



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD No. 4

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STATEMENT OF DISTRICT NEEDS

Fiscal Year 2004

DISTRICT OVERVIEW

Manhattan Community District No. 4 (CD4) is comprised of two Westside neighborhoods, Chelsea and Clinton; the latter is commonly known as Hell's Kitchen. The District generally covers the area between 14th and 59th streets – to the west of Eighth Avenue north of 26th Street, and to the west of Sixth Avenue south of 26th Street. CD4 shares borders with Greenwich Village, the Flatiron area, the Upper West Side and the Midtown central business district. Portions of several other well-known areas exist within CD4's boundaries: the Garment District, the Flower District, the Meat Packing District, the Ladies Mile Shopping District and the Theater District. Other notable sites in CD4 include Restaurant Row, Columbus Circle, Maritime Piers 56 – 97, and the new Hudson River Park

The total population of CD4 is projected to reach 100,000 people within the next 12 months. Many CD4 residents are long time residents; many others are relative newcomers. An estimated 10,000 new residents already occupy or are expected to move into housing projects completed or begun since the last Census count two years ago. Chelsea and Clinton remain desirable residential neighborhoods for their diversity of people, streetscapes, building types and local institutions, as well as their proximity to world-class cultural resources and amenities.

CD4 is central to Manhattan and the region's core. CD4's identity is characterized as much by its neighborhoods, as by the physical infrastructure that supports the citywide economy. At the local level, transportation infrastructure exerts the greatest impact as it channels hundreds of thousands of visitors through CD4 every day. Streets and avenues are exceedingly congested, trucks are an increasing presence on residential streets, parking facilities of all types are inadequate – especially for buses and commuter vans – and environmental pollution is a constant quality of life complaint and threat to public health.

A range of economic activities exists within CD4. Many reflect the area's historical development as a working-class neighborhood once closely tied to an industrial waterfront and later serving as a "backstage" community for the theater industry. CD4 is defined by its homegrown, unique characteristics, both physical and social; its symbiotic relationships with surrounding neighborhoods; and our communities' reaction to the unique characteristics, both physical and social, of those surrounding neighborhoods.

Recent growth in the Midtown central business district has created pressure to expand commercial development westward into CD4, especially in the area north of 30th Street. The area is now a focus for development designed to carry the city over the long term into the next series of economic cycles. Local goals for neighborhood growth have been developed toward balancing the proposed expansion of the central business district with the preservation and expansion of the Clinton and Chelsea residential neighborhoods.

Development of all types in CD4 is considerable, but housing production is most proliferate. In-fill construction, building enlargements and substantial renovations have filled-in gaps and improved the housing stock in core residential areas. Housing development activities in less dense areas have preserved and strengthen the character of existing neighborhoods (Hell's Kitchen South and the Clinton Urban Renewal Area) and created new population centers (42nd Street and far west 23rd Street).

In this setting of growth and development, Manhattan Community Board No. 4's priorities are (1) preventing displacement, (2) maintaining neighborhood stability, and (3) attracting development that enhances diversity and positive neighborhood relations among disparate groups. Concrete efforts to realize these priorities include advocacy for access to affordable housing, improvement of the area's physical infrastructure, and adequate delivery of social and public services.

LAND USE PLANNING

Chelsea

The Chelsea 197-a Plan, now in effect, has largely been effective in redirecting development pressures into areas that do not threaten the essential character of historic Chelsea or entail significant displacement. Conversions and new construction where such uses were previously illegal are transforming the face of Chelsea while not impinging significantly on the historic core. Nevertheless, it remains a source of deep dissatisfaction to the Board that effective means have not yet been found to fulfill the Plan's important goal of creating mixed-income housing on appropriate sites in the community. The difficult issue of creating affordable housing where land values are high, as they are in Chelsea, must be addressed in order to attain social stability and social justice in our communities. We look forward to working with the City administration and elected officials as well as with private institutions toward this goal when new funding sources may be available.

Manhattan Community Board No. 4 (CB4) is now undertaking planning for the remainder of the Chelsea community, essentially the manufacturing districts west of the now rezoned residential area. Among the goals are supporting the burgeoning arts community in West Chelsea, preserving and improving the existing manufacturing and service base, and providing for parks and open space and residential development where appropriate. Preservation and expansion of the existing residential corridor along Tenth Avenue, preferably including provisions for affordable housing, is a major concern of the

Board. Adaptive reuse of significant existing buildings, discouragement of nuisance uses, and linking the community physically and visually to the waterfront should be promoted by putting in place well-considered use and bulk controls. In many places buildings and streetscapes of considerable distinction remain in the area and should be protected by zoning or Landmark designation. We hope to work with City Planning and other agencies in developing and putting in place a carefully designed and appropriate plan establishing a genuine mixed-use district based on maintaining and strengthening the arts district and linking the area to the rest of Chelsea by provisions for limited residential and other compatible uses.

CB4 cannot support any rezoning plan for this area that does not provide effective measures for dealing with the spread of nightclubs and the growing impacts on residents and visitors from noise, traffic, drug use and violence. Recent incidents at or near some clubs in western Chelsea are only a part of a long-standing and worsening problem that is in serious conflict with the growing arts and residential presence in the area.

CB4 notes that the proposals for extending the Central Business District westward toward the river proposed by City Planning include the northern part of West Chelsea: south of 30th Street as a “transitional zone,” and over the West Side rail yards north of the streets as a central part of the new office expansion. We believe that these proposals, whether or not they include a stadium, are excessive in bulk and need considerable restudy in order to achieve legitimate goals and to avoid major negative impacts on the area. The “transitional area” should be planned so as principally to reflect and extend northwards the communities to the south; the rail yards need imaginative planning in order to create a new community that could be an extraordinary addition to New York.

CB4 continues to believe that locating any stadium over the rail yards or nearby would be disastrous for both the city and the immediate area. Among other things, we question the economic feasibility and desirability of such a proposal, oppose the inevitable public subsidy, and fear that the increased traffic would bring insurmountable problems. The ensuing litigation would delay and very possibly defeat the proposal. The proposal for the 2012 Olympics on the site suffers from many of the same problems. Even if the proposed infrastructure should be in place for the event and provisions have been made for moving the athletes and officials from place to place, the issue of managing spectator traffic in the middle of a congested metropolis located on a narrow island so as to allow other activities to go on has not been addressed, let alone resolved.

The failure to provide for adequate expansion of the Jacob Javits Convention Center, the scale and type of development on the site, and the long-term impacts of locating a football stadium in one of the few large available sites for development in New York City are among the issues that prevent the Board from supporting these proposals. While the rail yards offer the possibility of a really new community, a stadium would condemn the area to ordinariness at best. Meanwhile, the uncertainty about the future of the various proposals has already seriously affected planning for the area, whether undertaken by the community or City Planning.

West 14th Street Area

West 14th Street is the southern boundary of CB4 and the northern boundary of CB2. For this reason, the two community boards have been working together to comprehensively plan for the area around and including our common boundary, from Sixth Avenue to the Hudson River. Some of the goals that our boards have agreed on are as follows:

- Rezoning West 14th Street, from Seventh to Ninth avenues, as proposed in the Chelsea Plan, to more closely reflect the low-scale nature of this street and its importance as a linkage in scale between low rise Chelsea and Greenwich Village.
- Preserving the essence of the Gansevoort Meat Packing District as a mercantile district where light manufacturing can co-exist with commercial and retail uses, and where residential uses are prohibited.
- Seeking the creation of open space on the parking lot bounded Ninth Avenue, 13th Street, Hudson Street and Gansevoort Street, where there has been talk of the site being used for a Third Water Tunnel access shaft.
- Curbing the proliferation of unruly bars on the ground floors of residential buildings.
- Sanitation Concerns, see QUALITY OF LIFE section.

Clinton

Clinton is experiencing an explosion of commercial and residential development. The 2.1 million square foot AOL-Time Warner Center is under construction in the northeast corner of Clinton, and the Studio City project, a 540,000 square foot film and television production facility, is in its center. Throughout the neighborhood, there has been a proliferation of commercial and cultural development. The Board has inventoried recently completed or pending Clinton projects involving the creation of approximately 6,000 housing units (16% more than the total number of residential rental or condo units existing in 1999). The majority these new units will be market-rate units.

Clinton Urban Renewal Area

CB4 is pleased to note that the Clinton Urban Renewal Area (CURA), which has long been the focus of the Board's land use efforts in Clinton, has been part of this development boom:

- The renovation of six tenements at 52nd Street and Eleventh Avenue in CURA Site 9A were completed in 2001 to produce 45 units of low-income housing.
- Tenements at 501 West 52nd Street at Tenth Avenue in CURA Site 8 are being renovated to produce 26 family units that will be affordable housing in perpetuity; a permanent home for Housing Conservation Coordinators, a Clinton-based non-profit organization that has played a crucial role in stabilizing and improving the quality of affordable housing and is actively involved in community housing issues; and a community garden.
- The Flats/Old School renovation at Eleventh Avenue and 52nd Street in CURA Site 7A will produce 33 low-income family units, and 53 low-income units for homeless adults and community residents. The development will also include a community garden.

- The construction of an 11-story building at 52nd Street and 11th Avenue in CURA Site 7A will produce 96 residential units – 70% of which will be low-income units and 30% of which will be middle-income units.
- The construction of an 8-story building at 755-765 Tenth Avenue in CURA Site 9C will provide 84 units of subsidized housing for low-income seniors.
- HPD has recently received eight proposals in response to its RFP for the undeveloped portions of CURA Sites 8 and 9C. The RFP calls for mixed-income housing units (at least 20% of which must remain low-income units for at least 30 years), commercial/retail space along Tenth Avenue, two new theater spaces and substantial publicly accessible open space.

These developments reflect the cooperation that has developed between CB4 and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) with the assistance of the Department of City Planning. The Board also acknowledges the ongoing assistance of the Clinton CURA Coordinating Committee, a coalition of not-for profits, in developing and sponsoring affordable housing in this area. The coalition includes Clinton Housing Association, Clinton Association for a Renewed Environment, Clinton Housing Development Company, Encore Community Services and Housing Conservation Coordinators.

This partnership between the not-for-profits, the Board and the city agencies has made remarkable progress toward realizing the goals established for the Clinton Urban Renewal Area many years ago. We look forward to continued cooperation to complete redevelopment of the CURA.

Consistent with the Board's past positions, we maintain that all city-owned property developed in the CURA should have at minimum 40% of its units dedicated to affordable housing. Other CURA principles adopted by the Board include a new mixed-use zone to accommodate existing commercial, light manufacturing, cultural and non-profit institutions on site; urban control design controls to reconcile the community's need for more housing with the preservation tradition and limits of the Special Clinton District; and the maintenance and development of only low-rise buildings on the west side of Tenth Avenue to match the low-rise character of the District to the east. Any action by HPD to facilitate development in the CURA must reflect these principles.

In addition, we note that the only acquisition parcel that has yet to be acquired by the City in the CURA is Site 6, which is the western portion of block 1082, on 11th Avenue between 53rd and 54th Streets; as such, this property is not subject to the development restrictions of the Clinton Urban Renewal Plan and, because it is located within the CURA boundary, it is also excluded from the height and bulk restrictions of the Special Clinton District. This Board will oppose any future request to permit redevelopment of Site 6 for a use inconsistent with residential use or at a density that exceeds what is allowed in an R8A zoning district.

Special Clinton District – Preservation Area

The development boom throughout Clinton has put considerable pressure on the Special Clinton District, which was established in 1973 to, among other things, preserve and strengthen the residential character of the community, and permit rehabilitation and new development in character with the existing scale of the community and at rental levels which would not substantially alter the mixture of income groups then residing in the area. To maintain these goals, we will continue to favor development proposals that will produce substantial ratios (more than 30%) of low-income or affordable residential units maintained in perpetuity and commercial tenants that serve area residents.

However, attention must be paid not only to new development but also to enforcement of the protective provisions of the Preservation Area of the Special Clinton District, the neighborhood's residential core. The proper training and assignment of inspectors with detailed local knowledge is a must (see HOUSING section, *Special Clinton District*). Without adequate and informed enforcement, the goals district will not be fulfilled.

Special Clinton District – Other Area

The western area of the Special Clinton District beyond the boundary of the Preservation Area, is primarily zoned for light or medium manufacturing uses. In the coming year, the Board intends to study those manufacturing zones with a view toward better understanding the uses, scales and activities that are present and adapting the area for desirable development in the future.

Hell's Kitchen South Area

CB4 seeks to balance the proposed expansion of the Midtown Central Business District in the central portion of the District with the preservation and expansion of the Clinton and Chelsea residential neighborhoods. It seeks to reconcile the requisite high density needed for the proposed CBD expansion with the low to moderate densities needed to maintain a livable neighborhood. It seeks to build on elements of the working model of the Special Clinton District which has successfully reconciled those opposing goals since 1973 in the portion of the Clinton neighborhood north of 42nd Street. It also recognizes the ongoing transformation of the manufacturing districts both from local real estate pressures and global economic changes and seeks to manage the ongoing changes in those areas.

CB4's principles for development in the Hell's Kitchen South area are built upon the platform of community input and study undertaken by the Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Association (HKNA) from 1999 to present. The goals and strategies from HKNA's *Hell's Kitchen South: Developing Strategies* formed the basis for Board discussions and served as guideposts for the formulation of the Board's own ideas for density, height and use.

CB4's overarching goal for the area between 34th and 42nd streets, from Eighth to Eleventh avenues is to have a residential neighborhood develop with strong local identity. In this area, existing residential buildings should be protected and development should occur in a fashion that reinforces the community's historical identity and strengthens its

connections with neighborhoods to the north and south. Affordable housing production should be encouraged throughout the area wherever and whenever possible. Higher density commercial and residential development should be diverted to the 34th and 42nd street corridors – already high-rise, high-density spines.

The mid-block area between Ninth and Tenth avenues should be the neighborhood's dense residential core comprised mostly of low- to medium rise buildings. The Ninth Avenue corridor should serve as the neighborhood's "main street" with a similar scale and function as Ninth Avenue north of 42nd Street. At higher densities, primarily residential buildings with ground floor retail should line the Tenth Avenue corridor. With a mixed-use transition area buffering residences on Tenth Avenue, Eleventh Avenue is suitable for several high-rise commercial buildings as called for in the Administration's plan. To the east of the core, another transition area should be created to promote mixed-used buildings, beyond which the Garment Center Special District regulations should be reinforced.

TRANSPORTATION

More and more vehicles crowd our streets and avenues each year. There is ever increasing competition for the limited curb space on neighborhood blocks. There are no easy solutions to these competitions and conflicts. Remedies and amelioration call for a balanced and thoughtful approach; efforts must be in a partnership among CB4 and the Department of Transportation and other municipal agencies.

There is a pressing need for one or more off-street parking sites within the Board area for tourist and commuter buses and vans. The Port Authority Bus Terminal is unable to accommodate them. The parking and standing of these vehicles on our streets brings with it serious traffic and pollution problems for area residents and businesses. Using the streets as terminals for loading and unloading commuter vehicles is also a problem. The loss of parking lots to development aggravates these problems. Both the location and prescribed routing to and from such facilities must be carefully evaluated and the Board consulted. There is also a need to consider the establishment of off-street facilities as a waiting area for limousines, and to provide rest and comfort station facilities for drivers of taxis and similar vehicles.

Parking/Standing regulations require clear posting, and even-handed constant enforcement. No intervention from a single special interest user should hold sway. All stakeholders must be considered when these regulations are adjusted. The mixture of commerce and residential uses in our Board area makes imperative budgeting for adequate signage and for enforcement staff.

Four dominant district traffic concerns are the Port Authority Bus Terminal, the Lincoln Tunnel, the Theater District, and the Route 9A interface with 23rd Street traffic. Each of these areas of attention requires continuing and careful study with the overall public interest as the bottom line.

Much of CD4's population uses mass transit every day. Keeping the City's system operating at an optimal level is therefore a continuing basic need. In addition to efficient movement of surface traffic, the accessibility of bus stops and subway stations contribute materially to the usability of public transit. Subway stations must be designed to be as accessible and friendly as possible for all riders. Bus stops should have clear signage. Where feasible, shelters are desirable, and standing vehicles must be kept away so that buses can "curb" for passengers with mobility limitations. The Board must be kept apprised of temporary and emergency changes in bus routes, subway station closings, and schedule alterations. The Board must be consulted before implementation of permanent changes in types of equipment used, schedule modifications, and bus stop relocations.

All Chelsea and Clinton neighborhoods should be safe and friendly for pedestrians and bicyclists. Vehicle speed limits and other traffic laws must be vigorously enforced. Traffic-calming elements can be added on residential streets that are not arterial routes intended for heavy through-traffic. All street crossings need to be designed to be usable by blind and low-vision pedestrians as well as those traveling in wheelchairs and with walking aids.

Enforcing all laws regarding the proper use of bicycles substantially contributes to pedestrian safety. The provision of safe, defined bicycle lanes encourages cyclists to travel in a safe, lawful manner. An Eighth Avenue bike lane has been on the NYC Bicycle Master Plan for several years but has not yet been implemented. Funding to evaluate feasibility, design and implement such a lane would greatly improve safety and circulation of pedestrian, bicycle and automotive traffic in Chelsea and Clinton. In addition, there is a continued need for bike parking racks throughout Chelsea and Clinton to discourage chaining of bicycles to trees, tree-guards, scaffolding and other inappropriate locations. There must be vigilance to ensure that sidewalks are kept clear of unnecessary clutter and obstructions. That goal requires a constant balancing of the needs of commerce with human needs, and this Board requires the active help of various City agencies to accomplish it.

The Columbus Circle subway station is sorely in need of additional work beyond the Subway Improvement Program recently proposed by the Hearst organization. This includes noise abatement; improved lighting, ventilation and signage; and final surfaces. Creating direct access to the downtown IRT platform from the west side of Broadway, and addressing the dangerously steep stair at the entrance adjacent to the Trump International Plaza should also be priorities. It has been suggested that a passage could be created between the north and south mezzanines via the now unused central IND platform. This suggestion seems attractive to the Board as an inexpensive measure to improve connections between the south end of the station and the uptown IRT and should be further considered. MTA has been studying all of this work for some time. It is time to stop studying and start planning and construction.

Related to the subway station improvements beneath Columbus Circle is the work needed in the redesign of Columbus Circle. The community has been left largely uninformed about the status of this important project. We are concerned that there is inadequate

coordination of the multitude of construction projects in the area, and inadequate planning for the increased focus they will place on Columbus Circle itself. The City should not find itself in the position of having to tear up the Circle to begin work on its redesign just as work on the AOL Time Warner Center, the Hearst Subway Improvement Program, the Hearst Tower and possibly even 2 Columbus Circle is being completed. We urge City Planning and other relevant city agencies to accelerate and coordinate work on the redesign of Columbus Circle so that this important public space can be made worthy of the substantially improved private spaces surrounding it by the time the major developments on the Circle are opened.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Police Department

Responsibility for enforcement of traffic regulations has been shifted from the Department of Transportation and the Taxi and Limousine Commission to the Police Department. We note that a great number of auto repair shops and taxi, bus and truck depots are concentrated on the west side of Manhattan, where the 10th and Midtown North Precincts are already responsible for nightclubs, prostitution, drug and other problems. Any increase in precinct responsibilities must be balanced by an increase in the number of officers.

We ask for police enforcement of the Limited Truck Zone in Chelsea, especially in view of the advent of Route 9A and its impact on Chelsea.

We continue to welcome the community policing strategies implemented by the Administration and the Police Department. We are happy to see that these strategies have improved the quality of life for our citizens and tourists. This Board will continue to work closely with our local precincts. We caution the police, however, to be constantly alert and sensitive in balancing the quality of life for the community with the rights of individual citizens. We also recommend that care be taken to assure a consistent presence of beat officers. Community policing has such a positive impact that even a small lack of continuity in deployment creates a negative effect. We must add, however, that the community policing beats in the midtown area have become too large; smaller beats were more efficient.

CB4 would also like to see the implementation of the use of noise meters and enforcement of the noise code by police officers. While we understand that noise meters were purchased by the Department, we have yet to see their use in effectively addressing citizen complaints. We have brought this matter forward for several years, and note that noise complaints, especially at night, are rising in the Board area. Last year, total noise complaints from CD4 ranked among the highest registered by DEP. We look forward to working for a solution to this growing problem.

We request that the Manhattan South Borough Command closely monitor the needs of precincts since the merger of the Housing Police with the NYPD. Precincts such as the

10th and Midtown North, which contain a significant amount of public housing, may now be facing a burden out of proportion with their current staffing level.

Growth and development within CD4 and in surrounding areas increasingly strains our under-staffed, under-equipped local precincts. We feel that it is vital to bring all of our precincts up to strength both in manpower and in communications technology. The security and safety of CD4 residents and businesses, as well as the increasing number of visitors to the City and to our neighborhoods, must not be compromised by a lack of enforcement tools or manpower.

Our precincts need more cell phone accounts. Cell phones play an increasingly important role in managing the increasing number and size of demonstrations, parades, and public events and in responding to emergency situations.

In addition to more uniformed police officers and cell phones, our local precincts have other specific needs. The Midtown North Precinct requires an up-to-date computer system to give this most important of city precincts a critical edge in the fight not only against crime but also against threats of terrorism to the midtown area. The 10th Precinct requires additional unmarked vehicles to conduct anti-crime patrols and street narcotics operations.

In 1996, CB4 (along with neighboring CB5) requested a major revision of the boundaries between Midtown North, Midtown South and the 10th and 13th Precincts that would reflect the changing residential identification along the existing borders. We hope that some day this change will be implemented.

Sanitation

The reduction in the number of litter baskets on our avenues and streets together with a reduction in the number of trash pickups has substantially increased the litter and filth on CD4 streets. If we want tourists and visitors to feel safe on our streets we have to work at keeping the streets clean of litter. Dirty streets are a health hazard, and the negative impact on everyone's quality of life cannot be in question. Not every neighborhood has a Business Improvement District with its own private sanitation crew; all neighborhoods need the City to do its job in keeping our streets clean.

Improving Sanitation maintenance in the area is important, especially along 14th Street and the adjoining avenues, as commercial and tourist traffic has increased dramatically over the past few years, leading to a constant overflowing garbage condition. Increased foot traffic has also contributed to the worsening of overflowing wastebaskets and garbage accumulation on the sidewalks along Ninth Avenue in the middle portion of the District.

Environment & Health

A large part of the CD4 population is highly vulnerable to water-borne disease. A recent survey indicates that almost one in four Chelsea residents has a compromised immune

system. Also, Chelsea-Clinton has a large senior citizen population and a rapidly growing number of children. As a result, this Board is extremely concerned about the quality of the City's water supply. In particular, we need DEP to take immediate action to ensure that all immune-compromised individuals are informed of the danger of water-borne disease and of appropriate ways of protecting themselves from these diseases.

We also want to emphasize the importance of preventing pathogens, especially cryptosporidium, from infesting our drinking water. These actions are critical in CD4 because Chelsea-Clinton receives much of its water from the already-polluted Croton Water Supply System.

We are concerned about the negative health effects that result from cuts to pest control. Cutbacks to the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene have aggravated the problem of rat infestation in certain locations. There must be enough inspectors and exterminators to respond promptly to community board requests for inspections and baitings.

Concern remains over the sewer and storm drainage system west of Ninth and Tenth Avenues. During heavy rains, basements and first floors, as well as streets and sidewalks, flood. The area west of Tenth Avenue in Chelsea is increasingly residential, and this is also a health concern for those living in the area. While there is some improvement, the problem continues to need study and monitoring from the DEP and DOT.

We have been working for years with DEP to obtain violations for unlicensed patron dancing and club music which plays far above the allowable decibel level. This has been a frustrating experience. By now DEP should be familiar enough with the problem nightclubs to know that sound readings should be done with equipment to measure low frequency violations, and that lawyers should be sent to the Environmental Control Board hearing to prosecute the violation. DEP must work more closely with the community boards and neighborhood residents to build cases against clubs, bars and lounges that consistently make life unbearable for area residents by playing music too loud. Better communication will go a long way, but we also understand that DEP needs additional inspectors who are trained to operate the machinery that measures low frequency noise.

Loud music emanating from nightclubs, bars and lounges and patron noise is not the only quality of life disturbance to residential neighborhoods. We have noise and odors from restaurants as well as noise and vibration from large mechanical systems serving restaurants and other commercial buildings; long hours of operations; garbage-pickup noise during early morning hours; etc. We need to affect a workable co-existence with mutual respect of businesses and residents in mixed-use neighborhoods.

Last year, total noise complaints from CD4 ranked among the highest registered by DEP. In 1999, CB4 asked our elected officials to investigate lowering the maximum decibel reading from 45 to 35. We still look forward to the adoption of this proposal.

CB4 is concerned about electromagnetic fields (EMFs) emanating from sub-stations and has called for a moratorium on construction of electric power substations and high-

voltage power lines pending further study of the health effects of electromagnetic fields. We encourage dissemination of information to the public explaining the hazards of EMFs, and detailing precautionary measures that citizens can take to minimize exposure.

Mayor's Office of Midtown Enforcement

CB4 strongly affirms its support for the continued and strengthened existence of the Mayor's Office of Midtown Enforcement, an office essential to the welfare of the community – residents, businesses and visitors alike. No other City agency can so effectively marshal the vital components – fire, housing, and health inspectors, police and attorneys – often necessary to resolve illegal, threatening or dangerous situations in our area. Immediately, OME needs an additional attorney line and added support staff, including inspectors.

Department of Information Technology & Telecommunications

The proliferation of public pay telephones (PPTs) in our community is the product of a quest for advertising revenues from booth walls. It is not a response to public demand for additional stationary telephonic services. PPTs at times are a great convenience and at times are essential for public safety. However, PPTs can also attract socially unacceptable enterprises, are obtrusive on most residential streets, constitute a negative element in the viewscape, and present unnecessary obstructions to fluid pedestrian movement.

Over the past year and a half, this Board reviewed and provided substantive comments to over 500 proposed new PPT locations in CD4. Site observations determined that public demand is sufficiently met, and probably exceeded, within the Eighth, Ninth and Tenth avenue corridors. While there may be other areas in CD4 that are appropriate for new installations, without location-specific data, there is no way of knowing where PPT service is needed.

It remains very important that Community Boards continue to be consulted with regard to all installations of PPT's in public spaces. Further, Boards must be respected when they determine that a particular location is inappropriate for a new installation or that a particular booth should be removed in the public interest.

Department of Consumer Affairs

We look forward to improved legislation in regard to licensing and the oversight of patron dancing establishments. The State legislature recently passed legislation that would require applicants for liquor licenses to prove that they are in compliance with the building's certificate of occupancy before receiving a license. We support similar legislation with regard to the issuance of cabaret licenses by the City.

At least 60 sidewalk cafés are licensed or have licenses pending to operate within CD4. Storefront businesses also commonly use sidewalk space for merchandise displays, signage, planters, informal seating and other business related uses. When operated responsibly and within the law, these uses can contribute positively to the vibrancy of our

neighborhoods. However, as sidewalk space is increasingly occupied by commerce and public street furniture, less space exists for pedestrians. Given limited enforcement personnel and other budget constraints, we encourage multi-agency enforcement by DCA, DOT, OME, DOB and DOS to ensure that sidewalk space is maximized for pedestrians and that all sidewalk regulations are upheld.

While we have in the past coordinated efforts with the 10th Precinct, DOB, OME and DCA to increase enforcement of parking lot licensing regulations, these efforts have recently been unsuccessful. When DOB or OME identifies faulty or expired Certificate of Occupancy documents, it is essential that DCA follow through to ensure that parking lots operate legally, especially with respect to capacity. We look forward to working with DCA to tackle this difficult problem.

HOUSING

CB4 is committed to the preservation and expansion of affordable (middle and low-income) housing within our district.

Today, CD4 is a mixed-income community offering a range of services and resources to people of lower income that are not available elsewhere. Since its inception, the Board has worked to create a community open to people of all income levels. Unfortunately, the economic upswing of the last eight years has made tenants in Clinton and Chelsea vulnerable to speculation and displacement. The Board requests that the City recognize the long-term benefits associated with mixed-income neighborhoods and mixed-income buildings when considering the highest and best use for the remaining government-owned property within the district.

This diversity has been made possible by existing rent regulations which are in danger. Rent stabilization is again scheduled to expire next year. Given New York's low vacancy rate, the expiration of these regulations would create serious displacement of hundreds of thousands of families. In addition, the automatic deregulation of apartments once rents reach \$2,000 per month is depleting the stock of affordable housing. CB4 is firmly committed to the continuation of rent regulation; it is a necessity in a city predominately comprised of renter households. To that end, deregulation of units renting for more than \$2,000 per month should be repealed to ensure the preservation of regulated units with predictable rental rates.

Many Mitchell Lama and otherwise subsidized tenants are facing opt-outs from their programs. The City must ensure that rental subsidies (Section 8 Certificates or other programs) are in place to meet the needs of these tenants faced with displacement by their inability to afford increased rent due to opt outs.

Single room occupancy housing, (SROs) continue to disappear from the neighborhood, due to both legal and illegal conversions of these buildings to transient hotels. CB4

supports the acquisition, renovation and new construction of sensitively sited supportive housing developments to preserve and expand SRO housing stock.

CB4 supports the increasing of the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) annual income limits from \$20,000 per year to \$30,000 per year to reflect today's economics. Many seniors with income comprised of Social Security and pensions totaling \$30,000 are unable to afford their rents but make too much to qualify for SCRIE.

CB4 believes significant government investment is required to ensure new affordable (both moderate and low-income) housing is built in our community. With the exception of the 80-20 Housing Program (80% market rate units; 20% low income units), no new affordable housing is being constructed. Since the long ago demise of the Mitchell-Lama Program, most government funding opportunities do not address the needs of middle-income housing. In a community with a minimal supply of publicly held land, the best use for the remaining government-owned property within the district must be affordable housing. New means of creating affordable housing on privately owned property must be considered. Text and map modifications of the Zoning Resolution new funding programs and innovations in housing type/construction must be explored for expansion of affordable mixed-income development within CD4.

Department of Housing Preservation & Development

Over the last 10 years, most city-owned residential property within CD4 has been transferred to nonprofit and tenant-ownership programs that have provided opportunities for preserving and increasing the supply of decent, affordable housing. Tenant ownership has been possible through HPD's Tenant Interim Lease (TIL) Program. Several years ago, there were almost twenty buildings enrolled in the program. Today, all but three have been sold to their tenants. These 3 buildings on 2 sites are both funded for renovation in FY '03. The successful completion of these renovations will mark the completion of the TIL program in the Board area. Since 1980, the TIL program will have produced over 500 affordable units of low-income cooperative housing providing homeownership opportunities for families and individuals whose incomes do not allow them to compete in the real estate market.

CB4 continues to support HPD's Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP), which funds the rehabilitation the city-owned buildings. We recognize that not every group of tenants is capable of, or desires, to assume the responsibilities of home ownership. Nonprofit rental buildings are a long term stabilizing force in our neighborhood. The Board also supports the continued use of the Supportive Housing Program to preserve and expand the supply of affordable SRO housing for homeless persons and community residents. This housing, with onsite supportive services for tenants, has been a successful model in housing very low-income persons. It is the sole HPD program that provides funds for acquisition of privately owned property for conversion to affordable housing, and provides a means to expand the supply beyond currently publicly owned land.

CB4 supports the Community Consulting Contracts that in turn support the work of the Clinton Housing Development Company (CHDC) and Housing Conservation Coordinators (HCC). As a result of their work deteriorated buildings have been restored to excellent, long-term affordable housing and the rights of tenants have been protected. Their funding sources, always in danger, should be increased.

General Code Enforcement

Residents of Chelsea and Clinton continue to observe the negative impact of insufficient government response to conditions that threaten life, health and safety. In the 1980s, there were 685 housing code inspectors citywide. Currently, there are only 307 inspectors, including supervising inspectors. The Board requests of HPD to increase the number of its inspectors; fill the vacancies in its Litigation Bureau; and step up code enforcement and to increase the number and timeliness of litigation against the most egregious violators of the housing codes. We also request of HPD, DOB, and Corporation Counsel to pursue with due diligence the collection of outstanding fines owed by repeat violators, ensuring better enforcement and creating badly needed income for New York City. An atmosphere of lawlessness now exists because corrupt landlords know there will be few consequences for disregarding relevant statutes and codes.

Code Enforcement - Special Clinton District

DOB and HPD inspectors, and those assigned to the Office of Midtown Enforcement (OME), do essential work in our area. Their work is particularly important within the Special Clinton District (SCD), where we depend on their skills to enforce arcane but essential provisions of the SCD. The Board continues to see cases where owners have made renovations in SCD buildings without first applying for a required Certificate of No Harassment. The Board is concerned that the spread of self-certification by architects and engineers in applications to DOB and other agencies has led to a lowering and evasion of standards, particularly in areas like the SCD where special zoning regulations apply. Close monitoring of the effect of self-certification is essential.

Regulations are only as effective as the system in place to enforce them. We therefore request of DOB, HPD and the Mayor's Office of Midtown Enforcement to provide rigorous and adequate training to ensure that inspectors have the special knowledge essential to preventing the flagrant disregard of SCD regulations that continue to occur too frequently. We also commit to taking such actions as are appropriate and necessary to stop illegal conversions, and to ensure that tenants are not harassed. We also call upon the DOB's Legal Department, Corporation Counsel and HPD to begin prosecuting the most flagrant violators of the regulations of the SCD and other housing codes and regulations.

It is crucial that an ongoing procedure be implemented by DOB to meet regularly with the Board and the community regarding these issues.

Single Room Occupancy Housing

CD4 contains a large number of SROs, including rooming houses, SRO hotels, and converted tenements. One of the largest concentrations of SRO housing is located on in the West 40s and 50s between Eighth and Ninth Avenues with over ten buildings used at least in part as SROs. SROs have become the single most important source of affordable housing for single adults and an important resource for the prevention of homelessness. Affordable housing within our district is critical to house the diverse population of artists, writers, musicians, students, minimum wage earners and those on fixed incomes. This mixed population is the backbone of the service and cultural economy of the city.

The Mayor's Office of Midtown Enforcement and HPD must strengthen the SRO anti-harassment laws and enforce them to protect this valuable and essential community resource. Continued funding of the efforts of the West Side SRO Law Project to protect SRO tenants' rights and the preservation of SRO housing is essential.

NYC Housing Authority (NYCHA)

CB4 requests that NYCHA resolve the ongoing problems at Elliott-Chelsea Houses of poor maintenance and a lack of security at the state-funded portion of the development. Understaffing, lack of additional resources and the lack a coordinated management approach contributes to the worsening of these issues. We urge the City to bring the state-funded buildings under the federal funding umbrella.

Security and enforcement are issues facing all property owners in the city. In particular, vandalism, drugs and lack of security continue to plague NYCHA developments in both Clinton and Chelsea. We encourage NYCHA to work with CB4 to help coordinate solutions using a community-wide strategy instead of isolating developments and the people living within from the resources that surround them.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Homelessness

Tragically, homelessness which has for too many years been a terrible problem citywide and a particularly visible one in our Board Area, seems to be on the rise again. Over the years, efforts to "clean up" Midtown and other "high visibility" areas has only driven a larger number of homeless people into other parts of our community. Large public facilities located within our District, such as the Port Authority Bus Terminal, are also a natural gathering place for people without homes. Many homeless people need social services, in particular drug treatment and/or mental health services. Inclusion of these services is essential in any effort to address New York's homelessness situation. Increased funding to expand these services is likewise essential.

In February 2002, this Board participated in a homeless count of an area covering our entire district north of 23rd Street. In total, 1,028 homeless individuals were counted – only 603 of whom were counted in emergency, transitional or temporary shelters.

Currently, two of the twelve citywide drop-in centers for homeless individuals are located within CD4. We encourage the City to continue funding these centers at adequate levels to provide the comprehensive interventions that are needed. We are also deeply concerned about the inadequacy of family shelter slots, especially for victims of domestic violence, as well as the lack of adequate resources for homeless youth. It is especially troubling that the needs of women, children and youth at risk are still so far from being met.

Supportive Housing

CB4 recognizes the need for residential facilities and has consistently welcomed them into our neighborhoods, but we also realize that they can only be successful if they are well planned and staffed and appropriate for the location and population served.

Priority should be given to permanent facilities; whenever possible, such projects should mix supportive housing units with other low- and moderate-income units. The Community Boards must be given an opportunity to assess any proposal for residential facilities in terms of the needs for specific facilities, the adequacy of the plan, and the quality of the provider. The City should work with the community to determine the size, site and design of each facility. Any facility must provide adequate and essential social services as well as access to health services and other necessary support services.

The City must also provide for the protection and renewal of existing tenancies in occupied buildings in accordance with applicable laws.

Welfare Reform

CB4 remains concerned about the consequences of the original welfare reform efforts and current proposals for the renewal of these policies, especially in light of the seriously deteriorated economic picture. We believe the flaws in the implementation of the WEP program and its weaknesses in providing a route to permanent employment and adequate financial support for participants have been well documented. Continued efforts must be made to expand the ability of individuals to get the training, education, and the on-going support they need to secure and retain living wage jobs with opportunities for advancement. The Board urges the City to work with the State of New York to ensure continuity of assistance to those in need as time limits are implemented.

HIV / AIDS

New York City continues to account for a major proportion of the nation's AIDS cases; CD4 is home to the largest percentage of people with AIDS nationwide. In order to slow and hopefully stop the spread of this disease, we actively support programs such as education, condom distribution and needle exchanges. For our neighbors who are stricken with this disease, we welcome community-based care facilities, supportive housing and other programs geared towards people with AIDS. HIV/AIDS infection rates have long

been increasing especially within communities of color, and among women and youth, however funding for prevention and services to these communities has not kept pace.

Core Support for the Young and the Old

CB4 is concerned that both the youngest and the oldest among us have adequate access to services necessary to assure their health, safety and security. For young children, adequate, supportive, licensed and affordable day care must be available for all those eligible, especially those newly moving into employment. Easily accessible and responsive health services for children and pregnant women are essential. For the elderly, a comprehensive range of services for our elderly, including community centers, in-home supports, transportation, supportive housing, and preventive health and social services, are essential to assuring that they can live out their lives with dignity within their home communities.

Accessibility

We call upon the city Human Rights Commission to increase funding for more inspectors to investigate and enforce disabled accessibility building code compliance. We continue to receive complaints about deficiencies in various aspects of the paratransit system, including serious limitations in Access-a-Ride service.

YOUTH SERVICES

The combined neighborhood of Chelsea-Clinton is home to more than 7,500 children under 18 years of age, more than 17% of whom receive public assistance. More than 2,000 of these children are under the age of five, and in dire need of public day care. In our district, which ranked third in terms of reported abuse and neglect, only one quarter of the children eligible for public day care receive it and 1,200 children are uninsured, according to the Citizens Committee for Children of New York.

While we understand the current fiscal crisis, we are very concerned that youth services are shouldering more of the crunch than is equitable. While we were very relieved to see some of the initial cuts restored, there are still some areas of concern.

ACS is in line for a cut that is still too high, especially in terms of child-care slots. Chelsea-Clinton needs increased day care options. HRA has acknowledged that it still needs to serve thousands of children citywide to meet the needs of the families participating in the Work-Experience Program. In a neighborhood such as ours, where many of our families are dependent on public assistance, or are low-income working families, quality, city-funded day care is a primary concern for working parents.

While cuts to the Summer Youth Employment Program were restored, we believe the program should be strengthened and expanded. We also strongly urge that the cuts to youth programs be reduced. These programs are essential to children and provide places for after school recreational activities, homework assistance, cultural and social events

and individual enrichment. These service organizations have been forced to curtail, close down, or charge for the services once given freely to youth. How funding from DYCD was allotted to these organizations also needs to be disclosed in a thorough and appropriate manner.

Cuts to libraries were considerably softened, to the tune of a 5% cut instead of an 18 or 21% cut, which we applaud. There is still a hiring freeze in effect, though, and staff attrition will affect services to youth especially, as many youth librarians leave each year for school jobs. The Young Adult and Children's Services programming budgets remain frozen as well; this means the loss of free professionally instructed writing and arts enrichment for the children and teenagers of Chelsea-Clinton.

Cuts to city parks also greatly affect the youth of CD4 where recreational opportunities and space are extremely limited. The Chelsea Recreation Center is an especially important project. For over 30 years, CB4 and the Chelsea community have anxiously awaited the opening of the Chelsea Recreation Center. This facility will provide a positive, safe center for the young people in our neighborhood. According to the Department of Parks, the Chelsea Recreation Center is scheduled to open in the summer of 2003. We urge that this schedule be maintained. We also look forward to working with the Parks Department, community leaders and elected officials to ensure that the necessary funds are provided and that this facility reflects the needs and desires of the community.

We are also very alarmed by the cuts in juvenile justice and housing. Chelsea-Clinton has the highest number of felony arrests of any district in Manhattan. We urge that housing for homeless and run-away youth be maintained, that alternative to violence and creative justice programs be maintained, and that job training and placement programs be developed.

CULTURE & EDUCATION

Schools

CD4 has many elementary, intermediate and high schools serving children from the neighborhood as well as from other school districts and boroughs. We have always supported education and are committed to developing and maintaining high standards for teachers as well as students. We must also provide assurances to parents that their children are in safe and healthy environments, both during the school day and during after school programs; this means on the streets as well as indoors.

There exists a heavy concentration of high schools within CD4; therefore, we would like to be consulted when new schools (provided through either new construction or space rental) are planned. The reason for this provision can best be seen in the case of Park West High School and Graphic Communication Arts, which are within one block of each other. The 3,500 students attending these schools come from all five boroughs. This has

led to clogged neighborhood streets at varying arrival and dismissal times, problems at subways and at other transportation points, and disruptive situations affecting our residents and businesses.

In addition, greater consideration should be given to community residents in terms of their needs, which include better sanitation around schools, cleaner and safer streets for pedestrians, etc. Joint planning between the Board of Education and CB4 can result in a more harmonious relationship, which will lead to a better educational environment.

Libraries

CB4 endorses the restoration of the \$20.5 million cut from NY Public Libraries in order to continue six day service in all branch and research libraries, full funding for books and materials and important programs like the Connecting Libraries and Schools Project (CLASP).

We support increasing branch library funding to bridge the "digital divide" through free computer training and broad access to the Internet. Ninety-eight percent of all free public access computers in the City are in public libraries.

CB4 also believes library funding for expanded hours, and technology training and services should be increased. This Board seeks funding for building and technology infrastructure, which would serve to protect the investment that the City has made in computers and electronic information resources while ensuring well-maintained and secure libraries.

CB4 also seeks full funding for Sunday service at the Donnell, Fordham, and St. George Library Centers and individual units of the Mid-Manhattan Library, including the Telephone Reference Service, the Picture Collection, and Project Access. We also seek restoration of the State minimum standard of 60 hours of weekly service at Mid-Manhattan, a part of Central Library Services used heavily by CD4 residents.

We request that the \$2.35 million in funding that has been allocated in the FY2002 budget for a full renovation of the Columbus Branch flow through the proper channels in an expeditious manner.

In regard to the libraries' challenge to recruit and retain qualified librarians, and the severe levels of turnover, this Board supports efforts to increase librarian salaries to levels in parity within the City, particularly to the Board of Education, and in relation to the surrounding metropolitan area.

Cultural Affairs

CB4 is concerned about the continued loss of funding for small theatrical companies within our community. Small theatrical arts groups develop new talent in areas of writing, performing, and directing and this Board is pleased that the new administration has made support for these companies a priority.

We must also keep in mind the secondary theater and other artistic services that exist within CD4. For example, the Chelsea-Clinton community provide rental storage space for art, costumes, scenery and lighting. There are many dance companies and actively used rehearsal studios in our area. The money generated from these industries provides jobs and maintains the artistic life of the city. CB4 is also concerned with the loss of artists' studios in the District and the displacement of working artists.

WATERFRONT & PARKS

Although approximately 100,000 residents live on CD4's 700 acres of dense city blocks, the District has only 3 parks and 11 pocket parks or playgrounds, totaling about 16 acres. The addition of the Hudson River Park will of course increase that total, but very little acreage is available now. Of the 59 community districts in the City, CD4 ranks 57th in terms of open space. We have less than 1/5 of an acre of open space per 1,000 residents, compared to a citywide average of 2-1/2 acres per thousand. Expense and capital budget cuts and the dramatically low staffing levels of the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) are ruining our parks and with them the quality of life in New York City.

Funding

Over the past 30 years, the DPR budget has fallen sharply. Between 1990 and 2000 the decrease was over 30 percent. At approximately \$161 million, DPR's adopted budget for fiscal year 2003 is 6 percent less than what it was in the previous fiscal year.

In 2001, DPR had less than half of the full time staff that it did ten years earlier. In total, the number of full time staff declined from approximately 4,500 in 1990 to just 2,100 in 2001. As a result, parks are cleaned less frequently, fewer recreational programs are offered and less security is provided. As examples of impact, the number of recreation workers fell 78 percent, from 371 in 1991 to just 80 in 2001; over the same period, the number of park workers decreased by 58 percent, from 1,600 to 670. According to the Parks Council, there is now less than one recreation worker per 21,312 children, and each park worker maintains 43 acres of parkland.

Meanwhile, private spending in parks by groups such as the Central Park Conservancy, the Bryant Park Restoration Corporation and the Riverside Park Fund contribute millions towards the improvement of large city parks. However, developing a cash-endowed constituency for smaller parks, such as the few in our district, is not possible.

And while the city has kept parks cleaner using WEP workers, those workers cannot perform many repair and maintenance duties, and the welfare list is dropping, making less workers available for parks.

CB4 demands that the administration make a greater commitment to open space in our community by restoring the Parks Department Budget.

Parks staffing

Each park in our district should have a full-time, on-site park keeper to address constituents concerns, provide security and perform routine maintenance of that park alone. Funding must also be directed towards full-time gardeners, maintenance workers, PEP officers, as well as seasonal aides and playground associates for the summer.

Requirement contracts

All of our parks require some small capital investment to make minor repairs, such as replacing a swing, painting bathrooms, fixing water fountains. We ask that the administration increase the funding for requirements contracts, so the Parks Department can maintain the parks in the best fashion. Funding must also be dedicated to support Green Thumb Community Gardens and pruning for street trees.

Hudson River Park

Additional financing

To date, the state and the city have promised \$100 million each to build the park. The current financing plan puts the total cost at \$330 million. The Board would like to see commitments from both the state and the city for the balance of the bill. We do not want design or construction schedules held up due to a failure of political determination.

More acreage for Clinton Cove Park

The original waterfront park planned by the Hudson River Park Conservancy for Clinton Cove, from 52nd to 57th streets, included green space on 10-acre footprint of the current headhouse for Pier 94, now leased by the Unconvention Center. However, the Hudson River Park legislation left this parcel out of the park. As a result, northern Clinton was left with a four-acre park north of 54th Street only.

CB4 supports the community in its pursuit of a better solution for Clinton. At the very least, the board would like to recover the northern stub of the head house for public space, an addition of two acres. This should be able to be realized without a significant change in use of the headhouse for the Unconvention Center.

Removal of Municipal Uses Park

Currently the MTA parks buses on Pier 57, the Police Department stores towed cars at Pier 76 and the Department of Sanitation parks garbage trucks and stores sand at Pier 97 and the Gansevoort Peninsula. The Board expects the administration to put solutions to these uses on a fast track. The Hudson River Park Act requires that the salt pile at Gansevoort be removed by 2003. We therefore expect that that space will be free for additional use. We suggest that DOS move more trucks to Gansevoort, and therefore allow Pier 97 to be developed as parkland in accordance with the Act.

Resolution of commercial leases

Several commercial leases must be resolved in order for park planning to continue. At Pier 63, planning must take place immediately to ensure that Basketball City's

commercial lease is not renewed beyond December 2002. Resolution must be found with Circle Line/World Yacht parking areas in order to free the upland area of Piers 81 and 83.

Pedestrian bridges

While one bridge is planned to cross Route 9A at 46th Street to the Intrepid Museum, NYS Department of Transportation originally included another in its budget for our board area. So this funding does not fall through the cracks, the Board suggests that plans be made to secure public space on both sides of the highway, especially in northern Clinton either at DeWitt Clinton Park or 57th Street for the bridge. Access to the park at its northern end must be improved, especially at the highly trafficked intersections.

Heliport

CB4 remains opposed to any heliport within Hudson River Park. In particular, we are adamantly opposed to a heliport on Pier 76 as this would ruin all efforts to develop 50 percent of this pier as public open space, as stipulated by the Hudson River Park Act.

New Parkland

CB4 has pursued, but not secured, two potential sites for new parkland. The first, at 49th Street and Tenth Avenue, is currently held by the Department of Environmental Protection for construction of the Third Water Tunnel. We ask that the administration take action on this parcel, and execute a transfer of the property to DPR for future development as an annex for Hell's Kitchen Park.

The MTA has indicated in the past that it will have no use for the Ninth Avenue frontage of its Rail Control Center Project between 53rd and 54th streets. The Board has asked the MTA to consider dedicating this space to DPR, and asks the administration to pursue this possibility.

In addition, more parkland for the Chelsea neighborhood needs to be identified and secured. We ask that the administration investigate the reuse of city-owned land for pocket parks such as the Sanitation Department parking lot on the south-side of 20th Street between Sixth and Seventh avenues.

Inland Parks

Chelsea Park

We are pleased to hear that DPR will improve the eastern end of Chelsea Park through requirements contracts. However, we believe that a broader effort must be made between DPR, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Department of Homeless Services and the nearby soup kitchen to develop designs for the renovation of the park's Ninth Avenue frontage and to develop long term solutions for ensuring the proper use of the park by all its users.

DeWitt Clinton Park

CB4 would like to see funding secured for a tot-lot at the southeast corner of the park to replace an underutilized paved area. There are plans directly across the street for new affordable housing currently underway.

Hell's Kitchen Park

Hell's Kitchen Park is one of the larger parks in Clinton. It has a children's playground and is heavily used by all ages for handball, basketball and other sports. It is also the only neighborhood open space adequate for many outdoor community events. Unfortunately, the park's physical condition is severely deteriorated, its outmoded and ill-adapted design fosters undesirable uses, and its playground equipment has become unsafe. CB4 is optimistic about a recent announcement that funding to renovate Hell's Kitchen Park has been secured. We ask that this park be listed immediately as a capital improvement project.

59th Street Recreation Center

CB4 and CB7 recently concluded a two-year planning process for the Rec Center, started by a 10-year-old commitment of private funding as part of a restricted declaration for a nearby development site. A joint proposal and resolution has been prepared and endorsed by both boards calling for a combination of private and public monies to restore and redevelop this site. Other recreation centers in the city have received capital improvements and are gems within their community. While there is a large constituency for this center, including residents of the Amsterdam Houses, the city has left it to decay.

We ask that the administration endorse the community plan for the center and dedicate city dollars to this project, both for immediate much-needed improvements as well as inventive ways to create a state-of-the-art community center at this location in the future.

July 2002