

THE OFFICE OF THE QUEENS BOROUGH PRESIDENT

Strategic Policy Statement
2014



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Queens Borough President



The Borough of Queens is home to more than 2.3 million residents, representing more than 120 countries and speaking more than 135 languages¹. The seamless knit that ties these distinct cultures and transforms them into shared communities is what defines the character of Queens.

The Borough's diverse population continues to steadily grow. Foreign-born residents now represent 48% of the Borough's population². Traditional immigrant gateways like Sunnyside, Woodside, Jackson Heights, Elmhurst, Corona, and Flushing are now communities with the highest foreign-born population in the entire city³.

Immigrant and Intercultural Services

The immigrant population remains largely underserved. This is primarily due to linguistic and cultural barriers. Residents with limited English proficiency now represent 28% of the Borough⁴, indicating a need for a wide range of social service support and language access to City services. All services should be available in multiple languages, and outreach should be improved so that culturally sensitive programming can be made available. The Borough President is actively working with the Queens General Assembly, a working group organized by the Office of the Queens Borough President, to address many of these issues.

Cultural

Queens is amidst a cultural transformation. The Borough is home to some of the most iconic buildings and structures in the world, including the globally recognized Unisphere and New York State Pavilion. Areas like Astoria and Long Island City are establishing themselves as major cultural hubs. In early 2014, the New York City Council designated the area surrounding Kaufman Astoria Studios as the city's first arts district through a City Council Proclamation. The area's unique mix of adaptively reused residential, commercial, and manufacturing buildings serve as a catalyst for growth in culture and the arts.

However, Queens is not being widely recognized for its cultural offerings. There is a misconception that Manhattan is the sole source of major cultural programming. But the programs offered by Queens are unique due to its ethnic diversity. The Borough President is actively working to bridge this image gap and letting tourists know of the opportunities to see the world through the arts that Queens provides.

Additionally, the Office of the Queens Borough President invested more than \$125 million over the past 13 fiscal years, including \$5.6 million in Fiscal Year 2015, in capital funds for cultural and historical buildings and structures. However, many sites still need attention. In particular is the New York State Pavilion. The Pavilion, which consists of the Tent of Tomorrow and three observation towers, was an iconic structure of the 1964 World's Fair. Starting in January 2014,

the Queens Borough President spearheaded the fight to save and restore the Pavilion. In just six months, \$5.8 million in funding has been secured to begin the restoration work on the Pavilion. Although the funding will go a long way to make the Pavilion structurally sound and lighted, more than \$35 million dollars are needed to restore and adaptively reuse this heritage site.

Tourism

Tourism is a major economic contributor to Queens' local economy. The Borough President intends to further develop the tourism economy by highlighting the diversity of the Borough. In order to realize this vision, Queens has to, first, inform tourists that Queens offers a world within itself and that the experiences offered are unique and exciting. Currently, Queens is without a brand identity, and the Borough needs to overcome this image gap in order to attract various public and private enterprises. This effort needs to be complemented by working with local businesses and institutions so that there is a unified effort in providing high quality services so that tourists' experiences are authentic. This includes highlighting the efforts of immigrant gateway communities and enhancing cultural tourism.

The Borough President has already begun an active campaign to promote the Borough as the "World's Borough." Initial steps include changing all the Department of Transportation *Welcome to Queens* signs on all major thoroughfares to include the slogan "Queens – The World's Borough," presenting a cohesive brand message. Partnerships with entities like NYC & Co. to help market this message to firms like the Mets, USTA, Delta Air Lines, major hotel chains, museums, cultural institutions, and traditional tourism destinations throughout the City are already underway.

Economic Development

Economic development strategies are being implemented to complement the effort to increase tourism. Queens' diversity is not limited to its ethnic and cultural composition. The local economy is robust and unlike the other boroughs, no single industry overwhelmingly dominates the economy. The largest source of employment in Queens is the growing healthcare and social assistance sector, followed by retail trades, transportation and warehousing, manufacturing, and construction. In addition, Queens has several notable emerging sectors of the tech industry that is growing rapidly. Long Island City is rapidly emerging as a tech hub. The area is now home to more than 50 tech start-ups like Songza, Shapeways, and World Now. There is anticipated growth in the sector, especially with the planned development of the *Cornell Tech* campus on Roosevelt Island, and the Borough President is actively working to cultivate and attract tech entrepreneurs. Initial efforts include steering the Borough President's Queens Tech Zone Strategic Plan Task Force and working with groups like Coalition 4 Queens to develop a strategic action plan that studies the conditions that are necessary to grow the tech economy in western Queens.

Still, traditional small businesses continue to be a primary driver of economic growth in Queens. These small businesses present new employment opportunities for a growing and unique employment base, bringing growth and innovation to communities where the businesses are established. They possess the ability to respond and adapt quickly to changing economic climates, providing a consistent revenue base that is needed for the Queens economy to endure. Even though small businesses have made significant contributions to the durability of the Queens

economy, there remains a need to assist small businesses so they are stronger, more resilient, and more effective. This means providing access to small business support programs, helping businesses navigate the City's regulations, and expanding business opportunities through government procurement opportunities.

Cultivating major commercial sub-centers is another major necessity in both growing the economy and supporting small businesses. The four commercial sub-centers with the highest growth potential – Long Island City, Downtown Flushing, Downtown Jamaica, and Rego Park – produce significant economic activity for the Borough. The Borough President has started working with area stakeholders to plan and further cultivate the growth of these commercial centers.

Developing a skilled workforce is a necessary component to growing the local economy. Queens already benefits from robust commercial sub-centers and an emerging tech industry. There needs to be increased efforts in workforce development, particularly those from underserved communities, to supply these industries, and provide wraparound services that link employment training with other social service programs and community resources. Access to social services and community resources are vital to the health of the Borough.

Housing

Queens' communities are quickly outpacing the available housing stock. Already, Woodside, Jackson Heights, Elmhurst, and Corona are among the most severely overcrowded communities in the entire city⁵. Low-income households are left with few alternatives to living in overcrowded conditions. Rent-regulated housing is being lost to vacancy decontrol, and existing market rate housing is aging and being lost to degradation.

More affordable housing needs to be created. Since the inception of the New Housing Marketplace Plan, the City created and preserved 157,230 units of low- and moderate-income housing. Yet, only 16,530 of these units were created in Queens, representing 10.5% of total new units. Public housing through the New York City Housing Authority exists throughout the Borough. However, waitlists are long and, because of budget constraints, the Authority has had limited effectiveness in managing buildings.

This shortage has created two issues of concern. The first is the overwhelming need for housing assistance, which has been underfunded for years. The second is an emerging underground market of illegally converted housing, which includes partitioned apartments and converted attics and basements. Added to this is the loss in supply of the aging housing stock through degradation.

Addressing the first issue requires adequate funding for housing assistance programs, including increased City grants to non-profit organizations that provide housing assistance. The second issue requires adequate levels of code enforcement. Today, less than 300 inspectors are on staff citywide, with no staff increase projected. A majority of complaints become response delayed because of the inadequate number of inspectors. Because of these staffing shortfalls, The Department of Buildings and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development frequently have a backlog of thousands of complaints. Violations go uncorrected, which could

lead to building collapse and injuries, and millions of dollars in fines go uncollected. Without robust enforcement, there is no deterrent to those involved in the illegal conversion of housing or the exploitation of those in need of affordable housing.

Special attention also needs to be made for middle-income housing. There are currently few opportunities to create middle-income housing. The Mitchell-Lama program was the major source of middle income housing, but many landlords are now leaving the program, and few existing programs are able to create middle-income housing.

Still, the overwhelming majority of the Borough's housing is privately owned. There are issues specific to owner-occupied homes, including those living in cooperative and condominiums. The Borough President has been organizing a Task Force on Cooperatives and Condominiums to address these issues.

Zoning and Land-Use

Zoning is a critical tool in designing our neighborhoods and can address many of the housing concerns. Since 2002, 45 neighborhood contextual rezonings, affecting over 6,000 blocks, have been completed in Queens⁶. Additionally, there have been major rezonings in the Borough's larger commercial centers like Long Island City, Downtown Jamaica, and Downtown Flushing, reflecting the latest development trends and projected future needs in those areas.

The need to match zoning designations to the existing built character of neighborhoods is highlighted during every building boom, when market pressures drive increased as-of-right, sometimes out of character, development that disrupts the quality of life and impacts the stability of those areas. Before 1961, the built low-density development pattern in many areas did not reflect the underlying zoning that allowed much higher density, multi-family dwellings, and apartment buildings. When the New York City Zoning Resolution passed in 1961, it comprehensively revised zoning laws. Still, many areas of Queens were left inappropriately zoned compared to the predominant building types. One of the reasons for the mismatched zoning of the existing lower-density areas was that the zoning revisions did not properly consider what was actually built in those areas. Another factor was based upon the projected population growth and vision of where housing would be developed to meet this projected growth. This resulted in higher zoning designations for many of those lower density areas. It was these areas that were exploited during the real estate booms when out-of-character buildings were legally constructed as-of-right in these neighborhoods.

The contextual residential rezonings of the 1980s were designed to more closely reflect the existing housing stock, refining zoning regulations and making future development in contextually rezoned neighborhoods more predictable and similar in overall physical character. Many neighborhoods still need to be appropriately zoned, and the Borough President is working to contextually rezone neighborhoods, preserving neighborhood built character, and increasing density in appropriate areas so that more housing, both market-rate and affordable housing, can be developed. The shortage of senior housing is another area of concern for the Borough.

Hurricane Sandy

The Borough has yet to fully recover from this natural disaster. All of the Queens communities impacted by Hurricane Sandy continue to feel the long-term effects of the storm's devastation. It is critical that tourism, economic development, housing, and zoning strategies are concentrated to revitalize impacted neighborhoods.

Many hurricane victims still remain displaced, while many business owners have been forced to cease operating or wholly relocate. The flooding in southeast Queens has made homes in areas unlivable. Dilapidated bulkheads, vulnerable seawalls, and rising tides from Jamaica Bay have left these areas at risk from future weather events. Investments made in housing and economic development must continue to support the revitalization of the Rockaway peninsula. Several projects are underway, like the Beach Channel Drive Bulkhead Rehabilitation Program, the Spring Creek Mitigation efforts, and the Rockaway Boardwalk. Others programs, like Build It Back NYC, have not yet properly initiated. Yet, key to these revitalization efforts is the improvement of the peninsula's transportation infrastructure. The ferry service has become an irreplaceable and essential resource for residents, yet it still remains temporary, set to expire in the end of October 2014. The ferry service needs to be made permanent.

Seniors

Queens is home to one of the fastest growing aging populations. There are more than 381,000 persons 60 years of age and older, representing 30% of New York City's elderly population and 20% of the Borough's entire population⁷. The older population is increasingly diverse, with over half comprised of a rapidly growing immigrant population and an increasing LGBT population. To serve this increasingly diverse older population, programs need to be multi-faceted so that they are culturally considerate and linguistically competent.

Foremost, the need for affordable housing for seniors needs to be addressed. This means improving rent subsidies and creating more senior housing. The Borough President is working to address these issues, advocating for an increase in income eligibility level, lowering the tenant's share of rent to 30%, and funding the development of senior housing. The Borough President has already provided \$750,000 in capital funds towards the completion of senior housing in Jamaica.

The Borough President is also working towards addressing quality of life issues seniors may face. Senior centers serve as the network hub for senior services. Located in most communities throughout Queens, these centers typically provide hot congregate lunches, home delivered meals, transportation services, recreational and educational activities, and a wide range of opportunities for socialization and support. However, senior centers need to be redesigned so that programming will better match needs and attract a broader spectrum of the ethnically diverse senior population. Funding also needs to be increased so that culturally sensitive congregate and homebound meals are available. Additionally, the Borough President is working towards improving social adult day care programs and enhancing para-transit services.

Health and Human Services

Health and human services are another service area that the Borough President is working to improve. One of the most significant challenges facing the Borough is the provision of accessible and affordable health care. This challenge has become particularly difficult with the closure of

five major acute care hospitals over the past seven years. Queens is currently the most under-bedded borough in the city. In the absence of sufficient primary care capacity, emergency rooms become the primary care provider. Yet, the lack of primary care facilities and infrastructure deficiencies at hospitals has prevented facilities from serving residents. The Borough President has been actively working to address these issues. In Fiscal Year 2014, the Borough President provided \$1.79 million in capital funding towards hospitals to upgrade emergency rooms, and purchase equipment.

Homelessness

Homelessness is another growing issue in Queens. As of April 2014, there were 54,667 homeless people sleeping in shelters, including 13,001 homeless families with 23,116 homeless children, sleeping each night in the New York City municipal shelter system⁸. Currently, the Department of Homeless Services directly runs or contracts with more than 200 shelters citywide. However, the waitlist for these shelters are long and these sites remain overburdened.

The Advantage rental subsidy program was defunded in 2011. The City and State just announced its successor program, funded at \$139 million. If the two new programs are to be successful, it must to be managed well, and overhead costs need to be controlled.

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence programs need to be improved. Emergency shelters for domestic violence victims are available throughout the city. However, a stay at one of these shelters is limited to 180 days. Thereafter, victims must choose between entering the homeless shelter system, which does not provide the levels of confidentiality that emergency shelters have, stay with a friend or family member, or return to their abusers.

Veterans

Many veterans have difficulty accessing social service programs. While Queens boasts the highest number of veterans in the five boroughs, many remain homeless, unemployed and underemployed, and in need of healthcare. There needs to be special attention to those that have served on behalf of their country, and outreach should be improved so that veterans can take advantage of the social services that are available.

Education

In addition to social services, improvements to public services need to be made. This is particularly true for the public education system. Currently, Queens' School Districts are among the most overcrowded in the entire city.

Overcrowding persists for several reasons, including the sharp increase of immigrant populations. Additionally, these neighborhoods are the ones that are experiencing the highest growth from the migration of working professionals and new families. Neighborhoods like Long Island City, Astoria, Sunnyside, and Woodside, where the development of new multi-story residential buildings is ongoing, has been growing. Added to this migration and population growth is the emergence of new homeless shelters. Hundreds of children are being added to the schools.

New seats are desperately needed in Queens' schools, but the Department of Education's Grade Expansion policy, which fills newly constructed schools only one grade at a time, does not allow newly constructed schools to be utilized to its fullest potential. Meanwhile, children in neighboring, overcrowded schools continue learning in dilapidated trailers that are over 20 years old. The Borough President strongly urges rethinking such a policy. New seats for schools with an overutilization rate of 150% need to be prioritized, either rented or newly constructed.

Another issue that needs to be considered is the planned rollout of universal pre-kindergarten. Universal pre-kindergarten will give children in all communities in the Borough better access to education and prepare them for kindergarten. Applicants for universal pre-kindergarten can apply for a public school- or community-based organization's program. However, while there is a consensus that universal pre-kindergarten is necessary, there are concerns about space in the public school sites, as overcrowding is already an issue.

The Borough President has re-established the Queens Borough President's Education War Room, a monthly meeting that brings together the School Construction Authority and Superintendents with the Borough President and key staff, to address the issue of overcrowding and other issues of concern.

Queens Public Library

The Queens Public Library, with its 62 community libraries, seven Adult Learning Centers, and two Family Literacy Centers, has the highest utilization rates of any public library in the country. Libraries are critical to our communities. They have transcended the mission of lending books and other materials. They are now extensions of the school and higher education systems, and vital community resources that provide a wide range of social and cultural programming.

It is critical that an institution this large and important to the Borough is operating at a level that is fiscally responsible and transparent. The Borough President recently worked with the State legislature to pass a law that increased accountability and operational transparency of the Queens Public Library. The Borough President will continue to work with stakeholders to ensure that accountability and transparency measures are adopted successfully.

Infrastructure

Public infrastructure projects also need to be re-evaluated. Many streets in Queens remain in need of capital improvements. Queens still remains the highest in number of pedestrian traffic fatalities, and streets need to be redesigned to be safer. The Borough's sewer system also requires major improvements. Many neighborhoods throughout southeast and northern Queens experience perennial flooding due to the lack of drainage systems.

Transportation

The transportation infrastructure needs to be reexamined as well. For many Queens residents, public transportation is either not an option or impractical because of the time it adds to one's commute. Mass transit service needs to be increased to create new and meaningful mass transit options. This means, in the short term, making the Rockaway ferry service permanent and expanding ferry service for waterfront communities, providing Select Bus Service along major arterial roadways, increasing bus service lines, and expanding bike share programs in western

Queens. In the long term, this also means redesigning many of our congested roadways and developing additional transit infrastructure.

The infrastructure projects at the airports cannot be overlooked. Queens has enjoyed the advantages and suffered the consequences of having two of the country's busiest airports, LaGuardia and John F. Kennedy Airports, located within its borders. Combined, these airports provide 300,000 jobs and generate \$42.4 billion.

While the airports are vital to the economy of Queens, they also negatively impact the communities surrounding them due to the airplane noise and air pollution they produce. The Federal Aviation Administration is rolling out new efforts to deliver more efficient operations, and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is studying ways to mitigate noise in those communities. The Governor also ordered the establishment of an Aviation Community Roundtable, which provides an opportunity for the community to address the noise issue in a grassroots, comprehensive manner. The Borough President will take an active role in working with all the regulators and stakeholders and ensure that the participation in the Aviation Community Roundtables is inclusive.

Parks

Parks are essential to the life of any neighborhood. Queens has one of the highest parkland acreages of any Borough, with 7,272 acres of parkland situated in 464 parks, playgrounds, triangles, and malls throughout the Borough's 14 community boards. This includes the flagship Flushing Meadows Corona Park and 127 acres of Jointly Operated Playgrounds adjoining schools. However, the 14 Community Boards throughout Queens have all raised issues of accessibility. This is particularly true for the public school open space facilities that remain locked during the evenings, weekends, and holidays, denying valuable open space resources. The Borough President remains focused on ensuring that the parks are adequately funded and accessible to residents throughout the year.

Public Safety and Waste Management

The public safety and waste management services provided by the New York Police Department, the Fire Department of New York, and the Department of Sanitation have been generally positive. However several long-standing Borough specific issues still remain. The first is the creation of a new 116th Police Precinct to alleviate the 105th Precinct. The 105th Precinct covers the largest land area of any police precinct in New York City, a coverage area of nearly 13 square miles, half the size of the entire Borough of Manhattan. The precinct's vehicles currently travel more than 1,000 miles per week due to the distances within the precinct boundaries. Funding must be provided to divide the territory of the 105th precinct into two and to create the 116th Precinct (the precinct number has already been reserved) to reduce the time it takes police officers to respond to crimes and emergencies. The City also must re-open Engine 262 in western Queens. The population of western Queens is increasing rapidly with thousands of new apartments, new business centers and major attractions. The Department of Sanitation needs to increase services and the City needs to enforce illegal dumping laws.

There are many issues that have not been covered in this summary section that are discussed in extensive detail in the forthcoming sections. This Strategic Policy Statement is a guiding principle of goals that the Office of the Queens Borough President hopes to accomplish in order to find a meaningful approach to solving some of the longstanding challenges faced by the Borough of Queens.

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IMMIGRANT AND INTERCULTURAL SERVICES

Existing Conditions and Issues

Queens has the distinction of being the most culturally diverse county in New York City and the nation. Close to half (47.8%) of the borough's population is foreign-born¹⁰. Neighborhoods in northwest Queens, such as Sunnyside, Woodside, Jackson Heights, Elmhurst, and Corona are major immigrant gateways communities and continue to have the largest immigrant populations in New York. The top three Community Districts with the highest foreign-born population in the city are in Queens, districts 3, 4, and 7; five of the top ten are in Queens¹¹. More than 120 nationalities are represented and over 135 languages are spoken Borough-wide¹². In Queens, no single racial or ethnic group predominates, which helps to account for the Borough's high degree of cross-cultural interaction.

The below table lists the top 20 foreign-born populations in Queens ranked by country of birth¹³:

Country of Birth	Number	Percentage
China	142,957	13.1
Guyana	82,538	7.6
Ecuador	72,736	6.7
Mexico	62,215	5.7
Dominican Republic	56,899	5.2
Colombia	51,087	4.7
Korea	50,411	4.6
Bangladesh	47,313	4.3
India	46,103	4.2
Jamaica	40,181	3.7
Philippines	29,434	2.7
Trinidad & Tobago	26,209	2.4
Haiti	25,655	2.4
Poland	25,510	2.3
Peru	20,142	1.8
Pakistan	18,168	1.7
Italy	16,767	1.5
El Salvador	16,117	1.5
Russia	15,407	1.4
Greece	13,384	1.2
All Others	229,954	21.1
Total	1,089,187	100.0

These newest New Yorkers make significant contributions to local economic, social, cultural, and civic life. While immigrants constitute just over one-third of New York's population, immigrant entrepreneurs operate almost half of the city's small businesses.

Those with advanced degrees are entering emerging fields, such as science, technology, and health care, and in many cases their participation is boosting employment for American workers.

Immigrant youth are attending public and parochial schools together with American-born children and immigrant families are worshipping side-by-side with long-time Queens residents. New Americans are becoming increasingly active in Community Boards and civic associations. At public festivals and in cultural institutions, the pride that characterizes multiethnic Queens is evident.

At the same time, Queens immigrants face considerable challenges. Over one-quarter (28%) of Queens residents are Limited English Proficient¹⁴. Fully 12.9% of the Borough's population is over the age of 65, of which 35.6% of them are Limited English Proficient¹⁵. Many senior citizens who are eligible for home-delivered meals are not receiving food that takes into account dietary laws or cultural traditions. Immigrant youth are in need of meaningful after-school activities and decent summer jobs. Immigrant entrepreneurs remain unaware of financing available to them, and immigrants in the workforce lack information about their rights and protections. Immigrant women who are victims of domestic violence or human trafficking stay in abusive situations for fear of deportation or reprisals. Hospital emergency rooms are overcrowded in part because immigrant families lack adequate health care. Many of these issues are faced by immigrants and non-immigrants alike, but limited access to information, combined with language barriers, and the continued lack of culturally sensitive services, keep many new immigrants in the shadows, preventing them from improving their lives and contributing fully to their communities. Compounding the problem is the fact that immigrants are targets of unscrupulous attorneys and agencies seeking to defraud the most vulnerable newcomers.

Meanwhile, long-time residents and recent immigrants interact on a daily basis in Queens, in commercial establishments, schools, houses of worship, residential neighborhoods, as well as at community meetings. While Queens is a model of intergroup harmony, tensions may arise over cultural misunderstandings or when changing demographics provoke feelings of displacement. More opportunities are needed to bring local stakeholders to the table to discuss shared neighborhood concerns and, in the process, to appreciate diversity.

Strategic Goals and Policies

The Office of the Queens Borough President firmly believes that cultural diversity is one of Queens' greatest assets. The Borough President will redouble its efforts to address an array of concerns in the area of immigrant and intercultural affairs:

Expand Constituent/Immigrant Services

The Office of the Queens Borough President's Constituent Services Department will respond to requests for immigration assistance in a timely fashion. Callers will be personally assisted with citizenship and naturalization procedures, as well as in immigration fraud investigations.

Expand Translation Services

The Borough President will expand publicity for this long-standing partnership with the Asian/American Center at Queens College, which offers non-profit organizations and government agencies free translations of documents from English into Chinese, Korean, and Spanish. We will explore ways to increase funding in order to expand the program's language pool to include Russian and Bengali. The Borough President is also committed to bringing Language Line interpretation services to her office.

Continue the Immigration Task Force

The Borough President will continue to convene this diverse network of social service providers and government agency representatives, who meet on a monthly basis to exchange information and address key immigrant integration issues such as health care access, worker rights & protections, and comprehensive immigration reform. The task force will assist the Borough President in promoting policies that advance immigrant integration and increase access to vital information, through press conferences, publications, and special events.

Promote the Municipal ID Card Program

A top priority for the Immigration Task Force and the Borough President in 2014-2015 will be their partnership with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs on implementation of the new Municipal ID Card program. In July 2014, the City Council passed legislation providing for creation of this city-level identification card. Starting in January 2015, all New Yorkers regardless of immigration status will be able to apply. Coordinated outreach in diverse communities will be essential to ensure that undocumented immigrants in Queens access the Municipal ID Card, which they can use to check out library books, sign a lease, attend cultural institutions, respond to police summonses, and enter their own children's schools.

Support and Expand the Queens General Assembly

The Borough President will support the efforts of this diverse network of civic activists as they address concerns at Queens Borough Hall and disseminate information from this office back to their communities. The Queens General Assembly, which brings together long-time residents and recent immigrants for dialogues about quality of life issues, will expand its outreach throughout all 14 Community Boards, and include more inter-generational leadership from our multiethnic borough. The members will also be active resources to work with the Borough President in addressing bias incidents or hate crimes of any kind.

Promote Heritage through Cultural Events

The Borough President will sponsor additional cultural heritage events throughout the year, to further highlight the presence of diverse communities in Queens and to encourage their participation in the cultural and civic life of the borough. Cultural heritage events include:

- African American Heritage Month
- Greek Independence Day
- Bangladesh Independence Day
- Philippine Independence Day
- A Celebration of Jerusalem
- LGBT Pride Month
- Iftar-Ramadan
- Hispanic Heritage Month
- Asian American Full Moon Festival
- Italian American Heritage Month
- Polish American Heritage Month
- Diwali
- Chanukah
- Christmas

CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND TOURISM

Existing Conditions and Issues

Cultural Affairs

Queens possesses one of the richest concentrations of cultural institutions in the world. The arts and cultural community is thriving in the Borough of Queens, and much of this success is due to the ethnic diversity found in its borders. Queens is the most ethnically diverse Borough in New York City, and the most diverse county in the nation. It is this diversity that has spurred the creation of artistic gems unique only to Queens, significantly contributing to New York City's offerings as a cultural hub for the global community.

These institutions are gaining more and more prominence throughout the city. In March of 2014, the City Council recognized Astoria's contribution to the arts and culture by designating the area surrounding Kaufman Astoria Studios as an arts district. This designation will hopefully serve as a catalyst for growth in the arts.

Queens is home to some of the most iconic buildings and structures in the world. These include sites of historical importance, as well as many of our most important cultural institutions. Although the Office of the Queens Borough President invested more than \$125 million over the past 13 fiscal years, including \$5.6 million in Fiscal Year 2015, in capital funds for cultural and historical buildings and structures, many sites still need attention. One prime example is the New York State Pavilion. The Pavilion, which consists of the Tent of Tomorrow and three observation towers, was an iconic structure of the 1964 World's Fair, recognized by people all over the world. While the Pavilion was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2009 for its historical significance, this New York City icon has gone to disrepair and now only serves as a scenic backdrop. The Department of Parks and Recreation will begin scoping the project and it is expected that the first phase of the restoration process will begin in the basement of the towers, including electrical and flooding prevention work. The Pavilion is just one of the many structures and buildings that define the Borough of Queens that are in need of capital improvements for the sake of preservation.

Capital investments have improved the basic infrastructure of major cultural organizations so that their facilities and programs can better serve an increase in visitors. However, many of these Queens institutions still lack adequate funding to provide high quality programs to an ever-changing and ever-growing Borough. These organizations not only face tight program budgets, but also tight operating budgets due to high insurance rates and, in many cases, high commercial rents. Admissions and ticket sales cover only a small portion of operating expenses, while foundation, corporate, state, and federal grants cover a little more. All of our institutions and organizations rely on basic funding provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. However, the per capita support from the Department of Cultural Affairs for Queens is lower than every other Borough for both Cultural Institutions Group funding and for non-profit funding through the Cultural Development Fund.

Cultural Institutions Group Funding per Borough Fiscal Year 2015 Budget					
Borough	Population	Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Allocation	Per Capita Arts Support	# of Cultural Institutions Groups	Avg. Funding per Institution
Bronx	1,385,108	\$21,790,136	\$15.73	6	\$3,631,689
Brooklyn	2,504,700	\$31,382,069	\$12.53	5	\$6,276,413
Manhattan	1,585,873	\$55,858,481	\$35.22	11	\$5,078,043
Staten Island	468,730	\$5,406,124	\$11.53	5	\$1,081,224
Queens	2,230,722	\$6,764,699	\$3.03	8	\$845,587

Cultural Development Fund per Borough Fiscal Year 2013				
Borough	Population	Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Total Allocation	Per Capita Arts Support	# of Cultural Groups
Bronx	1,385,108	\$2,274,212	\$1.64	44
Brooklyn	2,504,700	\$5,874,700	\$2.35	152
Manhattan	1,585,873	\$19,035,947	\$12.00	601
Staten Island	468,730	\$673,858	\$1.44	69
Queens	2,230,722	\$2,990,035	\$1.34	24

At the same time, Queens is not being widely recognized for its cultural offerings. New York City is home to some of the most iconic cultural institutions in the world, including museums and galleries containing masterpieces of the art world and concert halls and theaters presenting classic and contemporary pieces. People from all over the world settle here, bringing their rich culture to share with all New Yorkers. However, there is a misconception that Manhattan is the sole source of major cultural programming in the city. While the programs that Queens offers are unique because of its ethnic diversity, tourists need to know of the opportunity that rests in Queens to see the world through the arts.

Tourism

The vision of the Borough President is to develop a robust tourism economy that highlights the best of Queens: the diversity of the Borough, quality of services provided by small businesses, and the wide array of historical and cultural sites.

In order to realize this vision, Queens has to, first, inform tourists that Queens offers a world within itself and that the experiences offered are unique and exciting. Currently, Queens is without a brand identity, and the Borough needs to overcome this image gap in order to attract various public and private enterprises; ultimately, enhancing its local economy is key. This effort needs to be complemented by working with local businesses and institutions so that there is a unified effort in providing high quality services so that tourists' experiences are authentic. This includes highlighting the efforts of immigrant gateway communities and enhancing cultural tourism.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Investing in the cultural industry contributes to economic vitalization of urban areas and neighborhoods, building economic and social capital. The Borough President recognizes that artistic quality, cultural integrity, sustainability, and professionalism are essential to ensuring economic stability in this sector. The preservation and presentation of our Borough's culture is fundamental to shaping Queens' distinct identity. By working with neighborhoods, stakeholders, governmental entities, non-profit organizations, cultural institutions, and dedicated individuals, the Office of the Queens Borough President anticipates an increase in tourism dollars to Queens, and a changed perception of the Borough so that it is recognized as a unique cultural and ethnic hub for incubating and nurturing culture, arts, and private enterprises.

Provide Equitable Funding for Queens' Cultural Institutions and Groups

The importance of providing these organizations with governmental and financial support to enable them to continue and enhance their facilities and programs cannot be overstated. The Office of the Queens Borough President understands this need, and has continually provided both financial and professional support to these organizations. However, the City needs to adequately fund Queens' cultural institutions and organizations so that they are able to provide adequate levels of programming.

The Borough President intends to continue and eventually enhance the level of discretionary funds being allocated to cultural groups, but the City must increase the level of funding for Queens' eight Cultural Institutions Groups and other cultural organizations in order resolve the inequity among the boroughs.

Preserve the Cultural Infrastructure of Queens

Every resident of Queens has the right to the widest possible access to cultural resources and activities. The Office of the Queens Borough President believes that residents should have access to structures that are of historical importance, and that they are safe and attractive facilities that exhibit a diversity of programming to attract new and returning audiences.

One of the primary structures that the City needs to preserve is the New York State Pavilion. In Fiscal Year 2015, the Borough President was able to secure \$5.8 million in City capital funds for structural improvements to the Pavilion. However, total restoration costs are estimated to be \$42 million. In order to restore and adaptively reuse the Pavilion, the City needs to provide more capital funds towards restoration. However, the preservation of the Pavilion does not rest solely on public funds. These city capital dollars need to be leveraged to secure private and foundation dollars. In this endeavor, the Borough President is already dedicated to organizing a working group of public and private entities to collaborate on preserving the Pavilion.

In addition to the Pavilion, several notable cultural institutions and sites need capital funding support. Institutions like the Thalia Spanish Theatre need to update basic infrastructure, and buildings like the Bowne House need funds to preserve archeological structures. The Borough President is dedicated to increasing capital funding for these entities, but the City needs to invest in Queens' cultural and heritage sites.

Raise the Profile of Queens as a Cultural Hub

In order to raise the profile of Queens as a culture incubator, we need to highlight the work and programs of existing organizations, institutions, and artists. To do this, the Borough President will organize several Borough-wide events throughout the year to promote these programs. However, this endeavor needs to be supported by the cultural and arts community. Community leaders in the cultural and arts community need to work together towards the goal of increasing awareness of cultural offerings, building new audiences, and enhancing the experience of existing cultural consumers. This means holding regular meetings with stakeholders so they are able to communicate needs and concerns, working together to cross-promote programs. This also means promoting events across cultures and ethnicities so that organizations can reach new audiences. The Office of the Queens Borough President is dedicated to working with cultural groups and creating partnerships with ethnic media and other community based non-profit organizations to promote cultural programs.

Make Cultural Programming a Mainstay in the Education Curriculum

The infusion of arts and heritage into all aspects of education will profoundly impact the long-term sustainability and vibrancy of the Borough. Such an infusion will produce creative thinkers with a lifelong appreciation of the arts and a strong sense of cultural stewardship.

To meet this goal, the Borough President will collaborate with educators to supplement curriculum and allocate funds for cultural organizations to partner with schools to provide during- and after-school programming. The Borough President will work with the City to increase programming for the arts in schools, and link schools with private institutions and corporations to donate funds to provide cultural programming to students.

Re-brand Queens

Re-branding Queens is a critical component in enhancing the Borough's local economy. In order to successfully re-brand Queens, the Borough President will enhance and promote a Borough identity that people can associate with, and simultaneously create a platform for businesses, cultural institutions, and the tourism industry to thrive.

The first step is to identify a brand message. Initial steps have been taken in creating a brand for the Borough. "The World's Borough" has been tagged as Queens' motto. The Borough President will start brand messaging by changing all the Department of Transportation *Welcome to Queens* signs at all major thoroughfares to include this motto. In addition, preliminary steps have been taken in marketing a cohesive message of "If you haven't visited Queens, you haven't visited New York City." Next steps need to include partnering with NYC& Co. to help market this message to firms like the Mets, USTA, Delta Air Lines, major hotel chains, museums and cultural institutions, and traditional tourism destinations throughout the City.

This effort needs to complement the City's investment in Queens' cultural groups, so that cultural tourism plays a defining role in enhancing tourism generally. In addition, Queens needs to leverage its most important asset, its ethnic diversity, in order to promote itself as the "World's Borough." Ethnic enclaves and cultural gateways are the communities that knit the Borough together. Queens needs to encourage audiences to become world cultural consumers by visiting Queens

Cultural Organizations and Historic Sites in Queens

There are eight institutions in Queens that are designated Cultural Institutions Groups (CIG), which operate cultural programming in city-owned buildings or land. In addition, with each diverse culture bringing the gift of their arts, there are several notable cultural institutions that provide programs throughout the Borough. Meanwhile, the Historic House Trust oversees the preservation of five houses of historic importance. Below are lists and basic information about CIG institutions, other cultural organizations, and historic locations based in Queens.

Cultural Institutions Groups

Flushing Town Hall

Under the direction of Flushing Council on Culture and the Arts since 1990, Flushing Town Hall, a New York City Landmark, offers creative and innovative visual and performing arts programs, as well as arts education programs, that represent and serve the diverse interests and backgrounds of the greater New York metropolitan area. Flushing Town Hall also provides career support for emerging artists and arts organizations. In 1999, it completed an \$8 million dollar restoration, transforming the building into a thriving arts center that serves as an anchor for the northern end of Flushing. Interior renovations finished in 2014 and included floor replacement and side stage reconfiguration. Average annual attendance is 35,000.

Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning

Founded in 1972 as part of a large scale effort to revitalize the Jamaica business district, located in the New York City landmarked Queens Register of Titles and Deeds Building, the Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning houses gallery spaces, a 99-seat theatre, art, and dance studios, and a music studio. The Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning also oversees the operations of the newly renovated 400 seat Jamaica Performing Arts Center, located in the landmarked First Reformed Dutch Church. Average annual attendance is 28,000.

Museum of Modern Art/PS1

Founded in 1971 by Alanna Heiss as the Institute for Art and Urban Resources Inc., in 1978, the organization moved into the school building known as PS1 and utilized the spaces to produce site-specific works by an array of worldwide artists. In 2000, PS1 became an affiliate of the Museum of Modern Art to extend the reach of both institutions. The Young Architects Program and Warm-Up are noteworthy projects. In 2010, Klaus Biesenbach was appointed Executive Director as Ms. Heiss retired. Average annual attendance is 120,000.

Museum of the Moving Image

Since 1988, the Museum of the Moving Image has developed and expanded its space adjacent to the Kaufman Astoria Studios main building to better serve its growing audience. The museum offers hands-on exhibits, screenings, collections, and interpretive programs that explore the art, history, and technology of film, television, video, and the digital media. Closed to the general public in 2008 for renovations, it re-opened its completed \$67 million dollar expansion on January 15, 2011. The Museum is now able to present more screenings and a wider range of programming in the 267-seat Sumner M. Redstone Theater and the 68-seat Celeste and Armand Bartos Screening Room. The core exhibition, *Behind the Screen*, has received a complete technological and artistic overhaul. A major new gallery has been created for changing exhibitions, and new spaces have been added for the presentation of video art. The Museum is

now under the leadership of Carl Goodman, Executive Director. Average annual attendance is 165,000.

New York Hall of Science

Built initially as a pavilion for the 1964 World's Fair, the New York Hall of Science is now New York City's premier hands-on science and technology center. Since 1986, the New York Hall of Science has served more than five million children, parents and teachers. The Hall of Science's mission is to convey the excitement and understanding of science and technology to children, families, teachers, and others by galvanizing their curiosity and offering them creative, participatory ways to learn. The New York Hall of Science features the largest collection of hands-on science exhibits in New York City. Visitors of all ages can explore over 450 interactive exhibits. Average annual attendance is 500,000.

Queens Botanical Garden

Officially opened as the Queens Botanical Garden in 1948, its origins can be traced back to the 1939-40 World's Fair exhibit called "Gardens on Parade." In 2002, the Trustees completed a Master Plan with Conservation Design Forum to recognize the Garden's vision to serve the many cultures in Queens through sustainable environmental stewardship. With the completion of the Visitor and Administration Building in 2007, the Queens Botanical Garden emerged as a national leader in the design, implementation, and public education of green technologies and practices. The building was designated a Platinum certification in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) by the U.S. Green Building Council. The Queens Botanical Garden is dedicated to developing programs and exhibits that utilize the educational potential of green technologies that are utilized in the Gardens facilities and landscapes. A Parking Garden was completed in the spring 2010. Average annual attendance is 200,000.

Queens Museum

In 1972, the north side of the New York City Building was given to the Queens Museum (then known as the Queens Center for Art and Culture). The New York City Building was built to house the New York City Pavilion at the 1939 World's Fair and renovated to serve the same purpose for the 1964/5 World's Fair. From 1946 to 1950 it housed the General Assembly of the newly formed United Nations. Almost twenty years after it opened, the Museum undertook its first major renovation. In 1994, Rafael Viñoly significantly redesigned the existing space, creating some of the most dramatic exhibition galleries in New York. Time Out NY Magazine named it an *Essential New York Museum* in 2009. The Queens Museum is dedicated to presenting the highest of quality visual arts and educational programming for people in the New York metropolitan area, particularly for the residents of Queens. In November 2013, the Queens Museum ushered in a new phase in the institution's history, completing an expansion project that gives New York a spectacular new art venue, and provides the Museum with the space necessary to better serve its diverse communities. Galleries house a varied temporary exhibition program, as well as two long-term installations. Average annual attendance is 200,000.

Queens Theatre

Part of the New York State Pavilion built for the 1964-65 World's Fair and subsequently developed into a theatre, the Queens Theatre was officially established in 1989. Queens Theatre is noted for its programs that reflect Queens' communities such as the Latino Cultural Festival, Black Cultural Arts, and the Immigrant Voices Project. It has recently completed a \$23 million renovation adding a 75-seat cabaret performance space with full service café and kitchen facility, a 3,000 square foot lobby/reception area and other visitor amenities. Queens Theatre presents and produces more than 300 performances annually with a focus on new directors and playwrights as well as under recognized artists from around the world that reflect the diversity of Queens. Average annual attendance is 110,000 people.

Non-Profit Cultural Organizations

Afrikan Poetry Theatre

In 1976, the Theatre was formed by a traveling troop of poets, singers and musicians who entertained throughout the New York City area. Today, they continue to educate children and adults about traditional African culture through on-site programs in the performing and visual arts at their permanent location. They also offer enrichment tours to Africa at various times during the year. Their facility is currently undergoing renovations to better serve the community. Average annual attendance is 10,000.

Alley Pond Environmental Center

Formed in 1972, the Center is located on 635 acres of forest, meadows, ponds, fresh and salt-water marshes. It is dedicated to educating people in the New York Metro area on the importance of protecting and preserving Alley Pond Park, open spaces, and bodies of water. It also advocates for sustainable environmental policies and practices. Average annual attendance is 6,200.

Black Spectrum Theatre

Formed in 1970, the Theatre's mission is to stimulate social and cultural awareness through the production and presentation of message-oriented theatre and films, and to help youth develop into responsible citizens through affordable theatre arts programs. Programs are offered at its 325-seat theatre, rehearsal and workshop spaces. Average annual attendance is 20,000.

Chinese Theatre Works

Formed in 2001, the Theatre's mission is to preserve and promote the traditional Chinese performing arts, including opera, puppetry, dance and music and to foster understanding and appreciation of Chinese culture. Although it does not have a permanent performance space it presents in various venues including schools, community centers, parks and libraries. Average annual attendance is 10,000.

Dance Entropy

Founded in 1998, Dance Entropy is a professional modern dance company that tours and teaches in the U.S. and abroad. The organization opened Green Space Studios in 2005 in Long Island City to answer the need for professional rehearsal space, classes and performance space. Average annual attendance is 3,500.

Flux Factory

The Flux Factory was formed in Brooklyn in 1999 and moved Long Island City in 2002. Their new building is an 8000 square foot, 3-story converted greeting card factory two blocks north of Queens Plaza. While still under renovation, programs are being offered to artists and audiences alike. The Flux Factory supports innovative and collaborative art works. It serves as an incubation and laboratory space for works that are in dialogue with the physical, social and cultural space of New York City. It also provides a computer center, darkroom, performance space, musical recording space, publishing equipment, and a Thursday night dinner salon for artists and intellectuals. Average annual attendance is 35,000.

The Noguchi Museum

Created by Isamu Noguchi, the museum opened in 1985 presenting a collection of the artist's works. They are housed in thirteen galleries within a converted factory building that encircles a sculpture garden. The museum completed a renovation that added an education center, new café and shop, better accessibility, and a heating and cooling system. The museum regularly collaborates with the Isamu Noguchi Foundation in Japan. Average annual attendance is 26,000.

Queens Council on the Arts

Before the establishment of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the Cultural Institutions Group members, and the National Endowment for the Arts as we know them today, there existed a collaboration between a number Queens cultural organizations to form an umbrella organization to act as a unifying voice on their behalf, promote events, and serve as a source of central information. This organization, Queens Council on the Arts, was founded in 1966 under the leadership of Jeanne Dale Katz and incorporated in 1970. It was the recipient of the first Borough grants given out by the then Administration of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs and the New York State Council on the Arts. The Council also became the point organization for the planned cultural use of the 1964-65 World's Fair buildings.

National recognition was achieved in Queens when in 1999, Queens Council on the Arts nominated the No. 7-Train for designation as a National Millennium Trail. The selection committee, comprised of the White House Millennium Council, the United States Department of Transportation, and the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, agreed it was indeed a treasure because it was a living trail of the American immigrant experience, showing the relation between immigrant communities, transportation and commerce. Queens Council on the Arts continues to develop the cultural richness found along the No. 7-Train through a yearly festival called the Queens Art Express, where visitors can hop on and off the No. 7 train to experience one-of-a-kind cultural happenings in the local neighborhoods.

Continuing as well is the grass roots funding support that helps grow and nurture many individual artists as well as many smaller cultural organizations who are representative of our many ethnic communities contributing to the city's cultural fabric. Queens Council on the Arts is now part of the Kaufman Arts District in Astoria. Average annual attendance is 300,000.

Queens Symphony Orchestra

The Queens Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1953 by David Katz to provide Queens residents the opportunity to experience classical music without having to travel to Manhattan. His mission was realized as the organization grew to provide concerts and quality programs to youth. The Queens Symphony Orchestra remains, to this day, the only professional orchestra and oldest professional arts organization in Queens. Having served as maestro since the Orchestra's inception, David Katz died in 1987, leaving a lasting legacy to Queens.

His passion is still alive today. The Queens Symphony provides multiple concerts throughout the year, including the Masterworks Concert Series, the Young People's Concert, and Young Soloist Competition. Average annual attendance is 30,000.

Rockaway Artists Alliance

Formed in 1994, Rockaway Artists Alliance, Inc. is an arts organization comprised of individuals who view the arts as vital to the health of the community. Its mission is to encourage and engage residents of the Rockaways, in the arts, education, and cultural activities. The National Park Service/Gateway National Recreation Area formed a partnership with the Rockaway Artists Alliance that grants the organization the use of two buildings for galleries, studio space, and workshops. Allocation of the surrounding area permitted the organization to create a sculpture garden and an outdoor stage to present multimedia exhibitions and diverse cultural events. Average annual attendance is 15,000.

Socrates Sculpture Park

Socrates Sculpture Park was an abandoned riverside landfill and illegal dumpsite until 1986 when a coalition of artists and community members, under the leadership of artist Mark di Suvero, transformed it into an open studio and exhibition space for artists and a neighborhood park for local residents. Today it is an internationally renowned outdoor museum and artist residency program that also serves as a vital New York City park offering a wide variety of public services. Average annual attendance is 78,000.

Thalia Spanish Theatre

Thalia Spanish Theatre was established in Sunnyside in 1977 by actress/director Silvia Brito. It is the only bilingual Hispanic theatre in Queens, serving a Hispanic population of more than one million from every Spanish-speaking nation in the world, as well as visitors from across the city. Offerings include plays, zarzuelas, and folklore shows. The theater is known as an important venue for new plays from Spain and Latin America. Average annual attendance is 9,000.

Historic House Trust

Bowne House (est.1661), Flushing

Home of John Bowne, a prominent Quaker and advocate of religious freedom, the house is an example of mid-17th century Anglo-Dutch architecture with an outstanding furniture collection. Presently, the house is closed for a renovation that will include the replacement and repair of timber framing, siding, windows, doors, shutters, and wood shingle roof. A visitor center that will be used for programs, administration and storage is also being planned for the site. The Bowne House, along with the adjacent Kingsland Homestead and Weeping Beech Park, is

working together with the Department of Parks and Recreation to develop a master plan and cultural landscape report for the three sites. By looking at the three sites as a whole, they hope to establish a stronger connection between them and the rich horticultural history of Flushing. Average annual attendance is 4,450.

King Manor Museum (est.1750's – 1810), Jamaica

King Manor takes its name from Rufus King, a member of the Continental Congress, a framer and signer of the Constitution, one of the first senators from New York State, the ambassador to Great Britain under four presidents and an outspoken opponent of slavery. After his death in 1827, his eldest son, John Alsop King, continued to operate the farm and made further improvements to the House. John followed his father's footsteps into politics, serving as a congressman and governor of the State of New York. Today, the Museum's programs focus on the roles of Rufus and John Alsop King in the early antislavery movement, and life and work at King Manor in the 19th century. Restoration plans for the chimney and education room are in design. Average annual attendance is 5,400.

Kingsland Homestead (est.1785), Flushing

Home of the Queens Historical Society, the Kingsland homestead is a farmhouse typical of those found in the 18th century. The Society organizes local history exhibitions in the first floor rooms where a permanent exhibit on the Homestead and its people is also on display. An archive and library of primary and secondary source materials covering the 300-year history of Queens is available by appointment. Public programs offered by the Society include tours, talks, and concerts. Average annual attendance is 3,400.

Louis H. Latimer House (est.1887-89), Flushing

The Lewis H. Latimer House is a modest Queen Anne-style, wood-frame suburban residence. Lewis Howard Latimer, an African-American inventor and electrical pioneer and the son of fugitive slaves, lived in the house from 1903 until his death in 1928. The house remained in the Latimer family until 1963. Threatened with demolition, the house was moved from Holly Avenue to its present location in 1988. The house is in need of some exterior renovation. Average yearly attendance is 2,000 people.

Queens County Farm Museum (est.1772), Little Neck

First established by the Adriance family in the 17th century, the Farm was operated by a succession of family farmers for nearly 300 years. The current farmhouse was built around 1772 by Jacob Adriance. Much of the original building remains standing today. In addition to planting, harvesting, and selling the crops, the Farm's staff cares for cows, sheep, goats, chickens, and pigs. Hayrides and a petting zoo complement educational programs in the restored barns and house, including demonstrations of historic farming techniques, open hearth cooking, and animal care. Average annual attendance is 500,000.

Other Notable Historic Sites

Fort Totten Officers' Club (est.1870), Bayside

Today, the Officers' Club at Historic Fort Totten Park is home to the Bayside Historical Society, and hosts events, exhibitions, and cultural programs. It is a learning destination for local schools and a resource for scholars and community groups. The Fort had been the location of major

Army hospitals since the Civil War and was frequently home to medical research facilities. Stationed here was Major Walter Reed, who later played a primary role in conquering yellow fever. In 1947, the Armed Forces Medical Research Laboratory was established at the Fort to develop or improve medical equipment for the specific needs of the military. After more than 100 years of service to our country, Congress approved the closure of Fort Totten in September 1995. The Army Reserve Command remains, although greatly reduced in size. Average annual attendance is 11,500.

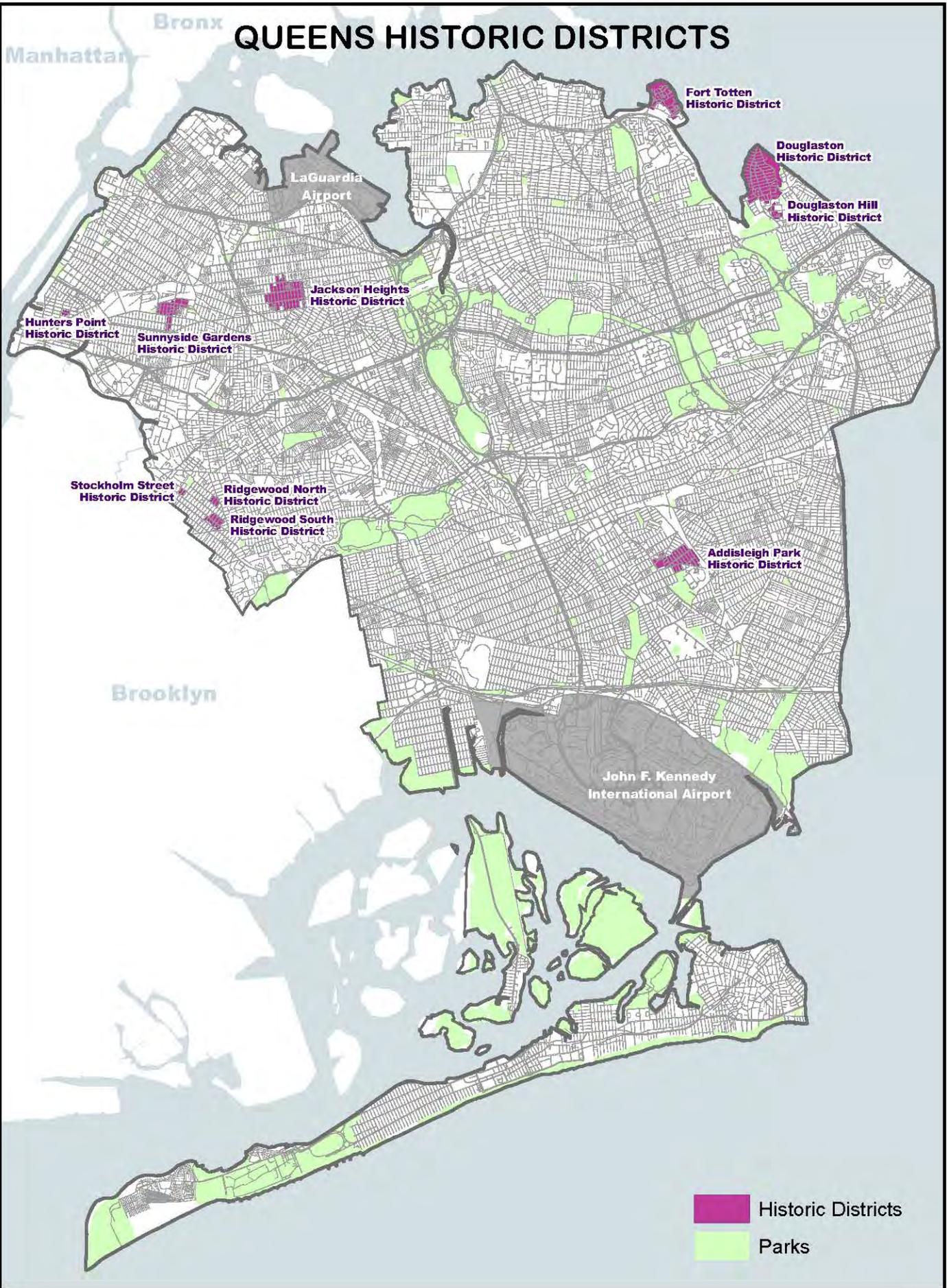
Louis Armstrong House Museum (est.1910), Corona

The mission of the Louis Armstrong House Museum is to operate the Louis Armstrong House, a national historic landmark and a New York City landmark, as a historic house museum, and to arrange, preserve, catalog, and make available to the public the materials held in its collections relating to the life and career of Louis Armstrong. The Louis Armstrong House Museum has the largest publicly held archival collection in the world devoted to a jazz musician. The museum collections can be browsed in the online catalog, or studied on-site. Annual attendance is 14,000 people.

Poppenhusen Institute (est.1868), College Point

Built by Conrad Poppenhusen as an education and recreation facility for his factory workers, the Institute survives today in keeping with this intended use. It offers programs on history, concerts, theatre, and numerous other pastimes. In 2010, construction began on an elevator. In 2011, renovation began on the façade. Completed construction includes landscaping and front portico restoration. Average annual attendance is 9,000.

QUEENS HISTORIC DISTRICTS



 Historic Districts
 Parks

QUEENS LANDMARKS



ID	Name	Address
1	Brinckerhoff Cemetery	69-65 182 Street
2	The Louis Armstrong House	34-56 107 Street
3	Fitzgerald/Ginsberg Mansion	145-15 Bayside Avenue
4	Sidewalk Clock, 161-11 Jamaica Avenue	161-11 Jamaica Avenue
5	Astoria Park Pool and Play Center	24-02 to 24-36 19 Street
6	Reformed Dutch Church of Newton and Fellowship Hall	85-15 Broadway
7	Lawrence Graveyard	215-15 42 Avenue
8	Lawrence Family Graveyard	20 Road and 35th Street
9	The Unisphere (with Surrounding Pool and Fountains)	Horace Harding Expressway
10	Moore-Jackson Cemetery	54 Street and 32 Avenue
11	Richard Cornell Graveyard	Gateway Boulevard
12	Newtown High School	48-01 90 Street
13	Poppenhusen Institute	114-02 14 Road
14	Rufus King House	150-05 Jamaica Avenue
15	New York State Supreme Court, Queens County, Long	25-10 Court Square
16	102-45 47th Avenue House	102-45 47 Avenue
17	Adrian and Ann Wyckoff Onderdonk House	18-20 Onderdonk Avenue
18	Richmond Hill Republican Club	86-13 Lefferts Boulevard
19	Remsen Cemetery	Trotting Course Lane
20	Creedmoor Farmhouse	74-03 Commonwealth Boulevard

ID	Name	Address
21	Prospect Cemetery	94-14 Beaver Road
22	Flushing Municipal Courthouse	137-35 Northern Boulevard
23	Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878	82-10 Queens Boulevard
24	Flushing High School	35-01 Northern Boulevard
25	St. George's (Episcopal) Church, Old Parish House	135-33 39 Avenue
26	Paramount Studios, Building No. 1 (Main Building)	34-12 36 Street
27	New York Architectural Terra Cotta Works Building	42-16 Vernon Boulevard
28	Arthur Hammerstein House	167-01 Powells Cove Boulevard
29	Fort Totten Battery	318 Cross Island Parkway
30	Bowne House	37-01 Bowne Street
31	(Former) Loew's Valencia Theater	165-11 Jamaica Avenue
32	First Reformed Church of Jamaica	153-10 Jamaica Avenue
33	(Former) Suffolk Title and Guarantee Company Build	90-04 160 Street
34	Friends Meeting House	137-16 Northern Boulevard
35	Allen-Beville House	236-12 Center Drive
36	Lewis H. Latimer House	138-10 32 Avenue
37	The Weeping Beech Tree	143-35 37 Avenue
38	Lent Homestead	78-03 19 Road
39	Trans World Airlines (TWA) Flight Center	154-68 Brookville Boulevard
40	35-34 Bell Boulevard	35-34 Bell Boulevard

ID	Name	Address
41	La Casina, also known as La Casino	90-33 160 Street
42	St. Monica's Church	94-43 160 Street
43	Steinway House	18-33 41 Street
44	Ridgewood Savings Bank, Forest Hills Branch	107-55 Queens Boulevard
45	Fire Engine Company No. 258, Hook and Ladder Company No. 115	10-40 47 Avenue
46	The Queens Borough Public Library, Poppenhusen Branch	121-19 217 Street
47	Cornelius Van Wyck House	126 West Drive
48	The Register/Jamaica Arts Center	161-06 Jamaica Avenue
49	Sidewalk Clock, 30-78 Steinway Street	30-78 Steinway Street
50	Ralph Bunche House	115-24 Grosvenor Road
51	Fort Totten Officer's Club	318 Cross Island Parkway
52	Former J. Kurtz & Sons Store Building	162-24 Jamaica Avenue
53	Marine Air Terminal	Grand Central Parkway
54	Fire Engine Company 289, Ladder Company 138	97-30 43 Avenue
55	Grace Episcopal Church and Graveyard	155-19 Jamaica Avenue
56	Sohmer & Company Piano Factory Building	31-01 Vernon Boulevard
57	Queensboro Bridge	11TH Street and Bridge Plaza North and South
58	Congregation Tifereth Israel	109-18 54 Avenue
59	(Former) Jamaica Savings Bank	161-02 Jamaica Avenue
60	Voelker Orth Museum, Bird Sanctuary and Victorian Garden	149-19 38 Avenue

ID	Name	Address
61	Jamaica Chamber of Commerce Building	89-31 161 Street
62	Queens General Court House	88-11 Sutphin Boulevard
63	Jamaica High School	167-01 Gothic Drive
64	Herman A. and Malvina Schleicher House	11-41 123 Street
65	Public School 66 (formerly the Brooklyn Hills School, Later the Oxford School, now the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School)	85-11 102 Street
66	Ridgewood Theater Building	55-27 Myrtle Avenue
67	Daniel and Abbie B. Eldridge House	87-61 111 Street
68	Kingsland Homestead	40-25 155 Street
69	Firehouse, Engine Company 305, Hook & Ladder Company 151	111-02 Queens Boulevard
70	Historic Street Lampposts	South Side of 53 Avenue Step Between 64 & 65 Place
71	Historic Street Lampposts	Rockaway Boulevard Near 150 Street
72	Firehouse, Engine Company 268, Hook & Ladder Company 137	259 Beach 116 Street
73	Forest Park Carousel	Within Forest Park; 83-93 Woodhaven Boulevard

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Existing Conditions and Issues

Queens' economy is a major economic engine for New York City and continues to be a center for opportunity and development. It is the largest of city's five boroughs geographically and is the second most populous borough, home to over a quarter of the city's population. Queens' population grew by 20% over the past three decades reaching 2.3 million in 2012, with the foreign-born population now accounting for nearly 48% of the Borough's residents¹⁶. No single ethnic group or nationality dominates the Borough's composition. Instead, while some neighborhoods reflect a certain ethnic majority, most of the Borough's communities are an eclectic mix of cultures, reflecting the many immigrants that have come here from across the world. These immigrant communities support the Queens economy through the enterprises they start and their strong and influential international connections.

Queens' diversity is not limited to its ethnic and cultural composition. This diverse economy of Queens has been a stabilizing force even as the nation and city's economy have wavered. Unlike the other boroughs, no single industry overwhelmingly dominates the Queens economy. The health care and social assistance sector accounts for the largest sources of employment in Queens with over 113,000 jobs. Retail trades accounts for the second largest, employing over 60,000 people. The transportation and warehousing sector accounts for the third largest sources of employment in Queens, with almost 59,000 jobs. Manufacturing, construction, and a growing high-tech economy also play vital roles in Queens' economy. There are now more than 50 tech start-ups in Queens, with anticipated growth in the sector as the Borough continues to cultivate and attract tech entrepreneurs.

The Queens economy was hit hard during the recent recession. Yet, it proved to be more resilient than the Manhattan economy and that of the rest of the nation. With a stronger rate of job growth than the rest of the city, and business and real estate development opportunities growing at exceptional rates, economic indicators demonstrate the robustness of the Queens economy. Many areas of opportunity have contributed to this sustained growth and have lead the way for Queens as an economic engine for the city. These areas of resiliency include:

- Small Businesses
- Employment
- Commercial Sub-centers
- Local Retail and Commercial Activity
- Industrial and Manufacturing
- Film and Television
- The Aviation Economy
- Waterfront Development

Private Employment by Industry in Queens, 2013	Total Employment	Percentage
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	22	< 0.01%
Construction	41,769	8.38%
Manufacturing	22,042	4.42%
Wholesale Trade	22,068	4.43%
Retail Trade	60,681	12.17%
Transportation and Warehousing	58,860	11.80%
Information	8,324	1.67%
Finance and Insurance	16,670	3.34%
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	14,771	2.96%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	13,140	2.64%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2,302	0.46%
Administration & Support, Waste Management & Remediation Services	31,059	6.23%
Educational Services	15,508	3.11%
Health Care and Social Assistance	113,684	22.80%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	6,278	1.26%
Accommodation and Food Services	42,055	8.43%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	23,794	4.77%
Non-classifiable	2,959	0.59%
TOTAL	498,641	100%

Source: New York State Department of Labor, QCEW 2013

Small Businesses

Small businesses continue to be a primary driver of economic growth in Queens. While small businesses may not generate as much revenue as large corporations, they are a critical component and a major contributor to the strength of the local economy. In Queens, small businesses present new employment opportunities for a growing and unique employment base, bringing growth and innovation to communities where the businesses are established. Small businesses in the Borough foster an entrepreneurial environment by attracting talent who invent new products or implement new solutions for existing challenges. Larger businesses also often benefit from small businesses within the same local community, as many large corporations depend on small businesses for the completion of various business functions through outsourcing.

According to a 2013 report from the New York State Comptroller's Office, Queens has over 44,000 businesses; two-thirds have less than five employees, 80% have less than ten, and over 35 businesses have more than 1,000 employees¹⁷. These figures reflect the federal Small Business Administration's definition of a small business; any firm with less than 500 employees.

Employment

The economic wellbeing of the Borough can also be attributed to a strong workforce. Queens has the largest and most diverse employment base among the four boroughs excluding Manhattan. Over the past two years, Queens had a stronger rate of job growth than the Bronx, Brooklyn, Staten Island, and even Manhattan. In 2012 Queens had the highest level of employment outside of Manhattan and accounted for 15.1 percent of all private sector jobs in the city¹⁸.

Commercial Sub-Centers

Queens has four major commercial sub-centers that support the Borough's small business and employment base, and contribute to the economic stability and strength of the local economy. These centers include Long Island City, Downtown Flushing, Downtown Jamaica, and more recently Rego Park. Classified by their robust public transportation access, zoning that allows for high-density and mixed-uses, and a concentration of local, regional, and national businesses, these sub-centers have become attractive for real estate development and increased economic activity.

Long Island City

Long Island City, the grand and exciting western gateway into Queens, has quickly become one of the most desirable mixed-used districts in New York City. Noted as being one of New York City's eight Central Business Districts, Long Island City is home to Fortune 500 companies, world-renowned arts and cultural institutions, prominent film and television studios, a large industrial base, and over 70,000 residents. The 2001 rezoning of Long Island City has allowed for a rich mix of taller residential and commercial projects that has created new opportunities for growth, positioning the area as one of the largest central business districts in the metropolitan area. Long Island City is a transportation hub, readily accessible by subway, bus, car, ferry, or bicycle. Located less than ten minutes from Midtown Manhattan, Long Island City is an ideal location for a variety of businesses.

The area, once defined by industrial buildings and parking lots, is quickly being transformed into an office district market, bordered by galleries, art museums, and a growing residential community. Long Island City is now home to a consolidated New York City Department of Health at Gotham Center, JetBlue Airways corporate offices, UN Federal Credit Union, and the Center Building that now houses various city agencies, including the Department of Design and Construction, the Human Resources Administration, the Department of Cultural Affairs, and the New York City Transit Authority. Arts and cultural institutions in the neighborhood include MoMA PS1, the Noguchi Museum, the Sculpture Center, and the Chocolate Factory Theater, as well as hundreds of individual artist studios, galleries, and theaters. CUNY's footprint in the area, which included LaGuardia Community College, was substantially increased when CUNY School of Law opened its new campus in 2012. Cornell University and Technion Institute of Technology will open *Cornell Tech*, a New York City Tech campus on Roosevelt Island by

2017. The anticipation of this nearby graduate school is already having a positive impact on Long Island City as a burgeoning tech hub.

Downtown Flushing

Downtown Flushing is one of the Borough's most exciting shopping districts, attracting visitors from all over the world. Flushing's significance as being America's birthplace of freedom, coupled with a vibrant commercial district, and cultural attributes, has allowed downtown Flushing to become a destination of choice. The area is a major transportation hub. Nearly 100,000 people travel through the downtown Flushing area on a daily basis, utilizing the #7 subway, colloquially known as the "International Express," 21 bus lines, and the Long Island Rail Road. Commercial businesses range from retail, professional offices, financial institutions, and unique dining options, setting the area apart from others across the City.

In recent years, Downtown Flushing has attracted many major mixed-use private developments. Queens Crossing, a small upscale urban mall, caters to the increasingly affluent Chinese and Korean immigrants while appealing to the entire Flushing community. Skyview Center and Skyview Parc on College Point Boulevard, combined, is a 14 acre project with 3.3 million square feet, and when complete will house six towers with 1,100 luxury condo apartments and 800,000 square-feet of retail. It is already home to several major retailers, restaurants, and amenities. The 5.5 acre City-owned Flushing Municipal Parking Lot #1 is being redeveloped to create new residential units, retail space, including local and national retailers and restaurants, office space, a brand new state of the art YMCA facility, and a 1.5 acre town square of open space with a fountain plaza; all with green building technologies.

The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development has invited developers to submit proposals for the redevelopment of Flushing Municipal Parking Lot #3, where the goal is to develop a transit-oriented, mixed-use, mixed-income development that will expand affordable housing opportunities and support the existing commercial and cultural uses. These large-scale projects are indications of the areas optimistic growth.

Downtown Jamaica

Downtown Jamaica, the "Gateway to the World", is best known as an established transit-oriented hub, with an extensive transportation network that connects to numerous subways and bus lines, providing easy access to Manhattan, Long Island, and Downtown Brooklyn. Its access and direct linkage to John F. Kennedy Airport by the AirTrain is key to this area's economic development potential and offers the most strategically positioned and lowest priced real estate development opportunities in New York City. Once home to legendary jazz greats, Jamaica is again growing as a destination for African-American and Caribbean-American musical performances and music production. In addition, the 368 block rezoning of Jamaica that was approved in 2007 has unlocked the Downtown's potential for growth and major real estate development.

Key public investments, like the \$90 million Jamaica Infrastructure project, are creating new and attractive amenities for Downtown Jamaica. In addition to significant public projects, private investments have poised Jamaica for significant commercial growth. New housing has been developed including the MODA apartment complex, with 346 residential units and more than 50,000 square feet of retail space, Yorkside Towers, with 180 residential units, and the recently

completed Park Haven Apartments, with 102 residential units. Norman Towers is opening with a nine-story, twin tower mixed-use building with 101 residential units, office and retail space, BRP Development Corp. is developing a \$225 million apartment tower with 582 rental units and 1,000,000 square feet of retail space, and Blumenfeld Development Group is building a new 180,000 square feet retail complex. New hotels are in the pipeline, including a new hotel development project on Sutphin Boulevard with 240 rooms, a full-service restaurant, and 10,000 square feet of retail space, and another 155-room hotel with a theme restaurant is being planned. All of these developments are within blocks of the recently constructed and modernized AirTrain and Long Island Rail Road Station.

Rego Park

Rego Park has quickly become the Borough's fourth largest commercial sub-center. The mix of residential and commercial properties creates a strong and vibrant community that continues to attract middle-income families and business enterprises. The area's proximity to public bus and subway transportation, and parking amenities, offers Rego Park easy access for residents and shoppers alike.

Rego Park, along Queens Boulevard, is home to one of Queens' most popular shopping destinations. Queens Center Mall, located at the intersection of Queens Boulevard and Woodhaven Boulevard, just outside of the Rego Park boundary, is the largest mall in Queens. It first opened in 1973, and has since then expanded and upgraded. It is one of the most profitable malls in the entire country.

The newly developed Rego Park Center complements the Queens Center Mall. Just a few blocks away, this two-part retail complex totals 277,000 square feet of retail space. Developed by Vornado Realty Trust, Rego Park Center includes four floors of shops and multilevel parking.

Local Retail And Commercial Activity

In addition to the Borough's commercial sub-centers, retail strips and smaller business districts have grown in size and importance for the Queens economy. The businesses located in smaller retail hubs directly stimulate local economies and prioritize employment to people who live in the surrounding communities. These local retail strips are clusters of commercial activity and are largely located along major thoroughfares parallel to mass transportation, making it easy for residents to commute to work. In lower density neighborhoods, stores and offices occupy the ground floors, with residential units above. Medium to larger size businesses are located on wider streets that have become the major commercial arteries for the Borough's economy. These major commercial thoroughfares include Queens Boulevard, Northern Boulevard, Jamaica Avenue, Main Street, Merrick Boulevard, Bell Boulevard and Myrtle Avenue. These areas are generally supported by one of the Borough's 12 Businesses Improvement Districts that provide supplemental services to boost local retail activity. These local commercial strips are the backbone of the Queens economy, and the employment in these retail and commercial centers account for more than half of the jobs in Queens.

Industrial and Manufacturing

A key contributor to Queens' economic growth is the industrial and manufacturing sector. As Queens continues to expand and include new and emerging sectors like technology, industrial and manufacturing remains strong in the Borough. After many years of decline in the five boroughs, a report compiled by the Center for an Urban Future show that the number of manufacturing jobs has been steady over the last three years¹⁹. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the City lost approximately 5,000 manufacturing jobs between 1997 and 2010. However over the past three years, employment in the sector has held steady, with 75,700 jobs in 2011, 76,300 jobs in 2012, and 76,300 jobs in 2013. For the first time in recent history, employment in the manufacturing sector in New York City is up by almost 600 jobs since 2011²⁰.

Queens is the ideal location for the growth of these industrial businesses – 15 minutes to Manhattan, 35 minutes to New Jersey and 5 minutes to Brooklyn. Queens' location secures its industrial strength, making it an attractive place to do business. In addition to its accessibility, seven New York City Industrial Business Zones (IBZ) support Queens' industrial strength. These IBZs, located in Jamaica, JFK, Long Island City, Maspeth, Ridgewood/SoMA, Steinway, and Woodside, offer technical support to the businesses located within their boundaries. According to the New York State Department of Labor, Queens employs nearly 30% of the City's manufacturing workers²¹. This is significant because the average annual manufacturing wage in Queens is 2.6% higher than the average annual wage for the Borough's private sector overall²².

Film and Television Economy

The film and television industry is another major economic driver for the Queens economy. New York State has the second largest film and television production industry in the US, employing over 46,000 New Yorkers. Queens is the home to many of the studios that support the industry. In New York City alone, film and television production generated an estimated \$382 million in taxes annually. New York City has historically had a robust film and television economy, and recent growth can be attributed to technological advances. In addition, New York State and New York City's campaigns to decrease transaction costs and tax credits of 30% for production expenses, and an additional 30% for post-production expenses, has allowed the city's film and television economy to grow significantly.

The growth in film and television in New York City, and incentives for the creation and expansion of production facilities, have encouraged Silvercup Studios and Kaufman Astoria Studios in Queens to expand their operations.

Silvercup Studios, which opened in 1983 in Long Island City, is the City's largest film and television production facility. It has two campuses, with 13 shooting stages on its main lot and six studios on its east lot. The Studio's \$1 billion Silvercup West expansion project will include a 2,000,000 square-foot waterfront project with eight soundstages, an office tower with media and entertainment companies, two high-rise residential building, and a public promenade.

Kaufman Astoria Studios has approximately 500,000 square feet of sound stages, production offices, and service space. It is one of the city's oldest and largest film studios. They have almost

completed a \$20 million expansion, and have recently opened New York City's first studio backlot, allowing for outdoor film locations within the studio space. The neighborhood surrounding Kaufman is saturated with cultural and artistic institutions and in March 2014 was designated as the city's first arts district. Kaufman expects to complete the expansion plan with the opening of their 10th stage in 2016.

Aviation Economy

The aviation economy is the second largest employer in Queens. Home to the 680-acre LaGuardia Airport and the 4,930-acre John F. Kennedy Airport, Queens benefits from two of the three major New York metropolitan area airports. Both airports help make New York City the commercial and financial capital of the world, and Queens the gateway for this economic impact. Approximately 46,000 people are employed at both airports totaling \$15.6 billion in wages and salaries. In addition to direct employment in the airlines industry, the airports support employment in other industries including retail operations, food service, ground transportation, and a growing import-export sector. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey reports that the airports in Queens directly provides 300,000 jobs, generates about \$15.6 billion in wages, and adds almost \$42.4 billion dollars in economic activity to the region²³. The New York State Department of Labor Statistics reported in 2012 that wages rose faster in Queens County than any other county in the country, excluding Manhattan²⁴. This is directly related to the aviation industry. In addition, it is no surprise that the boom in New York City's aviation travel and transportation business is supported by the enterprises started in Queens' immigrant communities with their international connections.

Tens of billions of dollars in construction and other financial investments are also directly attributable to the aviation industry boom in Queens. Both airports continue to modernize and expand their capacity, making spectacular new gateways into the United States. Since its original construction, the Port Authority has made a total capital investment of \$1.4 billion in LaGuardia, and plans to invest \$3.6 billion in a new Central Terminal Building and \$230.4 million for the design and construction of a 3,084-space garage. At JFK, about \$150 million was expended on original construction, and the Port Authority has invested about \$7 billion in the airport. Currently, the Port Authority plans on investing in infrastructure improvements that will enable the airports to increase capacity and efficiency. The reconstruction and rehabilitation of Runway 4L-22R includes installing high-speed taxiways. When the high-speed taxiways are completed and runway renovations are finished in 2015, aircraft landing at JFK will be able to exit the runway faster. This will allow the Federal Aviation Administration to utilize the airfield more efficiently to reduce delays.

In addition to Port Authority improvements at the airports, significant investments were made to the American Airlines terminal, Jet Blue terminal, and International Terminal 3. Recently, Delta Airlines received approval from the Port Authority for an expansion project at Terminal 4. In May of 2013 Delta Airlines opened a new gateway at JFK and will contribute more than \$19 billion to the local economy. The \$1.2 billion project includes nine new international gates for larger aircraft, an expanded baggage claim area, and border control operations. Delta Airlines is also investing \$170 million in renovations at LaGuardia Airport.

Waterfront Development

Over the past decade, New York City has been working to reclaim one of the City's most vital assets – its waterfronts. New York is a city of water. From its beaches fronting Atlantic Ocean to its harbor, to its rivers and preserved wetlands, New York City's 520 miles of diverse waterfront are among its most important resources. The City has already opened up access to miles of shorelines that have been closed off to the public by building new waterfront parks and ferry landings, and cleaning waterways after years of disuse. These actions have incentivized the development of vacant and underutilized waterfront land. In Queens alone, public investments have paved the way for exciting new waterfront developments in Long Island City and Astoria, and sustainable economic development initiatives along its southern shores in the Rockaways. New York City's waterfront developments embody the exciting progress that is driving our economy and enhancing Queens' natural beauty. With strategic planning, long-term visioning, and public and private investments, Queens will continue to transform and ensure that our once-forgotten waterfronts are economic drivers for the city.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Queens is well-positioned for growth, due to its growing diverse population, stable business environment, vibrant commercial sub-centers, diverse industry sectors, and multiple environmental assets, all supporting the further economic development of the Borough. The Borough President has developed a plan to stimulate the local economy for future growth. By leveraging federal, state, local, and private funds, the Borough President intends to implement initiatives that make resources even more accessible to residents and small businesses by:

- Supporting and investing in areas of the Borough that are prime for development;
- Providing capacity building and business development assistance to small businesses;
- Implementing strategies that enhance workforce development;
- Attracting new economies and emerging industries to the Borough;
- Supporting minority, women, disadvantaged, and local businesses

Support and Invest in Areas in Queens that are Prime for Development

New York City is home to the largest Business Districts (BDs) in the United States. Many of these BDs are known as global hubs for international business and commerce, as well as command centers for the world economy. Each of the New York City's five boroughs offers a different environment within its BDs and provides unique opportunities for economic success in each. Manhattan's midtown and downtown financial districts, as well as Brooklyn's Metrotech Center are among the city's better-known BDs. However Queens' BDs possess the highest growth potential. Long Island City, Downtown Flushing, and Downtown Jamaica are three of the most vibrant and diverse BDs the city has to offer, with mass transit systems that are utilized by the majority of its residents in both daily commuting to work and recreational commuting to the Borough's many cultural, dining, and entertainment venues. The Borough President will continue to work with the city, state, and federal governments to plan for the growth of these commercial centers in an effort to encourage private investment necessary to make these areas ripe for further development.

Long Island City

Due to Long Island City's growth and development over recent years, it has become one of the most desirable places to live, operate a business, and visit. This appeal has made it necessary to plan for future growth strategically, creating opportunities for all those living and working in Long Island City. Therefore, it is necessary to support efforts such as the Long Island City Comprehensive Plan proposed by the Long Island City Partnership. Such a plan will provide a framework to bolster economic productivity, help area residents overcome barriers to economic opportunity, and strengthen the underlying social and physical infrastructure. A key component of this plan will be a fully integrated workforce development program that enables low-income residents in Long Island City to connect to local employment opportunities, eliminating restrictions to economic growth and addressing challenges faced by the long-term unemployed. This plan should also identify physical and social service infrastructure improvements that will enhance transportation in Long Island City, improving quality of life and connecting people living in poverty with skilled employment, fostering growth and success.

One of the major emerging industries providing economic productivity in Long Island City is the tech community. Tech is a high-growth sector that is transforming the New York City economy. Over the past decade, the New York City tech ecosystem has experienced a rapid expansion of

activity, recently becoming the number two city in the United States for venture capital deals and fundraising. In Long Island City alone, there is a great mix of tech companies that range from smaller early-stage startups to larger more established tech companies. And with the opening of the Cornell Tech campus on Roosevelt Island, Long Island City will only grow as a burgeoning tech hub. With this promising tech community, its diverse population, and potential workforce, Long Island City has the potential of becoming a thriving hub for tech and innovation. The Borough President has begun efforts to grow this industry. Initial steps include establishing and steering the Borough President's Queens Tech Zone Strategic Plan Task Force and working with groups like Coalition 4 Queens to develop a strategic action plan that studies the conditions that are necessary to grow the tech economy in western Queens.

Another main opportunity for growth in Long Island City is the development of the East River waterfront. The East River in western Queens is one of the few major waterfronts stretches in New York City where community access is not obscured by a highway, railroad, or airport. Historically, residents of Long Island City have been cut off from their waterfront by manufacturing, industry, and utilities. However, now that manufacturing and industrial spaces are being adaptively reused for mixed purposes, waterfront areas that were once inaccessible are now being developed for other uses. The development of Long Island City's waterfront must continue to ensure a continuous, landscaped, and accessible waterfront greenway from Newtown Creek to Bowery Bay, and connect waterfront spaces to provide access from inland areas. The creation of ferry service as a transportation alternative will also be vital to the economic success of these areas.

Downtown Flushing

Flushing remains one of the City's fastest growing economic hubs. This rapid growth had placed increasing strain on its existing transportation infrastructure. Working with the Metropolitan Transit Authority and the New York City Department of Transportation, the Flushing Willets Point Corona LDC has developed a Transit Oriented Development proposal for the Flushing LIRR station and the adjacent Flushing Municipal Parking Lot #3, both of which are located on Main Street and 41st Avenue. The proposal calls for transit-oriented, mixed-use, mixed-income development. New York City's Department of Housing Development and Preservation has adopted this proposal and issued an RFP for the project. This project is necessary in addressing two main issues: surging levels of congestion that apply to mass transit, the sidewalks, and the roadways, and an acute shortage of affordable housing.

A second opportunity to grow Flushing as a BD is the development of the Flushing Creek. Revitalizing the Flushing waterfront requires partnership with the Flushing Willets Point Corona Local Development Corporation, the New York City Department of Planning, local property owners, and numerous community based organizations. Necessary efforts include rezoning the area from the current C4-2, M3-1, and M1-1 districts to higher density zoning designations, reducing the parking requirements associated with the higher density zoning, and establishing the area as a special purpose district to enhance the redevelopment potential of the Brownfield Opportunity Area. This special district would benefit the Brownfield Opportunity Area by providing a well-defined waterfront access and public space amenity plan, introducing a more urban-oriented parking allowance, controlling the general massing and bulk of new construction, and providing a specific definition of the public realm within the development framework.

Downtown Jamaica

A new commitment to neighborhood planning has begun to take shape with the new Mayoral and Borough Presidential administrations. One of the first neighborhoods to receive this renewed focus is Jamaica, Queens. A progressive multi-agency planning and development approach is being adopted in order to ensure that community needs and priorities are reflected and incorporated. This neighborhood-based planning initiative will bring local stakeholders, community residents, non-profit and faith-based organizations, private firms, and industry experts together with policymakers, and city government leaders to discuss priorities, opportunities, challenges, and ideas to strengthen Jamaica. The goal is to generate an Action Plan that will outline short- and long-term projects and programs for economic growth.

In addition, the Regional Plan Association is revisiting the idea of featuring Jamaica as a regional sub-center in preparation of its Fourth Regional Plan. These two planning efforts are significant steps in helping Jamaica reach its full potential as an economic driver for the city.

Another opportunity that will allow Jamaica to reach its full economic potential is START-UP NY. CUNY York College, located in the heart of Downtown Jamaica, has been selected as the only pre-designated location for this State program. This groundbreaking initiative is expected to transform communities across the state into tax-free sites for new and expanding businesses. Under this initiative, by partnering with local colleges, businesses can operate tax-free for ten years - no income, business, corporate, sales, property, state or local taxes, or franchise fees. York College proposes to offer 5.83 acres of available land on campus that is eligible for tax-free business development. Under York College's program, businesses that specialize in pharmaceutical research, aviation, or water resource management are targeted. This program is ideal for the continued growth and development of Jamaica because the campus is located in an ethnically diverse community of southeast Queens and is the only CUNY campus with a regional office of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. York College is also home to the CUNY Aviation Institute.

The third significant opportunity for growth in this BD is in the industries supporting John F. Kennedy Airport. The recently completed AirTrain links all Kennedy Airport terminals directly to Downtown Jamaica's multi-modal options. In order to fully transform the area into the city's only mass-transit accessible "Airport Village", government and private developers need to further efforts to build hotels, office space, retail, open space, public amenities and housing.

In addition, the air cargo industry affiliated with Kennedy Airport is a primary economic engine for Jamaica and the entire region. It represents the seventh largest cargo airport in the country, having shipped and received 1.3 million tons of cargo in 2010. Over 15,000 people at Kennedy Airport work directly in air cargo related jobs. These factors demonstrate the significant impact the Kennedy Airport air cargo community has had in Queens. The New York City Economic Development Corporation partnered with the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey to study the air cargo industry and plan for its future. The study aimed to address cargo and logistics needs related to facilities, infrastructure, access, and business development. The study produced an action plan designed to ensure that future development accommodates growth in cargo tonnage, while mitigating negative impacts on the local residential community.

Other Areas with Growth Potential

In addition to the Borough's primary Business Districts, there are several smaller developable sites and economic hubs that must be prioritized for economic development.

Maspeth

Maspeth, in the southwest section of Queens, is a small middle class mixed-use commercial and manufacturing neighborhood. Maspeth has a historic and thriving hub of industrial and manufacturing companies, home to industries such as knitting, solar panel manufacturing, and transportation and assembly plants. An Industrial Business Improvement District was established in Maspeth in 2005 to stabilize this industrial activity and protect it from residential development. The Maspeth Industrial Business Zone is home to more than 850 industrial businesses with over 15,000 jobs, and is one of the city's largest IBZs with 592 acres of land.

Ridgewood

Ridgewood is another commercial center bursting with economic vitality and diversity. Ridgewood is a mixed-use residential neighborhood with a thriving commercial corridor along Myrtle Avenue; a community oriented shopping district with over 300 stores. Myrtle Avenue's commercial corridor offers residents and shoppers a cross section of amenities with a balanced mix of traditional and contemporary apparel. The local businesses are supported by the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District.

Ridgewood's business district is transit rich, with seven buses lines. Only 30 minutes away from Manhattan and minutes away from Williamsburg on the L and M trains, Ridgewood is a commercial district that is experiencing significant growth and has become one of the most desirable neighborhoods to live, shop and visit.

Corona/Jackson Heights

Corona and Jackson Heights are two neighboring communities in northwestern Queens that provide enormous economic contributions to the Borough. They share a strong commercial corridor along Roosevelt Avenue, filled with a myriad of ethnic small businesses that represent the diversity of the community. The area's population is a diverse mix of New York City's Latin American immigrant community. Jackson Heights is home to a large South Asian population. The cultural and economic vitality reflected in this immigrant entrepreneurial commercial district is vital to the Borough's economy and a significant economic contributor to New York City.

Flushing Airport

One of the largest undeveloped publicly-owned parcels of land left in New York City is Flushing Airport. This site is 25 acres and located in the College Point Corporate Park. It was operated as a commuter airport until 1984 and has since been left vacant and unused, primarily due to its development challenges. The site has no existing access, the soil conditions are poor, and the infrastructure lacks all necessary utilities. These conditions make the development of this site difficult and expensive. However, through public and private sector innovations, Flushing Airport has the potential to become a prospect of economic opportunity.

Sunnyside Rail Yards

The Sunnyside Rail Yards create a physical divider in southwestern Queens, separating parts of Long Island City from Sunnyside and Woodside. With the exception of Staten Island's west shore, the Sunnyside Rail Yards, spanning 167 acres, is the largest parcel of "vacant" land remaining in the city. The partial or complete decking of the Sunnyside Rail Yards has the potential for extraordinary development. The Yards are surrounded by immense transit options and relatively dense development. Given the current growth and development throughout Long Island City and western Queens, potential development above the rail yards will only become more attractive and financially feasible.

Creedmoor Hospital Campus

As New York State looks to create revenue and make better uses of its land assets, the Creedmoor Hospital Campus creates immense potential for Queens. Located in Queens Village, Creedmoor stands on more than 300 acres. The campus includes more than 50 buildings, however a large number of them are empty and unusable. Due to these conditions, the State is presented with a great opportunity to consider proposals from private developers. Development of this site must be guided by a vision plan and consultation with local stakeholders. The Borough President looks forward to working with the State, residents, and community organizations to develop a plan that considers residential development, including affordable and senior preference, as well other uses that complement the other assets of the neighborhood.

The Rockaways

Separated from the rest of the Borough by geographical conditions, the Rockaway peninsula has experienced its share of economic barriers. Recent studies of the downtown Far Rockaway commercial area have indicated that disinvestment in the area has discouraged the attraction of shoppers and new businesses.

Shoppers from the five most eastern census tracts in the Rockaways (those with the highest spending potential) are lost to shopping districts in Nassau County and Brooklyn. However, the Rockaway Peninsula has the potential to thrive economically. Its attractive shorelines, willing and diverse workforce, and public parks and natural preserves make it prime for development.

In addition, Hurricane Sandy has created numerous opportunities for regrowth and redevelopment. Recovery efforts continue to bring new prospects for the peninsula. The City's resiliency program is an effective tool for Rockaway communities, keeping community residents and government engaged in collaboration to upgrade infrastructure, improve local building codes and permitting systems, and strengthen community relations. Still, there needs be a coordinated effort by government to make the Rockaways a priority and work to maximize the area's possibilities for growth.

Waterfront Revitalization

Strategies for enhanced waterfront access and waterfront revitalization will advance the growth and development of Queens' neighborhoods. Enhanced waterfront access provides increased connectivity between neighboring communities, improving quality of life and economic opportunities. Cleaner waterways, increased shoreline path systems, and waterfront park recreation facilities have been successful in bringing residents, tourists, and developers to

waterfront neighborhoods. In Queens, segments of Long Island City, Astoria, Flushing, and the Rockaways have already benefited from increased waterfront investment.

Project	Neighborhood	Size	Project Description
Flushing Creek BOA	Flushing	60 Acres	Higher-density, affordable housing development, broader streets, public space, and waterfront amenities
Queens West	Long Island City	44 Acres	3,312 units of housing, 120,000 sf. of retail amenities, a public school, 10 acres of parkland, and recreation area
Hallets Point	Astoria	11 Acres	Residential towers, public park, pedestrian walkways, bike path, and space for a public school
Arverne By The Sea	Arverne – The Rockaways	117 Acres	2,300 housing units, up to 270,000 square feet of retail space, a recreation center, and new school
Arverne East	Arverne – The Rockaways	80 Acres	Market rate and affordable housing and retail

Implement Strategies that Enhance Business Development

Small businesses drive the Queens economy and are crucial to the growth of the nation. These small businesses possess the ability to respond and adapt quickly to changing economic climates, providing a consistent revenue base that is needed for the Queens economy to endure. This consistency is due to the fact that many small businesses are customer-oriented, and Queens businesses excel at responding to the specific needs of a diverse consumer base. Many local customers remain loyal to their favorite small businesses and ensure that these enterprises stay viable during economic downturns.

Even though small businesses have made significant contributions to the durability of the Queens economy, there is a notable need to build stronger and more effective businesses throughout the Borough. One way this can be accomplished is through the support and expansion of the Borough’s business technical assistance providers and programs. Because small businesses provide more than 80% of the workers in New York City, government must work together with our non-profit partners to develop and implement innovative solutions to the challenges faced by small businesses. Leveraging government resources and utilizing best practices from both the private and non-profit sectors can create strategies to address emerging needs of organizations assisting small businesses.

The Office of the Queens Borough President recommends several programs and services as key components towards business development and enhanced business efficiency. Working with our business technical assistance providers will help government gain a wider reach, and provide businesses with the essentials needed for growth and stability. There are several essential areas of focus.

Entrepreneur Assistance

It is through entrepreneurship that important innovations enter the market, leading to new products or production processes. Navigating the process of starting a new business venture is an important step for any new small business owner. Entrepreneur assistance is necessary for the growth of business at all stages. Small, locally owned businesses and startups tend to generate higher incomes for people in local communities than large, non-local firms, which can actually depress local economies. By working with technical assistance providers that support smaller Queens based entrepreneurs, these businesses can eventually provide higher, long-term economic growth for the local economy.

Access to Capital

In addition to entrepreneur assistance, access to capital has become a major obstacle to business growth across the city. The lack of credit and access to capital is a critical issue for small businesses. Financial institutions have been tightening up lending criteria and cutting existing credit lines. Companies with good credit that were viewed as acceptable risks two years ago have watched their credit ratings fall as sales and profits decline. Recent federal actions have increased the maximum guarantee on the Small Business Administration's 7a Loan program and created a new federally-backed loan pool for small business loans at commercial banks. However, the US Export-Import Bank, a vital creditor for small businesses involved in international trade, is being threatened by national politics. For the future growth and development of Queens, local programs ensuring access to these capital funding streams are essential.

Procurement Opportunities

Gaining market share through procurement opportunities is vital to small business development growth. Government contracts are the leading source of procurement opportunities in New York City. The city, state, and federal governments use their financial strength to acquire goods and services from small businesses. These entities also contract with a diverse set of businesses, promoting multiple vendors and improving the economic health, welfare, and security of the Borough. Economic development has been difficult to achieve for many parts of the city, despite numerous attempts by procurement programs to address disparities. Therefore, assistance with the procurement processes is crucial. If small business growth through the procurement of goods and services is given a chance to act as multiplier, the local economy will continue to grow.

Business Permit Navigation and Compliance Processes

Small businesses are a large share of all businesses in New York City. These businesses include retail, professional, and service oriented enterprises, and tend to be the heaviest regulated. These businesses are overrun with cumbersome regulatory requirements, and navigating the multiple government agencies is often overwhelming and frustrating. There needs to be a way to streamline the regulatory environment for businesses so that City agencies can fulfill their missions without overburdening small businesses. Over the years, assistance by small business technical providers has helped small businesses with this navigation. The Office of the Queens Borough President is committed to working with the Borough's non-profit partners, the New York City Department of Small Business Services and other regulatory agencies to:

- Provide better information about the process
- Help to simplify the rules and compliance processes for businesses

- Ensure enforcement promotes compliance
- Work with City agencies to ease the process for correction and adjudication
- Improve services to the underserved

The Department of Small Business Services' Business Acceleration Team and, newly created, Small Business First initiative are taking steps towards easing the process. However, a potential City Charter revision pertaining to the business codes of New York City, and departmental policies and implementation strategies, need to be revisited in order to create a positive business climate that encourages business development in Queens.

Business Growth and Sustainability

Growth and sustainable business strategies are practical approaches to achieving economic development and resiliency in Queens. In simple terms, sustainable growth is the realistically attainable growth that a company could maintain without negative impacts. A business that grows too quickly may find it difficult to fund the growth. A business that grows too slowly, or not at all, may stagnate. Finding the optimum growth rate is the goal. The Borough President recommends the following methods of achieving sustainable business growth to assist in the development of the Borough:

- Capacity Building and Targeted Relief for Small Businesses
- Small Business Marketing
- Business Incentive Programs
- Incubator and Shared Office Space
- New Space through Adaptive Re-use of Older Buildings
- Retention and Attraction of Manufacturing and Industrial Businesses

Capacity Building and Targeted Relief for Small Businesses

Strengthening the capacity of businesses to improve their operations can be accomplished by providing resources that improve basic business skills, allowing them to thrive in the present economy. This assistance offers the ability to acquire new contracts and successfully complete existing ones. This goal can be achieved by linking businesses to cost savings and incentive programs that increase operational efficiency, and hosting workshops and seminars that provide information on ways to increase business capacity and open new business markets.

Small Business Marketing through "Buy Queens" Events

Marketing what Queens has to offer is an ideal way to help businesses grow and maintain stability. Showcasing the goods and services of Queens businesses through "Buy Queens" events will give businesses the opportunity to meet with potential new customers and open up new markets. As the Borough President creates a new brand for the Borough, highlighting economic development opportunities is a key component in the effort. The benefits of hosting "Buy Queens" events include:

- Creating opportunities for interaction between new buyers and decision makers
- Allowing multiple buyers to interact with the companies and reduce the cost per sale
- Enabling companies to market their products in front of their buyers at a single place
- Presenting opportunities to the sellers that are at a distance from the market
- Offering a great platform for the companies to introduce new goods to the market
- Providing companies with the opportunity to gather market intelligence on their industry

Business Incentive Programs

Business incentive programs have historically been used to support economic and neighborhood development. Now, more than ever, businesses located in New York City need the wide variety of programs offered through City, State, and Federal agencies. Incentive programs usually include tax benefits, energy and wage benefits, and technical assistance that are designed to offer valuable services and savings to small businesses. Incentive programs in New York are triggered by one of four main activities:

- Relocating to or within New York City
- Investing in equipment
- Purchasing and improving property
- Hiring and training employees

These types of incentive programs must be continued and expanded to retain and grow businesses in Queens. The uncertainty of existing “as of right” incentive programs will only make businesses hesitant about expanding or relocating within the areas of Queens. The creation of new incentive programs, such as a payroll tax exemption for new hiring, will only add to the economic health of the Borough.

Incubator/Shared Office Space

Shared office space has proven to be a successful method in helping build neighborhoods and providing many start-up and home office companies with cost-effective alternatives to traditional office leasing space. Shared office space, which is commonly used to cultivate entrepreneurship, often come fully equipped and furnished. It is an ideal solution for establishing a professional office at low cost. Besides the cost savings, a shared office space also assists businesses in developing skills and expertise in the areas of management, marketing, and product development. Queens is experiencing more and more building owners redeveloping their buildings and offering shared office facilities. One example is The Entrepreneur Space operated by the Queens Economic Development Corporation in Long Island City. The “E-Space” is a kitchen space rented on a part-time basis to emerging food manufacturers that have commercial needs, but are no longer able work out of their homes.

Adaptive Reuse

Another tool enabling the growth and support of small business is the ability of buildings to be adaptively reused. Adaptive reuse is the process of adapting old structures for new purposes. When the original use of a structure changes, or is no longer required, builders have the opportunity to change the primary function of the structure, while often retaining existing architectural details that make the building unique. With neighborhoods being rapidly rezoned, commercial centers are being revitalized using sustainable methods. Green design technology is being incorporated to update a building’s performance and create healthy spaces for people to live and work. There are many of these opportunities in Queens, much of which are suitable for small tech start-ups, an industry that has proven to anchor neighborhoods and generate social and economic revitalization.

Retain and Attract Manufacturing and Industrial Businesses

Queens still has a sizeable number of manufacturing and industrial areas. These areas are primarily located in Long Island City, Maspeth, Astoria, Woodside, College Point, Ridgewood, Rockaway, and Jamaica. While there has been a historical decline in manufacturing jobs over the last decade, the industry has remained relatively stable over the past three years. Larger manufacturing firms have been more likely to move out of New York, but smaller manufacturers have continued to consider Queens as a viable option for relocation and expansion.

Changing economic conditions have made many manufacturing areas more appropriate for other uses and suitable for rezoning, leaving manufacturing and industrial firms with fewer operating locations. To mitigate this loss, the City needs to explore ways to create modern, affordable, and efficient uses of industrial areas that can allow industrial and distribution businesses to operate without interfering with residential or commercial uses. Buildings need to be created with sizeable footprints so they have features that are beneficial for industrial businesses, like parking and loading facilities, improved roadways, and lighting. Additionally, incentives that comprehensively target industrial businesses need to be expanded to attract and retain these small businesses.

Implement Strategies that Enhance Workforce Development

As the Office of the Queens Borough President plans the further economic development of the Borough, it is necessary to ensure that Queens residents possess the necessary training and career advisement in industries that are experiencing growth. A Borough-wide workforce development plan will enable residents to be better prepared in facing challenges.

In recent years, workforce development has evolved from an industry-driven perspective, like addressing the need for more workers, to a social- and human- driven perspective, like training disadvantaged workers to be able to attain certain jobs available in the region. Because of its renewed focus on social capital, successful workforce development programs rely on community partnerships. This means providing wraparound services and linking employment training with other social service programs and community resources.

Similarly, the Borough President's workforce development plan intends to increase access to community resources that encourage career development and job readiness, support the creation of jobs in emerging sectors, and ensure that the local workforce can obtain local jobs.

Providing Career Development, Training, and Job Readiness

As Queens continues to provide opportunities for growth and development, workforce development strategies must address the inequity between communities. Many Queens residents do not have access to equal educational opportunities. Workforce development programs increase skill levels so the disadvantaged can compete for higher paying jobs, essentially leveling the playing field. The Borough President's workforce development plan includes the following strategies to address inequity and develop human capital:

- Create a resource guide listing educational programs focused on emerging industries and careers
- Encourage the creation of green jobs through priority funding to capitol projects that build LEED certified buildings

- Host career fairs and employment seminars
- Utilize existing economic development resources and maximize all referral systems
- Support “on the job” training opportunities through advocacy and policy implementation
- Conduct focused outreach of training programs to disadvantage groups
- Link Queens residents to construction job training through the Department of Labor’s approved pre-apprenticeship programs
- Identify gaps in training opportunities and work to fill those gaps

In developing workforce strategies, it is also important to help employers understand the benefits of training employees so they can advance within their companies. Providing a means of career advancement not only retains experience, but also provides benefits to revenue.

Supporting Job Creation

The second component of the Borough President’s workforce development plan is to support the creation of jobs. The Borough President intends to:

- Allocate capital and expense funding for projects that will immediately create jobs for local entities;
- Create recommendations for M/WBE and local hiring for all government capital projects in Queens;
- Partner with the Queens Air Services Development Office to match Queens businesses with aviation opportunities; and
- Host events that present procurement opportunities offered by Federal, State and City government agencies

Training the Local Workforce to Attain Local Jobs

Local hiring is the third component of the Borough President’s workforce development strategy. The goal is to prepare the workforce to be able to attain jobs, and ensure that the local firms hire this trained workforce when jobs are created. Local hiring has many direct and ancillary benefits like retaining tax dollars in the local economy, providing invaluable work experience to local residents, and increasing community involvement. The Borough President intends to:

- Work with the Council for Airport Opportunity to match residents with job opportunities within the aviation industry
- Ensure that jobs created through public funds, like development projects, hire the local workforce
- Promote training and apprenticeship opportunities in the building trades

Attract New Economies and Emerging Industries

The recent recession has revealed the importance of having a diverse economy that is able to respond to new trends. Although emerging industries are unable to predict the growth potential or the demand for new products, growing industries like biotech, cleantech, and mobile application development can help diversify the local economy.

The leading industries that have dominated New York’s economy for many decades are rapidly transforming. The financial services sector continues to be the largest segment of the New York economy. However, smaller sectors of the economy, growing at a faster rate, are responsible for the city’s recovery from the 2008 economic downturn. Over the past decade, high-tech

(predominantly digital media, e-commerce, social networking and ad-tech), creative industry (media, arts, fashion), and tourism sectors of the economy have grown at the highest rate. These sectors demonstrate a new economy that is emerging based on knowledge, technology, and innovation, leading to lower business cost and better jobs.

Queens has already benefited from the addition of new businesses that bring these innovative and sustainable practices. Long Island City has rapidly become a tech hub with companies like Songza, Shapeways, and World Now. In Jamaica, a rooftop greenhouse business, Gotham Greens, incorporates a greenhouse on the 12,000-square-foot rooftop that is expected to produce 30 tons of vegetables and herbs annually using hydroponic technology. The City and State must take steps to ensure that these industries are nurtured in New York.

Tech Economy

The tech economy in New York City is the fastest growing economic sector and offers the highest growth potential for Queens. The industry alone generates over 500,000 jobs citywide. Over 85% of New York start-ups are internet companies focusing on digital media, e-commerce, social networking, and ad-tech. However, new tech companies are active in diverse sectors of the Queens economy. For example, Shapeways, a 3D printing company in Long Island City, uses digital design to quickly and affordably manufacture new products. western Queens has seen the largest concentration of tech businesses in Queens and the Office of the Queens Borough President, with funding from the New York State Department of State, is creating a strategic action plan to further grow the tech economy in that part of the Borough. However, growth in the tech industry is vibrant throughout Queens, with activity in Bayside, Maspeth, and Flushing. Tech growth must not be limited to specific Internet based companies. All businesses in the Borough need to be tech enabled. The Office of the Queens Borough President, along with government and community partners, must assist small and medium businesses in technological integration of manufacturing, website creation, database management, and web connectivity.

Biotech

The Biotech economy in New York City has also flourished in recent years. Through the collaboration of top-tier academic and medical research institutions, biotech is quickly becoming a generator of economic opportunity for Queens. While the industry historically focused on pharmaceutical research and development, biotech has grown exponentially to include advances in nanotechnology, food sciences and medical technology.

The city has traditionally had a wealth of academic and medical research institutions, but adequate advanced facilities have always been lacking. The City recently has made significant investments to create biotech laboratories in Brooklyn, Lower Manhattan, and East Harlem. The increasing role of the healthcare industry in Queens, coupled with the growing tech community, create a unique opportunity for investment and growth in this sector. Queens businesses are already using technology to enhance medical research and practices, and have recently won citywide competitions in health technology.

Support Minority, Women, Disadvantaged, and Local Businesses

Government contracting is an important asset for small businesses because it leads to greater growth and employment. Companies that become certified with New York City, New York State, The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, or other certifying entities, obtain greater access to information about contracting opportunities and receive technical assistance to better compete for those opportunities. Certification is free, and most government agencies and private sector businesses will accept certifications.

In New York City, the Department of Small Business Services is responsible for administering, coordinating, and enforcing the citywide programs, as well as identifying, recruiting, certifying, and including businesses in city procurement. Because of the magnitude of the program, the Borough President recommends a Queens based advisory board to assist in the administration and monitoring on a more local level. Through the Office of the Queens Borough President, this group will have the capacity to maximize efforts to ensure Queens based Minority, Women, Disadvantaged and Local Businesses (MWDLB) participate in public and private development projects throughout the Borough. (MWDLB have special opportunities to compete for local, state and federal contract opportunities, however, many are uncertified.)

The advisory board would work to ensure meaningful participation in construction jobs, through a set of written recommendations for each project. These programs will work to:

- Ensure that policies are created to establish realistic goals, and create strategies to increase participation in projects
- Create standards for outreach to promote opportunities, and recruit qualified firms and individuals for each project
- Create and incorporate existing capacity building resources, and explore options of providing financial assistance to firms
- Utilize existing workforce development programs
- Establish mechanisms for employment

HOUSING

Existing Conditions and Issues

Queens has a diverse and sound housing stock that attracts families with children, young adults and seniors. Approximately one quarter of all housing units in New York City are in Queens. The Borough's housing stock is a mixture of mostly one and two-family homes and mid-rise apartment buildings with a concentration of a few higher-density apartment buildings. The higher-density apartment buildings are generally found in western and central Queens while lower density homes are found throughout the Borough, with higher concentrations in the eastern and southern parts of the Borough. For example in Bellerose, a community in eastern Queens, 92% of housing units are one & two- family homes. In contrast, only 12% of all available housing units in the Rego Park/Woodhaven neighborhoods consist of one and two-family homes.

It is estimated, that Queens has a total of 432,085 rental units, representing about one-fifth of all rental units in the City²⁵. About 45% of the rental units in Queens were unregulated compared to 28% for New York City as a whole. The tightest market for rental housing was in Queens, where the vacancy rate was lowest of the five Boroughs at 2.9%, compared to the citywide rate of 3.6%²⁶. The declining supply of rental units may be attributed to the large number of cooperatives and condominiums.

The overwhelming majority of the Borough's housing is privately-owned. There were a total of 357,844 owner units in Queens, representing a third of all owner units in New York City. More than 75% of all owner units in Queens were in privately owned one and two-family houses with 21% in cooperatives and 4% were in condominiums²⁷. The median income of households in all Queens owner units was \$55,000, ranking third in the citywide average²⁸. The vacancy rate for owner units was 3.5% in the Borough, a little lower than the citywide average of 3.7%. Queens also has the lowest share of in-rem housing in New York City.

Concentrations of city-owned property are in Community Districts 12 and 14, and to a lesser extent in Community Districts 1, 5, 10 and 13. Compared to the other boroughs, Queens has the lowest share of public housing. The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) enjoys the reputation of being the best run public housing authority in the country. In its continuing effort to maintain and operate its 181,000 units given cutbacks in federal and state operating subsidies, the agency has sought to increase the number of working families in public housing. Working families are given priority for half of the units that turnover with the remainder set aside for homeless families and individuals, and very low-income households.

There are 17,149 public housing units in Queens, approximately 10% of New York City's public housing stock. The units are concentrated in four areas. Queensbridge Houses, located in Community District 1, is the largest public housing development in the country with 3,144 units. Together with the Ravenswood, Astoria and Woodside Houses, Community District 1 has a total of 7,769 units of public housing. Other large concentrations in the Borough include 4,000 units in the Rockaways, almost 2,000 units in Jamaica, and approximately 3,000 units in Flushing. All of the developments in the Borough receive operating subsidies from the Federal government.

Affordable Housing

In New York City, there is a substantial shortfall of affordable rental housing. Middle income households in New York City are almost 50% more likely to be burdened by high housing costs than other households in the United States²⁹. In Queens, rental housing affordability decreased sharply starting in 2006. Of renters paying more than 50% of their income for rent, 73% earn less than 50% of the median income and almost 47.4% are immigrants.

The gap is a result of a lack of production of affordable units compounded by the loss of units due to housing deterioration and deregulation of rent regulated units. This is particularly true for Queens. Since the inception of the New Housing Marketplace Plan in 2003, 157,230 units of affordable housing has been created or preserved throughout the city. However, only 16,530 of those units were located in Queens - only 10.5%. At the same time, rent regulated units are being intentionally deregulated by unscrupulous landlords throughout the Borough through vacancy decontrol. Furthermore, with some of the oldest housing stock in the country, Queens loses a significant number of units each year to degradation, further straining the supply of the general housing stock.

Additionally, affordable housing that is created using public subsidies is not always affordable to the residents in the community. Affordability is defined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, who calculates affordable housing eligibility using the Area Median Income (AMI). However, the AMI for New York City is inflated due to the inclusion of other high-income towns like Westchester County. The current AMI is \$85,900; meaning units that are eligible for a family of four at 60% of the AMI would be \$51,540. Consider that the actual median income of residents in Jackson Heights is \$43,842; More than half of the residents wouldn't qualify for affordable housing at 60% of AMI.

The shortage of affordable housing has created two issues of concern. The first is the overwhelming need for housing assistance. While the need for affordable housing has risen, city, state, and federal government entities have not adequately addressed the issue of affordability. At the federal level, increases in Section 8 vouchers have not been granted over the last six years. In New York City, new applications for Section 8 have not been processed since 2009. There are more than a quarter of million families on the waiting list for Section 8 subsidies and 152,700 families are on the waiting list for public housing in the city. In Queens, approximately 2,300 units receive project-based Section 8 subsidies, but this is a small percentage of the total distributed throughout the city.

The second is the increased prevalence of illegally converted units. The fastest growing communities in Queens have adjusted to the lack of affordable housing by creating an underground market of illegally converted apartments, attics, and basements. Queens Community Districts 3 and 4, the second and third most overcrowded communities in the entire city³⁰, have particularly high instances of illegal conversions. Illegal conversions are usually created in violation of building and fire codes, and present a significant threat to the safety and health of other residents. They also place significant strain on municipal services, contributing to the overcrowding of schools, reduction of public parking, and an increase in sanitation problems.

Existing Housing

Even as the Borough struggles to create and preserve affordable housing, it is threatened with the loss of a substantial amount of its existing housing stock. Escalating real estate taxes and water and sewer charges jeopardize existing rental housing, particularly small apartment buildings, since maintenance funds are now being redirected to cover these increased expenses.

Furthermore, the preservation of existing multifamily units depends on the ability to have such building code violations detected and corrected. New York City once had more than 800 housing inspectors. Today, less than 300 inspectors are on staff citywide, with no staff increase projected. During annual heating season, these inspectors are only able to respond to heat and hot water complaints and other emergencies. A majority of complaints become response delayed because of the inadequate number of inspectors. Because of these staffing shortfalls, The Department of Buildings and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development frequently have backlog of thousands of complaints. Violations go uncorrected, leading to building collapse and injuries, and millions of dollars in fines go uncollected. The City needs to increase the number of inspectors and enforce building and housing codes.

Public Housing

NYCHA is the nation's largest public housing authority. In recent years, however, budget constraints have limited the effectiveness of NYCHA's ability to manage buildings. NYCHA buildings in Queens are in need of significant repairs, particularly those impacted by Hurricane Sandy. This includes repairs to both residential units and community facilities. Residents have had to live without much needed repairs because NYCHA is unable to respond to the overwhelming number of repair requests throughout the city. NYCHA community centers, similarly, are in need of repairs.

NYCHA's community centers serve as essential stabilizing vehicles in the community, providing enriching recreational, cultural and education/training programs. However, current budget deficits threaten the future of these centers. Due to years of underfunding by the Federal government, NYCHA was forced to respond to the shortfall with severe measures that included, increasing rents, decreasing services, and reducing headcount. Despite these attempts to close the gap between funding and services, sizable deficits continue to be projected.

Foreclosure Crisis

In the last decade an explosion of predatory lending, and the proliferation of high cost financial products and services, has resulted in the loss of more homes in Queens than in any other Borough. Southeast Queens, which has the highest population of new homeowners citywide, was identified as one of the main foreclosure epicenters in New York City – it was the area that had the highest concentration of foreclosure notices (lis pendens) had been issued in New York State. After two consecutive years of decline, foreclosure starts in Queens grew faster than any other borough from 2011 to 2012, jumping 24%³¹.

Senior Housing

Queens is home to more than 381,000 persons 60 years of age and older, representing 30% of New York City's elderly population, and 20% of the Borough's entire population³². Many are on fixed incomes, and are paying more than half their income towards housing. With the expected rise in the aging population, the demand for assisted living will increase.

Currently, all of the senior housing projects in Queens have a minimum waitlist of three years. For-profit assisted living residences are not an option for many because they are unable to afford the high monthly fees. Several non-profit senior housing developers exist, but because of restrictive zoning rules and state regulations, the developments of these facilities are costly.

Middle-Income Housing

Since 1955, the major source of moderate to middle income housing had been created through the Mitchell-Lama program. However, currently there are few opportunities to publicly create middle-income housing. Subsidy programs like 421-A and Low Income Housing Tax Credits have encouraged the creation of some moderate-income housing, but there is still a void in the creation of middle-income units.

In recent years, the City has acknowledged this growing need, and has addressed it by providing some public incentives for the development of housing up to 130% of AMI. However, to maintain a healthy housing stock and stable economy, new production programs must be created. Developers estimate that it costs about \$180 per square foot to construct new housing, or about \$200,000 for a two-bedroom apartment. Such an apartment will need to rent for approximately \$1,800 a month. There are very few neighborhoods outside Manhattan that can support such high market rents. Innovative programs need to be created to provide subsidies to supplement the cost of construction and ultimately create a more robust middle-income housing market.

Strategic Goals and Policies

The two major housing policy goals for Queens are increasing the production of new housing and preserving of existing housing. These goals will be achieved by the creation of new housing programs, the expansion of successful programs, and the modification of existing programs to address needs specific to Queens.

Housing Creation

Increase Production of New Affordable Housing

The City needs to create more affordable housing in Queens and generate more revenue sources to do so. The City can start by securing a commitment from the State to allocate more of the volume cap and tax credits for affordable housing for the City. The City and the State should also urge Congress to increase the volume cap for tax-exempt bonds and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits. Additionally, the City needs to explore the greater usage of federal and pension funds to finance affordable housing. The City's priority for these funds is for the purpose of economic development. Because of this, the amount of bond cap available to New York City Housing Development Corporation is uncertain each year. A mandatory minimum should be created so a set percentage of the funds are set aside for housing. This will remove uncertainty, and both the Housing Development Corporation and developers will be able to sufficiently plan the financing of housing projects.

The City needs to also expand its partnership with local non-profit organizations. These organizations have an intimate knowledge of the housing problems in their communities and provide cost effective services. To increase opportunities to develop affordable housing, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development should specifically set aside city-owned buildings for disposition and rehabilitation by community-based nonprofit organizations. Funding packages, combined with technical and education services, should be provided with the real property to encourage the development of properties by nonprofit organizations. At the state level, funding for the Neighborhood Preservation Program should be increased to enable these organizations to provide essential education and counseling services.

Create Affordable Housing at Lower Area Median Income Levels

The affordable housing units that are created through existing subsidy and financing programs utilize federal AMI guidelines, making units unaffordable to many of the low-income households that need it. The City needs to incentivize the creation of units that target 40% of AMI and below.

Encourage Comprehensive and Coordinated Planning

The development of affordable housing is often delayed by inadequate infrastructure. The creation and preparation of public sites needs a greater level of coordination between city agencies, local elected officials, and community groups.

Establish a Dedicated Housing Trust Fund

The City needs to either ensure that the New York City Housing Trust Fund which was created through the Battery Park City Authority equitably allocates funds throughout the five boroughs, or instead create a new Housing Trust Fund for each borough to oversee. These funds should be used to create new affordable housing and help preserve and maintain the existing stock.

Proceeds from the Participation Loan Program, city tax lien sales, and tax revenues resulting from new construction should be added to either option.

Create a New State Middle-Income Housing Program

The city's resilient economy is reflected in a surging luxury residential market. However, the booming economy also drove housing costs and rents to rise, significantly putting more pressure on lower and middle-income residents. Creation of new rental housing for moderate and middle-income households remains inadequate to meet the need. More resources must be committed to retain moderate and middle-income families and individuals. Without a significant increase in moderate- and middle-income housing, the city's working population will be forced out of the city.

The State should substantially increase its direct investment in housing. Similar to the City's Middle-Income Housing Initiative, there is a need for the State to provide additional financing mechanisms to increase the production of middle-income housing. Infrastructure subsidies should also be provided for at risk zones as identified by the new FEMA flood maps.

Encourage Construction of Senior Housing

With an expected increase in the aging population, the City needs to address the lack of senior housing and assisted living housing. In the past, the deferral Section 202 program provided a consistent source of funds for the construction of housing for the elderly. However, in recent years, this program has been steadily decreased. The current level of funding cannot meet the future needs of an aging population. The Borough President will continue to advocate for a restoration of these funds, along with the dedication of capital funds for entities that develop senior housing. In addition, the City needs to provide a rental subsidy program for seniors that are not living in subsidized or rent-regulated housing.

The City also needs to take a broader approach in encouraging the development of assisted living facilities. Design regulations should be streamlined to reduce pre-development costs and ensure quality of life. Zoning regulations need to be adjusted so that it maximizes the creation of units. For example, the parking development requirement can be reduced since the need for parking is not as high as regular housing developments.

Increase Homeownership Opportunities

The City needs to provide greater access to information for first-time homebuyers to prepare them for home ownership. The Borough President intends to partner with organizations to host workshops throughout the Borough. Additionally, the City needs to expand programs like the Housing Partnership Development Corporation's New Homes Programs so that more opportunities for home ownership are created for qualified buyers.

Housing Preservation

Preserve the Existing Affordable Housing Stock

The existing affordable housing stock needs to be protected from deregulation, and subsidy programs like Mitchell-Lama and Section 8 need to be expanded. This means working with the State to prevent unlawful deregulation of rent-regulated units through vacancy decontrol, and working with the city, state, and federal government to fund these programs at adequate levels. The Borough President is also dedicated to advocating for increased funding for legal service providers, supporting programs that provide residents with legal counsel in housing court. Low-income tenants that are unable to seek legal counsel because of their income limitations should have attorneys provided to them to defend themselves against unscrupulous landlords.

The City also needs to preserve the public housing stock. NYCHA is making a concentrated effort to foster a wider and more balanced budget in order to maintain stability. While this action is realized, it is essential that the federal government provide appropriate funding for federalized NYCHA projects to ensure that they are adequately maintained. This means working with the City, State, and Federal agencies in order to adequately fund NYCHA, and to ensure that NYCHA is being operated in a fiscally efficient manner. The Borough President is dedicated to working with the Mayor to address the many deficits that NYCHA currently faces.

Protect the Existing General Housing Stock

Programs aimed at preserving the housing stock through rehabilitation and code enforcement must be expanded. The City needs to expand the number of housing inspectors throughout the city, and create a more efficient system of ensuring violations are being corrected. Unpaid fines need to be collected, or converted into tax liens, more efficiently.

In addition, the City needs to specifically concentrate on the increased prevalence of illegal conversions by enhancing public education and explaining the existing illegal conversion laws and penalties to homeowners, tenants, and landlords. An executive level representative at the Department of Buildings should be assigned to oversee the enforcement of illegal conversions and coordinate interagency efforts.

The City also needs to expand and advertise rehabilitation loans for landlords who are unable to afford costly repairs and correct existing violations. This applies to both single-family homes and buildings. Only one program exists to help owners Class A residential buildings, the Home Improvement Program. Larger multi-family units do not have similar loan programs aimed at assisting landlords with much needed repairs.

To encourage a wider use of these programs, the City needs to make them more readily available, more widely known, and easier to navigate. The City needs to institute program centralization where owners are able to apply for financial assistance, thereby allowing the Department of Housing Preservation and Development to process and provide the most appropriate loan packages. Rehabilitation loans also need to be made readily available to large buildings, targeting buildings with code violations that may be dangerous.

Expand Foreclosure Assistance Services

The Office of the Queens Borough President is dedicated to cooperating with local non-profit housing and legal organizations, working to identify, educate, and train homeowners to prevent and stem the foreclosure crisis. The Borough President will work directly with these organizations to advocate for the increase of foreclosure legal services, and provide information sessions throughout the Borough to educate homeowners on how to access legal services and avoid scams.

Currently, many non-profit housing and legal service organizations depend on City contracts and discretionary funds, renewed on an annual basis. As a result of the uncertainty of this funding, the operating budget of non-profit organizations vary year to year, restricting their ability to retain quality staff and plan program expenses. Contract funds need to be baselined, and increased. Discretionary funds need to be increased so that a full range of foreclosure assistance services can be offered by providers. This is particularly true for Queens, where 6,371 foreclosures occurred in 2013, the highest amount of foreclosures out of all the boroughs³³.

Increase Housing Support for Seniors

Programs that preserve quality housing for the elderly should be expanded. The State RESTORE program, which provides emergency home repairs for senior homeowners under 80% of AMI, is funded only \$400,000 per year. This program should be expanded to provide assistance to more seniors in the Borough. The Borough President supports an expansion of funding for the Senior Citizen Homeowner Assistance Program that provides funds for emergency repairs.

The Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption Program (SCRIE) is an effective local effort to assist low-income senior renters. This subsidy program enables landlords to deduct the rental amount seniors are unable to afford from their property taxes. The SCRIE program can be improved by indexing the income eligibility limit to inflation, providing more staff to disseminate information, expediting the approval process, and funding local housing groups to provide assistance to seniors who do not respond to notices of recertification.

Preserve and Reform Mitchell-Lama

The preservation of the Mitchell-Lama housing stock is of vital importance to the maintenance of a stable middle-income population in Queens. However, the Borough's Mitchell-Lama housing stock is threatened from buy-outs in the coming decade. Under current law, Mitchell-Lama buildings, aided by public loans, may repay mortgages and buy-out of the program after 20 years from the date of initial occupancy of the housing.

To address the problem of buy-outs, the City must perform a comprehensive analysis of the finances of these buildings, and institute incentives to preserve affordable rents. Reform legislation should be enacted to preserve the Mitchell-Lama program as a moderate income housing resource. Under existing law, a household is subject to eviction from a Mitchell-Lama unit if its income exceeds the maximum allowable income limit by more than 50%. The provision for eviction of over-income tenants should be repealed, and those incomes in excess of 50% of the existing rent should be deposited into special reserve funds. The surpluses from over funded projects should subsidize Mitchell-Lama developments with deficient revenues.

Support Cooperative and Condominium Housing

Cooperatives and condominiums are vital to stabilizing communities and revitalizing neighborhoods impacted by the housing crisis. Both housing ownership structures were well insulated during the foreclosure crisis. Cooperatives, in particular, serve as relatively affordable means to ownership in Queens. It is important that issues particular to the cooperatives and condominiums are addressed.

The Office of the Queens Borough President will continue to convene its Task Force on Cooperatives and Condominiums, with the goals of:

- Attracting new homeowners to the Borough
- Supporting a cohesive environment to stabilize cooperatives and condominiums in the Borough
- Working with cooperative and condominium representatives to examine ways to lessen the burden of unfunded mandates
- Working with stakeholders to identify legislation that can help owners, each of which has its own unique issues specific to their corporate structure
- Working with FEMA to assist owners who were impacted by Hurricane Sandy
- Expanding veterans homeownership loan guarantees so that cooperatives qualify
- Allowing seniors that live in cooperative to apply for reverse mortgages

ZONING AND LAND-USE

Existing Conditions and Issues

Queens remains the borough of choice for many long time and newer New Yorkers seeking a variety of housing choices that includes high-rise apartments, medium sized co-ops and condominiums, or single-family homes with a front and rear yards. In addition to this wide range of housing choices, the Borough is also the focus of significant commercial, retail, and manufacturing activity. Unlike other boroughs, Queens is distinctly separated by individual neighborhoods.

Since 2002, 45 neighborhood contextual rezonings, affecting over 6,000 blocks, have been completed in Queens. Additionally, there have been major rezonings in the Borough's larger commercial centers like Long Island City, Downtown Jamaica, and Downtown Flushing, reflecting the latest development trends and projected future needs in those areas. Additional neighborhood studies are in varying stages of data collection and analysis, part of a continuing effort to assure that the residential, commercial, and industrial areas of the Borough remain successful. The need to match zoning designations to the existing built character of neighborhoods is highlighted during every building boom, when market pressures drive increased as-of-right, sometimes out of character, development that disrupts the quality of life and impacts the stability of those areas.

Zoning is not the only determining factor in the continued health and success of the Borough's neighborhoods. However, zoning is one of the key factors that determines the size and shape of buildings, and what uses or activities may go on within. In the recent past, technological advances, new industries, and business practices have challenged definitions in the New York City Zoning Resolution. Therefore, the text and zoning maps of the Zoning Resolution need be continually refined, mapping Queens with the most appropriate zoning districts to allow residential neighborhoods, local commercial areas, and waterfronts to develop successfully in a predictable manner that does not strain the infrastructure.

Borough-wide Characteristics

Residential Neighborhoods

Southern and eastern Queens, which includes neighborhoods like Howard Beach, Ozone Park, Bayside, Douglaston, Bellerose, Laurelton, South Jamaica, and Whitestone, continue to be predominantly lower density areas. The western and central neighborhoods of the Borough, like Astoria, Long Island City, Rego Park, Elmhurst, Sunnyside, and Jackson Heights, tend to be more highly populated areas with better access to mass transit and developed with medium to higher density apartment buildings. However, housing structures with one and two units are still the most prevalent residential building type in Queens – 49.6% of housing stock as opposed to around 11% for 3-4 units in one structure³⁴.

Inappropriately Zoned Neighborhoods

From the 1950s to the early 1970s, development patterns in Queens were determined by the preference and demand for one- and two-family homes. Developers responded accordingly with one- and two-family homes and garden apartments. In many areas, the built low-density development pattern did not reflect the underlying zoning which, in many of those neighborhoods, allowed much higher density, multi-family dwellings, and apartment buildings.

In 1961, the New York City Zoning Resolution and zoning maps were comprehensively revised, leaving many areas of Queens inappropriately zoned compared to the predominant building types. One of the reasons for the mismatched zoning of the existing lower-density areas was that the zoning revisions did not properly consider what was actually built in those areas. Another factor was based upon the projected population growth, and vision of where housing would be developed to meet this projected growth. This resulted in higher zoning designations for many of those lower density areas.

Many of those areas were exploited during the real estate booms of the late 1990s and early 2000s. Residents in many lower density neighborhoods were surprised when out-of-character buildings were legally constructed as-of-right in their neighborhoods during periods of high housing demand. In addition to the increased demand for housing, property owners, in many cases, demanded taller, larger houses to fit lifestyle changes. This led to construction of out-of-scale and out-of-style character buildings, colloquially known as “McMansions,” which changed the height and density of whole neighborhoods.

Continued Need for Contextual Residential Rezonings

The first contextual zoning districts were designated in the late 1980s. The 1961 Zoning Regulation did not accurately predict actual building trends. Thus, while homes were built in accordance with the zoning regulations, they varied significantly from neighboring buildings in terms of design and density. The new contextual districts were designed to more closely reflect the existing housing stock, refining zoning regulations and making future development in contextually rezoned neighborhoods more predictable and similar in overall physical character.

Single-Family Row Housing Stock

There are several neighborhoods throughout Queens that are developed with attached single-family homes. The Zoning Resolution currently does not exactly have a district that fits this type of housing development. This housing type is allowable in the multiple dwelling districts. Therefore, areas developed with attached single-family homes are mapped in such districts. Whenever a neighborhood is rezoned, the lack of such a designation forces the mapping of a multiple-family zoning district, despite the fact that attached single-family houses characterize the majority of the area. This leaves the potential for these attached homes to be torn down and replaced with higher density housing, pursuant to the underlying zoning, when market conditions make it financially attractive.

Need for Middle Income Housing

The demand for housing has steadily increased housing prices. This resulted in market rate housing becoming increasingly unattainable for moderate to lower income families. Even with housing prices declining during the economic downturn, starting around 2008, the overall price

of housing still remains unattainable for many middle-income earners. Starting in 2013, the housing market has rebounded and prices have begun to appreciate again. However, the shortage of moderate to lower income housing remains critical in New York City.

Such housing is necessary to retain the middle class that includes our new families, teachers, civil servants, and first responders who make up the largest group of taxpayers. Increasingly, many who are not able to afford housing in New York City relocate to exurbs where housing prices and costs of living are more affordable. Those who retain jobs in the city are often faced with commutes of two hours or more.

Inclusionary Zoning was devised as a tool to allow floor area bonuses to induce up to 20% of moderate to affordable units in new housing developments. This new zoning tool is relatively new and has not yet yielded enough moderate-income units to meet the ever growing need.

Major Neighborhood Developments

Long Island City

Long Island City and western Queens has been shaped and influenced by its proximity and ease of access to midtown Manhattan. Up until the early nineteenth century, the area was primarily an agricultural suburb. In the mid-nineteenth century, industrialization brought the railroad, bridges, and subway to western Queens. Much of the infrastructure that enabled this change remains in use and a part of the present visible landscape. For much of the twentieth century, there were many industrial factories and warehouses operating in western Queens, surrounded by residential neighborhoods and local retail to house and service the workers.

After its peak in World War II, manufacturing in New York City began to decline, causing many industrial buildings and spaces to become vacant. The effect of underutilization was a decline in retail activity and pedestrian traffic. However, as real estate values declined, these sites became attractive for artists and fabricators seeking inexpensive loft type spaces to do their work. The result was a unique mixture of manufacturing and cultural uses. In 2001, the City recognized this unique use and created the Special Long Island City Mixed Use District. The District was approved in 2001 to encourage new uses and development while maintaining manufacturing space for future industrial businesses. Sub-districts were delineated within the District to reflect the residential and industrial neighborhoods that give the area character.

This new zoning has since attracted new artists and cultural workers, creating an environment that has drawn more private housing development and businesses to the area.

Queens West

The Queens West Project, approved in 1990, succeeded in reclaiming and transforming the East River waterfront through the development of seven residential buildings, totaling 2,600 mostly market rate units, a public school, 10 acres of open space, and 120,000 square feet of retail space. The creation of this waterfront community has had positive spillover effects in adjoining neighborhoods, spurring housing, retail stores, restaurants, and increased pedestrian traffic in the Hunters Point and Long Island City area.

Hunters Point South

While the Queens West development plan was conceived as a market rate housing project, the southern portion of the Queens West Development site was approved for purchase and development as part of the City's commitment to create and preserve 165,000 units of affordable housing. The 30 acre Hunters Point South site creates 3,000 units of affordable housing, 60% of the entire residential development plan. A 1,100 seat intermediate school, 100,000 square feet of open space, and 11 acres of landscaped waterfront parkland are currently being developed to support this new neighborhood.

Downtown Jamaica

Downtown Jamaica serves as a primary transfer point for various subway lines, bus routes, and the Long Island Rail Road. The addition of the AirTrain terminal to and from John F. Kennedy Airport has cemented Downtown Jamaica as a major transportation hub. A comprehensive study of the area and an extensive rezoning has transformed the area into a major retail destination, creating opportunities for new growth, jobs, and services for Queens businesses and residents. Currently, several streetscape improvements are being completed to make the area an attractive focal point for increased economic activity.

Downtown Flushing

Downtown Flushing is the third busiest transportation hub and the fourth largest central business district in New York City, attracting new development in and around the downtown area. The most recent large-scale developments include the Skyview Center, Queens Crossing, and the currently ongoing development of Flushing Commons – the transformation of Flushing Municipal Parking Lot #1 into commercial spaces, retail spaces, and increased parking capacity.

Several years ago, the Downtown Flushing Framework Study was undertaken to examine ways to comprehensively integrate growing development. Some recommendations included making streetscape and open space improvements, redirecting traffic flow to improve circulation, creating safer crossings to resolve conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles, and reconnecting the downtown area to the Flushing River and Willets Point. Some of these recommendations are currently being undertaken.

Special Willets Point District and Willets West

The Special Willets Point District and Willets West was approved for development with the goal of transforming an underutilized, centrally located area. Willets Point is bounded by major highways and is within easy reach of both of New York City's airports. The 62 acre Special Willets Point District and 23 acre Willets West, combined will create on-site 5,550 units of residential housing, of which 35% will be affordable for low- and moderate-income families, 2.65 million square feet of retail space, 500,000 square feet of office space, 400,000 square feet for a convention/exposition space in conjunction with a 700 room hotel, 150,000 square feet for community facilities, a new K-8 school, and a minimum of eight acres of new publicly accessible open space³⁵. The approvals also mandate major infrastructure upgrades, including new highway ramps to the Van Wyck Expressway, roadway and street improvements, new storm and sanitary sewers, site remediation and abatement of ground contaminants, and the raising of the site by at least six feet.

Far Rockaway

Arverne by the Sea is a 117 acre site, that will consists of six neighborhoods with a total of 2,300 homes when completed. In addition to housing, approximately 220,000 square feet of retail space will be developed to provide goods and services to the neighborhood.

Arverne East is a 97 acre site that will consist of 1,600 units of housing and 500,000 square feet of retail space. Featured in the Arverne East project are a 35 acre nature preserve and a 15 acre dune preserve. Both of these preserve areas will protect environmentally sensitive portions of the beachfront.

Queens Waterfront

The New York City waterfront was largely responsible for establishing New York City as the most important financial and cultural capital of the world. The New York Harbor became a major port through which raw materials and finished good were transported all over the world It was also the main point of entry for millions of people that emigrated to the United States, bringing diversity, energy, and creativity that has enabled the growth of New York City's economy. Over time, due to advances in technology and transportation, the waterways became less and less important. It is now a major underutilized asset that needs to be realized and re-developed.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Continue Identifying Inappropriately Zoned Residential Areas in Need of Contextual Rezoning

Over forty neighborhoods, affecting 5,300 blocks throughout the Borough, have been contextually rezoned since 2002³⁶. The completed rezonings will help to ensure that the built character of distinctive neighborhoods is protected, and that new development is reflective of the existing neighborhood. Neighborhoods need to be monitored in order to track building trends and determine areas that will require zoning studies.

Adopt a New Zoning Designation for Single-Family Row Homes

Many of the lower density housing found in Queens are protected by new contextual zoning districts that closely fit the predominant housing types of their communities. However, many neighborhoods in areas like Flushing, Jackson Heights, Kew Gardens Hills, Fresh Meadows, Maspeth, and Rego Park are developed with single-family row houses in areas zoned for higher density multifamily development. A new attached single-family home zoning district must be created and mapped to preserve the character of neighborhoods characterized by attached single-family homes.

Create New Financial Incentives to Complement the Provisions of the Inclusionary Zoning Housing Program to Stimulate Production of more Affordable Housing

The Inclusionary Zoning Housing Program provides floor area bonuses in return for 20% affordable housing units. However, the program has not produced enough units to alleviate the increasing need for affordable housing. In addition to the floor area bonus, additional related incentives must be created that that would spur developers to provide more affordable housing.

The existing tax abatements programs need to be reexamined and modified to spur the development of more affordable housing. If existing programs are unable to, new affordable housing programs should be created to complement the Inclusionary Zoning Housing Program to induce more affordable housing production.

Fully Implement the Hunters Point South Plan

The Hunters Point South project will create the largest number of city sponsored middle income housing units in a single site. The proposed 3,000 middle income housing units will share the waterfront esplanade, and all of its open space amenities, with the market rate Queens West Project directly to the north. The planned active and passive green spaces will provide new recreational space and access to the East River for the entire Hunters Point and Long Island City area. The first phase is already funded and nearly completed. Future resources must be committed to assure that the full Hunters Point Project is implemented as soon as possible.

Implement Infrastructure Improvements in Downtown Jamaica

During the public review process for the Downtown Jamaica Rezoning, several infrastructure deficiencies were identified. Among them were the issues of traffic circulation, persistent flooding, and the need for streetscape improvements. Funding and resources must be directed to the planned connection of Atlantic Avenue into Downtown Jamaica, the creation of open space and facade work on the frontage of Sutphin Boulevard along the Long Island Rail Road/AirTrain Station, and the improvements to sewer infrastructure.

Monitor Growth in Downtown Flushing

Many new private developments throughout Downtown Flushing are either completed or nearing completion. Flushing Municipal Parking Lot #1 was approved for redevelopment, and the affordable housing development phase has been completed. Ground was broken this year for the Flushing Commons project, a key mixed-use redevelopment recommendation outlined in the Downtown Flushing Framework. In order for all of these projects to succeed, traffic circulation and sufficient city services, like schools, sanitation, and traffic safety, must be in place to meet the needs of this anticipated growth in population. The need for resources must be assessed and allocated to ensure the quality of life for residents and to maintain the area as a key transportation hub and central business district.

Fully Implement the Willets Point Redevelopment Plan

When completed, the Special Willets Point District and Willets West will be remediated and transformed, from an underutilized industrial area, into a fully functioning, robust neighborhood with market rate and affordable housing, public open spaces, retail, and entertainment. This new neighborhood will be centrally located, in close proximity to sports and cultural attractions, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, both airports, area highways, and mass transit.

Fully Implement the Arverne Plan

In addition to providing new housing opportunities in the Rockaways, Arverne by the Sea and Arverne East were designed to bring new retail space, community facilities, and public access to the waterfront. The first homes that have been completed in Arverne by the Sea have been very successful. It is important that this project is brought to full completion to reactivate over 200 acres of land that has sat vacant since the 1960's. The new housing, goods, and services will serve the entire Rockaway Peninsula.

Continue Environmental Remediation and Reclamation of Waterfront Areas

The New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan identifies specific goals and strategies for waterfront communities throughout the city. The Comprehensive Waterfront Plan categorizes the waterfront by use and function, as the Natural Waterfront, Public Waterfront, Working Waterfront, and Redeveloping Waterfront. Four areas in Queens have been identified as points of interest. There needs to be continued funding and commitment to fully implement the strategies outlined in the Comprehensive Waterfront Plan, and environmentally restore the waterfront and make it publically accessible and reconnected to communities. In addition, opportunities for waterborne transportation need to be fully explored for areas like the Rockaway Peninsula, Long Island City, and Astoria.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

Existing Conditions and Issues

The impacts of Hurricane Sandy were widespread throughout the East Coast, but especially pronounced in the Tri-State area. The Superstorm made landfall in southern New Jersey on October 29, 2012 but left a trail of damage ranging from the Greater Antilles in the Caribbean to eastern Canada. Winds topped 115 miles an hour and inflicted around \$68 billion of damage in total. In New York City, the Superstorm caused 43 deaths, rendered 2 million people without power, impacted nearly 90,000 buildings in the inundation zone and caused nearly \$19 billion in damage.

In Queens, communities bordering the water were especially hard hit, including the Rockaway Peninsula and parts of southeastern Queens. The Rockaway Peninsula, due to its close proximity to the Atlantic Ocean and Jamaica Bay, was severely flooded, leaving residences, businesses, and valuable piece of infrastructure, like the A-train line, the boardwalk, and the power lines, completely destroyed. Broad Channel in Jamaica Bay experienced similar water levels, while the majority of Howard Beach received three feet of water.

All of the Queens communities impacted by Hurricane Sandy continue to feel the long-term effects of the storm's devastation. Many hurricane victims still remain displaced, while many business owners have been forced to cease operating or wholly relocate. The flooding in southeast Queens has made homes in areas such as Broad Channel and Bayswater unlivable. Dilapidated bulkheads, vulnerable seawalls, and rising tides from Jamaica Bay as a result of two hurricanes striking the region within an 18-month period, have left these areas at risk from future weather events.

The Beach Channel Drive Bulkhead Rehabilitation Program, along with proposed recovery projects, like the Sunset Cove Restoration in Broad Channel and the Spring Creek Mitigation effort in Howard Beach, are steps towards making vulnerable areas more resilient. However, more infrastructure and mitigation projects will be needed to provide a higher level of protection for residents of these communities. Making the ferry service a permanent mainstay is essential in revitalizing the area.

Transportation

Traffic congestion, especially in the rush hour periods, continues to make commuting in and out of southeast Queens an arduous task. The Van Wyck Expressway, Woodhaven Boulevard, and Cross Bay Boulevard experience some of the densest traffic in the Borough. In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, residents of Howard Beach, Broad Channel, Rockaway Beach and Far Rockaway were without A-train service and experienced limited bus service. Limited access to roads and a shortage of public transportation further inflamed the traffic issues. New York City responded by implementing a temporary ferry service running from Rockaway to Lower Manhattan via Jamaica Bay. The ferry service has become an irreplaceable and essential resource for residents, yet it still remains temporary, set to expire in the end of October 2014.

Sunset Cove Restoration

The Queens communities that border on Jamaica Bay remain vulnerable to high tidal surges and flooding due to dilapidated bulkheads, eroded marshes, and reefs. The Rockaways, Broad Channel, Howard Beach, and Breezy Point also face great danger to life and property from potential flooding from Jamaica Bay.

In February 2014 the Borough President wrote a letter to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in support of the Jamaica Bay Ecowatchers' (an environmental organization comprised of Bay enthusiasts who fight to preserve and enhance Jamaica Bay) proposal for the Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resiliency Competitive Grant Program. In partnership with the New York Department of Environmental Protection, The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the New York Parks Department, the Hudson River Foundation and Harbor Coalition, the funding will aid in supporting the restoration of the Sunset Cove inlet, located in the Jamaica Bay inlet.

The Sunset Cove project is vital to the restoration of the Broad Channel community. While the Sunset Cove project plays an important role in this much needed resiliency, the project also promises to enrich the depleted ecosystem by cultivating an oyster revetment and a salt marsh that is sustainable. Rebuilding Sunset Cove under the proposed plan also includes a boardwalk and hiking trails, a boat ramp and recreation field.

Spring Creek Mitigation

The Spring Creek Mitigation Project combines "Green" (natural) and "Grey" (manmade) solutions for the purpose of strengthening the resiliency of Howard Beach against storm surges and sea level rise. The Spring Creek storm damage mitigation site is located along the eastern shore of Spring Creek on the north shore of Jamaica Bay. The site is bound by the Belt Parkway to the north, and a series of roadways (78th Street, 161st Avenue, 83rd Street, 165th Avenue, and Cross Bay Boulevard) to the southeast. The site also comprises the western and southern perimeter of Howard Beach, which has a population of 7,400 and contains nearly 3,000 homes, two schools and dozens of small businesses. The site is managed by the National Park Service as part of the Jamaica Bay Unit of the Gateway National Recreation Area.

FEMA awarded the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation the grant for this endeavor, which allows for \$3,000,000 for the design of the project, and \$47,000,000 for construction. Up to 75% of the project cost will come from federal funds and 25% will come from local funding.

Rockaway Boardwalk Rebuild

Since Hurricane Sandy, the area between Beach 86th Street and Beach 126th Street has been without a boardwalk. The blocks running west from Beach 127th Street to Beach 149th Street currently consists of concrete baffle walls to separate the beach from the streets and structures.

Phase 1 of the boardwalk rebuild, Beach 86th Street to Beach 97th Street is scheduled to be completed by Memorial Day 2015. The stretch between Beach 86th Street and Beach 126th Street is scheduled to be completed by Memorial Day 2016, and the entire boardwalk rebuild project is scheduled to be completed by Memorial Day 2017.

Beach Replenishment

The US Army Corps of Engineers received two contracts for Coastal Restoration Work in Rockaway Beach. The first contract awarded was for nearly 600,000 cubic yards of sand to be placed on the Rockaway Beaches. The second contract was for another 3,000,000 cubic yards of sand. The first contract provides sand replenishment from Beach 86th Street to Beach 149th Street. The second contract provides sand from Beach 19th Street to Beach 149th Street. As of April 2014, the second 3,000,000 cubic yards of sand has begun being set on the designated beaches.

Parks and Amenities Replacement

Hurricane Sandy also wreaked havoc on parks and recreational facilities on the Rockaway Peninsula, particularly in the area of Shore Front Parkway between 108th Street and 73rd Street. The New York City Department of Parks and Recreation began holding a series of conceptual planning meetings where residents were invited to participate in planning the design of the parks that will be rebuilt.

Projects identified through the conceptual planning phase that are currently funded include one of two skate parks, a roller hockey rink, and Sandpiper Park.

Build It Back NYC

Build It Back NYC is the City program created to assist homeowners, landlords, and tenants in the five boroughs whose primary homes were damaged by Hurricane Sandy. Funded by the Federal Community Development Block Grant- Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Bill passed by Congress, the goal of Build it Back NYC is to help affected residents return to safe, sustainable housing by addressing unmet housing recovery needs.

The grant covers the construction of thousands of new homes, as well as the repair of damaged homes. However, as of August 2014, only one home has been built and none has been repaired. The City has stated that by September, 500 homes are slated to begin reconstruction and repairs, and that 500 homeowners will begin receiving reimbursements for repairs they've already done on their own. However, two years have passed since Hurricane Sandy, and the federal guidelines that have been holding up these projects need to be revised.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Increase the Scope of Focus and Responsibility of the Hurricane Relief Task Force

The Hurricane Relief Task Force has established itself as the body offering the most comprehensive oversight of the Sandy recovery process. The Task Force has brought together the decision makers from organizations including The Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Mayor's Office of Housing Recovery, the New York City Department of Buildings, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and more. By hosting smaller meetings with other stakeholders, more frequently in between the main monthly meetings, the Task Force can better identify and address issues in the recovery process like the delayed Build It Back NYC awards.

Make Ferry Service to the Rockaway Peninsula Permanent

The ferry service to the Rockaways has become a necessary transportation option for the residents. Not only does it provide quick access to Manhattan, it also creates new potential for commercial expansion and economic growth. According to the Economic Development Corporation, the cost to operate this ferry service totals \$8 million annually. The service is currently set to expire by October. The RFP to extend, and make this service permanent, needs to be completed, and funding needs to be appropriated in the November modification to the Fiscal Year 2015 budget.

Provide Regular Status Updates on the Funding and Construction of Recovery Projects

There is currently an information gap among the stakeholders, elected officials, and agencies that are overseeing recovery efforts. All information needs to be centralized and available so that objectives can be tracked and goals can be realized. The various agencies overseeing construction projects need to provide updates on what federal funds were acquired, what projects these funds are being applied to, and how far along construction projects have advanced.

Accelerate the Reconstruction of the Rockaway Boardwalk

The Rockaway boardwalk is the backbone of the Rockaway community. Significant portions of the boardwalk are slated to be reconstructed. However, the first pilings were installed in August 2014. Phase I is expected to be completed in May 2015, and the entire project is expected to be completed in 2017. The construction of the boardwalk needs to be accelerated so that the economic and social benefits of the boardwalk can be realized. Better communication and coordination needs to occur between the public and private entities so that the project is completed in a more timely matter.

Support Ecologically Sound Infrastructure Projects in Jamaica Bay

Ecologically sound infrastructure projects serve the dual purpose of protecting the communities that border Jamaica Bay and improving the natural ecology of the region. The Borough President intends to fully support the development of ecologically sound infrastructure projects like the Spring Creek Mitigation Project and the Sunset Cover Restoration.

SENIOR SERVICES

Existing Conditions and Issues

Queens is home to more than 381,000 persons 60 years of age or older, representing 30% of New York City's elderly population and 20% of the Borough's entire population³⁷. A most dramatic change is the 21.5% increase in the oldest New Yorker's, those 85 years and older, residing in Queens since 1990³⁸. Today, more than 36,000 persons over the age of 85 reside in the Borough³⁹. The older population is increasingly diverse, with over half comprised of minorities, a rapidly growing immigrant population, and an increasing LGBTQ population as well.

New York City is in the middle of an "Aging Tsunami". By 2030 New York City's 60 and older population will increase to a projected 1.84 million, a 47% increase from 2000, and will represent 20% of the total population – seniors will outnumber school-aged children⁴⁰.

While the national poverty rate for older people has declined, New York has experienced an increase. More than 20% of older adults live in poverty⁴¹. Furthermore, while the median income for older adults is often inadequate to cover the high cost of living in New York City, they are prevented from qualifying for public benefits because their income is too high.

The changes in the composition of the Borough's older adult population present significant challenges to existing resources. The Borough is faced with more vulnerable older adults needing more services at a time when senior centers have been closed throughout the Borough. Social Day Care Programs have been defunded, para-transit vehicles are being taken off the road due to lack of operational funding, and waiting lists for home care are longer than ever.

As of April 2014, there are 61 Senior Centers in Queens. They are funded through Title IIIC and Title XX of the Older Americans Act, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), the New York State Community Services for the Elderly (CSE) Program, the New York State Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and city tax levy funds. In recent years, the predominant source of funding for new centers, new programs, and the expansion of existing services have been city tax levy dollars through grants provided by the New York City Department for the Aging, and through discretionary funds allocated by the City Council and the Borough President.

Senior Centers

Senior Centers serve as the network hub for senior services. Located in most communities throughout Queens, these centers typically provide hot congregate lunches, home delivered meals, transportation services, coordinate recreational and educational activities, and offer a wide range of opportunities for socialization and support. Seven of the centers in Queens also have Social Adult Day Care programs for physically and/or mentally frail seniors on site, primarily supported by discretionary funding.

For many seniors the meals provided at these centers are often their principle source of nourishment. In Fiscal Year 2014, more than 1.5 million lunches were served at Queens senior centers, and more than 1 million meals were delivered to home bound clients. In addition, the 12 centers contracted with the Department for the Aging served over 115,000 congregate breakfasts. Queens also has the only vegetarian senior center in the City, serving Flushing's underserved Hindu community.

Innovative services for both visually and hearing impaired have been established in some senior centers. Although special programming have been developed to meet the specific needs of these populations, emphasis is placed on mainstreaming these elderly into all aspects of community life, including activities shared by the general senior population. However, these programs have been reduced due to budget constraints.

In 2012, Queens was awarded two contracts by the Department for the Aging to provide Innovative Senior Centers. Innovative Centers offer a new model of centers for older New Yorkers by providing enhanced programming, including robust wellness programs, additional access to health care services, arts and cultural programs, as well as new technology and volunteer opportunities. The innovative senior centers also go beyond the offerings of the traditional senior centers to include flexible and expanded hours on evenings and weekends, and café-style flexible meal times.

Transportation

Transportation is a critical service that impacts a person's ability to live independently and remain in the community. For most frail and disabled elderly, public transportation is never a viable option. Unfortunately, the Access-A-Ride program does not adequately serve the needs of our elderly residents. Hence, para-transit becomes the most valuable lifeline for our seniors. Through our senior centers, programs, ranging from car service to wheelchair accessible vans, provide transportation for medical appointments, senior centers, shopping centers, and social service agencies.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Although the older adult population has one of the most comprehensive service delivery systems in the city, the ongoing challenge is to ensure that services continue to meet the needs of a very diverse, multi-ethnic, senior population. All demographic data indicates the rise in the older elderly-those 85 years of age and older. Services and programming must keep pace with the ever growing, ever changing older adult population.

Increase Affordable Housing for Seniors

With thousands of seniors on waiting lists for limited Section 202 and other publicly financed housing, older adults must be a part of the City's plan for affordable housing. The Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) program should increase the income eligibility level, lower the tenant's share of rent to 30%, freeze rent, and change regulations to prevent thousands of rent-regulated apartments from becoming market rate. Furthermore, additional housing support should be provided to older adults, including a right to legal counsel in Housing Court, an expansion of Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities program, and the creation of a program to help increase the habitability of living spaces as physical needs change.

Restructure Senior Citizens Centers

Senior centers need to be redesigned so that programming will better match needs and attract a broader spectrum of the ethnically diverse senior population. Funding also needs to be increased so that culturally sensitive congregate and homebound meals are available. This is particularly important for an ethnically diverse Borough like Queens.

Expand Social Adult Day Care Programs

Adult Day Care Services for physically and mentally frail elderly need to be expanded to accommodate the growth in this segment of the population. Respite services, support groups, and counseling for caregivers will also help to prevent premature institutionalization and allow the elderly to age in place.

Expand and Enhance Para-transit Services

Permanent and baselined operating funds need to be provided to support the maintenance and operation of transportation services provided by organizations. Additionally, Access-A-Ride needs to be enhanced so that it better serves our residents.

Eliminate Waiting List for Home Delivered Meals and Deliver Culturally Sensitive Meals

Additional funding needs to be provided to adequately serve the nutritional needs of a frail homebound population. Queens has an estimated eligible homebound population of more than 25,000 persons⁴². The nutritional needs of a growing number of the homebound elderly population are unmet because services are either unavailable or services are not culturally sensitive. The Borough President will advocate for the increase of services, and for meals that are culturally appropriate.

HEALTH

Existing Conditions and Issues

One of the most significant challenges facing the nation is the provision of accessible and affordable health care. In Queens, this challenge has become particularly difficult with the closure of five major acute care hospitals over the past seven years. Prior to these closures studies showed that the Borough was already under-bedded and underserved, with limited access to high-level tertiary care services, high rates of Queens patients out-migrating in search of care, and shortages of community-based doctors.

There is a growing demand for healthcare services in Queens as the development of new housing attracts additional families. In addition, a key driver of the increase for health care services is our aging population: Queens has 384,000 persons 60 years of age and older with 36,000 persons above the age of 85⁴³. Aging populations tend to use more services at greater intensities of care, which result in a higher demand of care.

To add further strain to an already overburdened system, approximately 390,000 Queens' residents do not have health insurance⁴⁴. Patients with insurance have choices, and leave the Borough for care more often than patients without insurance, which continues to contribute to the low operating margins of the Queens hospitals. Reducing the number of insured patients leaving the Borough is key to improving the sustainability of the health care delivery system in Queens. The Affordable Health Care Act has been productive in helping people acquire insurance. A total of 960,762 people enrolled for insurance through the New York State health exchange as of late August, 2014⁴⁵.

Borough Health Indicators - NYC DOHMH Community Health Profiles

Northwest Queens, comprised of Astoria, Long Island City and Sunnyside has the second highest proportion of uninsured adults among all New York City neighborhoods. Foreign born residents in this community are more likely to be without health insurance than those born in the United States.

Women in western Queens, comprised of Corona, Elmhurst, Jackson Heights, Maspeth and Woodside, are less likely to get regular pap tests than women in New York City overall. This neighborhood also has the highest percent of uninsured adults among all 42 New York City neighborhoods.

Mothers in northern Queens, comprised of Auburndale, Bay Terrace, Clearview, College Point, Flushing and Whitestone, are less likely to receive timely prenatal care than mothers in New York City overall. The percent of adults with diabetes increased in north Queens in recent years.

Women in central-western Queens, comprised of Forest Hills, Glendale, Middle Village, Rego Park, and Ridgewood, are less likely to get cancer screenings for breast and cervical cancer than women in New York City overall. Hospitalizations for falls among older adults, as well as hip fractures, are more common in Central-western Queens than in New York City overall.

In central Queens, comprised of Fresh Meadows, Hillcrest, and Kew Garden Hills, the primary cause of premature death is cancer. The leading cause of death is long term illness.

In northeast Queens, comprised of Bayside, Douglaston, Little Neck and Oakland Gardens, cancer is the primary cause of death. Additionally, hospitalizations for hip fractures among older adults are more common in this area than in New York City overall.

In southwest Queens, comprised of Howard Beach, Kew Gardens, Ozone Park, Richmond Hill and Woodhaven, the proportion of low birth weight babies is higher than in New York City overall. Additionally, women in southwest Queens are less likely to get regular pap tests for cervical cancer than women in New York City overall.

In southeast Queens, comprised of Cambria Heights, Glen Oaks, Laurelton, Queens Village and Rosedale, the infant mortality rate is higher than in Queens and New York City overall. Hospitalizations for injuries resulting from motor vehicle accidents are more common in southeast Queens than in New York City.

In Jamaica, the death rate due to diabetes is higher than New York City overall. Babies are also more likely to be born with low birth weight than in New York City overall.

In the Rockaways, the teen birth rate is higher than in New York City overall. Hospitalizations and deaths due to heart disease are more common in the Rockaways as well.

Hospital Facilities

Queens has nine acute care hospitals throughout the Borough responsible for serving 2.3 million residents. The Borough has two municipal hospitals: *Elmhurst Hospital Center* and *Queens Hospital Center*. Major capital investments, including those from the Borough President, towards the expansion of Queens Hospital Center and renovation to Elmhurst Hospital Center, have improved services and changed the perception of public hospitals in the communities they serve.

The other seven hospitals are voluntary and are part of major, multi-facility health systems. They are Jamaica Hospital and Flushing Hospital, part of the Medisis Health Network, Forest Hills Hospital and Long Island Jewish Medical Center, part of the North Shore Long Island Jewish Health System, Mount Sinai Hospital of Queens, New York Hospital of Queens, and St. John's Episcopal Hospital South Shore.

Together, these nine hospitals serve the entire Borough. However, Queens is the most under-bedded Borough in New York City. There are only 2.42 beds per 1000 patients in Queens, compared to 8.30 in Manhattan and 3.79 in Brooklyn⁴⁶.

Summary Status of Hospitals				
Borough	Population	Number of Hospitals	Total Number of Beds	Beds per 1000 Patients
Bronx	1,385,108	11	5,131	3.70
Brooklyn	2,504,700	15	9,487	3.79
Manhattan	1,585,873	20	13,165	8.30
Staten Island	468,730	4	1,324	2.82
Queens	2,230,722	9	5,401	2.42

Primary Care

In the absence of sufficient primary care capacity, the emergency room becomes the primary care provider. This trend has led to the massive overcrowding of all of the Queens emergency rooms. A prime example of this overburden is St. John’s Episcopal Hospital. With the closure of Peninsula Hospital, 50,000 emergency room visits were shifted to St. John’s Episcopal Hospital. Other Borough hospitals have witnessed similar increases in their emergency room intake as a result of hospital closures. In the advent of emerging health crises, the Borough’s emergency room capacity has been compromised several times, most recently with the H1N1 virus.

Over the past couple of years, the Borough has experienced the development of Primary Care Centers. The Federal government has identified several communities as medically underserved, thereby making them eligible federal funds. Through the Primary Care Development Corp. (PCDC) and Federal 330 funds, new centers have opened in Long Island City, Corona, Jamaica, and Far Rockaway. Still primary care access continues to be an issue.

Medical Education

The absence of a major teaching institution in Queens has led all of our hospitals into either mergers or affiliations with medical schools and teaching hospitals in Manhattan, the Bronx and Nassau County. Faculty members and students from these institutions work as interns, residents, and physicians in Queens’ facilities. Queens needs its own teaching institution and clinical campus to attract and retain medical talent in the Borough.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

HIV attacks the immune system, resulting in an inability for the body’s immune system to combat and terminate the virus. HIV is a slowly developing virus that can exist in the body for eight to ten years before any symptoms of AIDS appear. The immune system of a person with AIDS is threatened to the point that medical intervention may be necessary to prevent or treat serious illness.

The AIDS Center of Queens County remains the only borough-wide, community-based HIV/AIDS service provider. It is in the forefront of providing comprehensive social and preventive services to people living with or concerned about HIV/AIDS. Historically, Manhattan received a disproportionate amount of federal, state, and city government funds because

Manhattan based organizations state they serve Queens and other outer borough neighborhoods. However, this means Queens residents will have to travel to Manhattan to receive services, when in fact, receiving services in Queens would be more convenient.

Infant Mortality

Infant survival is highly correlated with prenatal care. Low-income women are much more likely than other women to begin prenatal care later in their pregnancies. The most significant factors leading to increased infant disease and death include inadequate prenatal care, poor nutrition, and stressful and unhealthy environments.

In 2008, Queens was selected as the first of seven sites for a long-range National Children's Health Study. This study will examine the environmental influences on children's health and development in order to improve the health and well-being of children nationwide. The study will take place over a 20-year period.

Strategic Goals and Policies

The goals and policies for the future must center on building a solid foundation for the sustainability of our institutions, as well as the provision of quality, accessible healthcare for the residents of Queens. The challenges have increased substantially since the closure of four hospitals within the past several years.

Strengthen Hospital Resources Throughout the Borough

The City needs to focus on providing resources to enhance the capacity of the Borough's hospitals. The Borough President is dedicated to continue providing capital funds towards the renovation and expansion of our hospitals, but the City needs to provide a significant contribution to the health system in Queens.

In addition to capital dollars, operating dollars need to be realized. This means assisting hospitals in Queens in their requests for CMS Waiver monies (\$8 billion has been waived) coming from the State.

Expand Primary/Urgent Care Programs and Facilities

Expanding primary care programs in underserved communities throughout the Borough would greatly enhance access to quality health care for all residents, especially those living at or below the poverty level. This will relieve the overcrowding in the emergency rooms by providing a "medical home" for all residents. One way to do this is to encourage or incentivize the establishment of primary care facilities within new real estate developments that are occurring throughout the Borough.

Establish a Clinical Campus for the Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education in Queens

An important way to attract and retain medical talent in the Borough is the establishment of a medical school and clinical campus in Queens. Physicians are attracted to the ability to perform research and practice in a teaching environment and providing community physicians with faculty titles at tertiary teaching institutions will encourage those physicians to keep their patients in Queens. The Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education of the City University needs a clinical campus in order to become a four-year degree granting Medical School, and the ideal location for this clinical campus is Queens Hospital Center.

Ensure Fair Share Distribution of Funding for HIV/AIDS Services

The incidence of HIV/AIDS is steadily increasing in the Borough, yet the allocation of available resources is insufficient to meet the needs of our communities. The Borough President intends to provide discretionary funds towards organizations based in Queens that provide services for HIV/AIDS and advocate for a larger proportion of federal, state, and city funds be allocated to Queens based organizations.

HOMELESS SERVICES

Existing Conditions and Issues

The New York City Department of Homeless Services was established in 1993 to address the problem of homelessness in New York City. Since its inception, and especially over the past two decades, the deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill and the burgeoning phenomenon of homeless families have changed the profile of homelessness in New York City. Currently, the Department of Homeless Services directly runs or contracts with more than 200 shelters citywide.

As of April 2014, there were 54,667 homeless people sleeping in shelters, including 13,001 homeless families with 23,116 homeless children, sleeping each night in the New York City municipal shelter system⁴⁷. Families comprise nearly three-quarters of the homeless shelter population. Over the course of Fiscal Year 2013, more than 111,000 different homeless men, women, and children slept in New York City municipal shelter system, including more than 40,000 different homeless children⁴⁸.

There are various triggers responsible for homelessness, which may include eviction, severely overcrowded housing, domestic violence, or hazardous housing conditions. Furthermore, housing prices have been rapidly outpacing wage growth for several years, creating a severe lack of affordable places to live.

The Department of Homeless Services has reduced the length of stay by clients in shelters. Single adults who used shelter in March 2005 spent an average of 328 nights in shelter over the last four years. Single adult clients who used the shelter system in March 2013 spent an average of 247 nights in shelter over the previous four years, a 25% decrease.

The Department of Homeless Services assists clients in shelters with a wide range of services designed to move them quickly to self-sufficiency. In Fiscal Year 2013, the number of families moving out of shelter and into permanent housing has averaged more than 700 per month. In addition, with the aid of federal stimulus funding, they have expanded their prevention efforts. The Homebase program provides case management and financial assistance to help at-risk families and individuals stay housed in the community, including mediation with landlords, job search assistance, benefits advocacy, household budgeting and relocation assistance. Anti-Eviction Legal Services providers have represented more than 40,000 families in housing court with 90% remaining stably housed for at least one year.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Reinstate the Rental Subsidy Program for Homeless Transitioning into Traditional Housing

The City and State recently agreed to fund \$139 million over four years to fund two programs. The first, funded at \$80 million, will provide rental assistance to homeless families that are transitioning from homelessness, in which one person in the household has a full time job. The second, funded at \$59 million, will fund services for those families that have been unable to leave the city's homeless shelter system. These two programs are intended to be successor programs to the Advantage Program, which ended in 2011 due to budget cuts. The Advantage Program, too, provided rental subsidies to transitioning families, but by itself, cost \$140 million. If the two new programs are to be successful, it must be managed well, and many of the overhead costs that the Advantage Program incurred need to be avoided.

Further Expand Housing Legal Services for Families At-Risk

Anti-eviction services are critical to preventing homelessness, especially in instances of illegal evictions. Many families aren't able to access the legal support they need to contest illegal evictions. Funding needs to be increased to expand legal assistance to individuals.

Expand Efforts to Link Clients with Employment

Programs that link the homeless with gainful full employment need to be expanded. Once employed, a streamlined process needs to be created so that these clients are immediately directed to the two new Advantage Program successor programs.

Increase Affordable Housing Stock

The shortage of decent, affordable housing contributes to homelessness in New York City. Since the inception of the New Housing Marketplace Plan, 157,230 units of affordable housing were created throughout New York City. However, only 16,530 of these units, 10.5%, were built in Queens. Affordable and moderate income housing production must be increased in Queens in order to prevent homelessness.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Existing Conditions and Issues

Domestic Violence includes both physical abuse and mental abuse of a person by a spouse or partner, regardless of marital status and sexual orientation. Domestic violence in Queens accounts for less than a quarter of reported cases city wide⁴⁹.

The leading cause of injury to women in Queens remains domestic violence by their partners⁵⁰. There is a wide range of services available to victims. The New York City Family Justice Center in Queens provides assistance to domestic violence victims and their families by giving them access to comprehensive services where they can meet with a prosecutor, petition for an order of protection, and receive legal advice on custody issues. Since its inception in 2008, the Center has served more than 45,000 adults and 4,000 children.

In addition, emergency shelter beds are available throughout the city to help victims. Shelters are operated by the New York City Human Resources Administration, Safe Horizon, the Salvation Army, and other non-profit organizations. There is no accurate number of how many victims are placed in domestic violence shelters because all client information is kept strictly confidential.

The Human Resources Administration currently operates 247 beds in Queens, while other non-profits account for an unspecified number of beds. Safe Horizon, the nation's largest provider of residences for victims of Domestic Violence, offers a 90-bed dwelling site in Queens that is confidential. Those that enter the system through the Human Resource Administration are only allowed to stay up to 180 days. A stay of only 180 days does not give a family sufficient time to find affordable housing, go for counseling, register children in a new school and regain a sense of control in their lives. Many end up being homeless and go through the homeless shelter system operated by the Department of Homeless Services, which does not have the same levels of confidentiality. Additionally, waitlists for domestic violence shelter beds are extremely long. The turnover rate is approximately 3%⁵¹.

There is a policy in place with the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) so that those domestic violence victims who qualify as Emergency N1 Status will have priority into NYCHA vacancies. However, in order to be eligible for Emergency N1 status, applicants must demonstrate that they have reported two documented domestic cases within a two-year period, essentially excluding those that leave their abusers after one reported incident. Additionally, the waiting list for domestic violence victims and intimidated witnesses in Queens in some cases has been more than 9 years. The wait in Brooklyn is five years, the Bronx eight years, and Manhattan is ten years. Last year, according to Safe Horizon and the Legal Aid Society, the New York City Housing Authority was unable to provide housing to 90% of their domestic violence victims⁵².

Shelters operated by non-profit organizations do not have the same limitations as those operated by the Human resource Administration. These shelters also provide services in multiple languages and provide programs that are linguistically and culturally appropriate. However, there are still an insufficient number of shelter beds to meet the needs.

Male Victims

Presently, 17% of all reported domestic violence cases in Queens have male victims. This number is considered under reported. Male victims have problems finding safe housing in the shelter system, since most shelters are only able to house women and their children. There is a shortage of service providers and advocates in Queens when the victims are men, and this needs to be improved.

Teen Victims

The largest increase in domestic violence incidents has occurred among. In 2011, 10.4% of high school students reported being intentionally physically hurt by their partner within the past year⁵³. In 2007, it was estimated that 131 of every 100,000 young women between the ages of 12 and 19 visited an emergency room because of injuries resulting from their partner⁵⁴. The Domestic Violence Hotline received an average of 1,400 calls from teenagers a month and around 10% of domestic violence victims seen in the City's public hospitals are under the age of 20, indicating that dating violence remains prevalent⁵⁵.

Dating violence can have a negative effect on health throughout life according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Teens who are victims are more likely to be depressed and do poorly in school. They are more likely to use drugs and alcohol and have eating disorders. Many teens even attempt suicide. Teens who are victims in high school are at higher risk for victimization in college.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Victims

Domestic violence and dating violence is of particular concern in the LGBTQ community. This is especially the case of LGBTQ teens that have not opened up about their sexual orientation, and fear their parents or other family members will discover their orientation. LGBTQ runaway and homeless youth face additional set of challenges since many don't have support systems in place. Response by law enforcement is another major concern in the LGTBQ community, which often includes verbal harassment and refusal to assist crime victims.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Increase Services for Domestic Violence Emergency Shelters

The 247 emergency shelter beds operated by the Human Resources Administration are not nearly enough to serve the Borough. The City needs to increase the number of shelter beds for victims of domestic violence, and increase funds so that non-profit organizations can expand their shelter services. It is particularly important that we increase the number of shelters operated by non-profit organizations because they are not limited to the 180 day stay that applies to the sites operated by the City.

In addition, the City recently agreed to set aside \$9 million for a one year pilot program that will subsidize rents for domestic violence victims in homeless shelters. A permanent program needs to be implemented once a full evaluation of the pilot program is completed.

Reform NYCHA Emergency N1 Status Designation Process and Prioritize Housing for Emergency N1 Designated Victims

A federal judge has recently ordered the New York City Housing Authority to revamp its intake system, making the process more transparent for applicants and spreading the waitlists between all the Boroughs. However, this change has not yet been fully implemented. The change to the Emergency N1 designation process needs to be implemented as soon as possible, with vacant NYCHA units prioritized for victims.

Increase Services for Male Victims of Domestic Violence

The Borough President is dedicated to increasing awareness for these services, and advocating for greater funding to address the gap in services.

Educate Teens about Dating Violence Prevention and Provide Resources for Teen Victims

Strategies that promote healthy relationships are vital during the preteen and teen years when young people are learning skills they need to form positive relationships with others. This is the ideal time to promote healthy relationships and prevent patterns of dating violence that can last into adulthood. Prevention programs change the attitudes and behaviors linked with dating violence. School based programs that are designed to change social norms and improve problem solving skills should be part of the Department of Education's education curriculum

Increase Services for the Unique Challenges Faced by the LGBTQ Community

The City needs to increase services for LGBTQ victims. Programs like the New York City Anti-Violence Project serve the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and HIV-Affected community, and reach out to domestic violence victims, many of whom are re-victimized by the legal system. These programs offer crisis counseling, domestic violence support groups, court related services and advocacy. Programs like these need to be expanded throughout the Borough.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Existing Conditions and Issues

Queens boasts the highest number of veterans in the five boroughs, as well as the most diverse population of men and women who have served in the Armed Forces. Adjusting to civilian life after service presents many challenges, including physical and mental injuries such as amputation, paralysis, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

New agencies, organizations, and initiatives aimed at the betterment of life for our veterans are consistently taking root in Queens. Volunteer efforts, donation drives, and memorial events occur throughout the year, but there are many existing unmet needs.

Housing and Homelessness

Currently, 130,000 veterans are homeless and hungry on in America, and nearly three million veterans and their families don't have enough to eat each month⁵⁶. According to the New York City Department of Homeless Services, while the total number of veterans in the city's homeless population declined by 12% since 2012, from 622 to 546, the number of homeless women veterans has increased. Securing housing for veterans has been an ongoing challenge in the Borough.

Unemployment

In Queens, nearly 8% of veterans between the ages of 18 to 64 are unemployed; veterans between the ages of 18 and 34 have an unemployment rate of 15.6%⁵⁷. Veterans' hiring initiatives, job fairs, and employment readiness programs are reducing the jobless rate for servicemen and women. Veterans also receive a 10-point credit on New York Civil Service exams as a consideration for military service, and CUNY colleges offer life experience credits for time spent serving. These considerations enhance opportunities for veteran candidates in the job market, while also serving as incentive for those seeking employment to enlist in the Armed Forces. However, many veterans still remain unemployed, and a concerted effort needs to be made to assist veterans find gainful employment.

Recovery and Rehabilitation

Since 2002, 118,829 cases of PTSD have been reported among service members deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan⁵⁸. Many PTSD cases are never reported. Cases of PTSD and traumatic brain injuries can cause veterans to turn to substance abuse which often leads to homelessness, incarceration, and long term hospitalization. There are several programs that assist veterans suffering from PTSD, yet outreach and education needs to be enhanced to capture the unreported.

Cold War Veterans' Property Tax Credit

There are property tax exemptions options available to veterans who have served in the U. S. Armed Forces. An Alternative Veterans' Exception (AVE) is available for individuals who have served in recognized times of war including the Persian Gulf conflict, the Vietnam War, the Korean War, and World War II. Veterans who received an Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, a Navy, Marine Corps, or Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal (not Service Medal) may qualify for the AVE as well.

Disabled veterans and senior citizen veterans get an added property tax exemption, and there is a partial exemption for veterans who purchased the property with pension, bonus or insurance. The Cold War Veterans' Exception is available to the property of veterans who served during the Cold War. However, it is up to the City's discretion whether or not to offer this exemption to qualified veterans. Currently, New York City does not recognize this exemption.

Poor Promotion of Agencies and Organizations

The Veteran community has many avenues of support and opportunities to meet their needs. Unfortunately, only a portion of the veteran population in Queens is aware of the benefits for which they qualify. Organizations like the Disabled American Veterans, Hope for the Warriors, and Reality House have reiterated the need for the City to increase outreach.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Create a Stronger Mechanism for Veterans to Transition from Homelessness to Independent Living

The development of shelters and transition facilities for veterans needs to be encouraged. However, increased focus needs to be made on the actual process of getting homeless veterans to transition into independent living. Programs that educate homeless veterans and improve skills, including financial independence, renter responsibilities, nutrition, and career development need to be enhanced.

Promote Veteran Employment and Hiring Policies

In June 2014, the Office of the Queens Borough President hosted a “Veterans Opportunity Fair,” which included representatives from companies and agencies that are actively seeking to hire veterans, or offer assistance to veteran business owners. The Borough President will continue to build a bridge between veteran job seekers and entities that are willing to provide employment opportunities. The Borough President will continue hosting employment opportunity events and build a network of firms that are actively willing to hire veterans.

Support Veteran Care Facilities

Promoting, supporting, and funding facilities and volunteer groups that provide treatment for veterans suffering from PTSD and other medical ailments will help veterans move towards rehabilitation. In addition, forums with experts in the field of PTSD and brain injuries needs to be more widely available in order to educate the community about the signs of these disorders, and encourage those showing symptoms to seek treatment.

Advocate for Cold War Veterans to Access Entitled Benefits

Cold War veterans should receive the same benefits afforded to those who served in wartime conflicts. The Borough President intends to advocate equal access towards these benefits, and meet with the City Council Members and the City in order to pass policy that will make these benefits available to all those who served during the Cold War.

Make the Office of the Queens Borough President the Hub for Queens Veteran Services

The Borough President intends to make the Office of the Queens Borough President a centralized hub for veterans to gain information and opportunities for life enrichment. This includes hosting job opportunity fairs, seminars, and other related events. The Borough President also intends to create a *Veteran’s Directory* of facilities and organizations that veterans can access for services, made available online and in print upon request.

EDUCATION

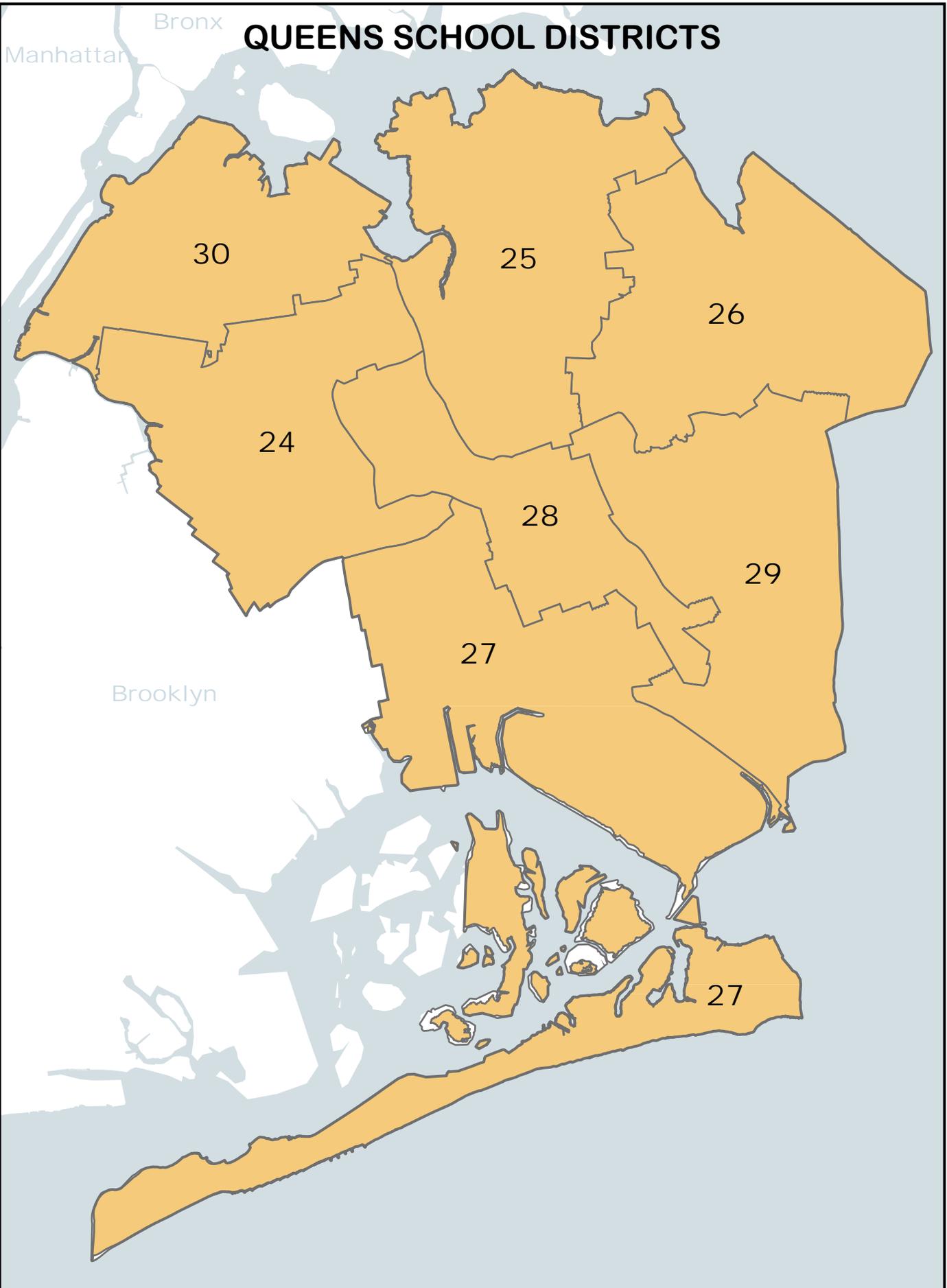
Existing Conditions and Issues

The New York City public school system is the largest in the United States, serving about 1.1 million students in over 1,700 schools. In Queens, there are 277,527 public school students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Of these students, 68.2% of the students are performing at grade level in math, and 54.4% are performing at grade level in reading⁵⁹. Additionally, 63.6% are graduating high school in four years, and 9.5% are dropping out of high school⁶⁰.

Public schools are divided into districts. The following School Districts are located in Queens:

Queens School Districts	Neighborhood
School District 24	Corona, Elmhurst, Maspeth, South Woodside, Middle Village
School District 25	Flushing, Whitestone, College Point, Beechhurst, Murray Hill, Willets Point
School District 26	Bayside, Oakland Gardens, Fresh Meadows, Douglaston, Little Neck, Glen Oaks, Floral Park, Bellerose, Jamaica Estates, Jamaica Hill, Hillcrest, Parts of Hollis Hills and Holliswood
School District 27	Howard Beach, Lindenwood, Ozone Park, South Ozone Park, Richmond Hill, Woodhaven, Far Rockaway
School District 28	Rego Park, Forest Hills, Kew Gardens, Jamaica
School District 29	Holliswood, Queens Village, St. Albans, Hollis, Springfield Gardens, Cambria Heights, Laurelton, Brookville, Rosedale
School District 30	Astoria, Ditmars, East Elmhurst, Hunters Point, Jackson Heights, Long Island City, Sunnyside, and Woodside

QUEENS SCHOOL DISTRICTS



Overcrowding

Queens' School Districts are among the most overcrowded in the entire city. Overcrowding persists for several reasons, including the sharp increase in immigrant populations. Added to this is a migration of working professionals and new families into growing neighborhoods like Long Island City, Astoria, Sunnyside, and Woodside, where development of new multi-story residential buildings is ongoing. In addition to this migration and population growth is the emergence of new homeless shelters. Hundreds of children are being added to the schools.

New seats are desperately needed in Queens' schools, but the process in which new seats are added are ineffective and counterproductive. The New York City Department of Education's method of filling newly constructed schools, called Grade Expansion, calls for only one grade being brought in each year until the school fills. This means, for a kindergarten through grade six elementary school, it will take seven years to finally fill the school, once the students that started in kindergarten reach the sixth grade. The empty space does not go completely unused, however. It is used to "incubate" newly created schools that do not have permanent buildings. Meanwhile, children in neighboring, overcrowded schools continue learning in dilapidated trailers that are over 20 years old.

Years ago, the use of Transportable Classroom Units, commonly known as trailers, was implemented to address overcrowding. However, trailers have a life span of 10 years, and several throughout Queens have been in use for much longer. Additionally, many times, these trailers have no heat and are in dire need of repair. The Department of Education has allocated \$480 million in the 2015-2019 Capital Plan to permanently remove all trailers within five years. The schedule for removal of each unit is contingent upon capacity constraints within the communities. However, these trailers are being used in the most overcrowded schools, and even after their removal, the issue of capacity still exists.

Furthermore, many schools have space in their buildings that is underutilized. These spaces, usually used for storage, can be converted to instructional classrooms.

Top 5 Most Utilized Schools per School District*				
District	School Name	Enrollment	Capacity	Utilization
24	P.S. 28	553	328	169%
24	Pan American International High School	503	304	165%
24	High School for Arts and Business	887	577	154%
24	P.S. 89	1,981	1,328	149%
24	P.S. 12	1,280	870	147%
25	P.S. 242	409	248	165%
25	P.S. 24**	934	587	159%
25	John Bowne High School	3,722	2,391	156%
25	P.S. 163	614	395	155%
25	P.S. 32	947	630	150%
26	Francis Lewis High School**	4,058	2,164	188%
26	P.S. 41**	464	360	160%
26	Bayside High School**	3,241	2,046	158%
26	P.S. 191	409	264	155%
26	P.S. 162	711	468	152%
27	P.S. 51	269	155	174%
27	P.S. 66**	538	320	168%
27	P.S. 64	647	422	153%
27	P.S. 232**	1,068	709	151%
27	P.S. 262	479	322	149%
28	Forest Hills High School	3,800	1,988	191%
28	P.S. 303	203	112	181%
28	P.S. 16	118	78	151%
28	P.S. 30	440	306	144%
28	P.S. 174	676	502	135%
29	P.S. 131**	840	422	199%
29	P.S. 95**	1,477	952	155%
29	P.S. 35	676	549	123%
29	P.S. 195	675	547	123%
29	P.S./I.S. 295	52	43	121%
30	P.S. 228	370	214	173%
30	P.S. 11	1,347	874	154%
30	Academy of American Studies	810	578	140%
30	P.S. 212	808	582	139%
30	P.S. 222	343	249	138%

*DOE Blue Book calculates utilization based on enrollment, which includes students in Transportable Classroom Units (TCUs). However, TCU is excluded in Capacity calculations.

**Utilization includes all schools co-located within building;

***92 schools were not included in calculations; DOE Blue Book did not indicate Enrollment or Capacity

Number of Seats Needed in Queens				
School District	Number of seats created between 2003 - 2013	Number of Seats Funded in 2015-2019 Capital Plan	Sites Found	Seats still needed between 2020 to 2024 Unfunded & Not Sited
24	9,324	4,045	No	4,425
25	1,327	1,397	No	874
26	1,611	912	No	184
27	2,788	960	Yes Site found for 504 seats; Site not found for 456 seats	776
28	2,025	1,096	No	418
29	2,038	1,103	Yes 2 Additions and 1 renovated site opening scheduled 2015-2016	0
30	2,632	1,912	No	941

Co-Located Schools

The practice of co-location has been particularly prevalent over the past decade. The policy of co-location was intended to find underutilized schools, and open new schools within the building to maximize building usage. According to the Independent Budget Office, about 100 schools have been closed and 650 have been created. In Queens, there about 175 schools, including District 75 and charter schools, that are sharing spaces with other schools⁶¹.

The policy has created unwanted consequences. With multiple schools in one location, dividing up the use of shared spaces becomes extremely challenging. Resources need to be divided as well. When the co-located school is a charter, inequity becomes even more apparent. This has been a shared problem across many of the co-located schools in Queens.

Underperforming Schools

Often times, principals are unable to develop turnaround plans for underperforming schools, and those that do are often not provided with the resources they need. Superintendents are now empowered to visit underperforming schools in order to work with principals to identify the support they need. This way a problem could be identified and dealt with before it worsens. Still, principals need added guidance and support in turning around underperforming schools.

Increase Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is the foundation of a well performing student. New structures and initiatives have been implemented to improve parental participation and input. These include the Office of Family Engagement, School Leadership Teams, Parent Coordinators, and district wide parent advocates. However, many parents continue to be concerned that their input is not being

considered. More needs to be done to encourage meaningful parental input and participation in their children's education.

Enhance After School Activities

After-school activities are a vital component to developing our youth. Many students of working parents are left unsupervised following school dismissal, and need a source of developmental activity, rather than being left alone without any meaningful options. School buildings need to remain open to community and youth groups after school hours, and funding for after-school programming needs to be equitably funded throughout the Borough.

Arts and Language

A better emphasis must be placed on art and foreign language in schools. Arts education not only encourages creativity, but also builds the foundation for a lifelong appreciation of cultural stewardship. Similarly, foreign language study encourages appreciation for other cultures, while building a skill-set that is critical to being competitive in a growing global economy.

Technology

Technology is a critical component in teaching and learning. Many schools are not able to integrate the latest technology practices because of aging infrastructure and hardware in their buildings. Many of these schools require significant renovations, including electrical upgrades, in order to incorporate technology into their educational curriculum.

Pre-Kindergarten

Universal pre-kindergarten will give children in all communities in the Borough better access to education and prepare them for kindergarten. Applicants for universal pre-kindergarten can apply for a public school- or community-based organization's program. The application process for each is different, and matriculation at a community-based organization may require tuition. Half-day programs are available for 2 hours and 30 minutes, and full-day programs are available for 6 hours and 20 minutes. Applicants are placed according to priority, based on a number of factors like the availability of existing pre-kindergarten in local schools and having a sibling in the same location.

There is a consensus that universal pre-kindergarten is necessary. However there are some concerns related to the rollout of the program. The primary issue is space as overcrowding is already an issue.

Higher Education

The City University of New York is a vital resource of higher education for students in Queens, serving as a gateway to economic and academic advancement. There are five CUNY campuses in Queens: LaGuardia Community College, Queensborough Community College, Queens College, York College, and the CUNY Law School.

Enrollment remains robust, with an anticipated 63,519 students expected in the five CUNY schools in Queens. The City Universities also provide resources to the borough and city, including classes and lectures, arts and cultural events, resources for economic development, and other programs.

Enrollment by Class Level and College: Fall 2013									
College	Undergraduate			Graduate			Total		
	Full Time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total
Queens	10,769	4,582	15,351	480	3,143	3,623	11,249	7,725	18,974
York	5,153	3,108	8,261	46	0	46	5,199	3,108	8,307
LaGuardia	10,455	9,109	19,564	-	-	-	10,455	9,109	19,564
Queensborough	9,626	6,665	16,291	-	-	-	9,626	6,665	16,291
Law School	-	-	-	380	3	383	380	3	383
Total	36,003	23,464	59,467	906	3,146	4,052	36,909	26,610	63,519

While high school graduation is a prerequisite for enrollment in a majority of colleges, this does not necessarily mean students are college ready. Several high schools in Queens have over 3,500 students and one college/career counselor. Students are not receiving the proper support to be prepared for college and careers since counselors are overwhelmed. Additional resources need to be made available to provide adequate support to reduce this ratio.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Re-establish the Queens Borough President's Education War Room

The Borough President's War Room on school construction is a monthly meeting that brings together the School Construction Authority and Superintendents with the Borough President and key staff. The purpose of the War Room is to monitor the implementation of the capital plan, check on the progress of construction, and to identify construction that needs to be expedited.

The Borough President will continue hosting these monthly meetings, and specifically address the issues of overcrowding, and the need to expedite construction in the most overcrowded School Districts.

Address Overcrowding in Schools

The Grade Expansion method of filling schools is ineffective and inefficient. This method needs to be reconsidered. A plan should be put forth that will transfer students from neighboring overcrowded school. This will be a critical issue, especially with the planned closures of trailers. The Borough President is dedicated to working with the members of the War Room to change matriculation policies in newly constructed schools.

Find Underutilized Space in Schools

A complete inventory of all usable space in all of the schools needs to be compiled, and underutilized spaces should be converted into functional classrooms. Currently, the Borough President is working with the Department of Education to find underutilized space in the following schools in District 24: PS 19, IS 61, PS 143, PS 14, PS 16, PS 13, PS 7, 877 51st Academy, PS 12, PS 199, PS 89, PS 12, and PS 199. Still, the Department of Education needs to take a comprehensive stock of all underutilized space and convert them into classrooms when viable. The Borough President has already worked with the Department of Education in converting underutilized space at Richmond Hill High School, warranting the removal of several trailers.

Alert Parents of New Schools

The Department of Education needs to improve outreach when new schools are constructed and are going to be opened. Parents have indicated to the Office of the Queens Borough President that they were unaware of new school openings. The Department needs to alert parents well ahead of the opening dates so parents can plan accordingly.

List of Schools Currently in Design and Construction					
School District	School Name	Address	Number of Seats	Type Of Construction	Occupancy Year
24	PS 315	96-18 43 rd Ave	1,110	New	2015
24	PS 320	360 Seneca Ave	472	New	2015
24	PS 199	50-15 44 th Street	256	Lease	2015
24	IS 311	97-11 44 th Ave	785	New	2016
24	PS/IS 49	63-60 80 th Street	333	Addition	2017
24	IS 125	46-02 47 th Ave	712	Addition	2017
24	PS 298	50-51 98 th Street	796	New	2017
25	PS 163	159-01 59 th Ave	376	Addition	2016
26	PS 332	210-07 48 th Ave	468	New	2017
27	PS 335	98-40 Albert Rd	504 Seats	New	2017
28	PS/IS 314	88-08 164 th Street	833	New	2015
28	PS 50	143-26 101 st Ave	396	Addition	2016
29	PS 35	191-02 90 th Ave	352	Addition	2015
29	PS 892	199-10 112 th Ave	379	New	2015
29	PS 176	120-45 235 th Street	372	Addition	2016
30	PS 70	30-45 42 nd Street	508	Addition	2014
30	IS 230	74-03 34 th Ave	423	Annex	2014
30	PS 339	39-07 57 th Street	472	New	2015
30	PS 92	99-01 34 th Ave	376	Addition	2016
30	PS 11	54-25 Skillman Ave	856	Addition	2017
78	IS/HS 336	124-06 14 th Ave	507	Lease	To be determined

Prioritize the Construction of New Schools in Communities that are Severely Overcrowded

The School Construction Authority needs to prioritize the siting and construction of new schools in School Districts that are severely overcrowded. This means actively looking for potential sites and working with stakeholders and elected officials in order to better construct schools in areas of urgent need. Any schools with an overutilization rate of 150% need to be prioritized. The Borough President intends to work with the War Room and the City Council to address siting and construction issues.

Turnaround Underperforming Schools

A critical component in addressing low performing schools is the ability to communicate needs between appropriate stakeholders. The Borough President will correspond monthly with superintendents, principals, and the Community Education Council to determine the level of support they need. These needs will be addressed in War Room meetings so that collaborative solutions can be implemented. In particular, high schools will be of focus. The War Room will discuss and identify high schools that are not meeting academic standards.

Once identified, the Office of the Queens Borough President will serve as an intermediary, ensuring that principals are developing a viable plan of action, and that the Department of Education is providing immediate feedback on the viability of the plan. Once the Department approves the plan, the Borough President will work directly with the Department so that adequate levels of funding are provided to the school to implement the plan. Principals who have successfully turned around schools should be mandated to share their turnaround plan so that it can be used as a template for other principals to adopt. Additionally, in schools with high delinquency, the Office of the Queens Borough President will work with the Department of Education's school security department and the District Attorney's mentoring program to ensure troubled youths receive the support they need.

Improve College and Career Bound Counseling Services

The Office of the Borough President will work with the high schools' college and career counselors to ensure they have adequate support to address the needs of students. This includes increasing the number of counselors in schools that need it the most. In addition, the Borough President will post information on how to access financial aid and scholarships on the Borough President's website, and will also provide opportunities for career building workshops like resume building.

Increase Parent Involvement

The Borough President will continue the Parent Advisory Board meetings that are organized by the Borough President's representative to the Panel for Educational Policy. Various Department of Education representatives will be invited to the meeting depending on the issue being discussed, and address concerns presented by parent association presidents. Invitations to these meetings will include the Community Education Council and City Council Members. All meetings will be open to the public so that parents can directly voice concerns to stakeholders.

Enhance Afterschool Activities

The Borough President will work with school principals in order to assess needs, and work with local organizations to provide programming through the Office of the Queens Borough President's discretionary funding grants.

Improve Arts and Language Curriculum

The Office of the Borough President will identify schools currently without foreign language or arts programs, and will work with the Department of Education to ensure that these programs are part of the education curriculum.

Increase Access to Technology

The Borough President will provide capital funds to schools to improve infrastructure and purchase needed educational technology. In addition, the Borough President is dedicated to ensuring that every school has high quality access to the internet. The Office of the Borough President will host a yearly seminar called the Queens Borough President Principals Grant Seminar, where principals will be informed of capital eligibility and how to request capital dollars from the Borough President. In addition, the Borough President will work to partner with private corporations to deliver technology to classrooms.

QUEENS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Existing Conditions and Issues

The Queens Public Library (QPL) with its 62 community libraries, seven Adult Learning Centers, and two Family Literacy Centers, is one of the most treasured institutions in the Borough. QPL serves a population of 2.3 million people and, with 7.5 million items in its collection, it is one of the highest circulations of any public library in the country.

QPL, created by the New York State Education Law, receives most of its operating and capital expenses from the City of New York. In Fiscal Year 2013, the total support was \$128.1 million, of which 85% came from the City of New York.

This vast and varied system fills the educational and cultural needs of the Borough's diverse populations, serving all age, interests, and languages. In Fiscal Year 2014, 17 million items were circulated and in-person attendance was 11.8 million people⁶². Some 675,000 people attended free programs in Fiscal Year 2014⁶³. QPL also offers access to a full array of online resources including e-books, music, magazines, movies, and other databases. QPL has several special collections, including collections in Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Russian, and several South Asian languages; smaller collections are available in other languages.

As a result of several issues involving the allocation of resources by QPL leadership, the New York State Legislature passed legislation in 2014 to reform QPL's governance structure and make it more accountable to its government funders. The new law governing QPL alters the length of time in which the Trustees of the Board may serve, from five years to three, and provides for the removal of Trustees that have failed or refused to carry into effect the educational purpose of the QPL. The new law also requires that Trustees either be residents or operate a business in the Borough. It also reforms the committee structure by which the Board of Trustees oversee the executive director and other QPL personnel. The law now requires the creation of an audit committee to oversee the accounting and financial reporting process of the institution, and an executive committee to provide leadership, structure, and guidance to the full Board of Trustees.

There are additional features of the new law that are intended to increase operational and financial transparency, indicating how QPL allocates its resources to support and enhance programming and infrastructure. For example, the new law requires the Board of Trustees to hold annual public budget hearings and further requires that they provide a thirty-day public comment period prior to the adoption of the budget and report all revenue sources for the budget.

Finally, the new law will require several non-profit "best practice" reforms that will enhance internal controls at QPL, including financial disclosure, limits on secondary employment, and hiring approval from QPL Board of Trustees for key staff.

Strategic Goals and Policies

The Borough President fully supports the new reform measures to increase transparency at the Queens Public Library. The Borough President believes that a revitalized and robust Board of Trustees will increase the level of necessary oversight and continue to steward QPL through difficult budget cycles. Once the provisions of the new law are fully implemented, trust and public faith will be restored in this great institution which has served the “World’s Borough” so well over the last 100 years.

The Borough President is also committed to working with QPL, other government stakeholders, and the communities throughout the Borough to ensure that QPL has adequate branch facilities in every community. The extensive, diverse programming of QPL demands innovative and dynamic space. While half of the current QPL branches have undergone some sort of renovation in the last eight years, there are still several capital projects that have been stalled, including the replacement library in Rockaway and Far Rockaway, and the new Hunters Point Library. It is important to these communities, in particular to those still dealing with the effects of Hurricane Sandy, that these projects proceed.

The Borough President also supports the continued expansion of self-service check-in return technology to all the branches and the reconfiguration of space to accommodate child and teen programming. The Borough President is also committed to the expansion of hours of service at every branch to accommodate additional night and weekend hours.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Existing Conditions and Issues

City Map for the Borough of Queens

The Office of the Queens Borough President maintains the original City Map for Queens and all subsequent changes to the City Map (Alteration Maps) dating back to colonial times. There are a total of over 5,000 original maps. The Office of the Queens Borough President furnishes copies of Queens maps to governmental agencies, utility companies, and the general public. The maps show the dimensions of city blocks and streets, proposed elevations of streets (legal grades), city parks, the waterfront plan, and form the city plan for Queens. The collection of maps shows the historical development of the Borough.

To promote planned development within the Borough of Queens, the integrity of the City Map must be ensured. Remapping of the waterfront is essential. With the recent acceleration of flooding and rising groundwater tables in waterfront communities throughout Queens, it is essential that planned bulkhead elevations and legal grades at waterfront sites be established to prevent flooding. This will ensure that new construction on private property and city infrastructure along the waterfront will not be adversely affected by observed and projected increases of tidal water levels.

In order to ensure the delivery of mail, emergency services, and the continuance of commerce, the Office of the Queens Borough President maintains the address system for the Borough of Queens. New addresses are assigned to new buildings and the information distributed to governmental agencies. Existing and former street names and house numbers are maintained in our files along with recorded city maps and made available to governmental agencies and the general public.

Street Infrastructure

Borough Monuments

The topographical Bureau in the Office of the Queens Borough President records and maintains the geometric data for surveying monuments in Queens, in addition to installing new monuments and replacing missing or damaged monuments. This data is provided to City agencies, utility companies, and the general public to locate street lines and determine legal street elevations for construction projects. The monuments provide the means to maintain the integrity of borough property lines.

Street Reconstruction

Queens streets account for over 38% of New York City's entire street system. Street reconstruction projects often include more than just sidewalk and roadway improvements. It may include work on sewers, water mains, utilities, street trees, pavement markings, pedestrian ramps, street lighting, traffic control devices, or safety improvements, all of which are often integral part of such projects. Depending on the complexity of the reconstruction street and traffic disruption are unavoidable. There are numerous streets throughout the Borough that still require major capital upgrades.

Pedestrian Safety

Pedestrian safety is a significant concern for Queens. Queens had the highest proportion of traffic fatalities in 2013, and major arterial streets such as Queens Boulevard, Northern Boulevard, Woodhaven Boulevard, and Linden Boulevard account for much of these fatalities⁶⁴. Streets must be redesigned to be safer and more efficient.

Sewer Infrastructure

There are 1,019 miles of sanitary sewers, 943 miles of combined sewers, and 797 miles of storm sewers within the 2,443 miles of Queens streets. However, Queens residents still remain underserved by its sewer system. There are still houses that discharge sewage into city bays, streets that become flooded due to inadequate, malfunctioning, or collapsed sewers, and neighborhoods in southeast Queens, northeast Queens, and the Rockaways that suffer from chronic flooding because of the lack of storm sewers.

Many of the existing sewers do not conform to the standards of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection and are in need of significant upgrades. The Department has begun some infrastructure upgrades throughout Queens, like the build-out of a drainage plan for southeast Queens and installation of storm sewers in Whitestone. Still much capital improvements are necessary.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Digitize the City Map for the Borough of Queens

The Office of the Queens Borough President prepares and maintains the City Map for the Borough of Queens. In order to make these maps more accessible, the Borough president is dedicated to digitizing all maps and making accessible through the Office of the Borough President's website.

Use underutilized Streets for Pedestrian and Neighborhood Enhancements

Streets are often redesigned or changed during reconstruction projects, making new space available. City-owned parcels of formerly mapped streets should be considered for conversion to public squares or reserved for used to make pedestrian improvements. Streets in historic districts should also be improved using original or historic materials to reinforce enhance the historic character of that district.

Coordinate Capital Reconstruction Projects

Planning for street reconstruction projects are complicated because projects need to be coordinated across different City agencies. Funding and planning for street reconstruction projects must be coordinated to minimize unnecessary street and traffic disruptions.

Increase Protection for Pedestrians

Streets need to be redesigned in order to reduce pedestrian traffic fatalities. This includes implementing elements of Vision Zero across the Borough, and redesigning high traffic streets so that they include countdown signals, traffic signals which maintain protected walk time, protected medians, and the enforcement of speeding violations.

Maintain Capital Commitments for Queens Sewer Projects

Sewers represent the primary infrastructure challenge for Queens that needs to be addressed in the capital budget. Capital funds that are already committed for these projects must remain in capital plan. Any additional funding necessary to complete projects must be committed in order to fully implement sewer projects.

The Borough President has begun addressing flooding and sewer issues in southeast Queens by forming the Taskforce on Southeast Queens, and working with stakeholders and resident to address some of the chronic flooding issues. The Borough President also intends to work with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation to address the flooding in parts of Flushing Meadows Corona Park.

TRANSPORTATION

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND ROADWAYS

Existing Conditions and Issues

Transportation issues in Queens are a result of inadequate transit infrastructure of both mass transit and on our roadways. Queens' transportation infrastructure was designed piecemeal over time to meet burgeoning needs, whose capacity we have now surpassed. To remedy these issues in the short-term, new mass transit options need to be examined. In addition to these short term goals, more ambitious strategies must be examined in the long term to begin to address the outdated transit infrastructure to eventually supplant the short-term solutions and meet the future demand of a rising population.

These traffic problems, both on the roads and in mass transit, are a significant impediment to current and future economic growth throughout the Borough. Transportation is a critical component in keeping the Borough's economy healthy and improving economically neglected areas. Without adequate transportation, neighborhoods throughout the Borough, like the Rockaways and parts of southeast Queens, will not be able to grow local businesses. Existing conditions in neighborhoods throughout Queens have actively held back the economic development of communities in need of revitalization. As the Borough and the city continue to grow and become less Manhattan-centric, inadequate transit will undoubtedly cap growth and bias economic prosperity towards those communities that are more accessible.

Evaluation of these problems is necessary on a Borough-wide and citywide basis to implement strategies to make our roads more efficient and mass transit options more diverse. Increased service on existing Metropolitan Transportation Authority transit can only do so much and will remain insufficient as Queens continues to grow.

Strategic Goals and Policies

For many Queens residents, public transportation is either not an option or impractical because it takes too long. This has led residents using vehicles as a primary means of transportation, overcrowding roadways which are not capable of handling rush hour traffic. Mass transit service needs to be increased to create new and meaningful mass transit options.

Short-Term Goals

Expand Ferry Service for Waterfront Communities

The most underutilized asset in creating additional transit for Queens' residents is through our waterways. Neighborhoods along the water, like Astoria, Long Island City, College Point, Whitestone, and all of the Rockaways, would see reduced commute times to Manhattan with the establishment of a ferry service. It will also provide an ancillary benefit of relieving our already overburdened roadways. Service to Astoria and Long Island City would also make travel to these burgeoning neighborhoods easier, providing additional customers to growing local businesses. The City must first fully fund the Rockaway ferry and make it a permanent mainstay.

Provide Select Bus Service along Major Arterial Roadways

Because direct access to the subway is limited throughout the Borough, buses are a vital part of Queens' mass transit infrastructure. Unfortunately, buses rely on arterial roadways that are heavily trafficked by a large numbers of commuters, many who are driving to subway access points. By implementing Select Bus Service (SBS) in the appropriate locations throughout the Borough, quicker commutes for thousands of Queens residents can be provided. In the locations throughout the city that have already implemented SBS, ridership has increased and commute times have decreased, alleviating traffic on overused roadways.

Increase Subway/Bus Service on existing lines

Constructing new subway or rail lines cannot be achieved quickly or inexpensively. However, bus service and subway service can be expanded at a lower relative cost. In transit deserts throughout the Borough, like east and southeast Queens, creating new service lines and enhancing current service lines are necessary to relieving overcrowding and expanding service to underserved communities. These improvements are required not only to maintain and improve existing levels of service, but also to meet the needs of growing neighborhoods that are becoming more densely populated.

Symptoms of these needs are especially apparent in southeast Queens where unregulated commuter vans travel along existing bus routes, picking up commuters that cannot be accommodated by the current service capacity.

Expand LIRR Service

Currently, the Long Island Rail Road service is only available in relatively few neighborhoods, serving a limited number of Queens residents. It remains primarily a mode of transportation for commuters from Long Island, rather than primarily serving Queens. By reopening closed stations in appropriate neighborhoods, the Long Island Rail Road can be another option that alleviates stress off of existing roadways, subway, and bus service routes. Two such stations are the former Elmhurst station (located between Whitney and Cornish Avenues on Broadway) and Corona station (located between 44th and 45th Avenues on National Street) Both of these stations are

located in the one of the most overcrowded neighborhoods; Queens Community District 4, which consists of Elmhurst and Corona, is currently the 2nd most severely overcrowded community district in the entire city⁶⁴.

Expand Bike Share in Western Queens Neighborhoods

As a Borough of diverse neighborhoods, many alternative forms of transit will not be appropriate for every community. In communities where it is suitable, making bike paths more accessible is another way to increase transit efficiency. For neighborhoods in western Queens, like Astoria, Long Island City, and Sunnyside, bicycles can be another low-cost element in our Borough-wide transit plan. The expansion of bike share to western Queens is a critical component of incorporating bikes into our transit strategy.

Removal of Toll on the Cross Bay Bridge

Rockaway Beach is Queens' beach. The toll on the Cross Bay Bridge penalizes residents and local businesses by lowering the number of visitors and shoppers, inhibiting future economic growth opportunities on the peninsula. In effect, it provides a reverse incentive to avoid traveling to the Rockaways because there is no other direct route for the majority of Queens' residents. After Hurricane Sandy, the Rockaways needed the help and support of government to restore and rebuild their neighborhood in a smarter and a more resilient way. The toll stands in direct contradiction to these goals.

Long-Term Goals

Redesign Arterial Roadways

While expanding Select Bus Service will help alleviate traffic and decrease travel time for commuters, there are still many underlying issues with large arterial roadways throughout the Borough that need to be addressed. Redesigning roads are a necessary step to address overcrowding. Woodhaven/Cross Bay Boulevard is a prime example of a roadway that needs to be significantly revamped, where a lack of turn lanes, frequent lane merging, and poorly placed bus lanes cause significant traffic. Addressing issues like these on other major roadways are critical.

Re-examine Congested Commercial Hubs

In commercial hubs throughout Queens, traffic can overwhelm streets, particularly during peak times, making it more difficult for visitors and shoppers to support local businesses. Among the many commercial hubs, Main Street, Austin Street, and Jamaica Avenue are particular examples of where parking and slow moving traffic discourage commerce. While improved mass transit will begin to address this issue, Queens residents still rely on the automobile as a primary mode of transportation. We must reexamine existing traffic conditions and look for opportunities to create additional parking at affordable rates in commercial hubs to help grow local businesses.

Develop Additional Transit Infrastructure

As parts of the Borough become more densely populated, it will require more mass transportation options. It is critical that new opportunities are examined, created, and integrated into the current infrastructure. New subway lines may be prohibitively expensive, but other methods of mass transit, such as Light Rail or monorail trains, may be viable alternatives. These efforts should be focused on neighborhoods that are poorly or under serviced by bus transit in order to reduce roadway congestion as much as possible.

AVIATION

Existing Conditions and Issues

Queens has enjoyed the advantages and suffered the consequences of having two of the country's busiest airports, LaGuardia and John F. Kennedy Airports, located within its borders. The year 2013 was a record setting year for both, with 26.7 million passengers using LaGuardia and 50.4 million passengers using Kennedy⁶⁶. Combined, the two airports directly provides 300,000 jobs, generates about \$15.6 billion in wages, and adds almost \$42.4 billion in economic activity to the region⁶⁷.

The Port Authority of New York & New Jersey operates the airports while the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) controls air traffic. Both continue to improve their efforts to modernize their facilities and equipment, making air transportation more efficient and cost-effective for both the air carriers and passengers. The Port Authority is beginning a \$3.8 billion redevelopment project at LaGuardia, including the redevelopment of the Central Terminal Building, upgrades to the airport infrastructure to create more landside and airside capacity, construction of a new electrical substation, and expansion of the parking lot.

The Port Authority also has runway safety projects to increase the length of the runway safety areas underway at both LaGuardia and Kennedy. The FAA has announced that it will begin the design process for a new state-of-the-art air traffic facility. In addition, two major airlines, JetBlue and Delta, have invested billions of dollars in creating hubs and new terminals at LaGuardia and Kennedy.

As a result of having high trafficked airports, Queens has a congested and complex airspace. The FAA has stepped up its efforts to redesign the airspace over New York, implementing and changing flight patterns to reduce delays. The FAA is rolling out new efforts to reduce delays using the Metroplex Approach, which uses Precision Based Navigation procedures to deliver more efficient operations and to ease bottlenecks. In addition to airspace redesign efforts, the FAA has initiated efforts to fully implement Next Gen GPS technology that guides planes by satellite, rather than radar, allowing reduction of space between aircrafts.

While the airports are vital to the economic engine of the Borough, they also negatively impact the communities surrounding them due to the airplane noise and air pollution they produce. Airplane noise at elevated levels is a daily occurrence in the adjacent communities to the airport. Other than a noise study done by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection under the New York City Noise Code in 2010, no other noise or environmental impact study has been done to examine the health or quality of life issues created by the Borough's airports. And until the recent commitment by the Port Authority, in 2014, to add new portable noise monitors, there have only been two permanent and two portable noise monitors at LaGuardia and six permanent and five portable noise monitors at Kennedy. The use of specific flight patterns to reduce airspace congestion has led to a dramatic increase in low altitude aircraft noise in communities in southeast Queens and northern Queens. While GPS is more accurate, it also concentrates flights and noise over designated areas, adding to the ever-present aircraft noise in communities in the Borough.

In response to the growing outcry by residents, local elected officials, and other stakeholders, the Governor ordered the Port Authority to do a Federal Part 150 study, which will establish and map out noise contours. This allows for Federal funding for noise mitigation efforts, such as noise proofing homes, schools, and nursing homes. The Governor also ordered the establishment of an Aviation Community Roundtable. Currently, a roundtable exists for each airport and the Port Authority is in the process of securing the entity that will conduct the study.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Support LaGuardia and Kennedy Airport Redevelopment Efforts while Ensuring the Community is Protected from Air Plane Noise Pollution

It is crucial that communities adjacent to the airports benefit from the economic growth, while remaining protected from noise pollution during both the infrastructure redevelopment, and the implementation of the new technologies that are going to make airspace safer and more efficient.

The Borough President will support redevelopment efforts at both airports, and will also work with the Port Authority and the communities surrounding the airports to ensure that the vital redevelopment work occurring at the airport will cease to impact quality of life. Queens is the gateway to New York City, and our airports need to be modern and efficient to be able to service the 80 million people expected to pass through them this year⁶⁸.

Ensure Community Participation in Aviation Community Roundtable Discussions

It is a pivotal moment for the communities, civic groups, and stakeholders surrounding the airports that have worked to raise awareness and address the airplane noise issue. The Part 150 Study being done by the Port Authority, and the participation and work of the Aviation Community Roundtables, which provides an opportunity for the community to address the noise issue in a grassroots, comprehensive manner. The noise contour maps that will be created as a result of the study will help minimize the impact of airplane noise in the communities it affects because these areas will then qualify for federal noise mitigation funds.

The Borough President will take an active role in working with all the regulators and stakeholders to ensure that the process for the Part 150 Study and the participation in the Aviation Community Roundtables is inclusive. Additionally, the Borough President will work with stakeholders to push for a ban of flights over heavily populated areas, to the extent possible, especially during nighttime hours.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Existing Conditions and Issues

Parks are essential to the life of any neighborhood, especially in a complex city such as New York. The New York City Department of Parks and Recreation is the steward of approximately 29,000 acres of land – 14% of New York City – including more than 5,000 individual properties ranging from Rockaway Beach and Central Park to community gardens and Greenstreets. Parks are places to play ball, listen to a concert, discover the wonders of nature, and enjoy a few precious moments with our families. They are a refuge from a hectic pace of day-to-day life.

The Department operates more than 800 athletic fields and nearly 1,000 playgrounds; 550 tennis courts, 54 public pools, 36 recreation centers, 15 nature centers, 13 golf courses and 14 miles of beaches. The Department also cares for nearly 800 monuments and 23 historic house museums.

Queens has one of the highest parkland acreages of any Borough. The 7,272 acres of parkland are situated in 464 parks, playgrounds, triangles, and malls throughout the Borough's 14 community boards. This includes the flagship Flushing Meadows Corona Park and 127 acres of Jointly Operated Playgrounds adjoining schools.

Flushing Meadows Corona Park

Flushing Meadows Corona Park represents one of New York's most heavily used open spaces, playing host to the 1939 and 1964 World's Fairs. It is also the home of one of the City's largest recreational facilities ever constructed within a city park – the new Pool and Ice Skating Rink.

Today, the Borough's flagship park contains 990 acres of athletic fields, landscaped meadows, lakes, fountains, playgrounds, stadiums, museums, and a Zoo. It is the home of Citi Field, the Arthur Ashe Stadium of the United States Tennis Association, the Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, the Hall of Science, the Queens Museum, the Queens Botanical Gardens, the Queens Theatre, the Queens Zoo, the Playground for All Children, and a skate park.

The Park has also witnessed some remarkable growth over the years; The Hall of Science has been greatly expanded, as has the Queens Theatre. The Queens Museum has doubled its exhibition space. The Al Oerter recreation center runs classes for members and non-members through Shape-Up NYC. It also takes the lead in running the most adaptive sports programs city-wide. The Queens Botanical Gardens continues to improve its facility with a Platinum LEED Administration Building, enhanced gardens, and a new pathway system for the gardens. The boathouse has been fully renovated and refurbished. Citi Field has replaced Shea Stadium.

The last great remnant of the two World's Fairs that graced the park is the former New York State Pavilion. The Pavilion, constructed for the 1964-65 World's Fair, contains three components, the Tent of Tomorrow, the three observation towers which soar over 200 feet above the park, and the former "Theaterama" which is now the Queens Theatre. Since the closing of the Fair in 1965 the Pavilion, save for the Queens Theatre, had deteriorated to the point where its fate was in the balance. Starting in January 2014, the Queens Borough President spearheaded the fight to save and restore the Pavilion to its former glory. Working with the Mayor, the New York City Council and other local elected officials, the New York City Department of Parks and

Recreation, other interested organizations, and the residents of Queens, the Borough President has championed the preservation of the Pavilion. In just six months, \$5.8 million in funding has been secured to begin the restoration work on the Pavilion. Scoping work has begun on the project and it is expected that the first phase of the restoration process will begin in the basement of the towers, including electrical and flooding prevention work.

Flushing Meadows Corona Park – Capital Projects: \$19,373,000

Project	Funding	Status
Ederle Pavilion Concession	407,000	Completed
Boat House Upgrades	3,500,000	Completed
Boat House Dock	2,000,000	Completed
Temporary Structure for Boat House users during construction	121,000	Completed
Unisphere upgrades	1,000,000	Completed
New Pool and Skating Rink Facility	10,500,000	Completed
NEC Sector work for the Pool entrance: Landscaping, pathways and tree-planting	1,395,000	Completed
New Volley Ball Court with nets and benches – adjacent to the Lake	450,000	Completed
TOTAL	\$19,373,000	

The pathway system around Meadow Lake is in the process of being funded for landscaping and upgrading.

Alley Pond Park

Alley Pond Park, in northeastern Queens, offers 655 acres of the most rustic and secluded natural areas in the Borough, ranging from wooded trails beneath towering oak trees to wide vistas of honey colored marsh grasses. The park also offers baseball and football fields, handball and tennis courts, picnic grounds, and a new Adventure Course that provides challenges and excitement for groups and individuals as they work through physically and intellectually demanding obstacles.

Since 1972, the Alley Pond Environmental Center (APEC) has been instrumental in providing the public with the understanding of the park’s history and ecology, and has been offering educational courses, school trips, tours, and exhibits. A new 6,000 square foot addition is planned, as well as the creation of outdoor classrooms, along with improvements to trails, circulation, visitor orientation, noise control, and restoration plantings.

Natural open space may be in abundance in the Adirondacks or the Catskills, but within city limits it is a threatened species. In 2005, the New York State Department of Transportation completed its Long Island Expressway/Cross Island Parkway Interchange Improvement project. The Department of Environmental Protection completed the restoration at the park in conjunction with its Alley Creek Combined Sewage Overflow facility. The restoration project included the construction of eight acres of tidal wetlands and eight acres of adjacent coastal grassland and shrub land habitat. Prior to the restoration, the area was dominated by invasive

plants that prevented native plants and animals from being established within the park. More than 450 trees were planted in the southern portion of the park. The Department of Environmental Protection will also upgrade a holding area and tree nursery off Northern Boulevard and 234th Street as part of the agreement for the upgraded Combined Sewer Overflow facility near the Alley Pond Environmental Center. They will also bring water service to that location.

In April 2013, The Department of Parks and Recreation planted 9,700 trees/shrubs at the eastern end of Alley Pond Park, just south of Northern Boulevard, which removed many invasive tree species. Additional plantings were completed in the fall of 2013.

The Department of Environmental Protection is currently upgrading the pump station at Alley Pond located at Douglaston Parkway and the Cross Island Parkway/Long Island Expressway interchange.

Forest Park

Forest Park is the third largest park in Queens, covering a total of 538 acres. The park sits on top of an ancient glacial ridge. The Forest Park greenhouses have been substantially upgraded. The facility is responsible for the production of more than 200,000 plants annually. The western portion of Forest Park has been transformed into an athletic playground with baseball, softball, bocce, and handball courts. Also located in the western portion are some non-sporting venues such as the George Seuffert Bandshell, which can accommodate up to 3,500 people.

Victory Field, located off Woodhaven Boulevard and Forest Parks Drive is the site of a 400-meter track with two synthetic fields in the interior. The track surface has been replaced with an all-weather track surface and the multi-purpose synthetic field was also put into place in the interior. New bleachers and drinking fountains have also been installed.

The Greenhouse nestled among towering oak trees in Forest Park has served the city's parks since it was built in 1904. A total of \$3,885,000 allocated by the Mayor, Borough President, and City Council has allowed the Greenhouse to be redesigned while preserving its existing historic features. The funding for the Greenhouse has provided a state-of-the-art facility with the latest technology for growing plants. The growing season and production has increased, and the nursery is now using an efficient system of rolling benches, doubling the growing area. Increases have been made to the energy efficiency of the greenhouse through the use of smart heating and control systems. There is a drip irrigation system that is controlled by a computer, reducing the amount of water loss. The system can be programmed to water individual plants according to their needs. In the past, the Greenhouse was able to produce approximately 200,000 colorful annuals and perennials, now it is able to produce 250,000, a 25% increase.

The Overlook has new windows and new window treatments funded by the Borough President. The Seuffert Bandshell project has been completed. Work included the restoration of the Bandshell benches, new plantings and fence work. The recreational areas at Victory Field Track and Field have been upgraded at a cost of more than \$3 million.

Cunningham Park

A walk down one of the park's many paths provides a far different perspective than those seen from the highways that cut through this 358-acre park. Beyond the highways and forests, shallow kettle ponds, fields filled with plants and wildlife, and 260 acres of outstanding natural lands that many assume can only be found in the countryside. The park also offers tennis, baseball, softball, basketball, bocce, picnic areas, playgrounds, and a playschool and summer camp. Five ballfields have just been completed at 193rd and Union Turnpike. Reconstruction of the tennis courts has been completed. The park continues to play host to concerts, the Big Apple Circus and PSAL Cross Country running events.

Baisley Pond Park

Baisley Pond Park in southern Queens covers approximately 109 acres. The park is perceived as two distinct parcels, separated by Rockaway Boulevard. Recent improvements to the Park include new asphalt paths, a new cricket field, path work, new plantings, drainage, and an upgrade to existing comfort stations. The portion north of Rockaway Boulevard is the original park, encompassing approximately 75 acres with a 20-acre lake in its center. This part of the park is heavily used by the community for recreation, jogging, football, soccer, tennis and basketball.

Idlewild Park

Three municipal agencies worked in collaboration to restore the landscapes and wetlands of a 23 acre portion of this 224 acre expanse abutting John F. Kennedy Airport and Nassau County. This \$1.7 million project funded by the Department of Environmental Protection resulted in the planting of more than 1,000 trees, 2,140 shrubs, and thousands of salt water and fresh water marsh grasses and wetland plants. The Borough President funded a new environmental center at Idlewild Park. A new Cricket Field was completed in 2009. Currently, there is a memorandum of understanding between the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the Department of Parks and Recreation that earmarks \$10 million for tree restoration and maintenance of Idlewild Park.

Little Neck Bay

For more than 35 years the City has been committed to the acquisition of the undeveloped land in Udalls Cove Ravine to be incorporated into the Udalls Cove Ravine and Preserve. The Ravine is a natural area between Little Neck and Douglaston, lying between 243rd and 247th Street, and between Northern Boulevard and the Long Island Rail Road. The ravine is an upland watershed for the freshwater wetlands – including the newly restored Aurora Pond and Salt Marsh. Approximately 70% of the Ravine acreage has been acquired or is in the process of being acquired. Four to five acres have yet to be acquired to complete the Park as designed. Both Community Board #11 and the Udalls Cove Preservation Committee have carried this priority in their Capital Budget Requests for several years.

Rockaway Beaches and Boardwalk

There was extensive damage to the Rockaway beaches and boardwalk from Hurricane Sandy. Following the storm, a massive clean-up effort removed debris and sand, as well as reclaimed boardwalk slats and timber. Interim protective measures were installed, including new larger baffle walls and a network of trap bags. New concrete boardwalk islands were constructed and opened at Beach 86th, Beach 97th, Beach 106th, and Beach 116th/117th Streets, and beach access

was made possible throughout the peninsula for the summer season. Concessions were also opened at Beach 17th, Beach 67th, Beach 86th, Beach 97th, and Beach 106th Streets. Some undamaged portions of the boardwalk were also opened, while other minimally-damaged portions were repaired and made ready for the season. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is working to replenish sand to severely eroded beaches in Rockaway and will continue to work through the end of the year. The larger restoration effort, including the installation of permanent protection measures and the full rebuild of the boardwalk has begun and we are working with the City, State, and Federal Agencies and the Rockaway community to move this process along to a successful conclusion.

Open Space Amenities

Open space/recreational facilities in the Borough are not limited solely to formally mapped parks. Public school playgrounds, vacant city-owned lots, numerous wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive lands provide a few examples.

The many playgrounds and playing fields at public schools throughout the Borough provide excellent open space and recreational resources. More than 120 acres of playgrounds are made available to the public during non-school hours through the Jointly Operated Playgrounds. Unfortunately, many of the public school open space facilities remain locked during the evenings, weekends, and holidays, denying valuable open space resources.

Large-scale real estate developments provide needed open space as well. Queens West provides significant amounts of open space as part of the required design guidelines. An estimated 20 acres of publicly accessible open space and recreational facilities are proposed, including a 1.25 mile continuous waterfront esplanade. A .75-acre active community park was opened in 1996 and the 4.5-acre Gantry plaza waterfront park opened in the spring of 1998. These parks are being operated and maintained by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Hunter's Point South, a mixed-use development on a 30-acre parcel in Hunters Point includes nearly 12 acres of open space, including an 11-acre waterfront park. The Phase I work, which includes a synthetic turf field and lawn area, playground, dog run, urban beach, basketball courts, pier deck and comfort station was opened to the public in August 2013.

While most parkland in Queens is under the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, State and Federal parks are also found in the Borough, including the 12-acre Bayswater Point State Park in the Rockaways. The Gateway National Recreation Area, a larger federal park located along the southern shore of Queens, includes Riis Park, Fort Tilden, Breezy Point, and the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. This facility was conceived as an opportunity to preserve shoreline open space and serve the recreational needs of the region. In 1972, this expansive waterfront assemblage was incorporated into the National Park Service system. It was the first National Recreation Area in a major metropolitan area and is the most visited unit of the National Park System.

Other local waterfront parks in Queens include: Udalls Cove, Alley Pond Park, Crocheron Park/Bayside Marina, Little Bay Park/Clearview Beach, Francis Lewis Park, Powell's Cove (Whitestone), McNeil Park, Flushing Bay Marina and Promenade, Astoria Park/Ralph Demarco

Park, Hallets Cove Esplanade, Rainey Park, Queensbridge Park, Bayswater Park, Mott Basin, Fort Totten, Rockaway Community Park, Dubos Point, and Brant Point.

The Queens shoreline also contains many ecologically valuable areas, consisting predominantly of wetland and uplands. The 350 acres of salt and freshwater wetland found largely in Jamaica Bay along the northeastern shore are important wildlife habitats. With proper preservation, these lands can enhance existing open space facilities by offering such passive recreational opportunities as walking paths, nature watches, and scenic view areas.

Recreational uses are also found along the shoreline throughout the Borough. Queens has approximately 2,100 acres, accounting for nearly 20% of the City’s entire shoreline recreational acreage. These and other waterfront recreational amenities, representing a large part of the Borough’s park system, range from promenades to marinas to parks and beaches, and include both active and passive recreational opportunities.

Swimming

Quality public swimming facilities in the Borough include four major pools, Astoria, Fisher, Liberty, and Fort Totten. Capital upgrades are being made to the Astoria Pool infrastructure and the diving pool. The Fort Totten Pool is now complete, funded by the Office of the Queens Borough President in the amount of \$500,000, with new pointing and cement work, and new ADA compliance work at Fisher Pool. There is an indoor pool at Roy Wilkins Recreational Center and an Aquatic Center in Flushing Meadows Corona Park that was completed at a cost of \$52 Million. Other park pools include:

Location	Pool Name	Address
Astoria	Astoria Park	19 th Avenue & 23 rd Drive
East Elmhurst	Fisher Pool	45 th Street & 30 th Road
Fort Totten	Fort Totten	338 Story Avenue
Liberty	Detective Keith Williams Park	173 rd Street & 106 th Avenue
Windmuller	Lawrence Virgillio Playground	52 nd Street & 39 th Drive
Marie Curie Park	Marie Curie Park Pool	211 th Street & 46 th Avenue
Flushing Meadows Corona Park	FMCP Pool and Rink	Avery Avenue & 131 st Street
Southern Queens Park	Roy Wilkins Recreation Center	177 th Street & Baisley Blvd

Boating

The New York City Water Trail connects 160 square miles of rivers, bays, creeks, inlets, and the ocean in the five boroughs, suitable for kayaks, canoes, and open water rowing craft. The trail is anticipated to expand over the next ten years in tandem with waterfront development in Queens and the other four boroughs. There are currently nine boat launch locations in Queens with more planned for the future. The American Small Craft Association Inc. (TASCA) teaches sailing and water safety at Flushing Meadows Corona Park Boathouse on Meadow Lake. The Boathouse has been fully renovated with a new façade, new windows, reconfigured space and new pathways. It is the home of TASCA, the Annual Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival, and Row NY.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Address Limited or Inadequate Open Space/Recreational Facilities

A guideline used in determining the adequacy of parkland acreage is the goal of 2.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons, established by the Department of City Planning. Queens compares favorably with this standard, having approximately 2.61 acres per 1,000 people. However, parkland is not equally dispersed along the 14 community districts. Eight districts fall below this standard, with several falling below one acre per 1,000 persons.

A common issue raised by community boards regarding parks and open space is the deficiency of parkland. Community Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, and 12 all fail to meet the open space standards. These community boards and local civic groups recognize this deficiency and understand the need to identify potential sites for parkland and other recreational facilities, including possible sites for winter sports facilities in southeast Queens.

Increase Public Access to Parks and other Open Space

A common complaint about the Borough's park system is the inability of many residents to access facilities that are underutilized, thereby increasing the potential for vandalism, poor maintenance, and possible abandonment by the surrounding community.

Queens is home to some of the city's finest open space facilities including Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Alley Pond Park, and Forest Park. Vehicular access to these facilities can be improved through the expansion of public bus lines or jitney services, particularly to and within Flushing Meadows Corona Park.

The existing Brooklyn-Queens Greenway provides an innovative and underutilized means of increasing accessibility to our recreational resources. As limited opportunities exist to expand the existing street and road network of the borough, alternative means of improving transportation to our parks facilities must be developed.

Maintain and Restore Regional and Sub-regional Park and Recreational Facilities

Ensuring a sustained capital investment in local parks, and providing maintenance and operations, staff should be a foundation of the city budget. Ensuring an adequate workforce to maintain those investments, and creating a safe environment for park visitors is also required. Adequate staffing includes a fair share of Park Enforcement Patrol Officers who help ensure public safety in our parks.

Expand Pedestrian/Bicycle Trails

The development of a safe and effective system of bicycle and pedestrian transportation plays an important role in open space planning. A comprehensive bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure includes an interconnected system of on-street bike lanes, road shoulders, paths and trails, sidewalks and street crossings, secure bicycle parking and access to transit. The facilities can help form positive connections between the built and natural environments, and bring open space into the lives of our citizens and visitors.

Maintain and Enhance Waterfront Public Access

Throughout most of the City's history, the waterfront was an integral part of the region's economy. The City needs to enhance the underutilized waterfront by supporting projects like the Queensbridge Park Seawall and Promenade.

Queensbridge Park is a 20.34 Acre Park bounded by the Ed Koch Queensboro Bridge, 40th Avenue, Vernon Boulevard, and the East River in Long Island City. The City of New York acquired the land as parkland in 1937. The design and construction of the park including the current seawall commenced in 1939 and was completed in the early 1940's and incorporated tree-lined, curvilinear pathways and open green space. Today, Queensbridge Park also offers a variety of recreational facilities including athletic fields, volleyball courts, handball courts, and playground and picnic area.

The Queensbridge Park Seawall and Promenade restoration will restore waterfront access for the community to use and enjoy. This project will reconstruct the seawall using new rip rap revetment and will include a concrete wharf. The wharf, located at the northern end of the promenade, will offer panoramic views of the Manhattan skyline. The restoration project will also feature a new pathway with benches, space for gatherings and enhanced plantings including flowering shrubs and trees. This \$6.650 Million capital project was made with \$1 million in Mayoral funding, \$1 million from the Borough President, \$3.65 million from the City Council, and \$1 million from the Metropolitan Transit Authority.

PUBLIC SAFETY

POLICE

Existing Conditions and Issues

The New York Police Department (NYPD) is the largest municipal police force in the United States, primarily responsible for law enforcement and investigation within the five boroughs of New York City. They maintain law and order, and provide protection for over 8.3 million New York City residents throughout a 322 square mile area. In Queens, the NYPD serves an ethnically and racially diverse population of approximately 2.3 million people living in close proximity within an area of 112 square miles.

The NYPD's total headcount of sworn officers has declined in recent years from approximately 40,000 sworn officers in June 2004 to its current authorized uniformed strength of 34,450. As the total number of police has diminished in recent years, the combination of using statistical data to target and saturate crime areas along with strong community outreach programs and services has helped to maintain law and order and quality of life in communities.

Services are primarily based in 16 local precincts within the borough. Eight of the precincts (the 104th, 108th, 109th, 110th, 111th, 112th, 114th and 115th) are grouped into Patrol Borough Queens North, currently commanded by Assistant Chief Diana Pizzuti. The 100th, 101st, 102nd, 103rd, 105th, 106th, 107th and 113th precincts are covered by Patrol Borough Queens South, currently commanded by Assistant Chief David Barrere.

The NYPD also has a broad array of specialized services, including the Emergency Service Unit, K-9, harbor patrol, air support, bomb disposal, counter-terrorism, criminal intelligence, anti-gang, anti-organized crime, narcotics, public transportation and public housing.

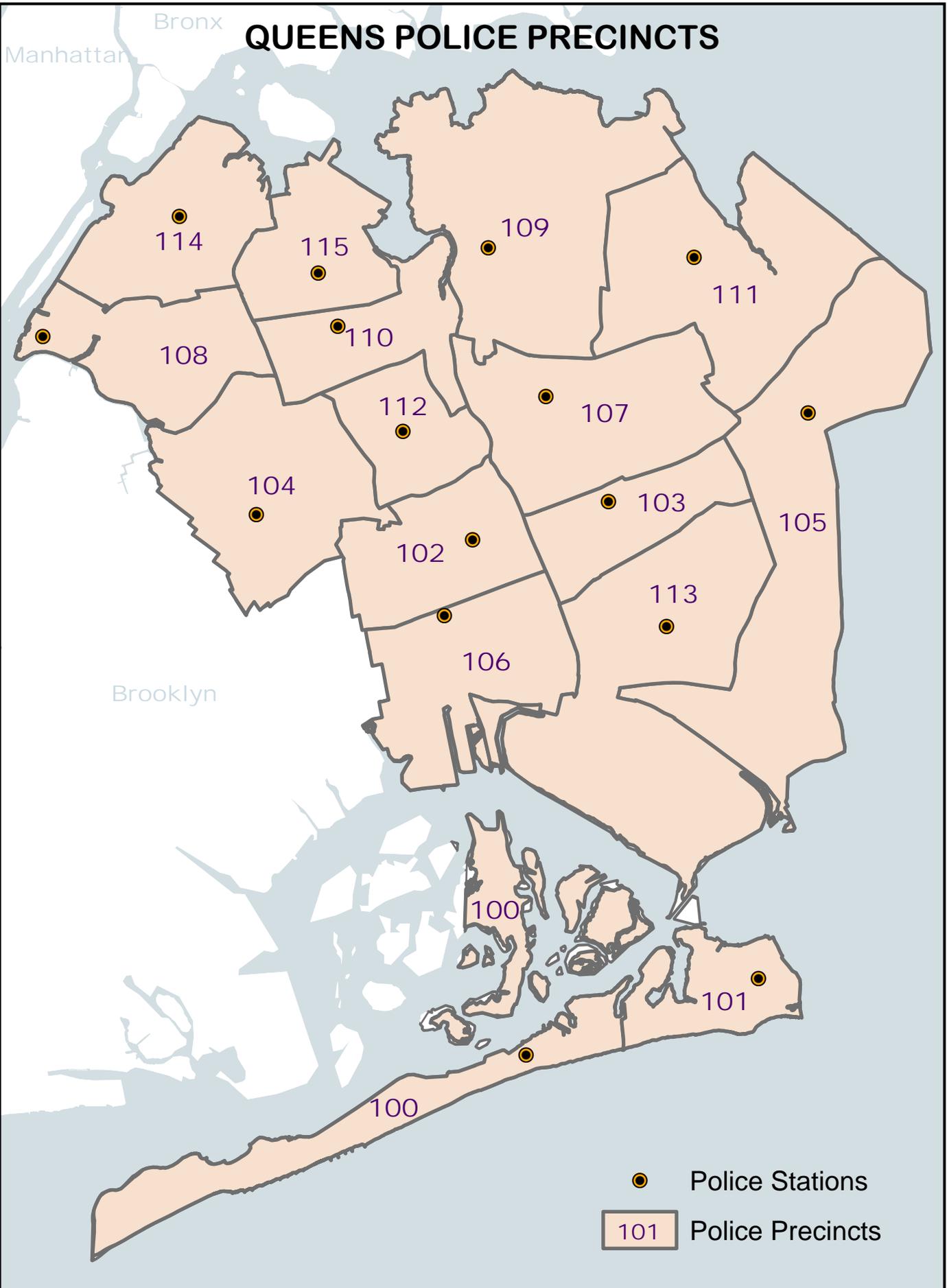
Despite the reduction in police manpower in recent years, the total number of major felony offenses⁶⁹ committed in Queens police precincts has declined in 13 of the 16 borough precincts since 2004, while the total number of such offenses in the Borough fell by 22.9 percent. Patrol Boroughs Queens North and Queens South continue their strong efforts to address crime, despite a reduction in personnel over the years. However, due to the Borough's large land area and long distances between precincts, officers are often required to cover large distances to address crime and quality of life issues.

There are three precincts worth noting. The 100th and 101st precincts had a 61% and 38% rise in Seven Major Felony Offenses*, respectively, two of the largest increases in Queens precincts. The third is the 105th Precinct. While it saw an 18% decline in major felonies, it was the second highest number of incidences in Queens South. Additionally, this precinct covers the largest land area of any police precinct in New York City, making coverage difficult.

* Non-Seven Major Felony Offenses include Felony Possession Stolen Property, Forgery/Theft-Fraud/Identity Theft, Arson, Felony Sex Crimes, Felony Dangerous Drugs, Felony Dangerous Weapons, Felony Criminal Mischief, and Related Offenses ** Seven Major Felony Offenses include Murder, Rape, Robbery, Felony Assault, Burglary, Grand larceny, and Grand Larceny of Motor Vehicle

It should be noted that this year the NYPD will face increased pressure to keep crime rates low while also adhering to the reforms in the Department's stop and frisk procedures that were ordered by the Mayor. The previous administration had argued that aggressive stop and frisk procedures helped reduce crime by allowing police to get guns off the street. But the new administration contends that stop and frisk tactics disproportionately targeted members of minority communities and created a sense of mistrust of the police within the community. It believes less aggressive use of stop and frisk will improve relations between the community and the police and prompt community members being more cooperative with police and be more willing to provide tips about illegal conduct. This will help reduce crime from its already low levels, according to the current administration.

QUEENS POLICE PRECINCTS



Queens North Summary												
	Violation Offenses			Misdemeanor Offenses			Non-Seven Major Felony Offenses			Seven Major Felony Offenses		
PCT	2004	2013	% Change	2004	2013	% Change	2004	2013	% Change	2004	2013	% Change
104	1,466	949	-35%	4,342	4,989	15%	876	745	-15%	2,263	1,607	-29%
108	965	816	-15%	3,353	3,594	7%	561	436	-22%	2,002	1,332	-33%
109	1,369	907	-34%	5,254	5,094	-3%	780	880	13%	3,148	2,146	-32%
110	1,064	713	-33%	4,454	5,142	15%	655	628	-4%	2,390	1,747	-27%
111	508	399	-21%	2,498	1,637	-34%	268	379	41%	1,336	909	-32%
112	710	371	-48%	2,725	2,574	-6%	282	253	-10%	1,675	843	-50%
114	1,712	1363	-20%	5,947	6,188	4%	819	977	19%	2,899	1,885	-35%
115	966	996	3%	5,131	5,977	16%	853	922	8%	2,339	1,760	-25%
Total	8,760	6,514	-26%	33,704	35,195	4%	5,094	5,220	2%	18,052	12,229	-32%

Queens South Summary												
	Violation Offenses			Misdemeanor Offenses			Non-Seven Major Felony Offenses			Seven Major Felony Offenses		
PCT	2004	2013	% Change	2004	2013	% Change	2004	2013	% Change	2004	2013	% Change
100	621	354	-43%	1,829	1,494	-18%	378	334	-12%	347	558	61%
101	1,019	655	-36%	2,964	3,134	6%	589	618	5%	618	852	38%
102	1,027	929	-10%	3,666	4,131	13%	712	729	2%	1,903	1,699	-11%
103	1,457	1205	-17%	5,939	6,521	10%	946	1,552	64%	2,012	1,811	-10%
105	1,421	1066	-25%	4,758	4,178	-12%	886	987	11%	2,336	1,917	-18%
106	1,168	885	-24%	3,852	3,906	1%	698	743	6%	1,604	1,665	4%
107	1,148	722	-37%	3,290	3,482	6%	483	401	-17%	2,248	1,298	-42%
119	1,032	890	-14%	4,618	5,608	21%	1,054	1,533	45%	2,165	2,055	-5%
Total	8,893	6,706	-25%	30,916	32,454	5%	5,746	6,897	20%	13,233	11,855	-10%

Strategic Goals and Policies

Create a Flushing Meadows Corona Park Sub-Station

The activity in Flushing Meadows Corona Park is second only to Central Park. This flagship park, a major year-round tourist attraction, deserves the same precinct level support afforded to Central Park. This park, which spans six Community Board districts, is geographically difficult to navigate and denote, particularly because of its land mass. There needs to be a police sub-station dedicated to safeguarding the park's year-round users.

Increase Police Presence in the Rockaway Peninsula

The 100th and 101st Precincts witnessed the highest percentage increase in major felonies. The City needs to increase patrol and coverage in the Rockaway Peninsula in order to stem this increase.

Create a New 116th Precinct by Splitting the 105th Precinct

The 105th Precinct covers the largest land area of any police precinct in New York City, a coverage area of nearly 13 square miles, half the size of the entire Borough of Manhattan. The precinct's vehicles currently travel more than 1,000 miles per week due to the distances within the precinct boundaries. Although the Queens South Task Force Headquarters is located in the southern portion of the 105th Precinct and serves as a satellite command, this is not enough to provide sufficient police protection for southeast Queens. Bordering John F. Kennedy Airport to the south and the Nassau County line to the east, a strong police presence is a must to curtail criminals from utilizing changes of jurisdiction to obfuscate law enforcement. Funding must be provided to divide the territory of the 105th Precinct into two and to create the 116th Precinct (the precinct number has already been reserved) to reduce the time it takes police officers to respond to crimes and emergencies.

Increase Support for Foot Patrols

It is important that the NYPD refocuses its efforts and allow a stronger presence of a community policing approach to neighborhood safety. When officers walk a patrol, it forces them to interact with and better understand the ebb and flow of individual communities. This familiarity fosters trust with the community and reduces the possibility of misunderstanding.

Create a Special Events Detail

Whenever a special event occurs within a community, local police offices are reassigned from regular duties to support the special event. Instead of compromising the safety of the neighborhood by reducing officers on the ground, a Special Events Detail should be created that supports special events throughout the city in order to maintain consistent levels of police coverage throughout precincts.

Increase the Number of Video Surveillance Cameras

The Office of the Queens Borough President has allocated \$2 million in capital funds in Fiscal Year 2013 for the purchase and installation of 57 ARGUS surveillance cameras in various locations throughout Queens. The locations of these cameras have been identified in June 2014 after analyzing crime data and other parameters. After installing the cameras, the department should determine whether or not to increase the number of cameras.

Increase the Number of School Crossing Guards

Automobiles are the primary form of transportation for many Queens residents. The large volume of automobiles has created traffic congestion in many areas that may be dangerous to pedestrians, especially young children going to school. School crossing guards play a vital role in managing traffic and ensuring the safety of our children, and the NYPD needs to expand the number of crossing guards throughout the Borough.

FIRE

Existing Conditions and Issues

The Fire Department of the New York City (FDNY) is the largest municipal fire department in the United States and the second largest in the world. The FDNY employs approximately 11,080 uniformed firefighters and over 3,300 uniformed EMTs and paramedics.

The FDNY faces extraordinarily varied firefighting challenges that are in many ways unique to New York City. In addition to responding to building types that range from wood-frame single family homes to high-rise structures, there are many secluded bridges and tunnels and large parks and wooded areas that can give rise to major brush fires. New York City is also home to one of the largest subway systems in the world, consisting of hundreds of miles of tunnel with electrified track. The multifaceted challenges they face add yet another level of firefighting complexity and have led to the FDNY's motto, *New York's Bravest*.

In addition to responding to all fire calls, the Fire Department must respond to emergencies at LaGuardia and JFK Airports. Less visible responsibilities include inspections at hazardous and unsafe sites and at commercial and public assembly facilities to ensure compliance with fire code regulations. The department's Hazardous Materials (HAZ-MAT) unit also monitors the movement of hazardous materials and issues permits for the use of such materials. Besides fires and medical emergencies, FDNY is a first responder to terrorist acts, structural collapses of buildings, hazardous materials incidents, utility emergencies, transportation incidents and catastrophic weather events.

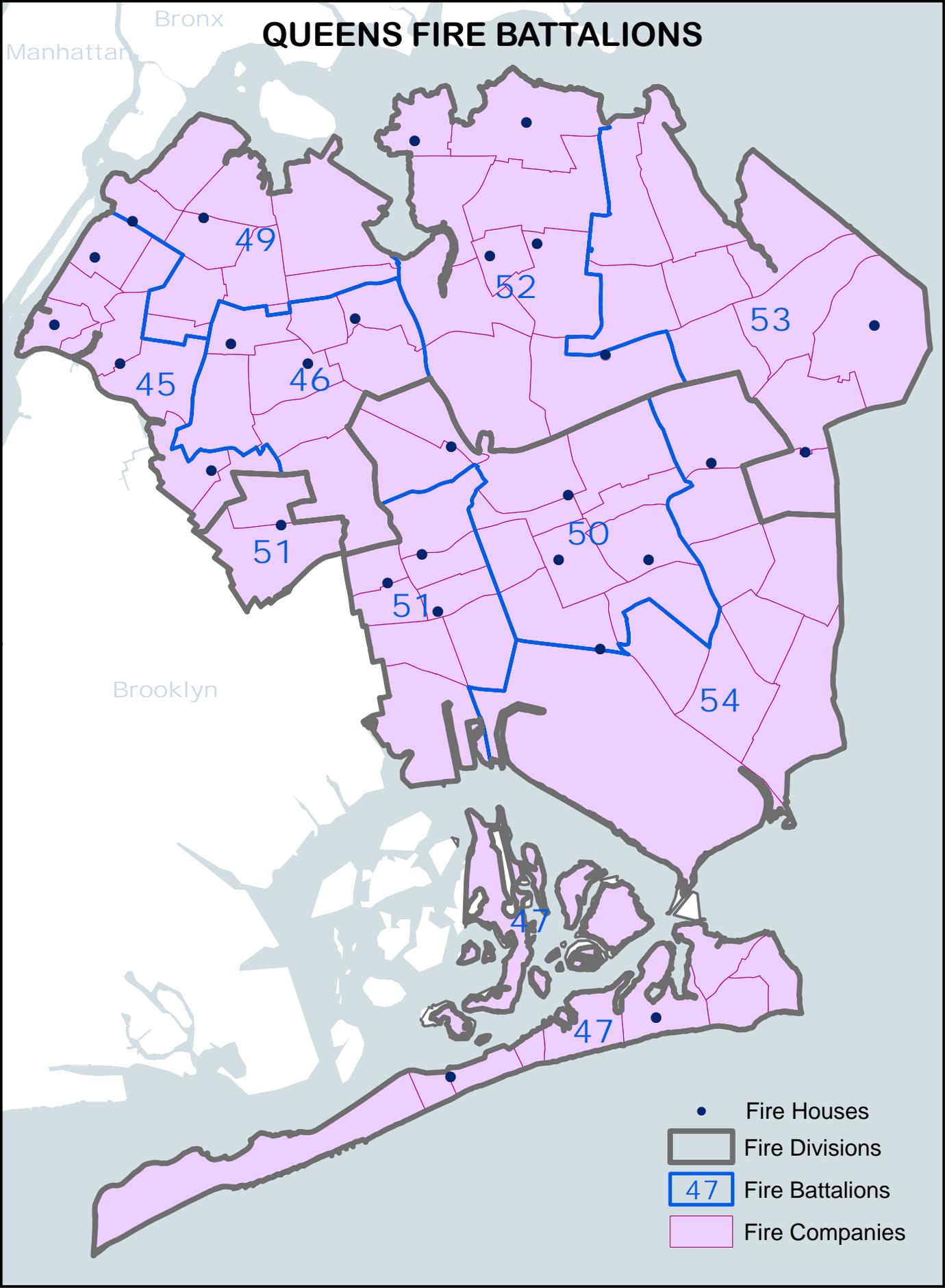
In Queens, the Department's organization consists of two divisions (Divisions 13 and 14) and nine battalions. The Borough Commander, whose headquarters is on Fort Totten, responds to all major fires and is responsible for the administration of all units in the Borough. Each Division Chief supervises approximately five battalions while the Battalion Chiefs supervise a number of engine and ladder companies. There are 49 firehouses, consisting of a total of 33 ladder companies and 48 engine companies. Ladder companies are responsible for searching, ventilating and making rescues at fire sites, while engine companies primarily extinguish fires.

Fire Response

Since 1989 when 246 fire-related deaths were reported, various programs, including fire safety education through outreach along with new dispatch protocols incorporating the latest technologies, have brought down the number of deaths to a record low 47 in calendar year 2013.

The FDNY has seen dramatically lower rates of fire incidences compared to 2004. A decrease in non-structural fires has seen drastic improvements, dropping 567% since 2004 levels. Malicious fire alarms have decreased 788% while overall fire incidents have decreased 385% from 2004 levels. At the same time, average response time has decreased 2 seconds, from 5:19 to 5:17. Additionally, the number of Serious Incidents has dropped dramatically, 462% for all-alarm fire types.

QUEENS FIRE BATTALIONS



Civilian Fire Fatalities			
Year	2004	2013	% Change
Number of Fatalities	82	47	-43%

Source: Baruch College NYData Table 9.V.

FDNY Fire Incidents Summary									
Fire Incidents	Structural Fires			Non-Structural Fires			Non-Fire Emergencies		
	2004	2013	Change	2004	2013	Change	2004	2013	Change
# of Incidents	27,718	4,800	-477%	22,437	3,363	-567%	180,047	37,443	-381%
Avg Response Time	4:21	4:25	2%	4:47	4:35	-4%	5:19	5:17	-1%
Fire Incidents	Medical Emergencies			Malicious False Alarms			Total/Average		
	2004	2013	Change	2004	2013	Change	2004	2013	Change
# of Incidents	189,162	44,436	-326%	37,322	4,204	-788%	456,696	94,246	-385%
Avg Response Time	4:35	4:28	3%	4:21	4:41	-7%	5:19	5:17	-.21%

FDNY Serious Incidents Summary									
Serious Incidents	All Hands			2nd Alarm			3rd Alarm		
	2004	2013	Change	2004	2013	Change	2004	2013	Change
Number of Incidents	2,908	524	-455%	204	35	-483%	32	0	-100%
Serious Incidents	4th Alarm			5th Alarm or Greater			Total		
	2004	2013	Change	2004	2013	Change	2004	2013	Change
Number of Incidents	15	3	-400%	5	1	-400%	3164	563	-462%

Source: FDNY Fire Incidents Statistics

Fire Safety Programs

One of the fundamental missions of the FDNY is to protect the lives and property of New York City residents and visitors through fire safety education programs. Its strategy to reduce fire deaths and injuries is to focus on prevention by identifying and rectifying unsafe behaviors. FDNY fire safety educators conduct training, and provide lectures and fire safety demonstrations in elementary schools, at tenant association meetings, and at community and senior centers. Training sessions address the common causes of fire and fire injuries in the home, as well as provide information on how to prevent fires and what to do in case of fire.

The FDNY also has a mobile fire safety house that contains a kitchen, living room and bedroom. A smoke machine creates a fire simulation within which children can practice fire evacuation techniques. The house features smoke alarms and a phone to call 911. Schools and organizers of large community events can request the presence of the mobile fire safety house. In addition, the FDNY's Fire Safety Experience is a stage and simulated smoke house built on a 35-foot travel trailer. The set design, which is viewed through Plexiglas, is a typical home, including a kitchen, bath and bedroom. Dramatizations are performed, depicting life-saving behaviors and techniques during a fire condition. The set also is used as an exhibit of typical home fire hazards and unsafe behaviors. The smoke house is infused with theatrical smoke to simulate fire conditions, while participants practice effective fire evacuation techniques.

Fire safety programs were presented throughout Queens, and have proven to be an effective way to prevent fires throughout the Borough.

EMS Response

FDNY-EMS is an operational unit of the FDNY that operates under the Chief of EMS, who in turn reports to the Chief of Department, responds to more than 1.3 million medical emergencies per year, or 3,561 per day. Although EMS in New York City is controlled and dispatched by the Fire Department, approximately 30% of the ambulances in the system are operated by the non-profit hospitals in New York City, the majority of these being in Manhattan and Queens. These hospitals have historically provided emergency ambulances for over 125 years, with some now subcontracting actual ambulance operations to private ambulance providers. Queens has a number of neighborhood volunteer ambulance corps that responds to emergency calls.

From 2004 to 2013, Segment 1 emergency responses had a modest decrease in terms of number of incidents and the number of ambulance runs. However, Segment 2 and Segment 3 Life Threatening Medical Emergencies incidents both experienced increases. The number of ambulance runs for Segment 2 responses decreased, while the Segment 3 ambulance runs increased. For Segments 4 through Segment 8, only Segments 4 and 8 experienced decreases in number of incidents and ambulance runs, while Segment 5 through Segment 7 experienced similar paced increases in the amounts of incidents and ambulance runs. Overall, from 2004-2013, there was modest increase in the number of incidents and the number of ambulance runs (see chart).

	Cardiac Arrest & Choking			Life Threatening Medical Emergencies					
Segment	1			2			3		
Year	2004	2013	% Change	2004	2013	% Change	2004	2013	% Change
Number of Incidents	25,629	23,945	-6.57%	253,145	267,673	5.74%	120,202	161,224	34.13%
Ambulance Runs	55,865	49,338	-11.68%	321,414	291,154	-9.41%	148,152	191,154	29.03%
	Non-Life Threatening Medical Emergencies								
Segment	4			5			6		
Year	2004	2013	% Change	2004	2013	% Change	2004	2013	% Change
Number of Incidents	243,333	238,212	-2.10%	210,729	274,035	30.04%	178,249	231,875	30.08%
Ambulance Runs	236,106	256,591	-2.48%	220,829	291,635	32.06%	185,657	244,998	31.96%
	Non-Life Threatening Medical Emergencies						Totals		
Segment	7			8					
Year	2004	2013	% Change	2004	2013	% Change	2004	2013	% Change
Number of Incidents	78,678	109,962	39.76%	4,728	2,885	-38.98%	1,114,693	1,309,811	17.50%
Ambulance Runs	80,592	114,619	42.22%	6,782	5,081	-25.08%	1,282,397	1,444,570	12.65%

*Segments are the FDNY EMS's system of prioritization for dispatch. Segments 1-3 is the most time sensitive and can involve a victim of cardiac arrest, choking, anaphylactic shock or a major burn. Segments 4-8 can involve someone who had a drug overdose, is sick or has pain (Source: NYC Analytics, 911 Performance Reporting).

Segment 1 Cardiac Arrest & Choking EMS incidents saw an overall modest decline from 2014 to 2013. Segment 2 and 3 Life Threatening Medical Emergencies only saw a decrease in ambulance runs for Segment 2, while number of incidents rose for both, and only ambulance runs rose for Segment 3. In Segments 4-8, only Segments 4 and 8 saw overall declines in number of incidents and ambulance runs, with Segment 8 ambulance runs experiencing the largest drop of over a quarter. Segments 5, 6 and 7 saw similar gains, with Segment 7 incidents rising shy of a 50% increase. Overall, the total number of incidents and ambulance runs saw modest gains from 2004 to 2013.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Reopen Engine 261 in Western Queens

The population of western Queens is increasing rapidly with thousands of new apartments, new business centers and major attractions. The addition of so many new residents, workers and visitors to the area requires the proportional increase in services. However, Engine 261 in Long Island City was closed in May 2003. Engine 261 needs to be reopened in order to service this growing community.

Create a Rockaway Peninsula Ladder Company

The Rockaway Peninsula continues to increase its population as a result of the on-going construction projects currently underway and planned for the future. Space is available for a ladder company in the quarters of E-266 located at Beach 92nd Street and Rockaway Beach Boulevard. Currently, when fires and emergencies occur on the peninsula, other Queens ladder companies are relocated to cover the area. An additional ladder company would cover the Rockaway Peninsula and neighboring Broad Channel, where only a volunteer company exists.

Provide Fire Safety and Prevention Education for Every School Grade Level

Fire safety and prevention education programs are a vital component in preventing life-threatening fire incidents. Providing this education for all students in every grade level will instill responsible practices early on in their lives.

Increase the Number of EMT Services

The city's population is expected to substantially increase, with increases in health related emergencies, the FDNY needs to assess the need for increased EMT services.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Existing Conditions and Issues

The Department of Sanitation is currently the world's largest waste removal agency, collecting 10,500 tons of residential and institutional refuse and 1,760 tons of recyclables per day⁷⁰. The Department serves the city out of 59 Districts and approximately 5,700 vehicles. Queens is split into Queens East and Queens West; Queens West houses sanitation districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, and Queens East houses sanitation districts 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14.

Community Board	Acceptable Streets			Acceptable Sidewalks		
	FY04	FY13	% Change	FY04	FY13	% Change
1	84.3%	92.8%	10.1%	93.8%	95.8%	2.1%
2	86.2%	91.9%	6.6%	88.9%	93.1%	4.7%
3	87.9%	92.7%	5.5%	94.4%	96.9%	2.6%
4	79.6%	90.4%	13.6%	92.9%	97.2%	4.6%
5	93.0%	94.5%	1.6%	92.9%	96.3%	3.7%
6	95.5%	97.4%	2.0%	96.3%	98.6%	2.4%
7	95.7%	98.0%	2.4%	98.0%	99.2%	1.2%
8	95.2%	97.9%	2.8%	97.6%	98.0%	0.4%
9	82.1%	91.6%	11.6%	93.6%	95.6%	2.1%
10	92.3%	94.7%	2.6%	97.6%	98.5%	0.9%
11	97.7%	99.0%	1.3%	99.3%	99.1%	-0.2%
12	86.9%	94.9%	9.2%	94.7%	95.7%	1.1%
13	95.5%	96.7%	1.3%	97.7%	98.2%	0.5%
14	90.8%	92.8%	2.2%	85.7%	91.8%	7.1%
Total	90.2%	94.7%	5.0%	94.5%	96.7%	2.3%

Source: Department of Sanitation Scorecard/Street Cleanliness Ratings*

According to the Department of Sanitation, during the period between Fiscal Year 2004 and Fiscal Year 2013, the Acceptable Street rating and the Acceptable Sidewalks rating have both increased in all the Community Boards. Overall, there was a 5% increase in Acceptable Streets and a 2.3% increase in Acceptable Sidewalks in Queens.

Despite the increased ratings, parts of the Borough are still plagued with waste disposal issues. Southeast Queens, in particular, suffers from increased illegal dumping issues. Unmaintained lots and patches are usually targets of illegal dumping, and violations to clean areas go unenforced.

* Street cleanliness ratings are impacted by the rate and amount of littering, the degree of compliance with Alternate Side Parking regulations and incidents of Health and Administrative Code Violations as well as weather and other seasonal factors. Sidewalk cleanliness is based on similar factors.

In addition, residents are using public litter baskets for residential and commercial waste disposal, causing litter baskets to be overfilled.

Additionally, adjusting the impacts of waste disposal and removal on the community is integral to creating safer and healthier neighborhoods. New York City's waste disposal system is primarily truck-based, and imposes safety and health hazards especially in communities that house waste transfer stations. Equitable distribution of waste to neighborhoods must be ensured since communities that receive a higher share of the city's waste also receive more air, noise, and environmental pollution.

Transport of Putrescible and non-Putrescible Solid Waste on Freight Rail

For years, the communities of Glendale, Middle Village, and Maspeth have been plagued by air and noise pollution stemming from the freight rail that is used to transport putrescible and non-putrescible waste. The Fresh Pond Railyard is the only freight rail transfer station in Queens, so all waste coming from Long Island must be transported through the Fresh Pond Railyard. There are significant quality of life issues that residents suffer because of the poor practices of the freight industry. Often times, non-putrescible waste is not sealed properly, causing things like construction debris to pollute the air with dust and other harmful particles. Freight containing putrescible waste are often transported uncovered and sit idle on tracks hours at a time, causing sickening odors and waste to spill over the tracks and on to private property. Freight passes through the tracks all times during the day, six days a week, causing noise pollution, even in the middle of the night.

Currently, the State is trying to resolve some of these issues. The State appropriated \$6 million for the purchase of two new locomotives. In addition, legislation was introduced that would require rail cars carrying waste to be covered with a tarp or contained based on the type of waste transported. The legislation was not adopted, but the Borough President supports re-introduction and passage by the legislature to address these quality of life issues.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Increase Personnel to Meet Waste Disposal and Street Cleaning Needs

The Department of Sanitation needs to increase capacity in Queens, particularly growing neighborhoods where new housing is being developed, in order to meet the increased residential and commercial waste. In major commercial corridors, the Department of Sanitation needs to clean streets and sidewalks, and collect litter baskets more frequently to ensure these areas remain economically viable and attractive for residents and shoppers.

Implement Recycling and Waste Disposal Opportunities in each Community District

The Borough President is dedicated to hosting a series of “Recycling Days” and “Garbage Days,” so that residents and businesses can place extra refuse in commercial dumpsters, as opposed to public litter baskets or streets.

Enforce Illegal Dumping Laws

The City needs to enforce illegal dumping laws, particularly those in private empty lots. Illegal dumping causes blight in neighborhoods and reduces the safety and property values of neighborhoods.

Promote Equitable Spread of Waste to all New York City Waste Transfer Stations

The City needs to ensure that there is an equitable distribution of waste throughout all of the city’s waste transfer stations. Those in low-income neighborhoods are overburdened, and need to be relieved.

Address the Quality of Life Issues Stemming from Freight Rail

The Borough President has begun addressing the quality of life issues that residents face by hosting the inaugural freight rail task force in July. The Borough President is dedicated to continue working with all stakeholders, residents, and government agencies to develop solutions that will reduce noise and air pollution. The State needs to adopt policy that will require the full containerization of rail cars when waste is being transported.

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