

THE OFFICE OF THE QUEENS BOROUGH PRESIDENT

Strategic Policy Statement
2018



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Queens Borough President



The Borough of Queens is home to more than 2.3 million residents, representing more than 190 countries and speaking more than 200 languages.¹ 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 population.² Traditional immigrant gateways like Sunnyside, Woodside, Jackson Heights, Elmhurst, Corona, and Flushing are now communities with the highest population of residents born outside the United States in the entire city.³

Immigrant and Intercultural Services

The immigrant population remains largely underserved. Residents with limited English proficiency now represent 28.9% of the Borough,⁴ indicating a need for a wide and growing 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 Office of the Queens Borough President actively works with the Queens General Assembly and the Immigration Task Force, two working groups organized by the Office of the Queens Borough President, to address many of the issues that the immigrant community faces. As an extension of this work, the Office of the Queens Borough President launched "Know Your Rights Week," a series of weeks dedicated to providing free legal assistance and consultation. The first "Know Your Rights Week" series focused on immigration legal services.

Cultural Affairs

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 issued a Proclamation designating the area surrounding Kaufman Astoria Studios as the city's first arts district. The area's unique mix of adaptively reused residential, commercial, and manufacturing buildings has served as a catalyst for growth in culture and the arts.

Since 2014, the Queens Borough President has actively advocated for Queens' growing cultural institutions, fixing the misconception that Manhattan is the sole source of major cultural programming in the city. This was done by highlighting the wide range of programs that are unique to our Borough because of our ethnic diversity. The Office of the Queens Borough President has also invested more than \$28.43 million over the past five fiscal years in capital funds for the improvement of the Borough's cultural institutions.

Still, cultural institutions in Queens remain the most underfunded in terms of programmatic dollars. Of the 35 Cultural Institutions Group supported directly by the City, eight are in Queens, where the average funding per institution and per capita funding rate are the lowest in the City. The Office of the Queens Borough President is committed to eliminating this funding disparity and advocating for fairer share of resources for the cultural institutions in Queens.

In 2014, the Queens Borough President also launched the campaign to save and restore the New York State Pavilion, an iconic structure of the 1964 World's Fair which consists of the Tent of Tomorrow and three observation towers. Since then, the Office of the Queens Borough President has allocated nearly \$11.5 million in capital funds, while also raising \$9 million from the Mayor, \$778,000 from the City Council, and \$2 million from the Governor for a total of \$23.26 million raised towards the restoration of the Pavilion. These funds have been dedicated towards the restoration of the three observation towers and decorative lighting. Additional funds are still needed to restore the Tent of Tomorrow.

Tourism

Tourism remains a major economic contributor to not only Queens' local economy, but to the entire city. Queens now ranks second, only behind Manhattan, representing 20%, or \$8,792,315, in traveler spending in 2017. Since 2014, the Office of the Queens Borough President has actively campaigned a cohesive brand message for the Borough as a destination and is now known synonymously as "The World's Borough." This included replacing all the Department of Transportation *Welcome to Queens* signs on all major thoroughfares to include the slogan "Queens – The World's Borough" and marketing this slogan as a brand identity. The spotlight on Queens continues to grow as it is more and more recognized as an international destination of choice. The Queens Borough President intends to continue working with local businesses, government partners, and institutions to collectively highlight the efforts of immigrant gateway communities and enhancing cultural tourism.

Economic Development

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 transportation and warehousing, and retail trades and construction.

Cultivating major commercial sub-centers has been the primary objective for the Queens Borough President, with the goal of both growing the economy and supporting small businesses. The four commercial sub-centers with the highest growth potential – Downtown Jamaica, Long Island City, Downtown Flushing, and Rego Park – produce significant economic activity for the Borough. The Queens Borough President has worked with area stakeholders to plan and further cultivate the growth of these commercial centers.

In Downtown Jamaica, key public investments, like the \$90 million Jamaica Infrastructure project, are creating new and attractive amenities. In addition to the substantial public projects and inherent transportation assets, public-private investments have poised Jamaica for significant commercial growth. New housing and commercial enterprises are actively expanding.

In April 2015, the Queens Borough President, in collaboration with Mayor Bill De Blasio, the New York City Department of Transportation, New York City Department of City Planning, local stakeholders, community residents, non-profit and faith-based organizations, private firms, and industry experts, launched its neighborhood-based planning initiative, the Jamaica Now Action Plan. This initiative, a \$153 million in public investment, identified 26 strategic investments for implementation in Jamaica over a five year period. Currently at the start of Year Four, the Plan has already realized the installation of 20 free Wi-Fi kiosks in the downtown, the completion of a transportation study, and the recommendation of a streetscape study, among other major improvements to parks and pedestrian spaces. Added to this is the recent \$10 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative from Governor Andrew Cuomo awarded to the area to further development.

In Long Island City, having recognized the area as a rapidly emerging tech hub, the Office of the Queens Borough President has finalized a strategic action plan for Long Island City. *Live, Work, Create: A Roadmap for Equitable Growth in Western Queens Tech Eco-system*, a three pronged initiative designed to leverage the tech industry in Queens by proposing people focused, place-based, and programmatic initiatives. The tech plan aims to increase equitable job growth in Western Queens. The tech plan is overseen by a Tech Advisory Council made up of local stakeholders who, working with a fulltime project manager, will bring this plan to fruition.

Downtown Flushing remains one of the City's fastest growing economic hubs. The area is a major transportation hub, and has attracted many major mixed-use private developments like Queens Crossing, Skyview Parc and Center, and the current developments of Municipal Parking Lots #1 and #3. The foremost opportunity to grow Flushing as a business district 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 City 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.

Traditional small businesses and micro-enterprises continue to be primary drivers of economic growth 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. 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.

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.

Housing

Queens' communities have outpaced the available housing stock. Jackson Heights, Elmhurst, and Corona remain the most severely overcrowded communities in the entire city.⁵ Public housing through the New York City Housing Authority exists throughout the Borough. However, waitlists are long and, because of budget constraints, the New York City Housing Authority has had limited effectiveness in managing buildings.

Since *Housing New York* was launched with the goal of building and preserving 300,000 units of affordable housing by 2026, 109,767 units of affordable housing have been constructed or preserved citywide. However, only 10,085 of those units, or 9.2%, were in Queens.⁶ This gap is compounded by the fact that under the previous administration's *New Housing Marketplace Plan*, of the 157,230 units of affordable housing created, only 16,530, or 10.5%, were in Queens.⁷ Added to this is the loss in supply of the aging housing stock through degradation.

This shortage has created two issues of significant concern. The first is the overwhelming need for housing assistance, which has been significantly underfunded for years. The second is an emerging underground market of illegally converted housing, which includes partitioned apartments and converted attics and basements, because low-income households are left with few alternatives to living in overcrowded conditions.

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 are plagued with complaint backlogs in the thousands. 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.

Queens is home to more than 315,853 residents over the age of 65 residing in Queens, representing 14% of the Borough.⁸ Many are on fixed incomes and pay more than half their income toward housing. With the expected rise in the aging population, the demand for assisted living will increase. All current senior housing projects in Queens, however, have a minimum waitlist of three years, and for-profit assisted-living residences are not an option for many because they are unable to afford the high monthly fees.

Special attention also needs to be made for middle-income housing. There are currently few opportunities to create middle-income housing. For decades, 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.

Homelessness

Homelessness is another growing issue citywide, including in Queens. In June 2018, there were 61,421 homeless people, including 14,934 homeless families with 22,266 homeless children, sleeping each night in the New York City municipal shelter system.⁹ Currently, the Department of Homeless Services directly runs or contracts with more than 200 shelters citywide. The waitlist for these shelters, however, are long and these sites remain overburdened.

Currently, the City runs the Family Homelessness and Eviction Supplement program, a rental supplement for families with children who receive Cash Assistance and have been evicted or are facing eviction, lost their housing due to a domestic violence situation, or lost their housing because of health or safety issues. Still, this program has not been sufficient in preventing the increasing number of families and individuals entering homelessness. Home Stability Support, an initiative advocated by New York State Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi, aims to streamline existing rental subsidies and provide a rental subsidy that meets 100% of localized fair market rent.

Zoning and Land-Use

Queens remains the Borough of choice for many long time and newer New Yorkers. The variety of housing choices includes high-rise apartments, medium sized co-ops and condominiums, or single-family homes with 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.

Over 6,000 blocks in the Borough affecting 45 neighborhoods were contextually rezoned between 2002 and 2013 by the Department of City Planning, and there have been no major contextual neighborhood rezonings undertaken since then. While zoning is not the only determining factor in the continued health and success of the Borough's neighborhoods, it is one of the key factors that determines the size and shape of buildings, and what uses or activities may be permitted within.

Meanwhile, the City has undertaken several major initiatives since 2014. The foremost is the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) program and Zoning for Quality and Affordability (ZQA) in 2016. The MIH provisions mandate a minimum of 25% to 30% of affordable units for any residential development requiring upzoning that increases allowable floor area for the project. The ZQA provisions create new zoning definitions and refinements that allow more efficient use of allowable floor area to facilitate production of affordable and senior affordable housing, to allow more varied or attractive mixed-use buildings. However, the programs have not produced enough units to alleviate the increasing need for affordable housing, especially for lower- to moderate-income households.

The City is also in the process of undertaking two major development projects. The first is the Special Willets Point District, first approved in 2008 with the goal of transforming this

underutilized, centrally located area into mixed-use housing, commercial spaces, and schools. While the approvals are still in place, there are considerations underway to examine which elements of the approved plan should go forward ten years after the original approvals. Redevelopment at Willets Point should move forward with skilled labor, and include a new multipurpose soccer facility that would naturally complement the advantages of being centrally located to mass transit and both major airports.

The second is the Sunnyside Rail Yard, an approximately 200 acre active rail yard used by Amtrak, the Long Island Rail Road and New Jersey Transit for daily transportation operations. In 2016, the New York City Economic Development Corporation completed a feasibility study, and a Sunnyside Yard Steering Committee, made up of public officials, business, and community leaders, was convened in 2018 to formulate and review potential uses and development of the rail yard. As these plans develop, it is increasingly important to find a balance between affordability and commercial viability.

Hurricane Sandy

The impacts of Hurricane Sandy were widespread throughout the East Coast. In Queens, coastline communities 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, destroying residences, businesses, and infrastructure like the A-train line the boardwalk, and the power lines. 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. Recovery projects, like the Sunset Cove Restoration in Broad Channel, the Spring Creek Mitigation effort in Howard Beach, and the rebuilds of the Rockaway Boardwalk and Shorefront Parkway, are positive steps towards making vulnerable areas more resilient. Key resiliency projects, however, remain stalled and in 2018 have yet to commence. Sand erosion continues to plague the Rockaway Beaches. Yet, since the Army Corps of Engineers first introduced their Draft Reformulation Study for the Atlantic Coast, East Rockaway Inlet to Rockaway Inlet and Jamaica Bay in October 2016, no work has commenced. Such projects are critical in securing the long-term resiliency of the Rockaway Peninsula.

Seniors

Queens is home to one of the fastest growing aging populations in the city. There are more than 447,000 persons 60 years of age and older¹⁰ representing 29% of New York City's elderly population and 20% of the Borough's entire population. The older population is increasingly diverse, with over half comprised of a rapidly growing immigrant population and an increasing LGBTQ 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 must be met. This means improving rent subsidies and creating more senior housing. Also is the need to improve the quality of life issues seniors may face. In particular is the increased support of senior centers which serve as the network hub for senior services.

Health and Human Services

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. 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 Queens Borough President has been actively working to address these issues, like increasing the capacity of Article 28 community based healthcare providers. This includes a \$3.1 million capital allocation for the Charles B. Wang Community Health Center in Flushing, \$230,000 for The Floating Hospital in Long Island City, \$3.46 million for the Joseph P. Addabbo Family Health Center in Arverne, and \$216,000 for Plaza del Sol Family Health Center in Corona. In the absence of primary care capacity, these community-based healthcare facilities can serve as a stop-gap in relieving the overcrowding at emergency rooms.

Domestic Violence

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.

The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) does have a policy in place 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 seven years.¹¹ A better policy needs to be implemented.

The Office of the Queens Borough President has consistently been awarded a federal grant by the Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women for several years to partner with the Queens District Attorney, who has subsequently been able to boast the highest conviction rate for domestic violence cases, and Safe Horizon to coordinate efforts to assist victims and combat domestic violence. In September 2018, the federal grant was re-awarded for another three year period.

Veterans

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. The first and only memorial in Queens dedicated to Vietnam Veterans is set to break ground 2018 at Elmhurst Park. Yet, many remain homeless, unemployed and underemployed, and in need of healthcare. Nearly 4% of veterans in Queens between the ages of 18 to 64 are unemployed; veterans between the ages of 18 and 34 have an unemployment rate of 5.6%.¹² In 2016, the Mayor's Office of Veterans Services opened its first satellite office in Queens Borough Hall, an initiative that the Queens Borough President had advocated for in the past. While access for Queens veterans have been made easier, there still 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

Queens currently has the most overcrowded and most underfunded schools. Queens has the second highest public school student population. Class sizes are at a record high and continue to rise. Queens has the highest utilization rate in the city, a rate of 108.11% and is the only Borough operating over capacity.¹³ Four of the top five most crowded school districts are in Queens.

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 are 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.

Upon advocacy from the Office of the Queens Borough President, the School Construction Authority recently dedicated \$1,908,300,000 in order to fund the creation of 18,533 additional seats in Queens.¹⁴ Even with this additional investment, Queens will still remain overcrowded with a utilization rate of 100.97%, and still remain the only Borough over capacity.

At the same time, Queens' public school students have the lowest per pupil spending in the entire city. The City spends an average of \$11,359 per pupil in Queens, compared to the highest, the Bronx, which spends \$14,186 per pupil. Three of the City's lowest Per Pupil Spending school districts are in Queens: District 26, 28, and 25.

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 system in the country. Libraries are critical to our communities. They have transcended the mission of lending books and are now extensions of the school and higher education systems, and vital community resources that provide a wide range of social and cultural programming.

The Queens Borough President worked with the State Legislature in 2015 to pass a law that increased accountability and operational transparency of the Queens Public Library. Since then, the Queens Borough President has invested more than \$45 million in capital funds to expand or improve 26 libraries throughout the Borough.

Infrastructure

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

Queens is a transit desert. For Queens, transportation infrastructure was designed piecemeal over time to meet burgeoning needs and its capacity is now surpassed. To remedy these issues in the short-term, new mass transit options and alternatives are needed. Significant positive steps include making the Five Borough Ferry Service a permanent mainstay for commuters, including stops in Astoria, Long Island City and the Rockaways, implementing the “Atlantic Ticket” Pilot Program to provide reduced fare for Long Island Railroad services in Southeast Queens, and implementing Select Bus Service in parts of the Borough. Still, evaluation is necessary on a Borough-wide and citywide basis to implement strategies to make our roads more efficient and mass transit options more diverse.

Aviation

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 more than 53,000 jobs and generate about \$23 billion in wages, and adds almost \$64.4 billion in economic activity to the region.¹⁵ \$8 billion in improvements are planned at LaGuardia Airport and another \$13 billion is planned for John F. Kennedy Airport.

While the airports are vital to the economic engine of the Borough, they also impact the surrounding communities. The Queens Borough President will continue to work with the Port Authority and the communities surrounding the airports to ensure that this vital redevelopment work proceeds in a prudent and accountable manner, with as minimal impact on the quality of life in local communities.

Parks

Parks are essential to the life of any neighborhood. Queens has the most parks 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 Queens Borough President remains focused on ensuring that the parks are adequately funded and accessible to residents throughout the year. Since 2014, the Queens Borough President has allocated more than \$105 million for the improvement of the Borough’s parks.

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. Through the advocacy of the Office of the Queens Borough President, the long awaited 116th Precinct was created to alleviate the 105th Precinct. In addition, through capital funding from the Office of the Queens Borough President, a sub-precinct in Flushing Meadows Corona Park is set to be established.

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 people 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 of the Borough's population is foreign-born. 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 four Community Districts with the highest foreign-born population in the city are in Queens, districts 2, 3, 4, and 7.¹⁶ More than 190 nationalities are represented and over 200 languages are spoken Borough-wide.¹⁷ 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 birth¹⁸:

Country of Birth	Number	Percentage
China	162,181	14.8
Guyana	80,559	7.3
Ecuador	74,173	6.8
Mexico	56,000	5.1
Dominican Republic	55,191	5
Colombia	50,773	4.6
India	50,436	4.6
Bangladesh	49,796	4.5
Jamaica	49,706	4.5
Korea	42,300	3.8
Philippines	34,338	3.1
Trinidad & Tobago	28,302	2.5
Haiti	23,220	2.2
Poland	22,740	2.1
Peru	17,896	1.6
Pakistan	17,339	1.6
El Salvador	16,585	1.5
Italy	14,398	1.3
Greece	13,334	1.2
Russia	12,414	1.1
All Others	226,333	21
Total	1,098,014	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. 28.9% of Queens residents are Limited English Proficient.¹⁹ Fully 14% of the Borough's population is over the age of 65, of which 38% of them are Limited English Proficient.²⁰ 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 directed to immigration legal service providers that are partnered with the Office of the Queens Borough President.

Expand 'Know Your Rights Week'

In 2018, The Office of the Queens Borough President launched 'Know Your Rights Week,' a week dedicated each month to providing free legal assistance and consultation. The first 'Know Your Rights Week' was dedicated to immigration legal services. The Queens Borough President will continue this service, dedicating four of those months for immigration related assistance.

Continue the Immigration Task Force

The Queens 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 Queens Borough President in promoting policies that advance immigrant integration and increase access to vital information, through press conferences, publications, and special events.

Continue the Queens General Assembly

The Queens 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 Queens Borough President in addressing bias incidents or hate crimes of any kind.

Promote Heritage through Cultural Events

The Queens 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
- Lunar New Year Celebration
- Greek Independence Day
- Bangladesh Independence Day
- Philippine Independence Day
- Vaisakhi Celebration
- Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month
- Guyana Independence Day Celebration

- Haitian Independence Day Celebration
- A Celebration of Jerusalem
- Pakistan Independence Day Celebration
- Indian Independence Day Celebration
- LGBT Pride Month
- Iftar-Ramadan
- Hispanic Heritage Month
- Italian American Heritage Month
- Polish American Heritage Month
- Diwali
- Chanukah
- Christmas
- Kwanzaa

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.

Since 2014, the Queens Borough President has actively worked to advocate for Queens' cultural institutions and repair the misconception that Manhattan is the sole source of major cultural programming in the city. This was done by highlighting the wide range of programs that are unique because of its ethnic diversity. Capital investments have improved the basic infrastructure of major cultural organizations so that their facilities and programs can better serve an increase in visitors. Since 2014, the Queens Borough President has allocated more than \$28 million for the improvement of the Borough's cultural institutions.

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.

Cultural Institutions Group Funding per Borough					
Fiscal Year 2019 Executive Budget					
Borough	Population	Fiscal Year 2019 Executive Budget	# of Cultural Institutions Group	Avg. Funding per Institution	Per Capita Funding
Bronx	1,455,720	\$13,999,041	6	\$2,333,173	\$9.61
Brooklyn	2,629,150	\$13,769,274	5	\$2,753,854	\$5.23
Manhattan	1,643,734	\$25,977,956	11	\$2,361,632	\$15.80
Staten Island	476,015	\$4,082,945	5	\$816,589	\$8.57
Queens	2,333,054	\$5,578,313	8	\$697,289	\$2.39

Queens is also 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. 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.

In 2014, the Queens Borough President spearheaded the campaign to save and restore the New York State Pavilion. The first effort was to have the paint restored on the Pavilion, which is now repainted to its original color. The Office of the Queens Borough President has allocated nearly \$11.5 million in capital funds, while also raising \$9 million from the Mayor, \$778,000 from the City Council, and \$2 million from the Governor, for a total of \$23.26 million raised towards the restoration of the Pavilion. These funds have been dedicated towards the restoration of the three observation towers, while funds are still needed to restore the Tent of Tomorrow.

Tourism

Tourism has grown exponentially as an economic contributor to Queens' local economy. Queens now ranks second only behind Manhattan representing 20%, or \$8,792,315, in traveler spending; Brooklyn represents 5% of traveler spending, the Bronx County represents 2%, and Staten Island represents 1%.²¹ In Queens, there are 90,920 tourism jobs, representing 13.7% of all employment in Queens, and generating more than \$607 million in local taxes and more than \$483 million in State taxes.²²

The vision of the Queens 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, the Queens Borough President has actively campaigned to brand the Borough as a destination since 2014. Queens is now known synonymously as "The World's Borough" after having presented a cohesive brand message for the Borough. This included replacing all the Department of Transportation *Welcome to Queens* signs on all major thoroughfares to include the slogan "Queens – The World's Borough" and marketing this slogan as a brand identity. The spotlight on Queens continues to grow as it is more and more recognized as an international destination of choice.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Investing in the cultural industry contributes to economic vitalization of urban areas and neighborhoods, building economic and social capital. The Queens 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.

Continue to Advocate for the 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 Queens Borough President intends to continue and eventually enhance the level of discretionary funds being allocated to cultural groups, but the City must increase the base level of funding for Queens' eight Cultural Institutions Group organizations and other cultural organizations in order to 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 order to restore the Pavilion, the City needs to provide more capital funds towards restoration.

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 Historic House Trust buildings like the John Bowne House, Lewis H. Latimer House, and Rufus King Manor need funds to preserve archeological structures. The Queens Borough President is dedicated to increasing capital funding for these entities, but the City needs to invest in Queens' cultural and heritage sites.

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 Queens 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 Queens Borough President will work with the City to increase programming for the arts in schools, and link schools with private institutions and corporations that provide funding for cultural programming for students.

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 Group

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.

Lewis 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

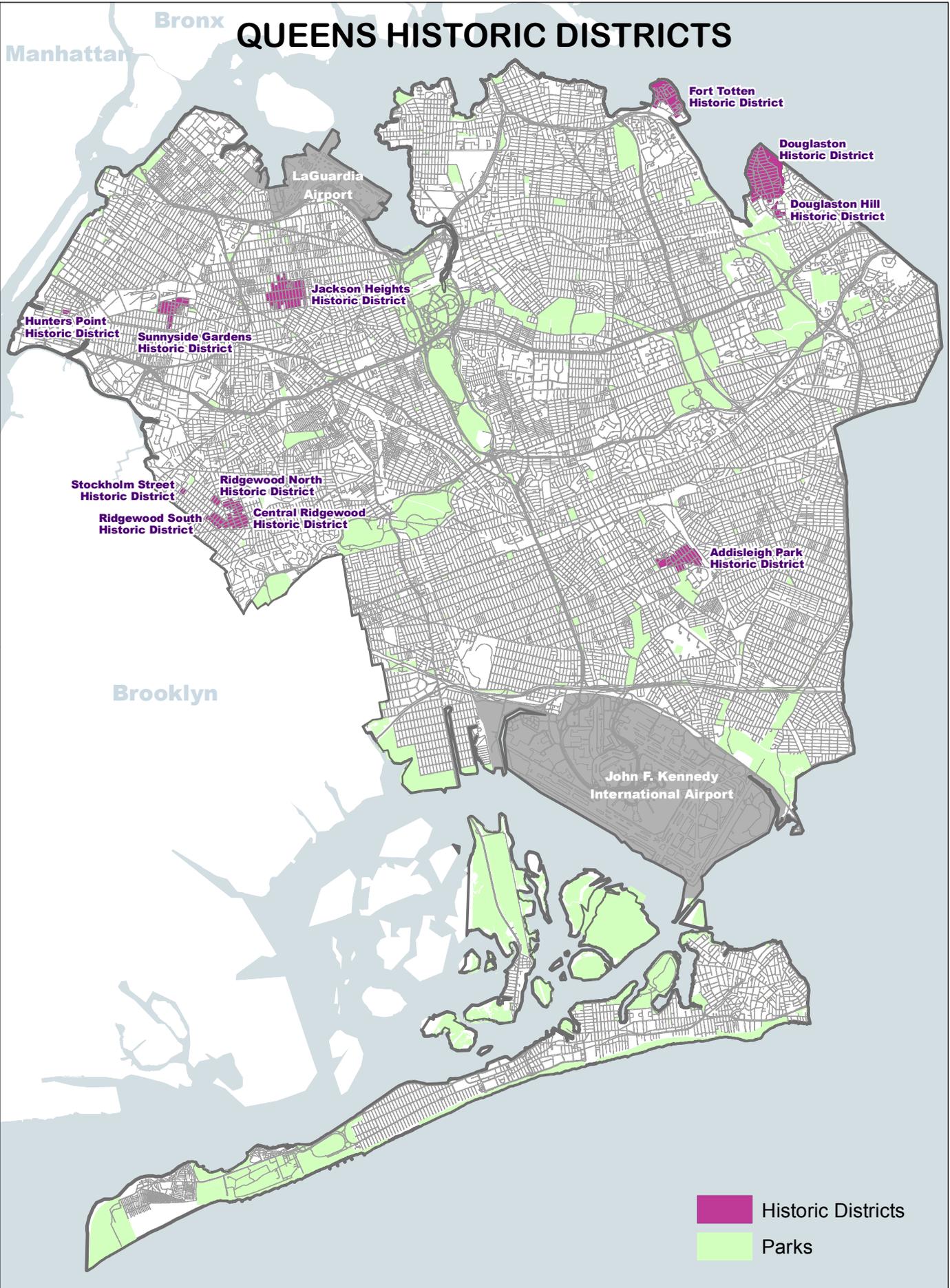
Army hospitals since the Civil War and was frequently home to medical research facilities. Stationed here was Major Walter Reed, who later played a primary role in conquering yellow fever. In 1947, the Armed Forces Medical Research Laboratory was established at the Fort to develop or improve medical 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

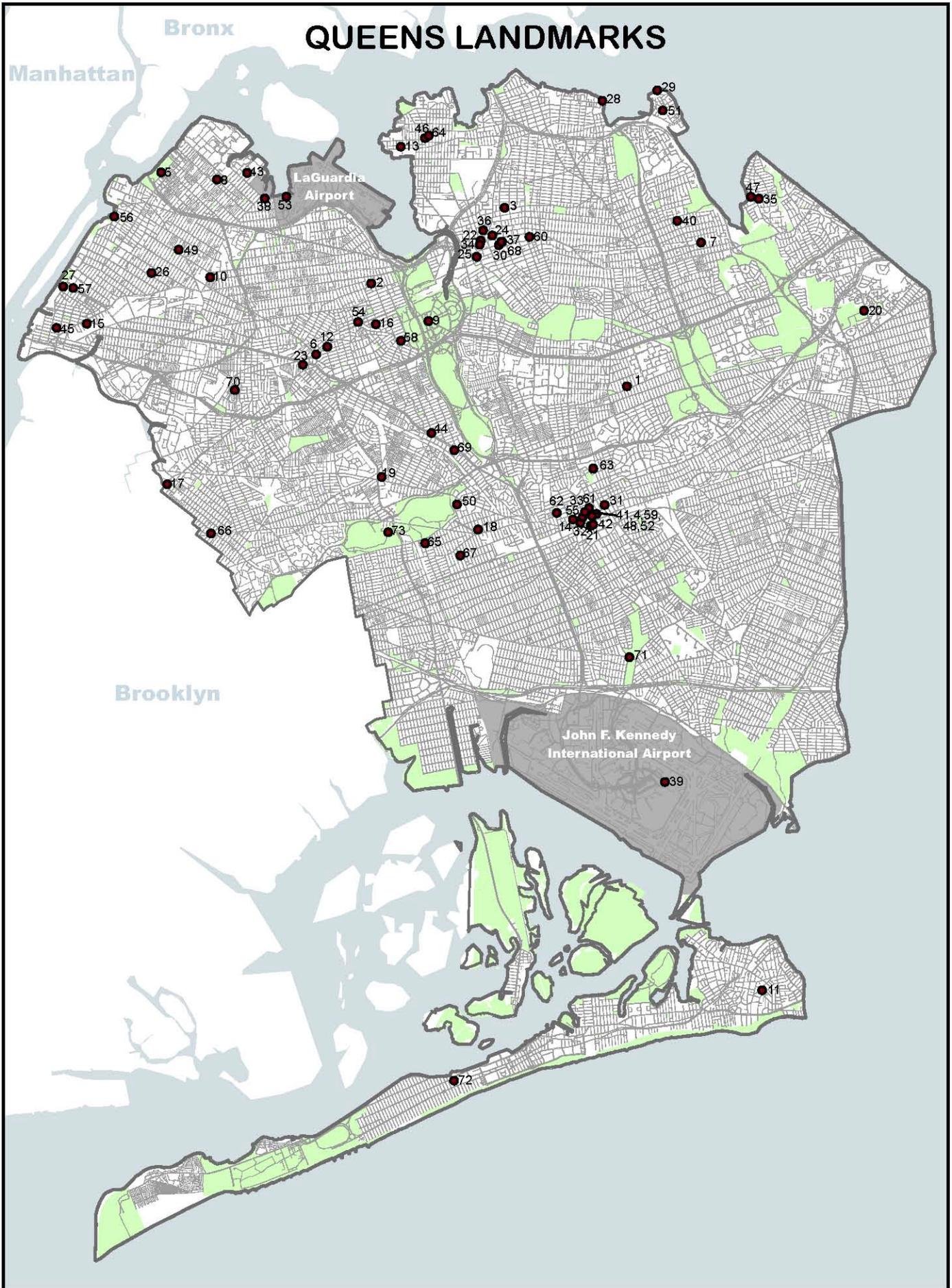
The mission of the Louis Armstrong House Museum is to operate the Louis Armstrong House, a national historic landmark and a New York City landmark, as a historic house museum, and to arrange, preserve, catalog, and make available to the public the materials held in its collections relating to the life 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 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 the 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 25% over the past three decades reaching nearly 2.4 million in 2017, with the foreign-born population now accounting for nearly 48% of the Borough's residents.²³ 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. After the recent recession which occurred between 2008 and 2011, many industries have seen a resurgence in employment with jobs in the private sector reaching nearly 567,000 jobs in 2018. The construction industry is enjoying a boom with an increase in construction jobs to 51,686, the highest over any other Borough. The health care and social assistance sector accounts for the largest sources of employment in Queens with over 143,166 jobs. The Transportation and warehousing sector accounts for the second largest, employing over 70,000 people. Retail Trade accounts for the third largest sources of employment in Queens, with nearly 63,000 jobs. Manufacturing, construction, and a growing high-tech economy also play vital roles in Queens' economy. Jobs in manufacturing, are on the rise and a growing high-tech economy also play vital roles in Queens' economy. There are now more than 8,000 tech jobs in Queens, with anticipated growth in the sector as the Borough continues to cultivate and attract tech entrepreneurs.²⁴

The Queens economy was significantly impacted during the 2008 recession. Yet, it proved to be more resilient than the Manhattan economy and that of the rest of the nation. The number of businesses increased by 22 percent since the end of the recession in 2009, faster than the citywide rate.²⁵ Queens has set new employment records for six consecutive years and the unemployment rate has reached a record low of 4%. Economic development projects in the pipeline and those under consideration will create more opportunities for growth. 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, 2018 Preliminary	Total Employment	Percentage
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	27	<0.01%
Construction	51,686	9.11%
Manufacturing	19,565	3.45%
Wholesale Trade	21,971	3.87%
Retail Trade	62,985	11.11%
Transportation and Warehousing	70,638	12.46%
Information	7,252	1.27%
Finance and Insurance	16,064	2.83%
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	15,781	2.78%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	18,249	3.21%
Management of Companies and Enterprising	2,527	0.44%
Administration & Support, Waste Management & Remediation Services	32,765	5.78%
Educational Services	17,330	3.05%
Health Care and Social Assistance	143,166	25.26%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	6,242	1.10%
Accommodation and Food Services	50,760	8.95%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	26,374	4.65%
Non-classifiable	3,367	0.59%
TOTAL	566,749	100%

Source: New York State Department of Labor, QCEW 2018 Preliminary

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 2018 report from the New York State Comptroller's Office, Queens has an estimated 52,100 businesses, an increase of 22 percent since the end of the recession in 2009 (faster than the citywide growth rate of 17 percent). More than two-thirds of the businesses have fewer than five employees and 84 percent have fewer than 10 employees. The Borough also has 43 businesses with more than 1,000 employees, which are concentrated in health care and transportation.²⁶

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 nine years, Queens has added an estimated 110,500 jobs, the number of jobs added during the current expansion was ten times more than were lost during the recession. Health care and leisure and hospitality were responsible for almost half (45 percent) of the gains.²⁷

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 opened The Cornell Tech campus in September 2017 and this nearby graduate school has had 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 has completed Phase I and construction for Phase II is expected to begin in winter of 2018. Flushing Municipal Lot #3 is in the final stages of completion to provide mixed-income housing, as well as commercial and community facilities. These large-scale projects are indications of the area's 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 has opened 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. The Alvista Towers opened its doors in June of 2018,

bringing 380 units of affordable apartments for rent just two blocks from the E, train line and LIRR station in Jamaica New York. This 26 story development offers modern amenities that includes, a lounge, children's playroom, courtyard, business center, fitness center, doorman, and parking.

The development of the former 168 Street NYPD garage, a project within the Jamaica NOW Action Plan, will transform the space into two affordable mixed-use apartment towers. The project will encompass 530,000 sf in total; 60,000 sf of commercial space, 19,000 sf of community facility, and 389 apartments at 333,000 sf of residential space, with the remaining space absorbed by parking. This project will be completed in summer 2021.

There are currently twelve hotels operating in Jamaica, with approximately 700 rooms, three of these hotels opened since 2015. There are another fifteen hotels currently in the pipeline, with an approximate 2,279 rooms, including a new hotel development project on Sutphin Boulevard with 240 rooms, a full-service restaurant, and 10,000 square feet of retail space. 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. Construction of Atlantic Avenue Extension has begun, which will add three neighborhood parks, landscaping, and increased lighting to a natural gateway while connecting the Northbound Van Wyck Expressway Service Road to the Sutphin Boulevard transportation hub via a connector loop on 94 Avenue.

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, Liberty Avenue, Jamaica Avenue, Main Street, Merrick Boulevard, Bell Boulevard and Myrtle Avenue. These areas are generally supported by one of the Borough's 13 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. 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 shows that the number of manufacturing jobs has been holding strong and increasing.²⁸ The city lost approximately 5,000 manufacturing jobs between 1997 and 2010. However over the past six years, employment in the sector has grown in small increments, with 75,700 jobs in 2011, 76,300 jobs in 2012, and 76,300 jobs in 2013. Since then, the city's manufacturing sector has grown by 3,200 jobs, for a total of 79,500 jobs by the end of 2016. With a renewed focus on manufacturing in recent years, and the trend shifting to 3D printing, metal and wood fabrication and food manufacturing, this upward trend is likely to increase.

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 28% of the City's manufacturing workers.²⁹ This is significant because the average annual manufacturing wage in Queens is nearly 3% higher than the average annual wage for the Borough's private sector overall.³⁰

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 1,330,860 new hires since 2011 according to the Empire State Development Corporation. Queens is the home to several 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 and the State's investment and renewal of \$427 million in film/tax credits.

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 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 completed their 10th Stage expansion plan 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 53,000 people are employed at both airports totaling \$23 billion in wages and salaries, and adds almost \$64.4 billion in economic activity to the region.³¹

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 436,000 jobs, generates about \$15.6 billion in wages, and adds almost \$64.4 billion dollars in economic activity to the region.³² The New York State Department of Labor Statistics reported in 2018 that wages rose faster in Queens County than any other county in the country, with the exception of Manhattan, and unemployment is at its lowest at 3.8%.³³ 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. Governor Cuomo presented a \$13 billion modernization and renovation project of JFK International Airport developed by the Airport Advisory Panel. Based on the recommendations of the Governor's Airport Advisory Panel, the vision plan lays out a comprehensive, airport-wide framework to create a unified, world-class airport. In order to accommodate the dramatic growth that is expected at the airport over the next several decades, and to keep New York's growing economy, Governor Cuomo has set forth a transformative vision for JFK International Airport. This vision calls for the creation of a unified and interconnected terminal layout, redesigning the on-airport traffic patterns, centralizing the parking lots, ensuring world-class amenities, expanding taxiways, and installing of state of the

art security technology. In addition to Port Authority improvements at this airport, 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 contributed 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.

LaGuardia Airport is undergoing an \$8 billion renovation, with private financing covering 75 percent of the cost. In 2016, work began on a \$4 billion modernization of Terminal B, and in 2017, work began on a \$4 billion Delta Airlines renovation of Terminals C and D. The \$8 billion overhaul of LaGuardia Airport is currently underway and it is focused on rebuilding of the main terminal, which replaces the Central Terminal Building by 2020. This project will add 1.3 million sf of space while creating 35 new gates. Phase II of this project will connect the main terminal with Terminals C and D with a mile-long hallway. LaGuardia Gateway Partners is stewarding the project. The new design maximizes the airport's ground space by way of building 600 feet closer to the highway, and including elevated walkways. In total, nearly two miles of taxiways for airplanes will be added to the existing site. This will allow for more fluid traffic on the runways and minimize delays. A newly expanded Grand Central Parkway and a built fly over has made getting into LaGuardia Airport considerably easier for vehicular traffic. This project also includes the expansion of the AirTrain at LaGuardia, which is expected to open by 2022. It will finally connect the airport with the subway system at the 7-Train Mets-Willets Point Station, opening up a direct subway connection from Grand Central Station and Hudson Yards.

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 Queens Borough President has developed a plan to stimulate the local economy for future growth. By leveraging federal, state, local, and private funds, the Queens 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 Queens 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.

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.

In June of 2018, the Queens Borough President released *Live, Work, Create: A Roadmap for Equitable Growth in Western Queens Tech Eco-system*, a three pronged initiative designed to leverage the tech industry in Queens by proposing people focused initiatives, place-based initiatives, and programmatic initiatives. This tech initiative aims to increase equitable job growth in Queens. The plan is overseen by a Tech Advisory Council made up of local stakeholders who, working with a fulltime project manager, will bring this plan to fruition.

The immediate next steps to implementation for each of the initiatives in the report are:

People-focused initiative - Convene representatives from Citywide and local training programs to identify skills gaps and devise a skills training curriculum that adequately prepares applicants with varying levels of experience for existing training programs.

Placed-based initiative – Convene local tech companies, workforce development organizations and training providers to participate in Tech Talent Pipeline efforts to develop a shared understanding of employer’s needs.

Programmatic Initiatives – Confirm geographic boundaries of focused nodes, and identify optimal streets as connector corridors. Promote partnerships between the Mayor’s office of Technology and Innovation and local organizations and institutions with the aim of establishing a neighborhood Innovation Lab in western Queens.

The full report can be found at:

http://www.queensbp.org/queens-unveils-tech-zone-strategic-plan/_v1/

Downtown Flushing

Flushing remains one of the City’s fastest growing economic hubs. The foremost 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 City 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.

Flushing has also benefitted from an investment by the New York City Department of Small Business Services, with an allocation of Neighborhood 360 Grant funding of \$1.55 million designed for implementation from 2017 through 2020. This program requires grantees to identify, develop, and launch commercial revitalization projects in partnership with local stakeholders. The program’s goals are to strengthen and revitalize streets, small businesses, and community based organizations that anchor the neighborhood. The Greater Flushing Chamber of Commerce partnered with Flushing Business Improvement District and Asian Americans for

Equality to provide a comprehensive marketing program called Flushing Fantastic, which includes place-making activities and outreach. Funding was also designated in this program for community beautification in the business district.

Downtown Jamaica

In April 2015, the Queens Borough President, in collaboration with Mayor De Blasio, New York City Department of Transportation, New York City Department of City Planning, local stakeholders, community residents, non-profit and faith-based organizations, private firms, and industry experts, launched its neighborhood-based planning initiative, the Jamaica Now Action Plan. This initiative, a \$153 million in public investment, identified 26 strategic investments for implementation in Jamaica over a five year period. Currently at the start of Year Four, the Plan has realized the installation of 20 free Wi-Fi kiosk in the downtown, the completion of a transportation study, and the recommendation of a streetscape study. The Jamaica Now Action Plan includes a storefront improvement project Phase I, and II, the renovation of King Manor Park, the renovation of Brinkerhoff Mall Park, currently under construction, and the installation of a pedestrian space at Parsons Boulevard, between Archer and Jamaica Avenues. The Jamaica NOW Action Plan is overseen by an advisory group of local stakeholders – the Jamaica NOW Leadership Council.

The full report can be found at:

<http://www.queensbp.org/jamaica/>

Other Areas with Growth Potential

In addition 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 northwestern 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 180 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 Sunnyside Rail 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 have become more attractive and financially feasible. Currently the New York City Economic Development Corporation, on behalf of New York City, has been exploring the financial and engineering feasibility of this potential development. They started by releasing the Sunnyside Yard Feasibility Study in February 2017, exploring three hypothetical development options – (1) Residential, (2) Live/Work/Play, and (3) Destination. Each test case focused on the creation of residential units, commercial units, neighborhood retail, public and community facilities, and parking, with each test case focusing on a different combination of each. Following the release of the Sunnyside Yard Feasibility Study, in May 2018, Amtrak released their Sunnyside Yard Master Plan, thus leading to the creation of the Sunnyside Yard Steering Committee and starting an eighteen month long community planning conversation, beginning in the fall of 2018, to develop a Master Plan for the project.

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 the fall of 2016, The New York City Economic Development Corporation launched a \$94 million strategic investment initiative to re-establish Downtown Far Rockaway as the commercial and transportation hub of the peninsula. The initiative aimed to reposition the area as a mixed-use retail and residential district, and encourage new mixed-income housing, in an effort to maximize the area's potential for growth. It includes plans to activate sidewalks and streets with pedestrian walkways, amenities, and public open spaces, and to improve the quality of life for residents through access to community services, education, and quality jobs. The initiative also included a program designed to build the capacity of community organizations and support local businesses.

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. Work on the redevelopment of public and private properties damaged as a result of Hurricane Sandy continues today, largely through the \$4.2 billion in Federal Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

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 2017, New York City launched NYC Ferry, connecting waterfront communities throughout New York City along the east river and the Rockaways, enhancing the city's transportation network. NYC Ferry launched in two phases. The Astoria, South Brooklyn, and Rockaway routes launched in 2017, and the Soundview and Lower East Side routes launched in 2018. The City is currently undertaking a 2018 ferry feasibility study to examine sites for possible future landings. The first stage of this process will include meetings with elected officials and community board members and other stakeholders. The study will look at water depth, population density, access to transportation, and travel times between modes.

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 have been taking steps towards easing the process. However, 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 Queens 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
- 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.

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 and the planned Co-working space currently under construction at the MODA building, which will be managed by the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation. In addition, Queens has welcomed the development of three WeWork Office developments in Queens, with two in Long Island City and one in Astoria.

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 Queens 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 Queens 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 capital 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 Queens Borough President's workforce development plan is to support the creation of jobs. The Queens 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 Queens 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 Queens 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, and 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.

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.

Long Island City Partnership is working with consultants to produce a strategic plan for a feasibility study that would help to site a multi-million dollar life sciences campus in the neighborhood. Referenced by the Mayor, Long Island City is a fast growing community and a multi-modal transportation hub which benefits from LaGuardia Community College, CUNY Law School, Cornell Technion Campus, and a strong labor pool that can all contribute to the development and expansion of a Life Sciences cluster. With a public investment of \$500 million for Research and Development for a Life Sciences Cluster in New York City, made in 2018, Long Island City Partnership is working to enhance the community while trying to identify

strategic measures to make Long Island City the next Life Science Cluster community in New York City.

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 Queens 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 City.³⁴ 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 second lowest of the five Boroughs at 2.7%, compared to the citywide rate of 4.6%.³⁵ Among renters, Queens has the second highest severe-overcrowding rate, at 4.7% of all renters. And among low-income households, Queens has the highest severely rent-burdened households, at 48.7% of low-income households.³⁶

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. Queens has the second highest home-ownership rate at 44.1% and had the highest home sales volume in 2017, 9,643 units.

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) maintains and operates 181,000. NYCHA 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. In Queens, 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. 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%. This gap is compounded by the fact that since the current administration launched Housing New York, with the goal of building and preserving 300,000 units of affordable housing throughout the city by 2026, of the 109,767 units of affordable housing have been constructed or preserved, only 10,089 of those units, or 9.2%, were in Queens.³⁷ 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 for a family of four is \$104,300, meaning that a family of four would have to have a minimum household income of \$62,580 for an affordable housing available at 60% of AMI. Consider that the actual median income of residents in Elmhurst and Corona is \$43,050; 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. There are 148,000 families on the Section 8 waiting list, with the maximum allowable number of families already on Section 8 vouchers, 99,838.³⁸

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 city,³⁹ 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. In Fiscal Year 2017, the Department of Buildings received 259,553 complaints. Of those, 146,549 complaints still remain active, a Citywide response rate of 56.46%. 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, 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 with a portfolio of 177,700 units throughout the city, with 15,796 of these units, in 21 development site, located in Queens. However, nearly 80 percent of the buildings are more than 40 years old, with several older than 70. The maintenance of these buildings are of utmost importance in ensuring quality affordable housing to those in need. NYCHA buildings in Queens are in need of significant repairs. This includes repairs to both residential units and community facilities. Residents have had to live without much needed repairs because NYCHA has been unable to respond to the overwhelming number of repair requests throughout the city. NYCHA community centers, similarly, are in need of repairs.

In effort to meet the growing demands and find viable ways to address needs for preservation, modernization, and improvement NYCHA is working in collaboration with New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development and Housing Development Corporation. Capital construction projects are essential to ensure their viability for current and future generations of residents. Still, major maintenance concerning basic quality of life issues must be addressed immediately.

Senior Housing

Queens is home to more than 315,853 residents over the age of 65 residing in Queens, representing 14% of the Borough.⁴⁰ 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. NYCHA and HPD is currently in the process of issuing a request for proposal for the creation of affordable family and senior housing units on available NYCHA sites. However, how this will impact existing sites must be examined carefully.

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. 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 preservation 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.

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 Queens 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 requirement for developments 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 Queens 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 Queens 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 Queens 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 of 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 Queens 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.

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 Queens Borough President supports an expansion of funding for the Senior Citizen Homeowner Assistance Program that provides funds for emergency and minor repairs which aid in the allowance of more senior homeowners to age in place.

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.

Reform legislation should be enacted to preserve the Mitchell-Lama program as a moderate income housing resource. Under existing law, a household may be 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.

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. There are various triggers responsible for homelessness, which may include eviction, severely overcrowded housing, domestic violence, or hazardous housing conditions. Furthermore, from 1994 to 2014, the New York City Department of Homeless Services shelter census increased 115 percent. At the same time, hundreds of thousands of affordable or rent stabilized units were lost to attrition or decontrol. This decline in housing affordability has driven many families and single adults into homelessness. Between the year 2000 and 2014, the median New York City rent increased by 19 percent in real dollars and household income decreased by 6.3 percent.⁴¹

Currently, the Department of Homeless Services directly runs or contracts with more than 200 shelters citywide. In June 2018, there were 61,421 homeless people, including 14,934 homeless families with 22,266 homeless children, sleeping each night in the New York City municipal shelter system.⁴² Families comprise nearly three-quarters of the homeless shelter population. Currently, in Queens, there are 10,513 homeless individuals housed in Queens within 38 hotels, 28 homeless shelters, one drop-in center with safe haven beds, and two short term sites for veterans.

The Department of Homeless Services has reduced the length of stay by clients in shelters. In 2017, the average length of stay in a shelter for single adults was 383 days, adult families was 550 days, and families with children was 414 days. Also in 2017, 7,742 adults, 570 adult families, and 8,571 families with children exited the shelter system into permanent housing – overall a slight decrease since 2016.⁴³

In February of 2017, the City released a comprehensive plan to address homelessness and shelters in New York City.⁴⁴ Under this plan, the Department of Homeless Services committed to reducing the total number of shelter facilities by 45% by vacating 360 cluster apartments and commercial hotel locations, building 90 higher quality Borough-based shelters, and expanding approximately 30 existing shelters. The agency's goal is to end use of cluster sites (Queens currently has none) by end of 2021 and commercial hotels by end of 2023. In addition, in August of 2017, the City Council passed and the Mayor signed Local Law 136 of 2017 which guaranteed legal counsel for low-income New Yorkers facing eviction and guaranteed individual consultations with lawyers for all tenants who face eviction in housing court.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Implement Home Stability Support in New York State

The current shelter system is inadequate in supporting the increasing number of families and individuals entering homelessness. The goal should be to prevent as many families on the brink of homelessness from becoming homeless. Home Stability Support, an initiative advocated by New York State Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi, aims to streamline existing rental subsidies and provide a rental subsidy that meets 100% of localized fair market rent.

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. With so few units created or preserved in Queens, more affordable housing needs to be created in the neighborhoods that have the direst need of affordable housing.

ZONING AND LAND-USE

Existing Conditions and Issues

Queens has always been, and remains, the Borough of choice for many long time and newer New Yorkers. The variety of housing choices includes high-rise apartments, medium sized co-ops and condominiums, or single-family homes with 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 most of New York City, neighborhoods in Queens are most often very specifically identified by a distinct name with origins dating back to colonial times.

Over 6,000 blocks in the Borough affecting 45 neighborhoods were contextually rezoned between 2002 and 2013 by the Department of City Planning. There have been no major contextual neighborhood rezonings undertaken since then. The Borough's larger commercial/retail centers in Long Island City, Downtown Jamaica, and Downtown Flushing remain as focal points of development because of mass transit connectivity to Manhattan or and function as transit hubs to outer lying areas of the Borough. Since 2014, there has been significant development activity in each of these commercial centers. The Downtown Far Rockaway rezoning covering 23 blocks was approved in 2017. The goal and purpose of this rezoning is the revitalization of Downtown Far Rockaway as the area's commercial center and transportation hub.

Since 2014, there have been significant amendments of the NYC Zoning Resolution including approvals of zoning text changes creating the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) program and Zoning for Quality and Affordability (ZQA) in 2016. The MIH provisions mandate a minimum of 25% to 30% of affordable units for any residential development requiring upzoning that increases allowable floor area for the project. The ZQA provisions create new zoning definitions and refinements that allow more efficient use of allowable floor area to facilitate production of affordable and senior affordable housing, to allow more varied or attractive mixed-use buildings.

In 2017, there was a zoning text change approved regarding the siting and development of self-storage facilities in manufacturing districts. The zoning text was adopted as part of an initiative to assure that self-storage facilities do not preclude more job intensive manufacturing businesses as the availability of land in manufacturing districts dwindles. The approved changes allow self-storage facilities as-of-right in designated manufacturing districts with a requirement that lots over 50,000 sf must set aside 25% of the lot for other industrial uses. On lots in those designated manufacturing districts that are less than 50,000 sf, there is an option to reserve 25% of the lot area for other industrial uses or larger (at least 100 sf) storage spaces equaling 25% of the lot area must be provided and reserved for business uses. Other designated manufacturing districts would require a City Planning Commission special permit for new self-storage facilities or the enlargement of existing self-storage facilities.

As of September 2018, there is a pending zoning text amendment to create a new City Planning Commission special permit required for hotels considering location in a light manufacturing district (M1). The impetus for this zoning text amendment was a growing and projected trend of increased construction of new hotels in the M1 districts over the last ten years. Increased use of

land in manufacturing districts for hotel development may inhibit future development of industrial businesses due to the decreased availability of properties in those areas. The proposed special permit would allow consideration and site specific review of potential effects a hotel might have on the surrounding area and neighboring uses.

Global warming and rising seas have been well documented over the last few decades. Queens and New York City have already experienced some of the worst flooding and damage caused by the intensity of storms strengthened by the warming. The Rockaway Peninsula was devastated by Hurricane Sandy in 2012. There was also significant flooding and storm related damage in other parts of the Borough such as Broad Channel, Hamilton Beach, Howard Beach, and Long Island City. Many of those areas are still in the process of recovery and reconstruction from that extreme storm.

The Sunnyside Rail Yard is an approximately 200 acre active rail yard used by Amtrak, the Long Island Rail Road and New Jersey Transit for daily transportation operations. The rail yard bordered by Long Island City, Dutch Kills, Sunnyside, and Woodside creates a north-south barrier dividing western Queens. The Regional Plan Association proposed decking and developing the rail yard in 1929. Over the years since there have been other proposals to deck and develop the rail yard. The scope and cost of the work needed to make a project of this size viable has always been the limiting factor. Now, with large parcels of land becoming harder to find, the Sunnyside Rail Yard may now be more feasible for potential development. Most recently, consultants completed a feasibility study in 2016 for the New York City Economic Development Corporation that will be used to inform a master planning process that is now underway. The feasibility study considers the ongoing use of the site as an active rail yard, improvements that the rail operators are building and considers how infrastructure needed to support development over the yard might be located. A Sunnyside Yard Steering Committee, made up of public officials, business and community leaders was convened 2018 to formulate and review potential uses and development of the rail yard.

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 to 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 – 48% of housing stock as opposed to around 11.4% for 3-4 units in one structure.⁴⁵

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. There is also a severe shortage of housing for lower to moderate income residents many of whom are service workers. Service workers are essential to the businesses and companies of New York City. 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 up to two hours or more.

Special Willets Point District

The Special Willets Point District was approved in 2008 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 approved project for the 62 acre site was to have 5,550 units of residential housing, with 35% of units affordable housing 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 space.⁴⁶ 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. While the approvals are still in place, there are considerations underway to examine which elements of the approved plan should go forward ten years after the original approvals.

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 2002.⁴⁷ 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. Areas that should be considered are those bordering the fastest growing parts of Queens such as Astoria, Long Island City or Flushing.

Infrastructure Improvements to Support Increased Population and New Development

A growing population and new development in all parts of Queens have added new demand for schools, public transportation, open space, roadway and traffic improvements, supermarkets, and other neighborhood services. This is especially true in western Queens, which over the last decade has experienced some of the densest and tallest new development in the Borough. Community groups throughout areas of the Borough experiencing new growth and development have been advocating for review and consideration of such improvements to maintain the quality of life in their neighborhoods.

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 Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Program to Stimulate Production of more Affordable Housing

The Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Program provides floor area bonuses in return for a minimum 25% to 30% affordable housing units. However, the program has not produced enough units to alleviate the increasing need for affordable housing, especially for lower to moderate income households. In addition to the floor area bonus, additional related incentives must be created 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 Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Program to induce more affordable housing production.

Hotel Special Permits

The creation of a new special permit for hotels in M1 districts may have an unintended result. Developers who do not want to go through a 2-3 year special permit review process may instead focus on areas where hotels could be built as-of-right. This might result in a concentration of hotels in commercial areas and have an adverse effect on other economic activity in the surrounding commercial areas. Another concern is what happens to the buildings when hotels

are not run by responsible operators or the hotels are forced to close. Instead of just requiring a special permit for hotels in the M1 districts, all new hotels should have to go through the special permit public review process to assure that wherever sited it is appropriate to the neighborhood.

Ensure Appropriate Development over the Sunnyside Rail Yard

Any development over the Sunnyside Rail Yard must be balanced and sensitive to the different neighboring communities around it with their varying densities of population, building heights and common needs for affordable housing, open space, school seats, and more efficient mass transit. Due to the complexity of the rail facility spaces and ongoing rail operations, if development were to occur it would have to be in phases. Development of the site must address affordable housing, open space, school seats and mass transit improvements. It is of critical importance that the neighboring communities have opportunities to provide meaningful input and comment throughout the process on any development that may occur.

Willets Point Redevelopment

The Special Willets Point District was adopted in 2008. The objective was, and still remains, remediation and transformation of an underutilized industrial area into a fully functioning, robust neighborhood with market rate and affordable housing, public open spaces, retail, and entertainment. Willets Point is centrally located, in close proximity to sports and cultural attractions, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, both LaGuardia and Kennedy Airports, area highways, and mass transit. Redevelopment at Willets Point should include a new multipurpose soccer facility that would naturally complement those advantages.

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. Arverne by the Sea have been very successful. Arverne by the Sea weathered Hurricane Sandy with minimal significant damage due to design and infrastructure that recognized and planned for its proximity to the ocean. It is important that Arverne East is implemented with appropriate infrastructure to fully reactivate over 200 acres of land that has sat vacant since the 1960's. The new housing, goods, and services provided will serve the entire Rockaway Peninsula.

Continue Reconciliation of Zoning to Assure Flood Resiliency

There is a fine balance to protecting waterfront communities and deciding which areas most vulnerable to storms and the rising sea and appropriate for any more development. The Zoning Resolution must be kept up to date with the latest state and federal regulations so that our waterfront residents have the ability to smoothly navigate the numerous regulations and to make the best decisions about keeping their homes safe.

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. Ferry service has been instituted for the Rockaway Peninsula, Long Island City, and Astoria. Overall, the ferry program has been more successful than anticipated requiring the City to order larger ferry boats to accommodate ridership. Other opportunities for expansion of ferry service to areas such as Willets Point, Bayside or Flushing would be worth investigating.

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.

Recovery projects, like the Sunset Cove Restoration in Broad Channel, the Spring Creek Mitigation effort in Howard Beach, the rebuild of the Rockaway Boardwalk, the rebuild of Shorefront Parkway, are positive steps towards making vulnerable areas more resilient. However, key resiliency projects remain stalled and yet to commence. Sand erosion continues to be a problem on the Rockaway Beaches. Yet, since the Army Corps of Engineers first introduced their Draft Reformulation Study for the Atlantic Coast, East Rockaway Inlet to Rockaway Inlet and Jamaica Bay in October 2016, no work has commenced. Such projects are necessary in securing the long-term resiliency of the Rockaway Peninsula.

Since February 2014 the Queens Borough President has chaired the Hurricane Relief Task Force. Members of the Task Force include the Mayor's Chief Resilience Officer Dan Zarrilli, Build it Back Program Director Amy Peterson, as well as ranking representatives from the federal, state, and city agencies involved in the housing recovery, and long-term resiliency efforts. The Task Force also includes the Chairs and District Managers of Community Boards 14 and 10, as well as community leaders from the neighborhoods in Queens that were heavily impacted by the Hurricane. The main focus of this Task Force since its inception has been the housing recovery effort (the Build it Back program).

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. 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.

In February 2014 the Queens 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, which includes a boardwalk and hiking trails, a boat ramp and recreation field.

In August 2018, the first phase of the Sunset Cove project broke ground, which aims to remove contaminated fill from the area, while providing public access, educational opportunities, and added resiliency to the Broad Channel community. The Queens Borough President has allocated \$1,000,000 towards Phase 2 of the project, which will fund the construction of the boardwalk, outdoor classroom, and temporary boat dock at the park.

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 had 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.

The entire boardwalk was rebuilt and open by the scheduled date of Memorial Day 2017, and welcomed more than 5,000,000 visitors that summer. Upon meeting with residents who were alerted to the fact that there were areas of the boardwalk that remained extremely vulnerable to tidal surges during extreme weather events, the Queens Borough President expressed the concerns to the New York City Office of Resiliency and Recovery, who then installed Geotube sand barriers to shore up the vulnerable sections of the boardwalk.

Beach Replenishment

Sand erosion continues to be a problem on the Rockaway Beaches. In the summer of 2018, eleven of Rockaway's beaches were closed due to sand erosion issues. The Office of the Queens Borough President has been working with other elected officials and the affected community to have a sand replenishment project on these beaches.

In October 2016, the Army Corp of Engineers, partnering with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency, the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, and the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, unveiled their Draft Reformulation Study for the Atlantic Coast, East Rockaway Inlet to Rockaway Inlet and Jamaica Bay. The study outlines a "Tentatively Selected Plan" to provide long-term protection to areas impacted by tidal storm surges including the Rockaway Peninsula, Broad Channel, Howard Beach and Hamilton Beach. The tentative plan includes the construction of seawalls, beach berms, groins (jetties), and storm surge barriers, working in concert to provide resiliency and protection measure to these communities for the long-term.

Unfortunately, these plans continue to remain stalled at the federal level. Currently the Army Corps of Engineers expect their long term resiliency project plan to commence by 2019. These measures would protect the communities against tidal surges and slow down sand erosion on Rockaway's beaches and need to commence as soon as possible.

Parks and Amenities Replacement

Hurricane Sandy devastated many of the 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 restoration efforts by holding a series of conceptual planning meetings where residents were invited to participate in planning the design of the parks that will be rebuilt.

Since then the reconstruction of Sandpiper Park has begun, while several other parks have been pipelined for reconstruction. In October of 2017, the fifth anniversary of Hurricane Sandy, the Queens Borough President and the Mayor announced that the \$120 million in federal money remaining from the Rockaway Boardwalk rebuilding project would be used to rebuild addition six parks/amenities on the Rockaway Peninsula; the Queens Borough President contributed \$2,500,000 towards this endeavor. These projects include:

1. The reconstruction of Bayswater Park
2. Edgemere Shoreline Drainage Improvements
3. Rockaway Community Park reconstruction
4. Rebuilding Recreational Amenities along Shorefront Parkway

5. Creation of a new waterfront park at Beach 88th Street
6. Demolition and Reconstruction of NYC Parks Operations Headquarters for the Rockaways and Broad Channel

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.

In August of 2014, only one home had been built and none had been repaired. However, through the efforts of the Office of the Queens Borough President advocating for the urgency of repairing these homes, to date, according to the City, there have now been 8,011 homeowners served, representing a 96% of the Build it Back population that have been served.

Fort Tilden

In 2017 the Queens Borough President organized a Land Revitalization Authority (LRA) for the purpose of determining the future use of 9.3 acres of federal land at Fort Tilden. The former U.S. Army Reserves base is being turned over to the City, and the LRA was tasked with reviewing proposals to repurpose the land. The LRA made the final determination and awarded the site to the New York Police Department Counterterrorism Bureau who until now have been using the land on a monthly agreement basis. This determination for permanent usage was made by the Queens Borough President bringing the stakeholders together with elected officials to ensure that the community had a strong voice at the table during this important process.

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. In May of 2017, permanent ferry service, NYC Ferry, was implemented citywide, and the first route to go online was the Rockaway route, which takes riders from Rockaway to Lower Manhattan. In December of 2017, responding to greater than expected ridership, the City agreed to the purchase of additional boats that would be implemented into the Rockaway route by the end of summer 2018.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Continue Regularly Held Meetings 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 City Planning, 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.

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.

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 Queens Borough President intends to fully support the development of ecologically sound infrastructure projects like the Spring Creek Mitigation Project and the Sunset Cove Restoration.

SENIOR SERVICES

Existing Conditions and Issues

Queens is home to more than 315,853 residents over the age of 65 residing in Queens, representing 14% of the Borough.⁴⁸ Today, more than 45,000 persons over the age of 85 reside in the Borough.⁴⁹ The older population is increasingly diverse, with over half comprised of minorities, a rapidly growing immigrant population, and an increasing LGBTQ population as well.

The growth in New York's older immigrant population is far outpacing that of the U.S. born senior population. Although the number of native-born seniors grew just 6 percent from 2010 to 2015, the number of immigrant seniors jumped 21 percent.⁵⁰ 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 children

21% of Queen's senior population lives below the poverty line.⁵¹ 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.

Senior Centers

The New York City Department for the Aging currently funds 249 Neighborhood Senior Centers, 16 Innovative Senior Centers, and 38 sites affiliated programs with those centers. Of the 230 Neighborhood Senior Centers, 51 are in Queens. They are funded through Title IIC and Title XX of the Older Americans Act, the US Department of Agriculture, 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 Queens Borough President. Over the past five years the Office of the Queens Borough President, through baselined and discretionary funds, have allocated \$9,365,000 to support senior services at senior centers throughout the Borough.

Senior Centers serve as the network hub for senior services. Located in most communities throughout Queens, all centers provide congregate meals and an environment where older adults can participate in a variety of recreational, health promotional and cultural activities, as well as receive information on and assistance with benefits. For many seniors the meals provided at these centers are often their principle source of nourishment. 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.

Since 2012, Queens has been awarded three contracts by the Department for the Aging to provide Innovative Senior Centers, SNAP Eastern Queens Senior Center, Selfhelp Benjamin

Rosenthal Senior Center, and HANAC JVL Senior Center. Innovative Senior Centers offer a new model of centers for older New Yorkers by providing enhanced programming such as robust health and wellness programs, additional access to health care services, arts and cultural programs, and technology and volunteer opportunities. Some Innovative Senior Centers have more flexible and expanded hours, including evenings and weekends, as well as transportation options to facilitate access to the centers, particularly those in Queens.

Housing

Older adults represent the fastest growing population in New York City. The need to increase affordable housing options are greater now more than ever.

In 2014, the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development launched the Senior Affordable Rental Apartments program (SARA), which provides gap financing low interest loans to construct and preserve affordable housing for low-income seniors. However, of the 5,593 reported SARA units, only 767 units were in Queens, representing only 14% of the total SARA units built or preserved.⁵²

In 2017, the New York State legislature passed legislation that raised the household income eligibility level for the Senior Citizen Homeowner Exemption from \$37,400 to \$58,400, and the Mayor signed a Local Law that extended the current income eligibility of \$50,000 for the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption and the Disability Rent Increase Exemption. Still, many seniors who are not eligible and are renting market rate units are severely burdened by rising rental costs. Waiting lists for existing senior housing can exceed seven years in several parts of Queens.

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. Several senior center programs, ranging from car service to wheelchair accessible vans, provide transportation for medical appointments, senior centers, shopping centers, and social service agencies.

The New York City Department for the Aging provides transportation for older adults through contracted non-profit organizations. These providers transport frail older New Yorkers who have no access to, or cannot use public transportation, for the purpose of attending senior centers and essential medical and social service appointments. In Queens, three organizations have been contracted to provide transportation services – HANAC, Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults (JSPOA), and Selfhelp Clearview Senior Center. JSPOA and Selfhelp Clearview Senior Center both provide transportation to and from medical appointments through partnership with local car services. However, even with these programs, transportation for seniors still remain a significant challenge for the Borough.

Home Delivered Meals

For many seniors, meals served at senior centers are their primary source of nutrition for the day. However, a significant portion of seniors are homebound, and the meals they receive through

Home Delivered Meals are crucial. In Fiscal Year 2018 the New York City Department for the Aging served 4,551,394 home delivered meals to 26,873 homebound older New Yorkers through 26 non-profit organizations. In Queens, several organizations provide Home Delivered Meals. However, only one is able to provide culturally sensitive meals. Queens is the most diverse Borough, and additional resources should be provided so that more organizations can provide meals that are familiar to those receiving them.

Geriatric Mental Health

Elder abuse victims have among the highest rates of depression and anxiety. Elder abuse includes physical and psychological abuse, predatory financial exploitation, and intentional neglect. The City provides a wide range of services to abuse victims, including a wide range of legal services and direct case management through programs like the Friendly Visiting Program and Providing Options to Elderly Clients Together (PROTECT). However, victims of elder abuse victims are often reluctant to report cases or seek assistance because they are often fearful or have had their judgement impaired because of the abuse. Increased community education and outreach is needed.

For older adults suffering from depression or other mental health issues, programs like Program to Encourage Active, Rewarding Lives for Seniors (PEARLS) provide geriatric mental health services with a focus on homebound older adults. In Queens, the Visiting Nurse Service of New York and OHEL Children's Home and Family Services provide services throughout the Borough.

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 affordable housing, the City needs to prioritize the creation of senior housing and ensure the preservation of rent-regulated housing.

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 persons. 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 Queens 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 over 352,000 persons 60 years of age and older with 40,052 persons above the age of 85.⁵³ 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 insurance.⁵⁴ 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. Over 727,000 Queens residents have enrolled for insurance through the New York State health exchange since it first opened.⁵⁵

NYC DOHMH Community Health Profiles – Key Concerns

Jackson Heights: Health Insurance

- 38% of adults have no health insurance, ranks 1st in NYC
- Average in Queens: 22%
- Average in NYC: 20%

Jackson Heights: New HIV Diagnoses

- 41.0 per 100,000 population
- Average in Queens: 20.5
- Average in NYC: 30.4

Elmhurst and Corona: Health Insurance

- 36% of adults have no health insurance, ranks 2nd in NYC
- Average in Queens: 22%
- Average in NYC: 20%

Jamaica and Hollis: Infant Mortality

- 9.0 per 1,000 live births, ranks 1st in NYC
- Average in Queens: 4.7
- Average in NYC: 4.7

Rockaway and Broad Channel: Hospitalization Due to Stroke

- 467 per 100,000 adults, ranks 3rd in NYC
- Average in Queens: 305

- Average in NYC: 319

Rockaway and Broad Channel: Psychiatric Hospitalizations

- 1,197 per 100,000 adults, ranks 5th in NYC
- Average in Queens: 500
- Average in NYC: 684

Rockaway and Broad Channel: Death Rates

- Heart Disease: 350.3 per 100,000 population
 - o NYC death rate: 202.6
- Nephritis: 13.6 per 100,000 population
 - o NYC death rate: 5.2

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. 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.

Since 2014, the Queens Borough President has provided nearly \$27.5 million in capital funds for hospitals and healthcare providers, including \$5.5 million for the Queens Hospital Center, dedicated for the expansion of the emergency room and pharmacy, and \$4.45 million for Elmhurst Hospital, dedicated to the expansion of the emergency room and Labor and Delivery Suite. However, these investments are not nearly enough. Queens remains the most under-bedded Borough in New York City. There are only 1.65 beds per 1000 patients in Queens, compared to 5.71 in Manhattan and 2.19 in Brooklyn.⁵⁶

Summary Status of Hospitals				
Borough	Population	Number of Hospitals	Total Number of Beds	Beds per 1000 Patients
Bronx	1,455,720	11	3,816	2.62
Brooklyn	2,629,150	15	5,746	2.19
Manhattan	1,643,734	20	9,380	5.71
Staten Island	476,015	4	1,183	2.49
Queens	2,333,054	9	3,838	1.65

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.

Since 2014, the Queens Borough President has focused on the expansion of Article 28 community-based healthcare facilities who are equipped to serve the linguistic and cultural needs of the neighborhoods they serve. This includes a \$3.1 million capital allocation for the Charles B. Wang Community Health Center to develop a new facility in Flushing, \$230,000 for The Floating Hospital for new ambulances and transport vehicles, \$3.46 million for the expansion of the Joseph P. Addabbo Family Health Center, and \$216,000 for medical equipment for Plaza del Sol Family Health Center. In the absence of primary care capacity, these community-based healthcare facilities can serve as a stop-gap in relieving the overcrowding at emergency rooms.

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 Queens 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.

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. 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.

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 wide.⁵⁷

The leading cause of injury to women in Queens remains domestic violence by their partners.⁵⁸ 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 assisted more than 41,403 clients through 121,227 client visits.

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 through the Office of Domestic Violence currently provides oversight of a network of 52 emergency domestic violence shelters to provide over 17,500 survivors of domestic violence with temporary emergency housing and supportive services. 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.

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 seven years; the wait in Brooklyn is five years, the Bronx eight years, and Manhattan is seven years.⁵⁹ 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 victims.⁶⁰

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, in Queens, 30% of all reported domestic violence instances reported to the New York Police Department have male victims.⁶¹ 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 teens. In 2017, 10.2% of high school students in Queens reported being intentionally physically hurt by their partner within the past year while 10% reported experiencing sexual dating violence.⁶² 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 an 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 number of 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.

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 Queens 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.

On April of 2016, the Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs transitioned officially into the New York City Department of Veterans Services. With the launch of the new city agency the Queens Borough President worked with Department of Veterans Affairs Commissioner Loree Sutton to open a Satellite Office for the agency at Queens Borough Hall in May 2016. For the first time Queens veterans did not have to leave the Borough to have their issues addressed by the City.

Housing and Homelessness

Currently, 40,000 veterans are homeless and hungry in America on any given night.⁶³ New York City has seen the largest decrease in the number of homeless veterans in the country between 2011 and 2017 – while homeless veterans nationwide increased 2%, New York City saw a homeless rate decrease of 4%.⁶⁴ Still, securing housing for veterans has been an ongoing challenge in the Borough.

Unemployment

In Queens, nearly 4% of veterans between the ages of 18 to 64 are unemployed; veterans between the ages of 18 and 34 have an unemployment rate of 5.6%.⁶⁵ 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 Afghanistan.⁶⁶ 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 Queens Borough President will continue to build a bridge between veteran job seekers and entities that are willing to provide employment opportunities. The Queens 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 Queens 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.

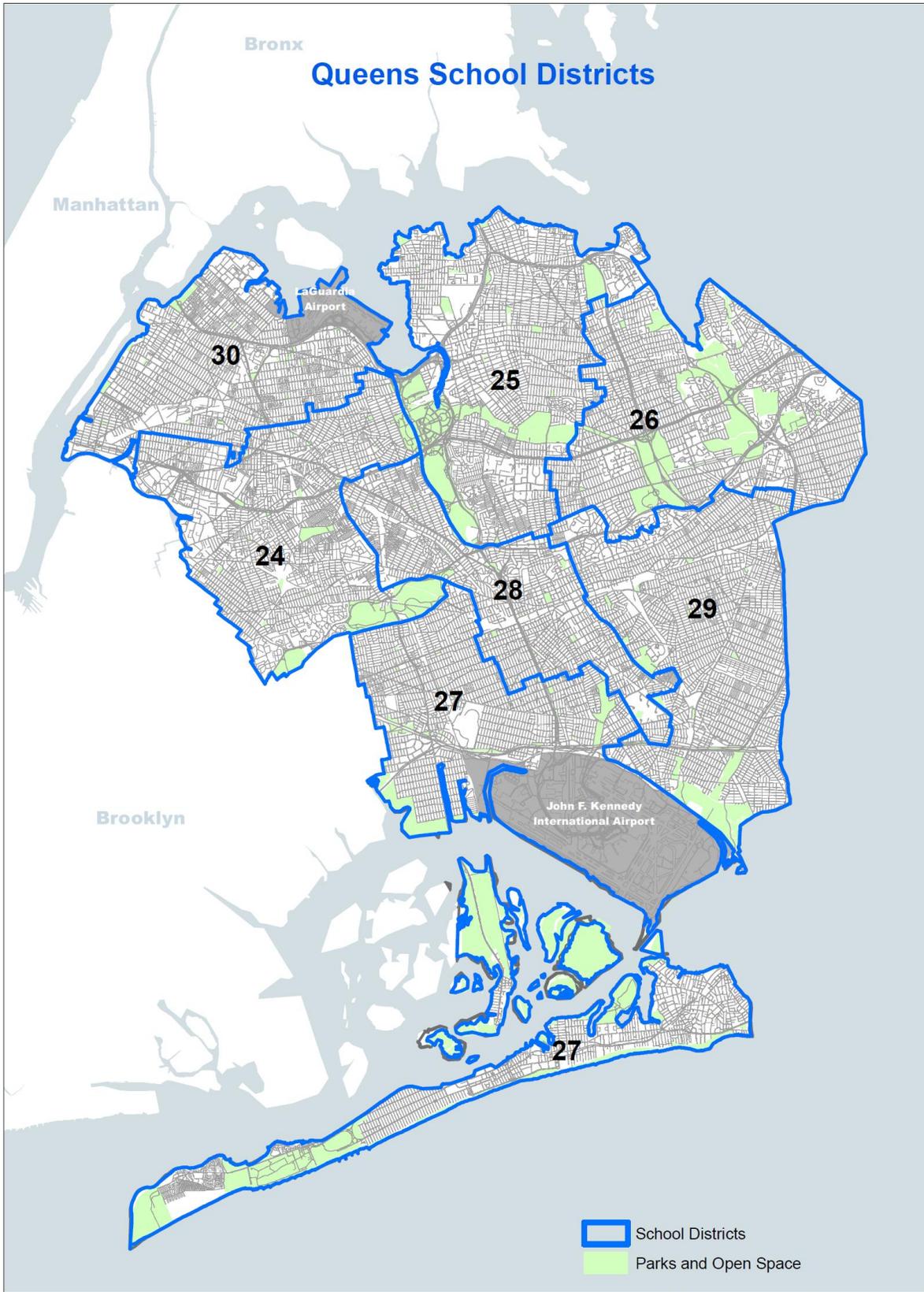
EDUCATION

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 309,302 public school students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Of these students, 83.2% of the students are performing at grade level in math, and 81.6% are performing at grade level in reading. Additionally, 74.8% are graduating high school in four years, and 6.4% are dropping out of high school⁶⁷

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

Queens School Districts	Neighborhood
School District 24	Jackson Heights, Sunnyside, Woodside, Corona, Maspeth, Ridgewood, Glendale
School District 25	Whitestone, College Point, Bayside, Flushing, North Flushing, Fresh Meadows, Kew Gardens Hills
School District 26	Bayside, Bayside Hills, Little Neck, Douglaston, Flushing, Fresh Meadows, Oakland Gardens, Bellerose, Glen Oaks, Queens Village, Hollis Hills, Kew Gardens Hills
School District 27	Howard Beach, Belle Harbor, Broad Channel, South Ozone Park, Woodhaven, South Richmond Hill, South Jamaica, Far Rockaway
School District 28	Rego Park, Forest Hills, Middle Village, Jamaica
School District 29	Bellerose, Queens Village, Hollis, Saint Albans, Laurelton
School District 30	Astoria, Long Island City, Sunnyside Gardens, Woodside, Jackson Heights, East Elmhurst, Corona



9/11/2018, The Office of Queens Borough President, Created by: Jeong-ah Choi, Source: Open Data, Department of City Planning

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.

Years ago, the use of Transportable Classroom Units (“TCU”), 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. Since 2014, through efforts by the Queens Borough President, 82 TCUs have been permanently removed, with another 33 in the process of being removed and 40 still awaiting a removal timeline.

Currently, Queens has the highest utilization rate in the city, a rate of 108.11%. Queens is also the only Borough operating over capacity.⁶⁸ When observing non-District 75 students only, Queens is currently over-capacity by 22,151 students. The School Construction Authority has recently planned an additional 18,533 for Queens. Yet, even with these new seats, Queens will still be operating at 100.97% capacity.⁶⁹

Current Public School Utilization Rate by Borough					
Borough	Total Students	Current Capacity	Current Overcrowding %	Amount of New Seats Funded	New Overcrowding % with new seats
Manhattan	146,209	167,515	87.28%	4,087	85.20%
Bronx	204,402	216,137	94.57%	5,208	92.35%
Brooklyn	283,921	324,701	87.44%	14,718	83.65%
Queens	283,309	262,067	108.11%	18,533	100.97%
Staten Island	62,100	61,061	101.70%	2,082	98.35%
Citywide	979,941	1,030,851	95.00%	44,628	91.06%

Current School Utilization Rate by Borough by School Type					
Borough	Elementary	Middle School	PS/IS	High School	IS/HS
Manhattan	91.86%	72.57%	91.83%	86.75%	86.97%
- including new seats	88.74%	64.13%	91.83%	86.75%	86.97%
Bronx	105.02%	78.50%	114.54%	82.87%	95.69%
- including new seats	99.64%	78.50%	109.73%	82.87%	95.69%
Brooklyn	95.13%	73.60%	87.79%	87.02%	81.85%
- including new seats	88.38%	73.60%	76.43%	87.02%	81.85%
Queens	116.18%	92.34%	104.36%	113.63%	101.00%
- including new seats	105.20%	92.34%	91.20%	107.48%	101.00%
Staten Island	110.24%	86.44%	99.97%	103.40%	None
- including new seats	104.30%	86.44%	91.27%	101.35%	None

Top 5 Most Utilized Schools per School District*				
District	School Name	Enrollment	Capacity	Utilization
24	P.S. 28	527	297	177%
24	International High School (Middle College Campus)	530	304	174%
24	P.S. 89	1,995	1,293	154%
24	P.S. 307	961	629	153%
24	P.S. 128	974	651	150%
25	P.S. 242	388	187	207%
25	P.S. 244 @ Franklin Avenue	461	252	183%
25	Flushing High School	547	327	167%
25	P.S. 32	974	618	158%
25	John Bowne High School	3,571	2,329	153%
26	Francis Lewis High School**	4,463	2,151	207%
26	P.S. 41**	510	292	175%
26	P.S. 94	365	229	159%
26	Benjamin Cardozo High School	3,744	2,403	156%
26	P.S. 162	702	449	156%
27	P.S. 66**	522	214	244%
27	P.S. 51	233	114	204%
27	P.S. 60	216	113	191%
27	P.S. 96	311	179	174%
27	P 256 @ P.S. 253	71	43	165%
28	JHS 72	329	125	263%
28	Forest Hills High School	3,903	2,007	194%
28	P.S. 303	208	112	186%
28	P.S. 144	895	569	157%
28	P.S. 16	115	78	147%
29	P.S. 131**	871	461	189%
29	P.S. 95**	1,508	976	155%
29	P.S. 15	465	313	149%
29	P.S. 36	466	350	133%
29	P.S./I.S. 295	53	43	123%
30	P.S. 228	331	156	212%
30	P.S. 339	194	106	183%
30	Academy of American Studies	999	554	180%
30	P.S. 222	291	176	165%
30	P.S. 212	814	539	151%

*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

Underfunding

Queens' School Districts are the most underfunded schools in the city based on per pupil spending. Funding for schools is determined using a wide range of factors. The Department of Education funds schools through School Allocation Memorandums (SAMs). Each SAM is a dedicated funding stream, each with its own unique distribution formula, from either the City, State, or Federal government. For example, the largest source of funding is SAM 01: Fair Student Funding. Funded by the City, it takes into account, among others, number of students, number of English Language Learners, and Academic Intervention in the weighting of its funding distribution formula. Another large source of funding for schools is SAM 08: Title I. This federally funded allocation is based on the number of low-income students. These SAMs combined comprise a schools total budget.

Queens students are currently the most underfunded students in the city, with a Per Pupil Spending of \$11,359.⁷⁰ When observing Per Pupil Spending by school grade type for the school's total budget, Queens schools have the lowest Per Pupil Spending for every school level. Six of Queens' seven school districts are among the ten lowest Per Pupil Spending districts in the city. District 26 is the lowest, \$10.260 per pupil, District 28 is the second lowest, \$10,812 per pupil, and District 25 is the third lowest, \$11.206 per pupil

Per Pupil Spending by Borough			
Borough	Total Spending	Total Number of Students*	Per Pupil Spending
Manhattan	\$1,379,267,178	108,131	\$12,756
Bronx	\$2,021,955,240	142,529	\$14,186
Brooklyn	\$2,688,575,570	211,487	\$12,713
Queens	\$2,515,403,765	221,446	\$11,359
Staten Island	\$533,602,051	43,607	\$12,237
Citywide	\$9,138,803,804	727,200	\$12,567

*D75 and Pre-K students are not included as their funding formula is calculated differently

Per Pupil Spending by Borough by Grade					
	Elementary	PS/IS	Middle School	IS/HS	High School
Manhattan	\$12,908	\$13,166	\$13,052	\$11,911	\$12,792
Bronx	\$13,667	\$12,741	\$15,467	\$14,402	\$14,821
Brooklyn	\$12,782	\$11,999	\$13,017	\$12,783	\$12,686
Queens	\$11,241	\$10,981	\$11,291	\$10,284	\$11,896
Staten Island	\$12,911	\$11,490	\$11,843	\$16,370	\$11,687
Citywide	\$12,500	\$12,066	\$12,807	\$12,457	\$12,761

Per Pupil Spending by School District Highest to Lowest	
School District	Total Per Pupil Spending
16	\$17,152.40
23	\$16,359.45
9	\$15,343.88
12	\$15,291.97
7	\$15,268.02
5	\$15,160.56
32	\$15,076.91
6	\$14,481.59
8	\$14,335.19
19	\$14,059.09
14	\$13,898.60
4	\$13,806.96
10	\$13,664.37
17	\$13,603.23
18	\$13,572.18
1	\$13,121.65
11	\$12,776.35
15	\$12,461.92
31	\$12,236.61
21	\$12,202.31
27	\$12,020.81
3	\$11,933.85
2	\$11,870.50
24	\$11,735.72
20	\$11,711.40
13	\$11,709.23
30	\$11,663.54
29	\$11,362.43
22	\$11,260.02
25	\$11,206.29
28	\$10,872.01
26	\$10,260.21

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. 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. In 2014, the Queens Borough President launched its Queens Technology Initiative aimed at providing capital funding to upgrade technology at every school in Queens. As of 2018, every school in Queens has received capital funds for technology, totaling \$20.86 million. Still, many of these schools require significant renovations, including electrical upgrades, in order to incorporate technology into their educational curriculum.

Pre-Kindergarten

Universal Pre-Kindergarten (“UPK”) has significantly expanded since its inception in 2014, now providing more than 71,500 students with quality pre-kindergarten education. Queens currently enrolls 20,946 students in UPK. There is an increasing need of UPK programs, particularly in Districts 24 and 30. However, there are overcrowding issues, especially in UPK programs offered in Department of Education schools, where these programs are taking up space otherwise available for Kindergarten.

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 63,446 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 2017									
College	Undergraduate			Graduate			Total		
	Full Time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total
Queens	12,149	4,531	16,680	443	2,743	3,186	12,592	7,274	19,866
York	5,056	3,337	8,393	126	14	140	5,182	3,351	8,533
LaGuardia	10,971	8,188	19,159	0	0	0	10,971	8,188	19,159
QueensBorough	9,208	6,192	15,400	0	0	0	9,208	6,192	15,400
Law School	0	0	0	344	144	488	344	144	488
Total	37,384	22,248	59,632	913	2,901	3,814	38,297	25,149	63,446

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

Continue the Queens Borough President's Education War Room

The Queens Borough President's War Room on education is a monthly meeting that brings together the School Construction Authority and Superintendents with the Queens 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 identify construction that needs to be expedited, as well as other education issues.

The Queens Borough President will continue hosting these monthly meetings, and specifically address the issues of overcrowding, underfunding, 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. In addition, the School Construction Authority needs to fund the creation of more elementary and high schools seats.

Address Underfunding in Schools

The Department of Education needs to re-evaluate the funding formula for SAM 01: Fair Student Funding. In Fiscal Year 2019, the Mayor increased Fair Student Funding, but it still did not address the equity issue of funding for students in Queens.

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 Queens 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, the 51st Avenue Academy, PS 12, PS 199, and PS 89. Still, the Department of Education needs to take a comprehensive stock of all underutilized space and convert them into classrooms when viable. The Queens 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.

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 Queens 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 Queens 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 Queens 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 Queens 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 Queens Borough President will post information on how to access financial aid and scholarships on the Queens Borough President's website, and will also provide opportunities for career building workshops like resume building.

Increase Parent Involvement

The Queens Borough President will continue the Parent Advisory Board meetings that are organized by Queens 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, to 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 Queens 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 Queens 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.

Prioritize School Safety

In order to ensure the safety of our students, all schools should have security cameras in place. The Queens Borough President will work with the Department of Education and the School Construction Authority in order to realize these plans.

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 2019, the total support from the City of New York was \$110 million.

The Queens Borough Public Library's services are beyond the traditional role of book lending. 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 2018, 13.5 million items were circulated and in-person attendance was 12 million people.⁷¹ 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.

Currently, all Queens libraries are open six days per week. However, only two of the 62 libraries are open seven days a week.

Fiscal Year 2017 Library Performance ⁷²				
	Number of Community Libraries	Average Weekly Scheduled hours	Total Attendance	Libraries Open 7 days
Queens Public Library	62	44.8	11.22M	2
Brooklyn Public Library	58	49.3	8.38M	4
New York Public Library	88	50	13.67M	7

Strategic Goals and Policies

Increase expense funding support to provide expanded seven-day service

The City needs to include additional funding so that more branches can provide seven day service. The Queens Borough President intends to continue advocating for this goal.

Increase capital funding support for Queens Borough Public Library

Several libraries are either in critical need of repairs, or need an expansion. While the Office of the Queens Borough President has allocated over \$45 million for the improvements of our libraries, the City needs to provide funds for the wholesale expansion of several libraries. The Queens Borough President intends to continue advocating for this goal.

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 fatalities.⁷³ 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 Queens Borough President is dedicated to digitizing all maps and making accessible through the Office of the Queens 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 to make pedestrian improvements. Streets in historic districts should also be improved using original or historic materials to reinforce and 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

The Queens Borough President has begun addressing flooding and sewer issues in southeast Queens by forming the Taskforce on Southeast Queens, and working with stakeholders and residents to address some of the chronic flooding issues. The Queens 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 the commute is 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

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 number 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. Three such stations are the former Elmhurst Station (located between Whitney and Cornish Avenues on Broadway), Corona Station (located between 44th and 45th Avenues on National Street), and Willets Point Station (located on Roosevelt Avenue at the Flushing Meadows Pedestrian Bridge), which currently only opens on game days at Citi Field or at the US Open. 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 city.⁷⁴

In 2018, working with local elected officials, the MTA began a pilot program and started offering discounted fares from six stations in Southeast Queens (Rosedale, Laurelton, Locust Manor, St. Albans, Hollis and Queens Village) to Atlantic Terminal. While the pilot program

offers significant financial alleviation for commuters in Southeast Queens, the plan still only provides discounted fares to Atlantic Terminal and not Penn Station. The MTA should study ridership changes since the pilot program began and properly assess whether or not the plan can be expanded to include discounted fares to Penn Station.

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 2017 was a record setting year for both, with 29.5 million passengers using LaGuardia and 59.4 million passengers using John F. Kennedy.⁷⁵ Combined, the two airports directly provides 53,000 jobs, generates about \$23 billion in wages, and adds almost \$64.4 billion in economic activity to the region.⁷⁶

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 procedures, making air transportation more efficient and cost-effective for both the air carriers and passengers while mitigating negative effects on local communities. These efforts present significant opportunities and challenges for the Borough.

The centerpiece of the Port Authority's efforts are the massive redevelopment projects for both airports: a \$13 billion redevelopment of John F. Kennedy Airport and an \$8 billion redevelopment of LaGuardia Airport (the latter of which will include the construction of an AirTrain). Premised on the Vision Plans for each airport developed at the request of the Governor, these redevelopment projects aim to provide a world-class experience for passengers at LaGuardia and JFK while ensuring that airport infrastructure is updated to accommodate passenger growth and future needs. These projects also present significant economic opportunities for local residents and firms. To that end, the Port Authority recently established the JFK Redevelopment Advisory Council, a group of community stakeholders and elected officials who will meet publicly and regularly to ensure that meaningful opportunities are provided to local firms, minority- and women-owned businesses, and jobseekers.

Concurrently, the FAA has been updating its procedures and flight patterns in response to multiple challenges at both airports. As a result of having highly-trafficked airports, Queens has a congested and extremely complex airspace. The FAA has engaged in efforts to redesign the airspace over New York, implementing new technology and changing flight patterns to reduce delays and congestion. While these efforts have increased the efficiency and frequency of flights, new flight patterns have also led to increasing and sustained elevated noise levels that disproportionately affects particular communities in the Borough. In response to outcry by residents, local elected officials, and other stakeholders, regarding these environmental and health impacts, in 2014 the Governor ordered the Port Authority to complete a study pursuant to CFR Part 150; the Port Authority is in the process of developing noise abatement and mitigation programs for both airports in response to their completed findings, and specific proposals are expected in 2019. Regular meetings of the New York Community Aviation Roundtable, established in 2014 by order of the Governor, have also brought community stakeholders and elected officials to the table with the Port Authority to discuss a path forward on noise issues. And recent federal legislation also charges the FAA with devising new methods of measuring aircraft noise and developing new approaches to alleviate excessive noise.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Support LaGuardia and JFK Airport Redevelopment Efforts while Ensuring that Local Communities Share the Benefits

As a member of the Airport Advisory Panel that drafted the Vision Plans for both airports and an advocate for sustainable, long-term economic development in Queens, the Queens Borough President strongly supports redevelopment efforts at both airports. Queens is the gateway to New York City, and our airports need to be modern and efficient to be able to service the millions of people expected to pass through them this year. But it is crucial that local communities in Queens share the economic benefits of the Port Authority's redevelopment projects and are protected from undue hardship that may result from construction.

The Queens Borough President will continue to work with the Port Authority and the communities surrounding the airports to ensure that this vital redevelopment work proceeds in a prudent and accountable manner, with as minimal impact on the quality of life in local communities. Specifically, the Queens Borough President will co-chair the JFK Redevelopment Advisory Council with Congressman Gregory Meeks to help maximize meaningful economic opportunities for local communities while minimizing the potential harms.

Promote Community Participation in Airport Operations and Noise Abatement and Mitigation Efforts

This is a pivotal moment for those seeking relief from the airplane noise impacting their communities. As the Port Authority completes the second phase of its Part 150 study and develops its proposed noise compatibility programs, sustained community input will be crucial. The Queens Borough President will continue working with the Port Authority and all relevant stakeholders to ensure a positive resolution to the multiyear Part 150 process. Specifically, the Queens Borough President will continue as an active member of the New York Community Aviation Roundtable and the Part 150 Technical Advisory Committee and will advocate for pragmatic solutions to mitigate excessive airplane noise and other deleterious environmental impacts.

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 30,000 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 the hectic pace of day-to-day life.

The Department operates more than 800 athletic fields and nearly 1,000 playgrounds; 550 tennis courts, 65 public pools, 51 recreation centers, 15 nature centers, 14 golf courses and 14 miles of beaches. The Department also cares for nearly 1,200 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.

Since 2014, the Queens Borough President has allocated more than \$105 million to fund the capital improvement of 78 parks throughout the Borough.

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. In 2014, the Queens Borough President also spearheaded the campaign to save and restore the New York State Pavilion, an iconic structure of the 1964 World's Fair. Since then, the Office of the Queens Borough President has allocated nearly \$11.5 million in capital funds, while also raising \$9 million from the Mayor, \$778,000 from the City Council, and \$2 million from the Governor, for a total of \$23.26 million raised towards the restoration of the Pavilion. These funds have been dedicated towards the restoration of the three observation towers and funds are still needed to restore the Tent of Tomorrow.

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. The Queens Borough President has allocated a total of \$2 million dollars for the construction of a new building for the Alley Pond Environmental Center. There are plans in the works such 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.

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, Queens 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 Queens 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. A total of \$1.2 million capital dollars have been allocated by the Queens Borough President for playgrounds upgrades at Cunningham Park.

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. There is a current project that will reconstruct the tennis, basketball and handball courts in Baisley Pond Park for which the Queens Borough President allocated \$1.5 million.

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 Queens 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. In response, the Queens Borough President has allocated \$500,000 for the acquisition of two parcels of privately held land to expand Udalls Cove.

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.

Since Hurricane Sandy, the area between Beach 86th Street and Beach 126th Street had 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. The entire boardwalk was rebuilt and open by the scheduled date of Memorial Day 2017, and welcomed more than 5,000,000 visitors that summer. Upon meeting with residents who alerted the Office of the Queens Borough President to the fact that there were areas of the boardwalk that remained extremely vulnerable to tidal surges during extreme weather events, the Queens Borough President expressed the concerns to the New York City Office of Resiliency and Recovery, who then installed Geotube sand barriers to shore up the vulnerable sections of the boardwalk.

In October 2016, the Army Corp of Engineers, partnering with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the Mayor’s Office of Recovery and Resiliency, the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, and the New York City Department of Environment Protection, unveiled their Draft Reformulation Study for the Atlantic Coast, East Rockaway Inlet to Rockaway Inlet and Jamaica Bay. The study outlines a “Tentatively Selected Plan” to provide long-term protection to areas impacted by tidal storm surges including the Rockaway Peninsula, Broad Channel, Howard Beach and Hamilton Beach. The tentative plan includes the construction of seawalls, beach berms, groins (jetties), and storm surge barriers, working in concert to provide resiliency and protection measure to these communities for the long-term.

Unfortunately, these plans continue to remain stalled at the federal level. Currently the Army Corps of Engineers expect their long term resiliency project plan to commence by 2019. These measures would some protection against tidal surges and slow down sand erosion on Rockaway's beaches and these measures need to commence as soon as possible.

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:

Pool Name	Location
Astoria Park	Astoria
Fisher Pool	East Elmhurst
Fort Totten	Bayside
Detective Keith Williams Park	Jamaica
Lawrence Virgillio Playground	Woodside
Marie Curie Mini Pool	Bayside
Castlewood Playground	Glen Oaks
Flushing Meadows Corona Park Pool and Rink	Flushing
Roy Wilkins Recreation Center	Jamaica

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 realized with \$1 million in Mayoral funding, \$1 million from the Queens 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 8.5 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 Juanita Holmes. 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.

SATCOM Queens North and South continue their strong efforts to address crime, despite a reduction in personnel over the years. Due to its large land area and physical distance between precincts, and due to the predominantly residential nature of the Borough, officers are often required to cover large distances to address crime and quality of life issues.

Across Queens, crime trended down from 2016 to 2017, especially the 102nd Precinct with a 20% drop in crime and the 114th Precinct with almost an 11% drop in crime, while the 112th Precinct was the only precinct that saw a slight uptick in crime. Additionally, both Queens South and Queens North saw a significant decrease in Grand Larceny of Automobile.

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.

The activity in Flushing Meadows Corona Park is only second to Central Park, and spans six Community Boards. Given its size and difficulty navigating the park, and urgent need for a dedicated sub-precinct. The Queens Borough President allocated \$2 million in Fiscal Year 2018 for a mobile command center and equipment for Flushing Meadows Corona Park, and it is crucial to expedite the creation of this mobile command center.

Queens North Year Summary

	MURDER		RAPE		ROBBERY		FELONY ASSAULT		BURGLARY		GRAND LARCENY		GRAND LARCENY OF AUTOMOBILE		TOTAL		
	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	
PCT																	
104	2	1	16	21	144	178	187	206	263	300	523	529	152	154	1,287	1,389	
108	-	3	11	15	100	100	155	131	146	145	502	529	89	116	1,003	1,039	
109	1	3	22	15	195	212	252	251	276	318	893	934	138	160	1,777	1,893	
110	5	2	25	30	307	253	260	273	194	227	531	668	86	98	1,408	1,551	
111	1	2	3	4	39	45	58	72	167	179	416	484	59	62	743	848	
112	-	1	7	8	40	50	55	50	91	79	386	367	43	51	622	606	
114	3	2	29	31	211	209	347	310	215	247	683	797	105	190	1,593	1,786	
115	1	-	32	39	344	343	356	377	254	242	675	691	156	173	1,818	1,865	
TOTAL	13	14	145	163	1,380	1,390	1,670	1,670	1,606	1,737	4,555	4,609	828	1,004	10,251	10,977	

Queens South Year Summary																
	MURDER		RAPE		ROBBERY		FELONY ASSAULT		BURGLARY		GRAND LARCENY		GRAND LARCENY OF AUTOMOBILE		TOTAL	
	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016
PCT																
100	1	-	9	5	52	53	143	120	73	66	230	21	18	456	492	
101	3	2	25	19	127	152	297	305	95	141	222	27	52	827	893	
102	6	5	19	21	141	170	181	272	154	170	353	124	173	931	1,164	
103	6	4	30	29	355	383	386	406	165	197	460	124	96	1,533	1,575	
105	6	1	21	16	214	218	392	334	302	331	609	161	201	1,705	1,723	
106	6	9	11	15	214	208	233	225	205	211	489	113	120	1,271	1,315	
107	-	3	22	19	170	176	138	105	186	182	503	83	141	1,114	1,129	
113	9	9	25	23	190	189	386	415	128	194	464	131	96	1,280	1,390	
TOTAL	37	33	162	147	1,463	1,549	2,156	2,182	1,308	1,492	3,251	740	897	9,117	9,681	

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. In Fiscal Year 2018, the Queens Borough President allocated \$2 million towards the creation of a sub-precinct. The NYPD should expedite the establishment of this sub-precinct and allocate enough patrol officers to ensure the safety of park 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.

Expedite the creation of the New 116th Precinct

The 116th Precinct was designated, upon several years of advocacy from the Office of the Queens Borough President, by bifurcating the 105th Precinct, which covered the largest land area of any police precinct in New York City. The 116th Precinct has yet to finalize buildout. The NYPD needs to expedite the establishment of this precinct.

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.

Increase the Number of School Safety Agents

School Safety Agents provide security and ensure the safety of students, faculty, and visitors in the New York City public school buildings and the surrounding premises by patrolling and operating scanning equipment, verifying identity, escorting visitors, and by challenging unauthorized personnel. Overcrowded schools are in need of additional School Safety Agents.

Increase Opportunities for Individuals to Relieve Non-violent Offenses

The Queens Borough President firmly believes that non-violent offenders who have turned their lives around should be given opportunities to relieve non-violent offenses committed in the past. The NYPD should work with the Office of the Queens Borough President to host more gun buyback programs, supplementing the *Know Your Rights* events the Queens Borough President has been hosting to seal non-violent convictions and clear non-violent summons warrants.

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. However, the city experienced 73 civilian fire deaths in 2017, 25 more than in 2016 when the city had the fewest deaths (48) in 100 years of accurate statistics.

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.

Civilian Fire Fatalities			
Year	2017	2016	% Change
Number of Fatalities	73	48	52.08%

Source: www.nyc.gov/fdny

FDNY Fire Incidents Summary									
Fire Incidents	Structural Fires			Non-Structural Fires			Non-Fire Emergencies		
	2017	2016	Change	2017	2016	Change	2017	2016	Change
# of Incidents	5,307	5,300	0.13%	3,690	3,239	13.92%	44,441	45,736	-2.83%
Avg Response Time	4:36	4:31	1.85%	4:47	4:40	2.5%	5:35	5:26	2.76%
Fire Incidents	Medical Emergencies			Malicious False Alarms			Total/Average		
	2017	2016	Change	2017	2016	Change	2017	2016	Change
# of Incidents	57,423	45,736	25.55%	4,861	4,677	3.93%	115,722	104,688	10.54%
Avg Response Time	4:46	4:40	2.14%	4:48	4:51	-1.03%	4:57	4:52	1.71%

FDNY Serious Incidents Summary									
Serious Incidents	All Hands			2nd Alarm			3rd Alarm		
	2017	2016	Change	2017	2016	Change	2017	2016	Change
Number of Incidents	537	546	-1.65%	25	34	-26.47%	4	6	-33.33%
Serious Incidents	4 th Alarm			5 th Alarm or Greater			Total		
	2017	2016	Change	2017	2016	Change	2017	2016	Change
Number of Incidents	2	6	4	5	5	-20%	572	597	-4.19%

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.

In recent years, the Department has dramatically increased outreach to communities with several initiatives, including Fire Safety Education presentations to more than 750,000 people annually, and a citywide initiative GETALARMED NYC, distributing and/or installing more than 150,000 smoke/CO alarms in homes and apartments throughout the city.

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 2016 to 2017, Segment 1 emergency responses had a slight decrease in terms of number of incidents and the number of ambulance runs. However, Segment 2 emergency responses had a slight decrease in terms of number of incidents but there was a 4.6% increase in the number of ambulance runs. Segment 3 Life Threatening Medical Emergencies incidents and ambulance runs both experienced increases. For Segments 4 through Segment 8, only Segments 5, 6 and 8 experienced a decrease in number of incidents and ambulance runs, while Segment 4 had an increase in the amounts of incidents and ambulance runs.

Queens Ambulance Incidents and Runs									
	Cardiac Arrest and Choking			Life Threatening Medical Emergencies					
	1			2			3		
	2017	2016	% Change	2017	2016	% Change	2017	2016	% Change
Number of Incidents	7,072	7,666	(7.75%)	60,986	61,645	(1.07%)	43,242	42,075	2.77%
Ambulance Runs	14,969	16,210	(7.66%)	84,964	81,239	4.58%	55,808	52,584	6.13%
Non-Life Threatening Medical Emergencies									
	4			5			6		
	2017	2016	% Change	2017	2016	% Change	2017	2016	% Change
Number of Incidents	56,274	56,087	0.33%	42,355	46,998	(9.88%)	39,364	39,444	(0.2%)
Ambulance Runs	62,981	62,323	1.06%	46,008	51,016	(9.82%)	42,033	42,174	(0.33%)
Non-Life Threatening Medical Emergencies							Totals		
	7			8					
	2017	2016	% Change	2017	2016	% Change	2017	2016	% Change
Number of Incidents	32,115	24,885	29.05%	886	945	(6.24%)	282,294	279,745	0.91%
Ambulance Runs	35,146	27,313	28.68%	2,083	2,170	(4.1%)	343,992	335,029	2.68%

*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).

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 day.⁷⁷ 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		
	FY17	FY16	% Change	FY17	FY16	% Change
1	95.6%	93.2%	2.4%	98.2%	97.0%	1.2%
2	93.5%	93.4%	0.1%	94.5%	94.1%	0.4%
3	94.8%	93.6%	1.2%	97.8%	96.1%	1.7%
4	94.8%	92.6%	2.2%	98%	98.2%	-0.2%
5	97.3%	96.8%	0.5%	98.5%	97.5%	1%
6	97.7%	98.7%	-1%	99.5%	99.3%	0.2%
7	98.2%	98.5%	-0.3%	99.2%	99.2%	0%
8	97.8%	98.7%	-0.9%	98.5%	98.3%	0.2%
9	95.0%	94.2%	0.8%	97.7%	97.3%	0.4%
10	97.2%	96.3%	0.9%	98.9%	98.8%	0.1%
11	98.8%	98.9%	-0.1%	99.6%	99.8%	-0.2%
12	96.3%	94.5%	1.8%	97.4%	95.5%	1.9%
13	97.1%	96.4%	0.7%	99.1%	97.5%	1.6%
14	96.8%	96.2%	0.6%	94.9%	94.8%	0.1%

Source: Department of Sanitation Scorecard/Street Cleanliness Ratings*

According to the Department of Sanitation, all Community Boards in Queens have a rating of 93% and above for both Acceptable Streets and Acceptable Sidewalks. Despite the high 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. In addition, residents are using public litter baskets for residential and commercial waste disposal, causing litter baskets to be overfilled.

* 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.

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 Queens Borough President supports re-introduction and passage by the legislature to address these quality of life issues.

In an effort to reduce the amount of garbage going into landfills, the City launched programs like RefashionNYC and Organics Collection. RefashionNYC is a free and convenient clothing donation and recycling service available to apartment, office, and commercial buildings, with 278 drop-off locations throughout Queens. The service is provided by the NYC Department of Sanitation and Housing Works. All proceeds from donations support the charitable mission of Housing Works to end the dual crises of homelessness and AIDS. Organics Collection is a curbside recycling service for food scraps, food-soiled paper, and yard waste. Just like traditional recycling of paper, cardboard, metal, glass, and plastic, residents separate these items and put them in brown bins provided by the City. These organics are collected weekly and turned into compost and clean energy. DSNY currently serve 3.5 million residents in all five Boroughs with curbside organics service. They provide collection to residents and also work with apartment building managers to bring their services to high-rise apartment buildings.

Strategic Goals and Policies

Increase Personnel to Meet Waste Disposal and Street Cleaning Needs

The Department to Sanitation needs to increase capacity in Queens, particularly in 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 Queens 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 relief.

Address the Quality of Life Issues Stemming from Freight Rail

The Queens Borough President has begun addressing the quality of life issues that residents face by hosting the inaugural freight rail task force in July. The Queens 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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