



COMMUNITYBOARD # 4Q

Serving: Corona, Corona Heights, Elmhurst, and Newtown

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STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY DISTRICT NEEDS

FISCAL YEAR 2016

Community Board 4Q (CB4Q) is a culturally diverse community comprised of over 100 different nationalities and over 150 spoken languages. The district encompasses the areas of Corona, Corona Heights, Newtown and Elmhurst with a total land area of 2.4 square miles, and is bounded by Roosevelt Avenue to the North, Flushing Meadows Corona Park to the East, the Horace Harding Expressway to the South, and the New York Connecting Railroad (CSX) to the West.

According to the 2010 Census the population of CB4Q is 172,598 a 3.3% increase in population from the 2000 Census and a staggering 25% increase from 1990. With this substantial growth in population over the past twenty years and the vast amount of new building permits issued, the actual population count may be approaching or surpassing the 200,000 mark. Because service levels are based in part on Census information it is necessary that an accurate count be made in order to provide adequate service to the residents of CB4Q. Service agency budgets must be increased to keep pace with our growing population.

GENERAL TRENDS

Overdevelopment

A common practice within the district is one in which older housing stock (one and two family houses) is demolished and replaced by larger three and four family homes. The current levels of service and infrastructure can no longer absorb the additional housing units. In order to secure the future stability of CB4Q, careful consideration must be given to the rezoning of our community.

Our youth population is being short changed, schools are overcrowded, and after school programs are limited; our hospitals and libraries are used beyond capacity.

Roosevelt Avenue

A persistent area of difficulty within the confines of CB4Q is Roosevelt Avenue, the commercial corridor that runs along the north side of the district. Over the course of several decades, Roosevelt Avenue continues to exist as one of the busiest commercial corridors within the district. With recent initiatives such as the potential expansion of the current BID (82nd Partnership,) and a recently submitted rezoning resolution, it is evident that Roosevelt Avenue will continue to thrive. However, it must be noted that Roosevelt Avenue is not only the dividing line between two Community Boards (3 and 4,) but is also the dividing line between 2 precincts, (110th and 115th,) and two DSNY districts (Q3 and Q4.) This layout makes initiatives to clean up Roosevelt increasingly difficult as coordination from 6 agencies would essentially be needed for maximum effectiveness.

We welcome the notion of the Roosevelt Avenue Task Force which was recently proposed by several Elected Officials, and hope that in conjunction with the local community and store owners, we could finally see this project come to fruition.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Park Space

One of the more pressing issues that CB4 faces on a day to day basis is the loss, and/or lack of valuable green space. While we encourage and welcome the attention and tourism on a large scale, we cannot forget that local residents, both young and elderly should be entitled to an escape in the form of green space. Upon several on-site inspections of the majority of parks within CB4Q, and listening to the general consensus of the community, we are asking that the following parks be considered for reconstruction/renovation:

- *Moore Homestead Park (located on Broadway and 45th Avenue)*
This park, just shy of 2 acres is located in Elmhurst in the heart of the Asian community of CB4Q. While at first glance the park is in fact utilized, special attention should be made to the playground equipment and basketball courts. These must be upgraded before they lose all functionality or injury occurs.
This park is also infamous for the enormous amounts of blatant gambling that takes place within it. The seating sections of the park are covered by hundreds of people gambling in broad daylight. Plans to reconstruct this park should reflect this, and several avenues should be explored as a means to discourage this activity.
- *Hoffman Park (Hoffman Drive and Woodhaven Blvd.)*
At close to 3 acres, Hoffman Park is a park right on the border of CB4Q which is for the most part covered in concrete/asphalt. Because the park is bordered by Hoffman Drive (a major strip of bus stops Q11, Q21, Q29, Q52, Q53,) it is important that adequate fencing and tree lines be implemented to encourage use of the park while staying away from the 1000s of people per hour who line up parallel to it. Fencing is very

limited, the playground equipment is severely outdated, and the handball courts have become avenues for large amounts of very blatant drug dealing and gang activity.

A key component for use of the ample space within Hoffman Park is the implementation of a track. Residents of Lefrak City and Elmhurst currently run along the sidewalk of the Newtown Athletic Field (99th Street and 57th Avenue) as a means to exercise.

Tree Pruning/Stump Removal

We must understand that in a busy, fast moving city such as ours, trees are a vital component of our environment. At the very least we are in need of adequate funding to maintain the seven year pruning cycle and restore pruner and climber positions to the Dept. of Parks and Recreation.

We would even furthermore welcome additional funds in order to reduce the pruning cycle to five years. A five year pruning cycle will produce stronger, healthier, better looking and most importantly, SAFER trees.

Because of its inland location, CB4Q was lucky enough to not have been too affected by Hurricane Sandy, but branches from unpruned trees did in fact leave a substantial amount of damage in their wake.

CB4Q receives many complaints of dead and/or diseased trees, branches breaking, and branches that are low to the ground forcing pedestrians to walk around the trees. Tree pruning needs to increase, with an emphasis on emergency service and stump removal.

On a final note, we must consider the recent expansion that has been approved for the USTA National Tennis Center located within the confines of Flushing Meadows Corona Park. The US OPEN at the USTA National Tennis Center and NY METS' baseball games at Citi Field need to be coordinated. There should not be any home games scheduled for the NY METS when the US OPEN is at the USTA National Tennis Center. The surrounding communities cannot absorb the traffic impact of the two events at the same time.

PUBLIC SAFETY

New York Police Dept. (NYPD) - 110th Precinct

For approximately 30 years, the relocation, and/or expansion of the 110th Precinct continues to be at the very top of our priority list. The precinct is in desperate need of a new facility as it is housed in an antiquated building with no facilities for parking of police vehicles. The 75+ year old building which suffers from structural crumbling, flooding, and loose bricks currently houses more than 250 uniformed and civilian personnel; personnel tasked with the safety of our district. The precinct is severely under sized and unsafe while it remains for over a decade as being one of, if not the busiest precinct in Queens North.

In addition, the lack of a proper parking facility means that over 15 marked, and approximately 2-3 unmarked vehicles, not including scooters and impounded vehicles are forced to use the surrounding residential area as a means to store vehicles on a 24 hour basis.

The 110th Precinct is not coterminous with CB4Q; the precinct covers Willets Point (CB7Q) and Flushing Meadows Corona Park which is home to the NY

METS at Citifield, the USTA National Tennis Center, Queens Theater In The Park, The Hall of Science, The Queens Zoo, and The Queens Museum of Art. The park is also host to many large cultural events and it is used by the residents from all over Queens on a daily basis, with weekends seeing the largest concentration of park visitors.

In order to protect New York City's investment in this park, permanent police presence may need to be established to serve Flushing Meadows Corona Park and Willets Point exclusively whether by means of more patrols or via a satellite station.

We adamantly commend the 110th Precinct for its excellent work; however like most of NYC, particularly Queens, we must understand that the population of Corona and Elmhurst is growing at a very alarming rate. We have seen a recent spike in gang activity and gang-related graffiti throughout the district, and unless a more centralized, more adequately staffed precinct is looked into, the condition could worsen a lot sooner than we will be able to handle.

Fire Dept. of New York (FDNY)

A budget increase for the Fire Department is necessary to meet the additional demands placed on our fire companies due to an increase in population. The Fire Safety Education Outreach unit provides valuable information on fire safety to our residents. This program must be maintained and be funded for the purchase of additional smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors. Overcrowding and illegal conversions have caused a number of fires in the CB4Q district; we support the idea that the FDNY should be part of a task force with Dept. of Buildings (DOB,) NYPD and Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) that investigates illegal occupancies and unsafe building conditions.

WATER, SEWAGE, SANITATION

Garbage Pickup/Recycling

In spite of the recent harsh winter of 2013/14 we must commend the DSNY for its hard work in trash pickup, street cleaning, and snow pickups. It has not gone unnoticed.

We ask however that budget increases reflect the increase in housing units in the CB4Q area.

As mentioned earlier, all too often we see smaller 2-3 family houses being replaced by much larger units. While we understand that DSNY has implemented several initiatives, i.e.: textile recycling, compost, etc., public knowledge is surprisingly minimal specifically in the immigrant heavy neighborhoods of Corona and Elmhurst.

Community outreach via literature and public presentations should be more aggressively implemented in multiple languages for maximum effectiveness.

Water/Sewers

With regards to our sewers, we must take into consideration that we are nearing a dangerous junction because of the aforementioned growth within the district. Action must be taken as flooding and sewer backups are commonplace within the confines of CB4Q. Sewer upgrades that have been submitted in past years via our

yearly Capital and Expense requests continue to be in need of funding, including but not limited to the following locations:

- **Queens Boulevard from the Long Island Expressway to the CSX Railroad Line**
This section has experienced an inordinate amount of development. High rise commercial and residential developments have replaced the typical low rise development along Queens Boulevard, and many new high rise developments are in the planning stages. Business owners and residents have reported flooding that is progressively worsening each year. The sewer drainage system currently in place is not able to process the demand placed on it. A complete study, reconstruction, and upgrade of the existing sewer infrastructure should be implemented.
- **Junction Boulevard from the Long Island Expressway to Roosevelt Avenue**
The above areas flood on a routine basis, which is progressively worsening each year, especially in the Lefrak City area (Junction Boulevard, W/B Horace Harding Expressway, 99th Street, and 57th Avenue). A complete study, reconstruction, and upgrade of the existing sewer infrastructure should be implemented.
- **111th Street from Corona Avenue to Roosevelt Avenue**
There are numerous reports of flooding from residents along 111th Street with conditions worsening every year. A complete study, reconstruction, and upgrade of the existing sewer infrastructure should be implemented. We have noted that several markings for Bioswale sites have been seen along 111th Street, but this is by no means a permanent solution.
- **57th Avenue from Queens Blvd. to 99th Street**
With the Queens Center Mall, Queens Place Mall, and site of the former St. John's Hospital (currently for rent,) the sewers in this area must be considered for an upgrade before the inevitable spike in growth that the area has seen, and will continue to see in the coming years.

Bioswales

Community Board 4 has welcomed DEP's Bioswales initiative, a large majority of which are right within our borders; however, in order to reach its full potential, this initiative is one that will only function in conjunction with an upgrade or at the very least an assessment of the current system as it stands, instead of on its own.

While the winter of 2013 may be to blame, we must express that as of late, there are several concerns over the stagnancy of the Bioswale initiative as we have seen a recent decline in the amounts of new pits being built.

Terms such as "why has my sidewalk been marked neon green for over a year?" or "those things are just expensive garbage pits" are commonplace. Homeowners must be properly informed in order to understand the potential benefits and responsibilities associated with having Bioswale sites in front of their properties.

TRANSPORTATION

For Hire Vehicles (FHV's)

While FHV's are necessary to fill the small gap not covered by public transportation, and while CB #4Q is well served by train and bus lines, the district is utterly oversaturated with For-Hire Vehicles with an average of 1-2 new companies opening per year. Thanks to more aggressive enforcement, we have seen a drastic decline in the amount of street hails. We cannot stress the over importance of the continuation of this enforcement. Although not as prominent as it has been over the years, many drivers constantly violate vehicle & traffic laws, cutting off other motorists, making illegal U-turns, going through stop lights & signs, and harassing other motorists. We have witnessed drivers sleeping overnight in their vehicles, and throwing trash out of their vehicles onto our streets. These actions must cease, and enforcement must be consistent and enhanced.

CB4Q has, on several occasions researched the records of drivers within several bases, and while we understand that it is not the base owner's responsibility to monitor every single driver, we do always request that bases provide us with company policy on reprimanding a driver that has several outstanding moving violations and /or tickets.

While useful for sake of knowledge, this will not remedy the problem that can only be fixed through more aggressive enforcement on the part of the TLC and NYPD.

Traffic Congestion/Studies

Because of an increase in traffic throughout the district, the following locations are in need of traffic studies and/or reconstruction of streets including but not limited to the following:

- 41st Avenue from 72nd Street to Broadway including 78th Street, 79th Street, & 80th Street from 41st Avenue to Roosevelt Avenue are in need of reconstruction.
- Reconstruct streets bounded by 57th Avenue, Long Island Railroad, Grand Ave. and Queens Blvd.
- Milling and repaving of Broadway from Queens Blvd. to Baxter Avenue.

Communications Based Transit Control (CBTC)

Commercial developments within the district are at an all-time high.

The 7, E, F, M, and R lines are heavily used, specifically within the confines of CB4Q due to the sheer amount of tourist attractions, sports venues and nearby shopping centers:

- Queens Center Mall, Queens Blvd. and 59th Avenue (M&R Lines)
- Rego Park Mall, Junction Blvd. & Horace Harding Expwy. (M&R Lines)
- Mattone Group, 92nd Street and 59th Avenue (M&R Lines)
- Queens Place Mall, 88th Street and Queens Blvd. (M&R Lines)
- Citi Field, Willets Point (#7 Line)
- US Open, Flushing Meadows Corona Park (#7 Line)
- Corona Plaza, 104th Street and Roosevelt Avenue (#7 Line)

We are elated to know that the #7 line will be seeing the implementation of CBTC slated for 2017. This proactive frame of mind shown by the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) further emphasizes that Queens is seeing steady growth, and that the oversaturated train lines are beginning to see a cap in terms of rider capacity.

Bicycle Lanes

While there are currently very few bicycle lanes within the confines of CB4Q, there has been a very sudden uptick in the amount of bicycles and bike racks seen. The idea of future bicycle lanes will simply not work if there is no enforcement to back it up.

With the sheer amount of restaurants competing with each other, bicycle delivery employees do not under any means follow the laws of traffic and safety whether there are lanes or not. Helmets are non-existent, sidewalks are not off-limits, and traffic laws are never, ever followed. Bike lanes will simply not be supported by CB4Q unless more aggressive campaigns depicting the laws for bicyclists are put into effect.

HOUSING/LAND USE

Department of City Planning (DCP)

The infrastructure of CB4Q was built mainly for low-density housing. The addition of larger housing units at double and in some cases triple the size of the preexisting structure places an undue strain on our infrastructure.

Such overdevelopment without proper planning affects CB4Q and its residents on all facets. The Dept. of Sanitation is overwhelmed with the increase in trash generated by the larger units; police and fire department response times are up due to the increase in traffic clogging our roads, already overused schools and hospitals are stretched beyond capacity, and reports of flooding and sewer backups are at an all-time high.

Community Board 4Q is requesting that the DCP evaluate the current zoning in the district. We are requesting that residential areas in need of down zoning and areas where affordable housing can be built be identified. Zoning regulations must include additional off-street parking provisions for each unit built.

Department of Buildings (DOB)

The ongoing issue of DOB not actively following through on inspections and violations continues to be detrimental to CB#4Q. In order to perform inspections and enforcement in a professional and timely manner, the hiring of additional qualified personnel is of utmost importance.

New building permits should be issued only after it is determined that the existing infrastructure can accommodate an increase in new housing units; in addition, new building permits and applications for major alterations and enlargements must not be issued until all prior violations and payments of fines are answered. A planned balance between residential and commercial buildings along the boulevard is necessary so Queens Boulevard does not continue to be a boulevard of haphazardly placed buildings.

Department of Homeless Services (DHS)

Community Board 4Q recently received a new homeless shelter in the heart of Elmhurst at the site of long time hotel and neighborhood landmark, the Panamerican Hotel. While we understand the desperate need to house our homeless population, we must more prudently consider the well-being of the surrounding neighborhoods where such shelters pop up. The shelter has the potential ability to house over 200 families, yet as high as this number is, we feel that little to no consideration was put into the feasibility of implementing such a center with zero community input.

The agency chose to pursue the option of whether it could, and never stopped to think if it should.

In addition to having one of the most overcrowded school districts in the nation, there is little to no regard to the lack of stores, markets and public transportation needed to house and accommodate over 800 people all at once.

More careful consideration and transparency in the form of community dialogue is absolutely critical before such a colossal undertaking be considered.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Department for the Aging (DFTA)

According to the population counts of the 2010 Census, 23.1% (39,833) of the residents in the CB#4Q area are 45 to 64 years old and 9.4% (16,180) are 65 years and over.

These numbers would now be substantially greater taking into account the steady growth in population within CB4Q. Senior citizens are in need of special services, such as Meals on Wheels, homecare, and help with shopping and home cleaning. Our senior population is also in need of social activities and programs that are supplied by senior citizen centers.

With the vast wealth of life experiences that seniors have to offer, they could act as mentors to our youth in intergenerational programs.

In a day and age where email has replaced letter writing, and computers have replaced calculators, we are happy to know that senior centers are now offering more “modern” programs (internet, etc.) and we are appreciative to know that these centers are geared towards moving our seniors forward.

The Department for the Aging should monitor all senior programs to ensure that the services provided are in the best interest of our senior population.

Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)

As mentioned previously, Community Board 4 is in dire need of intergenerational programs.

Afterschool centers are virtually non-existent. In a day where social media, smart phones and video games reign above all else, the majority of our youth today lack basic social skills than can only be obtained through communal activities and physical, social interaction with each other.

For this reason, CB4Q is asking that acquisition of land and furthermore, the construction of an intergenerational and/or after school center within our district be considered.

It is imperative that we give our youth, our future a place in their own community where mentorship and afterschool programs will be provided.

Queens Library

CB4Q is one of the most ethnically diverse communities in the world. The budgets for our libraries must reflect the growing demand of our diverse population. We fully support the expansion of operating hours necessary to accommodate the needs of the public, and patiently await the completion and expansion of the Elmhurst Queens Library branch (Broadway and 51st Avenue.)

CB4Q again requests the construction of a new reference library in the vicinity of 108th Street and Corona Avenue, which will help service the south east portion of CB4Q.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Medical Facilities

The utter lack of medical facilities within the district is cause for major concern. With the closing of St. John's hospital, a major hospital that serviced a large amount of Queens residents, we are in dire need of a new facility.

Elmhurst Hospital, despite potential expansions is operating well over full capacity. The feasibility of another major hospital is indeed far-fetched, but if nothing else, a medical facility of any kind to alleviate the constant influx of patients at Elmhurst Hospital would be a very welcome addition to the district.

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH)

As of late, the DOHMH is overwhelmed with complaints concerning mobile food vendors and rodent infestations.

Careful consideration should be given to issuing mobile food vendor licenses. Inspections should hold food vendors accountable to the same standards as restaurants.

Another issue that is ever present is that of space. Because real estate is so scarce, specifically along Roosevelt Avenue and around the Queens Center Mall, food vendors follow little to no rules in the fear that another vendor will take their space. Mobile food vendors should be held fully accountable, and penalties should be more freely issued to discourage such malpractice.

While we thank the agency for its help in enforcing laws, we feel that additional personnel are needed to maintain consistent levels of inspections. We support the continuation and enhancement of programs that address the health needs of our growing population.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Queens Economic Development Corp. (QEDC) – Corona Plaza

The Pedestrian Plaza located at Corona Plaza (Roosevelt Avenue, National Street to 104th Street) is currently functional, and has seen a substantial amount of activity. We congratulate and thank our Council Member, DOT, and QEDC in their joint effort for very successfully providing our residents with a great public space they can enjoy.

Plans to move onto the next phase of the plaza construction are currently underway, and we look forward to continue seeing programs that serve our youth, seniors, and immigrant heavy community along the plaza.

It must however be noted that despite its success, street vendors have increased within the plaza at an alarming rate. Proper enforcement must be taken into consideration to ensure that all the vendors using the plaza are in fact legally licensed and are following regulations.

82nd Street Partnership [Business Improvement District (BID)]

Community Board 4 is in the process of potentially seeing a BID stretch along the corridor of Roosevelt Avenue.

The BID has already shown several instances of how it would work by implementing several programs to the store owners and residents of Roosevelt Avenue. We have seen street fairs, clean up initiatives, and several workshops run by the BID itself to provide the public with first-hand knowledge as to how a BID would benefit the district.

While CB4Q has taken no official stance on this implementation, it is worth noting that there are still several hurdles to jump over. More open community dialogue opportunities in multiple languages should be initiated to provide our residents with a better understanding of what a BID truly means.

Roosevelt Avenue

Roosevelt Avenue is one of, if not THE main thoroughfare that runs through Community Board 4Q. While the avenue is in need of a substantial amount of attention, the biggest difficulty lies in its location. Not only is Roosevelt Avenue the dividing line between two Community Boards, but it is shared by 2 precincts, and 2 DSNY Districts. It is for this reason that enforcing laws and instigating cleanups always fall short. It would essentially take twice the resources and coordination from all the aforementioned agencies to effectively conduct a clean sweep.

RESILIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY

CB4Q Green Team

In April of 2014, Community Board 4Q created a volunteer based Green Team. This team comprised of members of the CB4Q Environmental, Youth and Parks Committees, along with several residents of the local community is tasked with general clean up and community outreach in all things green. With full cooperation and support from the Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP), Dept. of Sanitation (DSNY) and, and Dept. of Parks and Recreation (DPR) the group meets one weekend a month to carry out such activities.

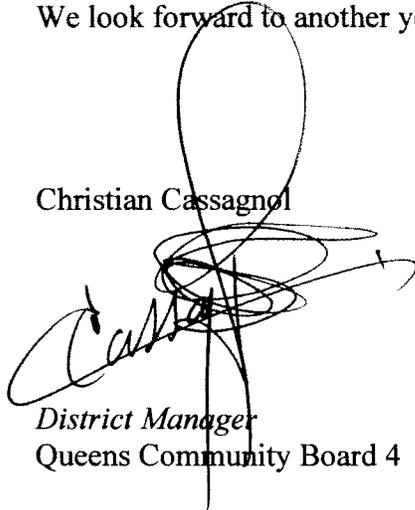
In just 3 events, the CB4Q Green Team has already cleaned, mulched and essentially renovated 3 parks adding up to just under 1 acre of NYC park land. While land is scarce, one cannot help but notice the amount of community gardens sprouting up throughout the district on any vacant plots available. We hope that in the coming years, CB4Q can coordinate with “green groups” such as Green Thumb, Green Market, and the Queens Botanical Garden to bring public awareness over the benefits of sustainability. Public informational

workshops in multiple languages teaching the basics of gardening and composting would be beneficial to the community of CB4Q.
We would openly welcome such initiatives.

As we do every year, the Chairperson, District Manager, Members, and Staff of Community Board #4Q wish to thank our agency representatives for their help in resolving many of the issues encountered during the year.

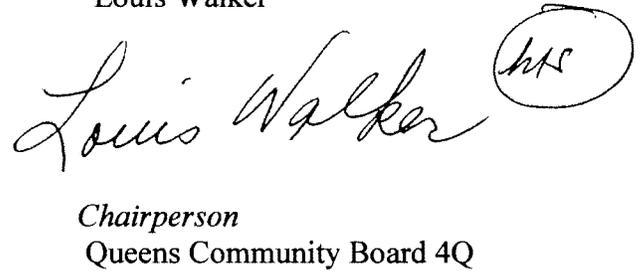
We look forward to another year of working with you.

Christian Cassagnol



District Manager
Queens Community Board 4

Louis Walker



Chairperson
Queens Community Board 4Q