play Spaces in Public Housing Complexes. The prospect developing open spaces in NYCHA complexes threatens the historical fabric, environmental health, and quality of life for local residents. MCB7 urges legislation that prohibits the sale of open lands in public housing projects. Furthermore, MCB7 encourages the development of community gardens, physical fitness facilities, and playgrounds to enliven these public spaces.

3.8 Environmental Sustainability

Tremendous effort at all levels of government has been put into making New York City sustainable. PlaNYC set the goal of reducing carbon emissions by 30% by the year 2030 in addition to improving the amount and accessibility of open space, remediating brownfields, improving water quality, supporting alternative forms of transportation, and addressing air quality issues. MCB7 has identified sustainability as one of its primary goals.

Transportation Emissions. Many West Siders feel overwhelmed by traffic congestion, especially in terms of truck traffic and emissions. There is an increasing desire to reduce road traffic (including idle standing) and also create more access to energy friendly transportation alternatives like walking, biking, subways, and buses. Many groups are interested in limiting parking slots, adding bike routes, and redesigning intersections to make walking easier and more attractive. Many have also expressed interest in more frequent buses and subway trains along busy routes (Buses M104, M7, M11, Trains A, 2, 3)

Building Efficiency. New development in the district creates opportunities to implement sustainable building systems, but existing building codes are limited and difficult to enforce. Most new buildings have glass facades, which constrict natural airflow and afford little room for energy saving insulation. Few new buildings take advantage of energy enhancements like solar panels and high-efficiency boiler systems. MCB7 supports the use of incentives that encourage energy efficiency and environmental responsibility.

Building Emissions. The Upper West Side is also home to one of the highest concentrations of buildings (most built before World War II) that are heated by oil-burning boilers. Such boilers burn a form of crude oil (#6/#4) and produce a high level of health-threatening particulates. Several schools in the district also burn these oils. MCB7 encourages efforts to appropriately tune, retro-fit, and/or convert these buildings to eliminate harmful emissions and reduce their carbon footprints.



Recycling. Numerous residents have expressed the need to step up recycling in parks and schools, where recycling guidelines are not enforced. Furthermore, people are interested in broader efforts to develop composting systems, reduce use of plastic bottles and bags, and encourage the use of biodegradable alternatives.

3.9 Preservation

- Nine Historic Districts, including 1100 Buildings
- Seventy Four Individual Designated Buildings
- Four Interior Landmarks
- Four Scenic Park Landmarks

Maintenance of designated buildings. Non-profits like churches and synagogues are challenged to maintain landmarked buildings without draining resources or pursuing redevelopment (by selling air rights). MCB7 encourages efforts to identify the needs of designated buildings and provide support to maintain them.



West End Avenue Preservation. MCB7 supports the creation of *West End Avenue Preservation District* to protect the rich architectural fabric of buildings from 70th To 107th streets west of Broadway. The proposed historic district captures a relatively short window of time in early 20th Century architecture when economic and social forces—largely a result of the introduction of service on the revolutionary Inter-borough Rapid Transit Subway line beneath Broadway in 1904—contributed to the avenue’s redevelopment from low-rise row-houses to the current grand apartment buildings.

Designed by prominent architects like George & Edward Blum, Rosario Candela and Clinton & Russell, these buildings are among the finest examples of New York City’s early 20th Century multifamily dwellings and form a cohesive and uniquely “New York” model for upper-middle class living. As Dolkart describes, the buildings on the avenue embody a tremendous sense of place, with consistent height, cladding materials, and build-out to the lot line. Nestled between these are a number of diverse and impressive churches, ranging in style from English Gothic to Neo-Flemish.



As of Right. Soaring real estate prices attract rapid development, which is often “as of right,” without any process of public review. Additionally, the incentive to maximize profits sometimes results in new developments that are less architecturally interesting than the older buildings they replace. MCB7 urges the city to develop incentives for the better design of new buildings, and to provide for some sort of public review for as-of-right structures. Many feel that broad landmark designation is one way for the public to gain a seat at the table during periods of rapid development.

New Rules. Finally, MCB7 has concerns regarding new rules adopted by the Landmark Preservation Commission that limit the need for public review of landmark proposals, especially when no action is taken to designate or disqualify a building. Several buildings in the district

merit review. However, delays in decision-making can have deleterious effects as buildings can fall into serious disrepair while they await final judgment. Of particular concern is the Con Edison Power Plant on 59th St and West End Avenue, a portion of which is currently used for steam production, but could be re-purposed as a historic building.

Community Board 7 welcomes comments and recommendations regarding this document. Please visit www.nyc.gov/MCB7 for more information. Special thanks go to the standing committees and members of Community Board 7/Manhattan, and to Louis Cholden-Brown, Chair of the Strategy and Budget Committee.



Mel Wymore
Chair, Community Board 7/Manhattan

Penny Ryan
District Manager, Community Board 7/Manhattan