

EXCERPTS FROM COMMUNITY BOARDS' "STATEMENTS ON THE PRELIMINARY BUDGET" FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016

Reactions to Agency Responses listed in the FY '16 Register of Community Board Budget Requests are collectively listed under Agency Subheading

Dept. of Homeless Services

BRONX 3

Bronx Community Board Three supports the following FY 2016 funding commitments to the NYC DHS budget:

PATH-Community Based Demonstration Project - \$4.3 million to fund homeless prevention efforts at family shelter intake

Prevention Team - \$342k for staff to provide oversight of prevention and aftercare programming

Aftercare for LINC IV individuals - \$2.5 million for support to elderly adults receiving LINC IV rental assistance

LINC support - \$3 million for staff to provide operational and administrative support

Conditional Rental Assistance for Singles - \$1.9 million funding for a conditional rental assistance program for homeless adults in shelter

Routine Site Review Inspections - \$1.2 million funding for staff to conduct routine site review inspections to prevent premature malfunction of building systems

Permanency Specialists - \$1.8 million to fund staff to provide advocacy, support, oversight and training to shelter providers related to housing permanency

Office of Public Private Partnerships - \$369k for staff to develop community resources for shelter clients and coordinate services with NYC agencies

BROOKLYN 3

Funding for the Sumner Armory. We are looking forward to working with the new commissioner of DHS to turn this Armory into a cultural/educational/recreational facility. This armory also has the potential to be an economic incubator for several different types of local businesses in our district.

BROOKLYN 9

The Kingsboro Men's Shelter has degenerated from a model that could have been replicated in other parts of the city to a place where homeless men roam our street and are not involved in constructive activity. Convicted sex offenders are housed at this shelter without regard for its close proximity to elementary schools in the neighborhood. This shelter is not being run under the terms that were agreed to by the Department of Homeless Services. We have tried to work with the agency to correct these conditions but we have largely been ignored. Community Board 9 wants funding to be restored so that this shelter is operated as agreed upon between the Department of Homeless Services and Community Board 9 when the shelter was initially established.

BROOKLYN 14

The board is encouraged that DHS has restructured to better monitor the capital and maintenance related issues that may develop at transitional housing facilities. We continue to support street outreach programs.

MANHATTAN 3

Expense Request # 9 (303201605E): Request: Increased funding for Manhattan Outreach Consortium caseworkers for chronically homeless

- Street outreach services are available 24/7, 365 days a year. By calling 311 or using the 311 app when a homeless individual appears to be in need of assistance, any New Yorker can dispatch an outreach team to that person and help them move indoors. Each month, outreach teams respond to hundreds of 311 calls to aid homeless individuals.

Community Board 3 is very aware of the excellent outreach services provided by MOC. However, the number of homeless has increased steadily in NYC—and CB 3 is ground zero for street homeless, most likely because of the pantry and food provider services offered to the homeless and others in need. The number of outreach caseworkers has not increased to meet these additional demands. MOC cannot provide the visits necessary to chronically homeless to encourage them to take advantage of services if they do not have additional staff to meet the increased needs of street homeless. Additionally, CB 3 has taken the position that street homeless who do not meet the criterial of chronically homeless (two years on the street) should have caseworkers assigned. This can never be done without additional staff.

MANHATTAN 4

Department for Homeless Services (DHS)

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH)

Asks:

- **Increase DHS and DOHMH funding to maintain and expand existing programs.**

- **Provide funding for additional shelter facilities to allow for the downsizing of the West 25th Street BRC site so as to alleviate community conflicts.**

Homelessness has long been and continues to be a major problem in MCD4. While we have productively welcomed numerous and varied homelessness-related services to our district, these facilities must be properly sized to fit seamlessly into our residential community. The BRC facility on West 25th Street is a prime example where too large of a facility becomes a hardship for a community. The negative impact to businesses and residents of the surrounding area has been well documented by our Board. Multiple facilities with a smaller capacity will help to provide the balance our community needs.

MCD4 is further concerned that there be adequate funding for those service components directed at preventing homelessness. We urge full funding of the adult rental assistance program; the anti-eviction and SRO legal services programs, which provide free legal services to low- and moderate-income people faced with eviction from their homes, as well as services for low-income Single Room Occupancy housing tenants; and aftercare services, which prevent families placed in permanent housing from returning to shelters.

In the past, we have stressed our concern about the inadequacy of family shelter slots, especially for victims of domestic violence, as well as the lack of adequate resources for homeless youth. It is especially troubling that the needs of women, children, and youth at risk are still far from being met.

The contracting process for shelters also bears further scrutiny, as the City is currently paying far more for shelter beds than would be required to pay for permanent affordable housing subsidies. Some of the funding dedicated to shelter beds should instead be directed to rental subsidies to keep people in their homes, rather than place them in temporary shelters.

Furthermore, we encourage the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to improve service delivery through additional funding. MCD4 is home to a significant population who suffers from mental illness, particularly among our homeless population in and around Port Authority Bus Terminal and Times Square. As noted in our comments regarding the Department for the Aging, there is a very real need to baseline funding to meet the growing mental health needs of our older adult population.

MANHATTAN 5

In 2016, the number of homeless people sleeping each night in the New York City shelter system is around 60,000—including 24,000 children. More individuals are homeless now in the City of New York than in any time since the Great Depression.

We understand that the rise in homelessness is not just a moral failing, but a financial failing as well—one that costs taxpayers over a \$1 billion each year. While we are encouraged by efforts to increase funding for prevention and increasing exits from the shelter system, we believe the city must undertake a more robust street outreach program to address the needs of the rising street homeless population in our community district.

305201403C—New York/New York III needs to be fully funded to ensure sufficient supportive housing to address our community's need. The city must increase resources if this is necessary to meet development goals.

305200402E—We do not believe DHS can properly prevent homeless and have sufficient street outreach with existing resources—funding should be increased as this is a major human services and quality of life issue.

MANHATTAN 6

We believe that greater efforts should be made to create additional, permanent housing opportunities for homeless families. We hope the Department will work with HPD towards this goal. We would also appreciate a report of such units that have been created in our District for as long as such programs have been tracked.

C-10: 306200305C - Additional permanent housing for homeless families (see also HPD)

MANHATTAN 7

Tracking Code: 307201502E

Request: Allocate increased funding for the DHS Home Base program.

Agency Response: DHS has invested \$40M in prevention services this year, opening 9 new Homebase offices, for a total of 23 citywide. DHS has collected data on the number of applicants for homeless services by community, and has opened Homebase offices in the communities in which there is a high number of applicants. The Bronx now has 10 of the 23 offices. We believe prevention services will help people remain in their homes and avoid shelter.

Reply: CB7 shares the goal of preventing homelessness by creating opportunities and support to keep residents in their current homes.

It is essential that these supports be shared by all who qualify, including those who struggle in areas of need surrounded by affluence.

Previous policies advanced by DHS have had the effect of capturing and removing from the housing stock in our District apartments that could and should be used as long-term affordable housing rather than as a short-term solution to the need for shelter beds. CB7 has observed the phenomenon of DHS policies chasing tenants from affordable apartments, by which the tenants lose their regulated protections and those displaced become more likely to become homeless themselves, thus creating the problem DHS purports to be trying to solve. CB7 urges that those policies not be revived or revisited.

QUEENS 8

Priority #28 asked for the installation of air conditioning at the Briarwood Family Shelter. This request has been one of our priorities for many years. The agency answered that that cooling rooms are provided in various shelters and that when this is not available the nearest cooling center location is provided. The board found this answer absurd. We are especially concerned about families with young children. Every effort should be made to provide the living quarters of these residents with air conditioning just like the offices of the staff members within the shelter.