



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

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Honorable Ruben Diaz Jr., Bronx Borough President

MS. WENDY RODRIGUEZ
Board Chairperson

MS. IVINE GALARZA
District Manager

DISTRICT NEEDS STATEMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016

INTRODUCTION:

As we begin to plan for and undertake the Fiscal year 2016 Capital and Expense Budget process, Bronx Community Board #6 is pleased to update readers of this document on the status of several development projects that were referenced in prior years District Needs Statements. According to the office of the Bronx Borough President' Annual Development Report, "Historically residential developments have surpassed commercial development" this report also states that total development In community board 6 surpasses the 1000,000,000 mark. The following is proof of this statement.

EAST TREMONT:

The following paragraph is an excerpt from a recent report from the Department of City Planning:

"According to City Planning, East Tremont Avenue is poised to re-emerge as a vibrant neighborhood commercial corridor. The effects of the rezoning combined with the formation of a business improvement district could spur new development, attract new businesses, and create a pedestrian environment which establishes a sense of place. Already E. Tremont Ave. enjoys a robust network of bus transportation including a new Select Bus Service along Webster Ave. East Tremont Ave. between Arthur and 3rd Ave. is where Tremont Park is located, a 15 acre open space and recreation area. The Metro - North rail station located on East Tremont and Park Ave. provides commuter rail service along the Harlem Metro North Line. The Cross Bronx Expressway is accessible thru Webster, 3rd as well as Arthur Ave." The Third Avenue East Tremont rezoning will bring additional much needed housing to this community as well as enhance existing commercial and recreational facilities. Presently, the community planning board is working alongside City Agencies and Civic organizations i.e. Transportation, Police Department. Parks and Recreation, to ensure that with the rezoning comes a better quality of life for our residents."

Mastermind Ltd.

Mastermind Ltd has several development projects on tap. Following are those that are in the pipeline and scheduled to materialize in 2015/16: The Tremont Blue – 516 E. Tremont Ave. has been in contract for several years with NYPD Traffic Violations Bureau, this agency has signed a 20 year lease, and it is expected to be occupied before fall 2014. Another project is the Tremont Renaissance on E. Tremont between Park and Webster Ave. with 216 rental units, a possible December 2015 closing. The Belmont Cove, which is to be located on East 176th Street between Belmont and Crotona avenues, is pending a variance. Mastermind is looking to build Belmont Cove as approximately 75-85 rental units which will consist of 3, 2, and 1 bedrooms as well as studios.

Honorable Ritchie Torres,
City Council Member, 15th Council District

Honorable Maria del Carmen Arroyo,
City Council Member, 17th Council District

FORDHAM ROAD:

The following section is excerpted from the Department of Design and Construction's newsletter:

The NYC Department of Design and Construction (DDC) is managing a capital reconstruction project of the roadways surrounding Fordham Plaza. Project work continues to progress. The months of May and June saw the completion of sidewalk and curb installation on Park Avenue East, installation of traffic signage, and tree planting. The coming months will see lighting, and punch list items. The anticipated completion date for all work operation remains summer 2014.

Propose work schedule

July/August 2014

1. Asphalt Milling/Asphalt Repair
2. Roadway line striping and street signage installation
3. Punch list and ancillary repairs

Work Completed to date:

1. Roadway reconstruction of E.189th Street between 3rd Ave. and Webster Ave.
2. Roadway reconstruction of 3rd Ave. between E.189th St. and East Fordham Road
3. Roadway reconstruction of East Fordham Road between Webster Ave. and 3rd Ave.
4. Fordham Plaza bus terminal reconstruction on 3rd Avenue.
5. Asphalt paving of all roadways in the metro North Fordham Station.
6. Curb and Sidewalk Repair in sidewalk repair in front of Metro North.
7. Curb and Sidewalk installation on Park Avenue East between East 188th St. and East 189th Street.

Community Impacts: Public Transportation:

- BX#15 and #15 UNLIMITED BUSES are permanently dropping off passengers along the East side of 3rd Ave. between East Fordham Rd. and East 189th St
- BX#15 and #15 LIMITED BUSES are now permanently picking up passengers along the West side of 3rd Avenue inside of the new bus turnaround loop.
- BX#17 buses are permanently picking up and dropping off passengers at the Eastside of 3rd Ave. at the intersection of East Fordham Road.
- The Fordham Road Bid has a pending contract with DDC for the maintenance and everyday operations of Fordham Plaza once work is completed.

WEST FARMS:

By far the area which will see the most development in the next few years is the West Farms section of our district. Examples of which are described herein.

THE BRONX RIVER ARTS CENTER had delays, however, the ground breaking took place in June and construction on their state of the arts building is scheduled to start by fall 2014 and completion 2015. The new Bronx River Arts Center will provide much needed arts and culture classes Bronx wide.

SIGNATURE URBAN will construct 2 residential buildings with a total of 392 units, 99 parking spaces and commercial use as well as a Day Care facility. According to the Bronx Borough President's report, Signature Urban is the #1 of the top ten residential developments in the borough for a total of \$75,000,000

PANKAJ SHAH, a private developer, is building 2 multifamily residential buildings with funding from HDC and HPD at 1939 West Farms Road, adjacent to the Howard Johnson Motel. Investment of this property is \$42,000,000 making this the third of the ten top residential developments.

Comunilife Inc.'s plans to construct the El Rio Residence, an 8-story building with approximately 65 dwelling units of supportive senior citizen housing at 2064 Boston Road.

At the time of this District Needs Statement is being written, Phipps Houses' is constructing three 8 to 10 story buildings, totaling 141 apartments, at 1160 Lebanon Street, and 1175 and 1172 East Tremont Ave.

The New York City Department of Design and Construction in conjunction with the City and State departments of transportation are in charge of the West Farms reconstruction project which includes E.177th St. and Devoe Avenue, Bronx Park Avenue and East Tremont Avenue. 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 which will provide more open space, better roadways and safer pedestrian crossings. Although this project has been delayed we expect it to move forward in 2015/16. The Community Board will hold a Town Hall meeting in the fall to inform residents of this project.

FISCAL YEAR 2016 DISTRICT NEEDS BROKEN DOWN BY AGENCY

Some of Bronx Community Board #6's more pressing needs and priorities for Fiscal Year 2016 are as follows:

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.

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.

The 48th precinct continues to be designated as an "Impact Zone." Due to this, the community board has a moratorium on street events occurring within the Impact Zone area, and limits street events to one (1) activity per day, not to lasting past 7pm. We still maintain our policy of no events on July 4th, Labor Day, Memorial Day, and Halloween.

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.

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 crime that it has experienced in recent months.

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 our busy street and intersections

Lastly, there are three policy, non-budgetary, issues that we urge the Police Department to implement in Fiscal Year 2016.

1. 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 better serve their communities.
2. 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 held in its district. This information, which is not normally provided to the board unless specifically requested, would prove extremely helpful to us as we decide which activities should continue to receive our support and be recommended for approval in the future.
3. Lastly, it is also necessary that the precinct continue to closely monitor all of our local bars and nightclubs to insuring that they are up to code (i.e., all required licenses, no selling to minors and no nuisance to residents).

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 & 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 that are proposing projects within the community board #6 area to, as much as possible, incorporate "green roofs" in their project design.

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 findings 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 safety 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.

CONCLUSION

The above District Needs Statement for Fiscal Year 2016 for Bronx Community Board #6 is respectfully submitted by:


Wendy Rodriguez,
Board Chairperson


Ivine Galarza,
District Manager