



**THE CITY OF NEW YORK
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 6**

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**DISTRICT NEEDS STATEMENT
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015**

Submitted August 2, 2013

By District Manager Ivine Galarza

OVERVIEW

As we begin to plan for and undertake the Fiscal Year 2015 Capital and Expense Budget process, Bronx Community Board #6 is pleased to update readers of this document on the status of several major development projects that were referenced in prior years District Needs Statements.

- 1) St. Barnabas Hospital's parking lot, containing 605 parking spaces, has been completed and is providing a much needed service as well as enhancing the look of the neighborhood with a beautiful structure.
- 2) The reconstruction of the East 180th Street, IRT elevated train station was also completed. Passengers are enjoying the beauty of new stained glass windows, a renovated lobby area, and a much more pleasant ridding experience.
- 3) Phipps Houses is midway through the construction of its East Tremont Affordable Housing Project which will consist of 3 buildings, eight to ten stories each, totaling 141 apartment units in all.
- 4) The New York City Housing Authority has completed renovation of all six of its buildings that are located in the West Farms area.

- 5) The Department of City Planning's East Fordham Road Rezoning Proposal was completed and approved by Bronx Community Board #6 in June 2013; thereby, paving the way for additional housing and commercial development along this important Bronx corridor.
- 6) The reconstruction of East Fordham Road from the Southern Boulevard bridge to the Bronx River Parkway exist/entrance ramps has been completed and included the installation new sewers, the reconstruction of roadway, and placement of granite curbs and raised 20" concrete medians.

Other significant projects that are in the pipeline for Bronx Community Board #6 include:

- a) Urban Signature will construct 2 residential buildings with a total of 392 units, 99 parking spaces and commercial space.
- b) The Bronx River Art Center will be host to a four-story state of the arts facility providing arts/culture to Bronxites. The project will start renovations in the winter of 2013.
- c) The area of East 177th Street, Devoe Avenue, Bronx Park and East Tremont avenues that abuts the entrance to the Sheridan Expressway will undergo extensive improvements. The project includes the reconstruction of roadways and water mains, new traffic signals, improved street lighting and the installation of central median planters. Construction on this New York City Department of Design and Construction project is targeted for the fall of 2013.
- d) The completion of the Fordham Plaza (Third Avenue) Reconstruction Project will result in Third Avenue between East 189th Street to Fordham Road being designated solely for "bus traffic."
- e) The Department of Transportation's Franchise and Concession division will once again contract with ABC Concessions Inc. to provide for the operation and maintenance of the food court and outdoor Public Square that is known as Fordham Plaza and boarded by East Fordham Road, Park Avenue, East 189th Street and Third Avenue. The contract is for one year with a 3 month renewal option. At the completion of its contract with ABC Concessions, DOT Franchise and Concession will contract with the Fordham Road BID for the operation and maintenance of the plaza.

FISCAL YEAR 2015 DISTRICT NEEDS BY AGENCY

Some of Bronx Community Board #6's more pressing needs and priorities for Fiscal Year 2015 are as follows:

NEW YORK POLICE DEPARTMENT

Bronx Community Board #6's support for its local police precinct (the 48th) is second to none. We want our police officers to be well equipped, well trained and totally prepared for the challenges and risks of the 21st Century and beyond.

- 1. Having said that, we urge the department to redouble its efforts to ensure that the 48th Police Precinct is equipped with all of the tools – bulletproof vests, computers, telephones, etc., -- that it needs in order to protect and communicate with the citizens of our district.**
- 2. For the first time ever, the 48th precinct has implemented an Impact Zone. Due to this the community board has a moratorium on street events within the Impact Zone area, and limits events to one (1) event per day and not to last past 7pm. We still maintain our policy of no events on July 4th, Labor Day and Memorial Day, and on Halloween.**
- 3. Bronx Community Board #6 asks that the Police Department pay greater attention to the 48th Police Precinct's vehicles. The vehicles, particularly its squad cars, appear to require a more frequent schedule of maintenance and repairs.**
- 4. Bronx Community Board #6 also asks that our district's allocation of police officers be increased in order that our community may continue to enjoy the significant reduction in overall crime that we have experienced in recent months.**
- 5. Similarly, the community board asks that our district's allocation of school crossing guards be increased in order to keep pace with the increased number of young children that attend our local schools and need guidance negotiating busy street and intersections.**

Lastly, there are three policy, non-budgetary, issues that we urge the Police Department to implement in Fiscal Year 2014.

- a) To further improve police and community relations, we ask that the Police Department mandate that the precinct commanders once again convene Precinct Management Team (PMT) meetings with their community board's district manager and the president of their precinct's community council. These meetings provide for the useful exchange of important information and ideas that help the precinct commanders, district managers and council presidents to serve their communities.**
- b) Additionally, we further ask that Bronx Community Board #6 be kept informed of any illegal activities (i.e., public drinking, gambling, etc.) that occur at fairs, block parties and other street events that are held in its district. This information, which is not normally provided to the board unless specifically asked, would prove extremely**

helpful to us as we decide which activities should continue to receive our support and recommendations for approval.

- c) Lastly, it is also necessary to closely continue monitoring all bars and nightclubs therefore insuring that they are up to code i.e., all required licenses, no selling to minors and no nuisance to residents.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Bronx Community Board #6 is requesting that the Fire Department install a backup generator at Engine Company 88 (which is located at 2225 Belmont Avenue) as well as for Ladder 18, Engine 45 on East Tremont Avenue. The generator is a very important piece of equipment that is necessary in the firehouse in case of a loss of power for any period of time.

NYPD SCHOOL SAFETY

We ask that the New York Police Department's School Safety Division designate the central Crotona and West Farms sections of our district as a school drug free zone. The boundaries of the zone would be: Southern Boulevard/Crotona Parkway to the west; East 180th Street/Bronx Park South to the north; Morris Park Avenue to the east, and the Cross Bronx Expressway to the south. At a minimum, the proposed school drug free zone contains three (3) day care centers, four (4) public and/or private elementary and intermediate schools, and several youth after-school programs. Youth will be able to travel more freely to and from these facilities as word spreads that persons arrested in the zone for the sale or possession of illegal drugs are subject to stiffer criminal penalties. As well as honing in on the prostitution that exists surrounding the aforementioned schools.

HOUSING PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Bronx Community Board #6 is fortunate that most of its vacant city owned land is now undergoing development for housing or other worthwhile development projects and that we have no vacant city-owned land that is not already in the pipeline for development. Nonetheless, we urge the Department of Housing Preservation and Development to encourage all housing developers to, as much as possible, incorporate "green roofs" into their future project designs.

Furthermore, in order to ensure that Community Board #6 receive the ultimate benefits from new housing projects developed within its district, the Community Board has adopted a policy of requesting letters from developers coming before it asking that they provide written assurances that they will attempt to hire locally, and purchase equipment and services from local vendors as much as feasibly possible.

Due to the number of recent fires at illegally converted apartments, we insist that HPD keep us updated of all finding by the Mayor's SRO Task Force.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Bronx Community Board #6's foremost concern for the Department of Parks and Recreation is for the safety of our constituents as they visit and utilize our district's numerous parks and plays areas. Therefore, we encourage the hiring and deployment of additional Parks Enforcement Personnel (PEP Officers) to patrol and monitor conditions in all of our park locations.

We also ask that the department work closely with the 48th Police Precinct in order to reduce criminal activities in and around our parks; such as, but not limited to, gang, prostitution and drug activities at Vidalia Park and River Park (where two youths drowned July 2010) and ensure that all parks are closed at dusk in order to further safeguard our neighborhoods.

Lastly, we ask that the department to advise the community board of all permits that it issues for activities in our district's parks (i.e., softball and basketball leagues, soccer games etc.).

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The Department of Transportation recently installed cameras. As well as improved traffic signals at the intersection of Fordham Road/Webster Avenue and Third Avenue. The Community Board will monitor these locations to insure no other measures are needed.

As of June 30, 2013 DOT implemented the Select Bus Service on the Webster Avenue corridor from East 149th Street to Gunhill Road. The SBS provides speedier service, less stops (pay before you enter) and, as an added bonus, eventually will have buses to LaGuardia Airport leaving from Fordham Road.