



August 20, 2022

Dear Distinguished Districting Commission-

We are writing to you today as residents of the 27th Council District encompassing St. Albans, Cambria Heights, Addisleigh Park, Hollis, Queens Village, parts of Springfield Gardens, and Jamaica, which includes half of the downtown Jamaica Avenue Business district. We the undersigned residents of the 27th Council District disagree with the first draft of the preliminary maps. We are however in support of the attached proposed map for district 27 and would like you to take it into consideration as you work diligently to finalize the maps.

After reviewing the proposed maps that the NYC Districting Commission released, we believe that it would be a disservice to the community to implement these district lines. In the released preliminary map, Rochdale Village has a building split right down the middle between two council districts, which violates the city charter on how the August 20, 2022, lines should be drawn. This historic 'city within a city' should be kept in one council district. Splitting Rochdale Village would also diminish a powerful African American voting bloc.

Additionally, the drafted map removes The Downtown Jamaica business district known as Jamaica Ave completely out of the 27th district. The Downtown Jamaica business district is critical to the 27th Council District and has historically always been a part of the district. This would place many of the ongoing projects contributing to the revitalization of the area in jeopardy from being completed. One important example of this is the Downtown Jamaica Task Force that Queens Borough President Donovan Richards and current Councilmember Nantasha Williams began. This task force is composed of multiple city agencies, elected officials, businesses, and community leaders all working towards the goal of ensuring The Jamaica Business District receives the attention and resources it deserves.

The Downtown Jamaica area is also where most of the assets of the 27th district are found. It is the home of the movie theater, the only retail district in Southeastern Queens, the Jamaica Center of Arts and Learning, and the Jamaica Performing Arts Center. The Jamaica Business District has so much potential spearheaded over many decades by councilmembers of the 27th Council District dating back to the Archie Spigner days. Jamaica Avenue is the main artery to the Southeast Queens community specifically the 27th council district.



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The continued expansion of the Downtown Jamaica area should not be left to the responsibility of two different people but instead be spearheaded by one Council Member who has the best interest of the community who frequent these spaces most, which is Councilmember Nantasha Williams. Downtown Jamaica belongs in the 27th council district.

Downtown Jamaica is also the only transportation hub in Southeastern Queens. This hub serves as the connection for thousands of commuters. Southeast Queens is a known transportation desert and relies heavily on the bus network. Councilmember Nantasha Williams has been a strong advocate for the downtown Jamaica area and will continue to advocate for this area even though the current council maps have the Business District split between two Council Members. Ensuring that this area is returned to the 27th district is very important to our community and should be a priority. In the map attached all of the Downtown Jamaica Business District is given to the 27th council district. Instead of removing it completely from this district, we should be representing more of it.

Cordially,

Patricia Robinson

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