



THE CITY OF NEW YORK MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 3

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District Needs Statement for Fiscal Year 2022

Introduction

Community District 3 Manhattan (CD 3) spans the East Village, Lower East Side, and part of Chinatown. It is bounded by 14th Street to the north, the East River to the east, the Brooklyn Bridge to the south, and Fourth Avenue and the Bowery to the west, extending to Baxter and Pearl Streets south of Canal Street. This community is filled with a diversity of cultures, religions, incomes, and languages. Its character comes from its heritage as a historic and present day first stop for many immigrants. CD 3 is one of the most densely populated Community Districts in New York City, with approximately 155,408 residents.¹ Our community is diverse: we identify as 27 percent Asian, 9 percent Black, 25 percent Hispanic, and 35 percent White.² Our residents are very proud of their historic and diverse neighborhood, however, the very characteristics that make this district unique also make it a challenging place to plan and ensure services for all residents and businesses.

Growing Inequality and the Impact of COVID-19

Many people within our community live on the edge of homelessness and economic survival. Inequality and housing precarity is tied to rising housing costs and stagnating incomes within the Community District. Prior to COVID-19, median asking rents in CD 3 had increased by 26% since 2010, while median household incomes have declined by 9% since 2010 to \$43,936 in 2019.^{3,4} During this period, the gap between the lowest and highest earners in CD 3 has widened.⁵ Before COVID-19, an estimated 30% of residents in CD 3 were living below poverty level, with approximately 38% of children under the age of 18 and 33% of seniors living below poverty level.⁶ COVID-19 has increased hardships for these lower income and minority families, creating even more destitution and need for resources.

The onset of COVID-19 in New York City in early 2020 has significantly impacted the residents and business

¹ 2014-2018 American Community Survey (2020). NYC Population Fact Finder.
<<https://popfactfinder.planning.nyc.gov/profile/396/demographic>>

² Ibid.

³ Furman Center. (2020). State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2019.
<<https://furmancenter.org/neighborhoods/view/lower-east-side-chinatown>>

⁴ 2014-2018 American Community Survey (2020). NYC Population Fact Finder.
<<https://popfactfinder.planning.nyc.gov/profile/396/demographic>>

⁵ Furman Center. (2020). State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2019.
<<https://furmancenter.org/neighborhoods/view/lower-east-side-chinatown>>

⁶ Ibid.

owners in CD 3 and emphasized the inequalities that previously existed among our different communities. Prior to COVID-19, there was a dramatic income disparity in CD 3. The district now has the second highest gap between the lowest- and highest-income households out of all districts in New York City and it is growing.⁷ We now know that New York City residents from low-income communities like CD 3 have tested positive for COVID-19 antibodies at a higher-than-average rate, underscoring the disproportionate impact of the disease on people of color.⁸ The pandemic has also exacerbated New York City's housing crisis, a major issue in CD 3 prior to COVID-19, and this impact has hit particularly hard for Black and Hispanic New Yorkers who have lost work. A study shows a higher rate of respondents who have lost work for a reason related to COVID-19 already faced some form of housing hardship prior to the COVID-19 outbreak.⁹ The same study shows that COVID-19 unemployment and income losses are disproportionately hitting those who were already financially vulnerable prior to the crisis. With COVID-19 we are seeing the confluence of issues around racial inequities, public health, housing and job insecurity, and income inequality. It has heightened existing inequities in our District and is highlighting the need for more resources to support our community.

Community-based organizations that provide essential services for residents in CD 3 continue to struggle to provide more services and fund themselves with fewer resources, particularly in the fiscal environment that COVID-19 has created. Community healthcare and social service providers face similar challenges and residents are left to grapple with service reductions while they are experiencing extreme economic and health vulnerability

CD 3 is also a coastal community still recovering from Superstorm Sandy in 2012, and the area is increasingly vulnerable to future climate change impacts and extreme weather scenarios that affect the waterfront. Several coastal resiliency projects have been planned for the district and are in various phases of approval, funding, or construction, but COVID-19 has threatened these crucial public works as well. City agencies tasked with coastal resiliency construction have pivoted to work related to COVID-19 response, putting critical funding streams from the federal government that are necessary for project completion at risk of expiration.

Economic Development

The COVID-19 shutdown in March of 2020 required businesses of all sizes that were deemed non-essential to indefinitely cease, limit, or adapt operations. While restrictions have lifted in varying degrees, the impacts on the economic ecosystem include:

- Retail stores, restaurants, bars, arts venues, personal care salons, hotels and many other local businesses that are concentrated in CD 3 experienced significant revenue losses and struggled to pay expenses such as rent, mortgages, utilities, and payroll.¹⁰

⁷ Furman Center. (2020). State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2019. <<https://furmancenter.org/neighborhoods/view/lower-east-side-chinatown>>

⁸ Rajesh Kumar Singh and Nathan Layne. "New York City's low-income, minority areas hit hardest by COVID-19, Cuomo says." (May 20, 2020) <<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-usa-new-york/new-york-citys-low-income-minority-areas-hit-hardest-by-covid-19-cuomo-says-idUSKBN22W2IG>>

⁹ Robin Hood and Columbia University. "Poverty Tracker." (2020) <<https://www.povertycenter.columbia.edu/poverty-disadvantage-in-new-york-city>>

¹⁰ Center for an Urban Future: "Supporting Small Business Through Coronavirus: Ideas From Experts And Leaders Across NYC"

- Employers were unable to retain jobs leading to significant unemployment for local residents. Unemployment within the district reached 17% in July 2020.¹¹
- Many commercial and residential tenants were unable to pay rent to property owners limiting the ability for landlords to pay operating expenses including property taxes and mortgages. Particularly impacted were small property owners, including providers and managers of affordable housing many of which also have commercial space, that did not have the same access to capital or influence as large owners or entities.

These impacts were especially acute for small businesses that located in CD 3, particularly those that are immigrant, minority or women owned.¹² As a result, many businesses have permanently shuttered and the remaining are vulnerable to permanent closure or relocation. The medium and long-term impacts on real estate, landlords, business and workers due to COVID-19 are not yet fully known at the time of writing this needs statement. Reducing regulatory and financial barriers in order to support and stabilize existing businesses and also to attract a diversity of new businesses will be critical.

Prior to COVID-19, there had already been a sustained loss of independent "mom-and-pop" stores providing a variety of goods and services in CD 3 due to increasing costs of doing business and increased competition from chains, and a saturation of destination bars and restaurants. As the local economy becomes more homogenous, in order to meet basic needs residents must increasingly leave our community or shop online – a trend further accelerated by COVID-19. In a December 2019 survey, just before business operations were impacted by the COVID-19 shutdown, there were 31 chain stores in zip code 10009, up from 27 in 2018, and 51 chain stores in zip code 10002, which was unchanged from 2018.¹³ The presence of these chain stores has altered the character of the Lower East Side by shifting purchasing power to mass-market retailers and constructing facades out of context with the rest of the historical community. Retail stores that do survive in our community are threatened by the rising costs of doing business in NYC without sufficient relief or protection from the City.

Merchant Organizing and Additional Opportunities for City Support

CD 3 is represented by the following Business Improvement Districts (BIDs):

- The Chinatown BID: Broome to Worth Street and from Allen to Rutgers;
- The LES Partnership: Orchard Street and currently seeking to expand to include a large section of the Lower East Side with Houston Street as its northern border;
- The Village Alliance: 8th Street and some surrounding blocks;
- The Union Square Partnership: 14th Street

Despite the presence of these organizations, many merchants are still not organized into associations and therefore under-supported in a substantial portion of the District.

As our community continues be burdened by a high cost of doing business, Community Board 3 (CB 3) has identified several ways that the City can help us grow and strengthen our local economy:

¹¹ Center for an Urban Future: "Recovery Signs, New Lows: NYC Employment By Industry Since The Outbreak Of Coronavirus"

¹² https://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/minority-and-women-owned-businesses-at-risk-impact-of-covid-19-on-new-york-city-firms/#Business_profile_of_the_MWBE_survey_respondents

¹³ Center for an Urban Future: "State of the Chains 2019." <https://nycfuture.org/pdf/CUF_StateoftheChains_2019_7.pdf>

- Provide Direct Support for Merchant Organizations – Continue financial and programming support for our local merchant-based organizations and BIDs
- Consideration of Special Commercial Zoning – CB 3 is considering the creation of several Special Enhanced Commercial Districts in the East Village. These districts would establish zoning requirements to facilitate a diverse mix of affordable and appropriate retail and service providers that meet local needs, support independently owned businesses, encourage robust daytime foot traffic, and level the competitive field of operation between small businesses and large national retail chains.
- Prioritize comprehensive adult education and job training programs to support district residents to access living wages, career mobility and job quality. Continue financial and programming support for our local workforce development organizations and spaces like the Union Square Tech Training Center.

Arts and Cultural Affairs

In CD 3 arts and cultural activities are an important means of preserving and exploring our exceptionally diverse community cultures. Arts and cultural activities are also an important economic engine for our district that has a large concentration of artists and arts and cultural organizations, large and small, professional and community-based, experimental and culturally specific.

Artists, cultural workers and arts and cultural organizations of all sizes have been impacted to a devastating degree by COVID-19. The performing arts sector is one of the hardest hit industries in NYC. The sector lost 69.2% of its total jobs since February 2020 which has put cultural workers, including performing artists and administrators, in a vulnerable position.¹⁴

Many gig economy artists and cultural producers have had no income since March. While the prospects of new commissions and projects are nonexistent since theaters, venues and all live-performance initiatives are largely shuttered for the immediate future. The negative economic impact on the arts and cultural sector is anticipated to last for 3-5 years depending on sector specificities. Artists and cultural workers are the creative capital of New York and are integral to the creative industry that fueled New York's tourism and provides arts and culture to the international community.

With the majority of public programs and all live performances cancelled, all arts and cultural organizations and venues are experiencing drastic revenue loss and significant reductions in annual operating budgets. This has caused an inability to cover operating costs, especially rents, and there is growing fear expressed for the very survival of many organizations. Due to the pandemic many arts and cultural organizations and venues as well as individual artists are under threat of eviction and rent relief is needed. Additionally, many non-profit cultural organizations within the CD receive annual funding through the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) or City Council discretionary funding. As resources are redirected to respond to COVID-19, the City's annual budget has become more constrained so that support for small, vulnerable arts organizations is not certain. DCLA primarily funds larger, well-known cultural institutions and with less funding awarded to small arts nonprofits that are located in CD 3. It is even more important now that equitable funding, support and resource opportunities are given to small local organizations that focus on the population most impacted by COVID-19, which are low-income people of color.

¹⁴ Center for an Urban Future. (April 2020). "Art in the Time of Coronavirus: New York City's Small Arts Organizations Fighting for Survival." <<https://nycfuture.org/research/art-in-the-time-of-coronavirus>>

Art and culture are important to the psychological and physical well-being of our community at this moment of crisis. CB 3 has identified ways the City can help achieve this:

- There is a need for legal provisions requiring that new significant real estate developments coming to the CD 3 neighborhood provide space for low-cost access to cultural programming and affordable work spaces for artists and arts organizations. Arts and culture should be integrated into the planning of City projects such as designated arts and cultural spaces in new publicly subsidized developments.
- The CD 3 neighborhood deeply feels the loss of CHARAS/El Bohio, a nonprofit community and cultural center that served as a much-needed axis for a local web of organizations, stakeholders and leaders that reflected the values of the communities in which they serve, and therefore needs this facility restored.
- There is a need for increased community participation and engagement with the Community Board regarding all new cultural/community spaces in publicly subsidized developments in the District.

Health and Human Services

Education

In Spring 2020, the abrupt closure of the public schools and transition to at-home remote learning burdened low-income students and their families the most. At the same time, these families faced declining incomes due to unemployment or illness. Students attending schools without resources such as well-equipped computer labs and regular in school digital literacy instruction were less prepared for at home remote learning and needed more support. Students with special needs or in temporary housing faced additional challenges. COVID-19 served to highlight these long-standing disparities that exist among K-12 students in CD 3.

Priority education needs in CD 3:

- **Social workers and counselors**

Social services staff are needed to support students who have been disproportionately affected as a result of the COVID-19 related changes to public education, changes at home due to loss of jobs or illness, and loss of a daily routine at school where there is in-person counselor or social worker support. Social workers are crucial also to those students in temporary housing and students with special needs.

- **Technology**

COVID-19 underlined the technological disparities in CD 3. In a 2018 survey, the Lower East Side was cited as having the highest rate of households without access to the internet in Manhattan.¹⁵ Technology enhancement, including providing the necessary devices, WiFi/internet and technical support, is needed to ensure our students are not left behind. This will be even more urgent if the hybrid or the all-remote models of learning becomes the new normal. In addition, the particular needs of students living in temporary housing, those living in NYCHA (NYC Housing Authority) housing, and those with special needs must be addressed.

¹⁵ Citizen's Committee for Children of New York. (April 2020). "NYC'S Digital Divide: 500K Households Have No Internet Access When it Is More Important Than Ever Before." <<https://www.ccnyc.org/blog/new-york-citys-digital-divide-500000-nyc-households-have-no-internet-access-when-it-is-more-important-than-ever-before/>>

- **After school programs**

Families in CD 3 rely heavily on community-based programs during after-school hours, weekends, and holidays, because 38% of our children under 18 years of age live below poverty level.¹⁶ After school programs provide the youth and their families intervention services and support programming.

Need for a New School

Community School District 1 (CSD1) schools are outdated and under-resourced. From 2014-2018, CSD1 lost 761 middle school students, as more neighborhood families must send their children to middle schools outside CSD1 because there are not enough well-resourced schools in the school district.¹⁷ A state-of-the-art facility could prevent the loss of these students to better equipped and resourced schools. CD 3 is in need of a new public-school facility, as exemplified by:

- 85% of CSD1 schools share a building with one or more schools resulting in inadequate access to gym, arts and enrichment, science labs, and acceptable hours for school lunch. 16% of schools share a gym and/or yard space with three or more schools and almost 1/4 of these schools share gym facilities between two schools. This lack of access is further exacerbated due to 35% of gym facilities being used for multiple purposes, creating “cafegymalaboriums.”¹⁸

The NYC Department of Education (DOE) mandates 120 minutes of physical education per week. Students in CD 3 do not have equal access to physical education and activity due to inadequate space.

- Inadequate, aging buildings that were not designed for today’s students. Middle and high school students often learn in classrooms designed for elementary school students.
- The lack of technology infrastructure in all these aging buildings, which prevents CD 3 children from access to 21st Century College and Career Ready skills. With the advent of updated state testing moving to an online format, these aging buildings will limit students' ability to compete in this new online testing format. Working families with multiple children face daily hardships when having to drop their children off at different elementary and middle schools that are in different locations. K-8 schools resolve such hardships and ensure students arrive safely and one time. There is a dearth of K-8 schools in the western side of School District 1 where the proposed site is located.

For students in our community to meet the goals of NYC DOE’s “Equity and Excellence for All” agenda, they must have adequate opportunities to move throughout their day and have adequate access to technology.¹⁹ A new school facility will provide the students of CSD1 with a state-of-the-art building and could also provide existing schools with necessary use of space. In consultation with the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA), a parcel of City-owned land that can accommodate a footprint of 75,000 square feet (on Site 5 of Essex Crossing) has been reserved for a school until 2023.²⁰ Given the rapid approach of the 2023 deadline, CB 3 urges DOE take advantage of this time-sensitive opportunity and fund construction of a new school in the 2019 five-year Capital Plan

¹⁶ U.S. Census. 2014-2018 American Community Survey. (2020). NYC Population Fact Finder <<https://popfactfinder.planning.nyc.gov/profile/396/economic>>.

¹⁷ NYC Dept. of Education. “School Quality Guide.” <<https://tools.nycenet.edu/>>

¹⁸ Community School District 1 Gym Survey <<https://cecd1.org/gym-survey/>>

¹⁹ <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/schools/equityandexcellence/default.htm>

²⁰ Essex Crossing School Position Paper. Manhattan CB 3.

<[http://www.nyc.gov/html/mancb3/downloads/planning/CB%203%20Essex%20Crossing%20School%20Position%20Paper%20\(FINAL%206.11.14\).pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/mancb3/downloads/planning/CB%203%20Essex%20Crossing%20School%20Position%20Paper%20(FINAL%206.11.14).pdf)>

Unmet Needs in Youth Programs

Community Board 3 has overlapping unmet needs that restrict the ability for our social service organizations to serve our most underserved residents, particularly children and seniors.

- **Lack of proper facility maintenance by NYCHA**

Many of our programs are held in NYCHA community rooms and serve mostly NYCHA residents. Because the programs are not run by NYCHA, the housing authority will not maintain the facilities. The settlement houses and other nonprofits who run the programs receive funding for programming and staff, but do not receive capital funding for needed extensive repairs. There are intolerable conditions that have been ongoing for years—plumbing backups in facilities used by Cornerstone programs, the ceiling falling in a senior center and raw sewage in a preschool program are among the significant problems. The situation is so dire that some of our settlement houses have taken it into their own hands to fix the problems. However, this diverts funds needed for operating these programs that serve our residents. The smaller organizations do not have the resources to do the major fundraising needed to both meet organizational goals and to raise funds to repair NYCHA facilities.

- **Families no longer qualified for programs due to outdated income requirements**

Many families now surpass the federal maximum income requirement for programs serving low income families (such as Head Start). This is often the result of wage increases from minimum wage to living wage without corresponding increases in maximum income requirements. Families earning a living wage are still in need of these programs.

- **Pay disparity**

City Council legislation will require pay parity for educators in early childhood programs, whether funded by DOE or DYCD. However, this will not apply to federally funded early childhood programs such as Head Start. Pay parity for educators and staff in these programs is also needed

Senior Citizens

CD 3 needs critically important investments to help older residents live healthier and more fulfilling lives as they age in place. In CD 3:

- There are 27,671 residents over the age of 65;
- Another 9,179 residents are between ages 60-64. Together they make up nearly 24% of CD 3's population;
- Approximately 9,012 seniors—32.5% of all seniors in the district—live below the poverty line;
- 43% of seniors are living with a disability;
- 34% of seniors experience ambulatory difficulties; and
- 36% of seniors live alone.²¹

²¹2014-2018 American Community Survey (2020). NYC Population Fact Finder.

<<https://popfactfinder.planning.nyc.gov/profile/396/demographic>> 7

Fifty-nine percent of CD 3 seniors are foreign born, with 24% speaking Spanish at home and 45% speaking Asian and Pacific Island languages at home.²² Therefore, CD 3 requires culturally and linguistically appropriate health and social services for its large senior population. In practice, seniors require care on a continuum that covers their diverse cultural, health and wellness needs. Priority concerns of seniors that have been identified are:

- Concerns about isolation
- Food access
- Wellness concerns such as needs for physical activity, mental stimulation, coping with depression, low self-esteem & self-worth issues (especially amongst the oldest)
- Staying informed with accurate information about health and other issues

Programs at senior centers and Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs) provide programs to address these concerns.

Senior Centers

According to the Department for the Aging (DFTA), in CD 3 there are 10 DFTA funded senior centers.²³ Each center is particularly important as they are culturally sensitive to the needs of our diverse communities. Given the growing senior population, there is a need to maintain and expand the existing facilities and to address significant capital maintenance needs.

Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities

In addition to senior centers, NORCs are also vital in CD 3. A NORC is a multi-age housing development or neighborhood that was not originally designed for seniors but now is home to a significant number of older persons. There are seven NORCs in CD 3 that provide Supportive Services Programs to maximize and support the successful aging in place of older residents (*See appendix for list of NORCs in CD 3*).

Often, NORC residents can access health and social services in their own buildings, building complexes or locally within their neighborhoods. Both the City Council and DFTA recognize the need for NORCs in the community and are working to budget more NORC programs.

NORC programs are a model for bringing necessary care and support to seniors living in age-integrated buildings and neighborhoods. Nurses and social workers are necessary to provide supportive services.

Health

Health Care Needs and Services

COVID-19 has highlighted health justice inequities that are particularly notable in CD 3 because of the large gap between the lowest and highest income populations and concentration of lower income communities of color who are at two to three times higher risk of contracting COVID-19 than wealthier, white residents.²⁴ Underlying health conditions and low-paying essential jobs are two of the most visible conditions causing this disparity, but questions remain unanswered about additional connections between race, economic status, and COVID-19 risk. The changes in responding to health care needs due to COVID-19 has highlighted areas of unmet needs as well as new trends in the provision of health care. The trends and priorities below were reported to the CB 3 Health and

²² 2014-2018 American Community Survey (2020). NYC Population Fact Finder.

<<https://popfactfinder.planning.nyc.gov/profile/396/demographic>>.

²³ “Aging Connect.” NYC Department for the Aging. <<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/dfta/services/find-help.page>>

²⁴ Who is Most likely to Die from the Coronavirus? New York Times, June 4, 2020

<<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/06/04/opinion/coronavirus-health-race-inequality.html>>

Human Services Committee by the following community health care facilities: Charles B. Wang Community Health Center, the Betances Health Center, and the Gouverneur Health Facility.

Behavioral Health Services

Behavioral health services are a priority for people with underlying conditions: seniors, first responders, and those with substance abuse disorders and pre-existing health conditions, people with disabilities, and those who have experienced traumatic changes in their employment. At this time there is not an overall plan to address the continuing increase in substance abuse and no increase in outreach/harm reduction services.

Stresses from the pandemic will continue after the immediate health crisis is over. It is estimated it will take several years for the economy to return to near normal. Community health centers, settlement houses, and local service organizations will need to meet the needs of our impacted residents.

Chronic Care Management

Many of our residents suffer from multiple conditions (such as diabetes and hypertension). Management of medical appointments and coordination of medical services is a necessary function. The changes to telehealth services makes this more of a challenge and is also not reimbursed by insurance companies.

Health disparities with a root in social determinants

People of color and those with lower income experience a disproportionate burden of preventable disease, death and disabilities.²⁵ Maintaining social supports and community programs (such as smoking-cessation, medical screenings and family planning as a few examples) are necessary. Pediatricians are seeing children left behind socially, educationally, and emotionally. Children are experiencing social isolation and services for special needs have been disrupted when most needed. Children will not catch up immediately when there is a vaccine. Enhanced services for these children will be needed for the near future and on an ongoing basis for several years.

Managing telehealth

Telehealth has become the new normal and is expected to continue as an option that has some benefits, but also has some challenges. Benefits include eliminating transportation and options for more accessible translation services. Challenges are lack of internet, since 23% of households in CD 3 do not have internet access.²⁶ In addition, insurance companies have not updated payments provided for telephone and internet visits so that health care facilities can afford to provide these services. The insurance payments currently do not reimburse healthcare coordination and management that continues to be necessary for telehealth visits.

Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Facilities

After suffering losses of hospital resources and nursing home/rehab beds, our community is in critical need to ensure these services. There are currently no Alzheimer's dedicated beds/units in the district. Since 2006 the number of long-term care facility beds in Lower Manhattan decreased from 1,085 beds across eight facilities to 353 beds across two facilities.²⁷ This includes the 219 beds lost when Rivington House was closed.²⁸ The remaining long-term care providers are Gouverneur Skilled Nursing Facility with a total of 295 beds for rehabilitation and long-term care beds and New East Side Nursing Home with 58 beds. The skilled nursing facility at Gouverneur operates at 95.69% occupancy rate – greater than the New York City average and the

²⁵ "Community Health Profile 2018: Lower East Side and Chinatown." (2018) New York City Department of Health.

<<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/data/2018chp-mn3.pdf>>

²⁶ "Households without Internet; Community District; Percent; 2019" U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Tables S2801& B28002 (2015-2019) <<https://data.census.gov/>>

²⁷ New York State Department of Health NYS Nursing Home Profiles <https://profiles.health.ny.gov/nursing_home/index>

²⁸ Hobbs, A. (2016). Lower Manhattan hit hardest by nursing home decline, stats show. DNAInfo. <<https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20161010/lower-east-side/nursing-care-facility-closures-department-of-healthdata-rivington-house>>

national average.²⁹

Unintentional Drug Overdose

In September 2020, The American Medical Association reported increases in opioid-related mortality since the COVID-19 pandemic started.³⁰ In addition:

- There is a general lack of education about the dangers of prescription opioids and propensity for overdose.
- Community residents do not receive enough education from their primary physicians regarding inherent dangers of opioid prescriptions.
- There is not enough education about how to dispose of outdated or unnecessary opioid prescription drugs.
- One program noted that they are seeing a rising use in heroin and other opiates. Heroin has become one of the top three substances. K2 use has been increasing, and dealers are lacing heroin and cocaine with extremely potent opioids such as fentanyl and carfentanil which cause more overdose deaths.³¹

Food Security

The Lower East Side was reported as having a food hardship rate of 36% as of November 2019. That is the 5th highest food hardship rate in all of Manhattan.³² Before coronavirus, over 1 million people in New York City were food insecure, and more than 1.5 million people are projected to experience food insecurity by the end of 2020, which is an increase of 38 percent over pre-COVID-19 levels.³³ In our district, the effects of COVID-19 have resulted in permanent closures of supermarkets such as Associated on 14th street between 1st Ave and Ave A, permanent closures of local food vendors including the Grandlo Café on 168 Broome Street, These closures and suspensions coupled with the increase in unemployment has resulted in a greater and continuing need for access to fresh food and produce for families throughout the district. Local community organizations operating food pantries have been left to fill the gaps of food security for households with immune compromised or elderly residents resulting in the engineering of home delivery by food pantries to particularly high need developments. Because of the Lower East Side's diverse population, food that is culturally appropriate is needed. A sustained, coordinated food delivery effort is needed between the City of New York and local food pantries to ensure that families get the food they need, and to reduce food waste.

Homeless Population

Street Homelessness

Street homelessness increased in areas in CD 3 before the pandemic. The recent history of street homelessness as measured by the Hope Count for Manhattan showed a 40% increase in 2016 followed by decreases of two and five percent, and then an increase of 55 percent in the January 2020 report.³⁴ The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated street homelessness. We expect New York City to be in a homelessness crisis in FY22 as there

²⁹ Gouverneur Hospital Community Advisory Board report at the CB3 June 2019 Health, Seniors, & Human Services / Youth, Education, & Human Rights Committee meeting

³⁰ American Medical Association. (2020). "Issue brief: Reports of increases in opioid related overdose and other concerns during COVID pandemic." <<https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/2020-09/issue-brief-increases-in-opioid-related-overdose.pdf>>

³¹ 2019 Report from Educational Alliance Wellness and Recovery Center

³² Robin Hood. (2020). "Mapping Hunger in New York City: A look at the Rate of Food Hardship in New York City neighborhoods, 2019." <https://www.robinhood.org/uploads/2020/02/PovertyTracker_Mapping-Hunger.pdf>

³³ Chelsia Rose Marcus. (2020). The Daily News. "A Panic for Food: How the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted NYC's hungry." <<https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/ny-covid-nyc-hungry-need-food-20201005-74ukp32w4fcihckkuscui7t6fq-story.html>>

³⁴ "NYC Hope 2020 Results." NYC Department of Homeless Services. (2020).

<<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dhs/downloads/pdf/hope-2020-results.pdf>>

appears to be no plan to address the many issues associated with homelessness which were evident before COVID-19. COVID-19 has highlighted social, economic, and racial inequities, and people of color and people living with disabilities are disproportionately represented in the homeless population in New York City.

The Coalition for the Homeless reports that in 2020, 86 percent of homeless single adults and 93 percent of heads-of-household in family shelters identify as Black or Hispanic.³⁵ An estimated 78 percent of adult families, 67 percent of single adults, and 51 percent of families with children have a disability or condition that may require an accommodation.³⁶ Additionally we have seen an increase in the percentage of seniors in single adult homeless population.³⁷

There is a recognized need for mental health services and a variety of programs for those experiencing homelessness, however there are no benchmarks or tracking systems to show effectiveness of programs. There are reports by NYPD of people being hospitalized for a few days and then released back on the street. CB 3 has also observed this with specific individuals.

The need for effective mental health outreach and treatment was evident before the COVID-19 pandemic, but the shutdown of services, isolation, and other consequences of the pandemic means that enhanced outreach and targeted services will be needed in the current and coming year.

There is observed substance abuse among the homeless population, and this is sometimes combined with mental illness. This pandemic has exacerbated existing systemic problems: many with mental health issues do not seek help, many do not have access to a phone, WiFi, or other resources.³⁸

CB 3 has advocated for DHS to pilot an outreach program that combines outreach to the homeless with harm reduction outreach workers. Harm reduction workers engage those who may not be ready to accept other support services.

Shelters and supportive housing

The number of people sleeping in shelters in New York City has been increasing for the last decade.³⁹ Individual adults in shelters have increased 132 percent over the last 10 years. The current snapshot of individual adults in shelters is 17,759.⁴⁰ The number of families in shelters have leveled off in the last three years.

CD 3 is home to over 15 shelters, among the highest in the City.⁴¹ The perception by many people experiencing homelessness that the shelters are unsafe appears to contribute to the many homeless people refusing services unless there is a Safe Haven bed available in a community they are connected to. In 2017-2018, the Coalition for the Homeless conducted a survey of individuals sleeping on the streets and subways, and found the majority of those interviewed on the streets had stayed in the DHS shelter system at some point and were unwilling to return to the shelter system because they feared for their safety and/or experienced difficulty following the rules and

³⁵ “State of the Homeless 2020.” Coalition for the Homeless. (2020). <<https://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/StateofTheHomeless2020.pdf>>

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Heather J. Kagan. ABC News. (2020). “Opioid overdoses on the rise during COVID-19 pandemic, despite telemedicine care.” <<https://abcnews.go.com/Health/opioid-overdoses-rise-covid-19-pandemic-telemedicine-care/story?id=72442735>>

³⁹ “Basic Facts About Homelessness in New York City.” Coalition for the Homeless. (2020). <<https://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/basic-facts-about-homelessness-new-york-city/>>

⁴⁰ <<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dhs/downloads/pdf/dashboard/tables/FYTD20-DHS-Data-Dashboard-Data.pdf>>

⁴¹ “Shelter Repair Scorecard – Building List.” Department of Homeless Services. (2020).

<<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dhs/downloads/pdf/Shelter-Repair-Scorecard-Archive/scorecard-2020-apr-building-list.pdf>>

procedures.⁴² Additionally, two-thirds of those interviewed had mental health needs.⁴³

One of the lessons learned from COVID-19 may be that congregate shelters are not as safe as smaller units for both health and personal safety. The City should also investigate creating smaller modular units within shelters for both safety and privacy. CB 3 has long advocated for more Safe Havens and supportive housing as well as more affordable housing as part of the solution to end homelessness.

Community issues sometimes arise around adult shelters. Outdoor space and programming that engages the residents is necessary. Better security is also necessary for both the neighboring community members and the shelter residents. In the coming year, DHS peacekeepers will transition back from NYPD to DHS. DHS will need to ensure that residents of the shelters are safe within the shelters as well as from drug dealers and others who prey on the shelter residents, causing crime and safety issues for the surrounding community as well as the shelter residents. The outdoor drug market such as the one at Third Street and Second Avenue has for years caused unnecessary conflict in the community as well as promoting drug use. The shelters can and must be made safer.

Manhattan Outreach Consortium (MOC) outreach teams are continuing to try a harm reduction approach for individuals experiencing homelessness who also actively use substances. There is an effort being made to team with a substance abuse harm reduction organization. We have encouraged DHS to support this substance abuse joint effort but the agency seems unwilling to do so, even as a pilot. MOC outreach workers report placing 162 people in safe havens and 57 people in permanent housing in the last year with a continued 91 percent retention rate.⁴⁴ Their work is invaluable but cannot keep up with the additional number of people who become homeless every year. More safe havens are needed for people experiencing homelessness in our community to provide safe shelter and services.

Homelessness in the Subways

The Hope Count for 2019 showed a 23 percent increase in homelessness in the subways from the previous year.⁴⁵ The most recent count from January 2020 showed a 23 percent decrease.⁴⁶ Currently all people are evicted from the subway system every night for COVID-19 disinfectant cleaning. The current situation caused by COVID-19 has resulted in new initiatives and information which can be found in a report on Homeless Outreach Activities issued in June 2020 by the MTA Inspector General. The report makes the following points and suggestions among many others:

- Intervention Programs appear to not be working.
- Better data is needed: what is the number of homeless individuals sheltering in the system, how many leave, how many actually shelter elsewhere? The Hope Count does not include all of the subway stations or lines and uses; statistical modeling should be done to extrapolate an estimate of the true population of homeless individuals.⁴⁷

The MTA report makes suggestions for learning from COVID-19 experiences to design better initiatives post-

⁴² “State of the Homeless 2020.” Coalition for the Homeless. (2020). <<https://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/StateofTheHomeless2020.pdf>>

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Information provided by NYC Department of Homeless Services.

⁴⁵ “NYC Hope 2019 Results.” NYC Department of Homeless Services. (2019). <<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dhs/downloads/pdf/hope-2019-results.pdf>>

⁴⁶ “NYC Hope 2020 Results.” NYC Department of Homeless Services. (2020). <<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dhs/downloads/pdf/hope-2020-results.pdf>>

⁴⁷ “Homeless Outreach Activities: Transformation Needed – Final.” Metropolitan Transit Authority Office of the Investigator General. (2020). <<http://www.mtaig.state.ny.us/assets/pdf/20-13.pdf>>

COVID-19. To better serve the homeless, for agencies to be more effective, and to make better use of funding, the MTA and DHS should resolve to learn from the recent experiences and consider suggestions provided in the MTA Inspector General report.

Homelessness in Parks

Two parks in CD 3, Tompkins Square Park and Sara Delano Roosevelt (SDR) Park, have for the last several years become the only open space for some shelter residents as well as magnets for drug dealers, users, and other crime. The current reported drug trend is K2, fentanyl, and heroin.

Parks/Recreation

CD 3, like most community districts in New York City, is underserved in terms of open space, with less than the City-recommended 2.5 acres of open space per 1000 residents.⁴⁸

- Citywide the median open space ratio is 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents⁴⁹ – CD 3 is slightly below that average at 1.2 acres per 1,000 residents.⁵⁰
- While 99% of residential units in CD 3 are located within ¼ mile of a park, not all parks are easily accessible or maintained at an acceptable level.⁵¹
- Open space is not evenly distributed throughout the district, with the area west of Avenue A and Chinatown lacking adequate open space.
- With the impending closure of East River Park for a minimum of 3.5 years, other parks in CD 3 risk being inundated and over-used by people looking for alternative spaces.

Parks Buildings

There are numerous Parks Department buildings in the district that are underutilized for the benefit of the community. These spaces are either completely closed or are used as store houses for citywide Parks operations. Our local park houses should not bear this disproportionate burden for other neighborhoods. These buildings would be better used as community facilities that could serve as neighborhood safe anchors thus increasing park safety.

We believe these buildings should be renovated and reopened for community use. According to a 596 Acres Study, the following properties are under-utilized in the district:

- SDR Park: The Stanton Street Park House in SDR Park was a community center until the 1970s and must be returned to community use (only the restrooms are open to the public). Three out of four Parks buildings in SDR Park are used for citywide Parks maintenance or communication centers. Public restrooms are closed in one park house and open only for limited, unsupervised and sporadic hours in the three others. This inequitable distribution of resources does not allow CD 3 to meet its needs for

⁴⁸ NYC Mayor's Office of Sustainability. (2016). City Environmental Quality Review.

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/oec/html/ceqr/open_space_maps_manhattan.shtml>

⁴⁹ NYC Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination. (2014). CEQR Open Space.

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/oec/downloads/pdf/2014_ceqr_tm/07_Open_Space_2014.pdf>

⁵⁰ New Yorkers For Parks. *Open Space Index*. <http://www.ny4p.org/client-uploads/pdf/OSI/NY4P_Open_Space_Index.pdf>

⁵¹ Furman Center. (2018). State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2017.

<http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/SOC_2017_Full.pdf>

community space, programming and park safety, especially in this very densely used and troubled park straddling the Lower East Side and Chinatown and a Scope of Work is needed to move this forward.

- SDR Park: Hester St. Building (Used by Parks. Only the restrooms are open to public)
- Allen Street Mall Comfort Station (Completely closed. RFPs for food vendor still in progress, which would open bathrooms)
- Seward Park "Park House" Building (Bathrooms are open, space slated for temporary use by Lower East Side Ecology Center at the time of this writing as an East Side Coastal Resiliency project mitigation)
- LaGuardia Houses Playground Building (demolished and converted to open turf area. However, this is a temporary conversion and Parks needs to commit to building a permanent community recreation facility.)
- Baruch Houses Bathhouse (Completely closed, RFP has been issued.)
- Tompkins Square Park Building (Bathrooms are open. the rest of the building is closed to the community.)⁵²
- The Stanton Street Park House in SDR Park was a community center until the 1970s and must be returned to community use. Three out of four Parks buildings in SDR Park are used for citywide Parks maintenance or communication centers. This inequitable distribution of resources does not allow CD 3 to meet its needs for community space, programming and park safety, especially in this very densely used and troubled park straddling the Lower East Side and Chinatown and a Scope of Work is needed to move this forward.

Recreational Use

The lack of park space is exacerbated by a lack of recreational sports fields. While CB 3 does not seek to exclude outside groups from our parks, the Board had taken the following positions:

- Priority access to recreational sports fields should be given to not-for-profit organizations serving the youth of CD 3 especially considering the full closure of East River Park.
- NYC Parks must revisit the policy of grandfathering sports field permits to certain organizations.
- Fields must be maintained to optimize use. This includes providing drainage so that fields can be used after rain and snow.

Rodents in Parks and Community Gardens

The Rat Reduction program implemented in 2017 has not shown success uniformly in CD 3, but there has been success in parks. The Parks most in need of continued treatment are Allen Street Mall One, East River Park, and SDR Park.

Wireless Access

CD 3 residents would benefit greatly from free wireless access in all public parks, such as the networks currently available in Alfred E. Smith Playground, Tompkins Square Park and Hamilton Fish Park, which allow all in the community to use their laptops and other devices in parks.

⁵² Living Lots NYC. <https://livinglotsnyc.org/media/files/LESmap_7.27.16_FINAL.pdf>

Maintenance

CB 3 members have routinely observed parks, playgrounds, plazas, Greenstreets, and street trees with plantings not being properly and regularly maintained or mowed. This issue has been particularly exasperated during the COVID-19 pandemic as more people than ever turn to their local parks and open spaces to escape their apartments for fresh air while they shelter in place. Many CB 3 parks have become overrun with overflowing trash cans, litter, overgrown lawns (some at almost 2-feet high) and rampant weeds. All this while parks in more affluent districts are maintained in pristine condition. Therefore CB 3 requests:

- Adequate staffing of Parks mobile maintenance staff.
- Regular maintenance of parks mechanical equipment to ensure that they are always at the ready.
- More frequent cleaning of playgrounds in parks, as well as standalone park playgrounds during the weekends and on summer weekdays, especially in all spray showers and water fountains, to maintain safety and sanitation.

Community Gardens

CD 3 has one of the highest concentrations of Greenthumb gardens in New York City and the densest distribution of gardens in the city.⁵³ It is essential that our community gardens are protected. Currently gardens can still be sold as they are not legally Parks property. CB 3 supports:

- The creation of a new Special Purpose “Community Garden District” that would offer a measure of protection, as would a new protected NYC zoning designation of "Community Garden."

Since all community gardens have the same maintenance and resource needs as public parks, CB 3 requests that:

- All gardens under NYC Parks jurisdiction receive funding through Greenthumb and be provided with adequate infrastructure, such as available water spigots, ongoing topsoil renewal, wrought iron fencing, and electricity/solar lighting where applicable.

Keeping the gardens well-lit is a public safety need. The increase in illicit drug use, as reported by area gardeners, makes garden lighting especially relevant. Therefore:

- For these safety reasons, an additional PEP Officer should be hired to specifically patrol the community gardens in CD 3.

Bioswales, Tree Plantings

Bioswales and tree plantings (tree canopy) needs to begin now especially considering the ESCR project. Indigenous plantings should also be distributed throughout CD 3.

Waterfront

⁵³ <<https://greenthumb.nycgovparks.org/gardensearch.html>>

Pier 42 has been partially funded, but the delayed project leaves the unfulfilled need to complete the critical missing link of public access along Lower Manhattan's East River shoreline. The masterplan approved by CB 3 in 2013 would provide needed access to the waterfront at Pier 42 with passive recreation space, barriers to storm surges, marine habitat, and ecological education opportunities. The plan would also provide for a much-needed concession and comfort station along with recreational areas. This is particularly needed to accommodate the rapidly increasing residential population in lower Manhattan and the heightened demand for open space. The Pier 35 eco-park opened in 2019 in an area desperate for open space. Adequate staffing and bathrooms are needed by the community to handle the increased traffic and to secure and maintain this new open space along the waterfront.

Composting

Renewal and expansion of city-wide composting in parks and community gardens wherever practicable is needed to ensure that environmental rewards of composting remain cost efficient and locally-based. The Lower East Side Ecology Center headquartered in the East River Park Fire Boat House and the compost yard are needed to continue to serve as a model for park regenerative practices. Each week, 3,500 people contribute eight tons of food scraps to the Center’s programs which divert food scraps from waste streams.

New York Public Libraries

CD 3 has five branches of the New York Public Library (NYPL) system: Chatham Square, Hamilton Fish, Ottendorfer, Seward Park, and Tompkins Square. The branches in CD 3 have amongst the highest numbers of visits in the NYPL system visits during FY20:

Manhattan Community Board 3		
Branch	Visits	Program Attendance
Chatham Square Branch	250,155	46,596
Hamilton Fish Park Branch	118,305	10,324
Ottendorfer Branch	37,447	13,542
Seward Park Branch	284,370	57,470
Tompkins Square Branch	164,797	35,370
Totals	855,074	163,302

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The current COVID-19 crisis has shown that our libraries are needed to meet public health, social, and economic challenges.⁵⁵ The Library is needed for its ability to adjust its services and programs such as digital library card sign-ups, and online educational resources: webinars, classes, book clubs, tutoring, and career/financial counseling, among others. In the coming years there is a need to grow digital platforms and services, but also provide services such as physical polling sites, cooling centers, and COVID-19 testing sites. Libraries are also needed for future partnering with the City to help implement in-person and remote learning. There is a need to increase or maintain services to ensure the most vulnerable residents have access to library services six days a week and expand to seven-day service.

⁵⁴ New York Public Library. (2020). “NYPL Statistics for Fiscal Year 2020 in Community Board 3”

⁵⁵ Giles, D. (2015). Library Funding is Behind the Times. Center for an Urban Future.

<<https://nycfuture.org/data/info/library-funding-is-behind-the-times>>

Housing and Land Use

Housing in CD 3 is increasingly unaffordable for many residents and the district has become increasingly socially stratified:

- In 2019, CD 3 had the second highest income disparity—the gap between our lowest income and highest income residents—in New York City.⁵⁶
- Median asking rents in CD 3 increased by 26% between 2010 and 2018, while growing by only 2% across the rest of the city.⁵⁷
- Thirty-four percent of low-income renter households in CD 3 are spending more than half their monthly income on housing.⁵⁸

Additionally, CD 3 is experiencing a crisis of street homelessness⁵⁹, and it is clear that new affordable housing is needed. But it must be targeted at affordability levels appropriate for current neighborhood incomes. Under the City’s Housing New York Plan, there were 859 new affordable housing unit starts in CD 3 between 2014 and 2020, with 25 percent targeted at households earning more than \$82,000 per year.⁶⁰ However, the median household income in the district is just \$43,936.⁶¹

COVID-19’s impact on the real estate market and construction industry, anticipated City tax revenue shortfalls, and \$457 million in cuts to the Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) capital budget in FY ‘21, puts the development of new affordable housing at risk.⁶² Cuts and withholding of federal funding to New York State and New York City also puts affordable housing at risk, as HPD is primarily funded through federal sources, with approximately 65 percent of the total budget in FY ‘21 coming from the federal government.⁶³ There is still a need for more deeply affordable housing in CD 3, but capital budgets for housing are facing significant cuts, and projects will likely be cancelled or significantly delayed in the wake of COVID-19. Over the next fiscal year, we must carefully watch how the expiration of emergency eviction moratoriums and rental assistance programs impacts low-income renters at risk for possible mass evictions, as well as monitor predatory real estate and private equity firms that may be looking for opportunities to buy up foreclosed and distressed properties in the district.

In the face of these challenges, CB 3 has identified several housing and land use needs the City should address:

Build and Preserve Affordable Housing

There is a need for more deeply affordable housing in CD 3 to address the crises of housing affordability, inequality, and homelessness in the district. New opportunities for affordable housing must be found, including

⁵⁶ NYU Furman Center. (2020). *State of New York City’s Housing and Neighborhoods in 2019*.

<<https://furmancenter.org/neighborhoods/view/lower-east-side-chinatown>>

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ NYC DHS. (2019). “NYC HOPE 2019 Results.” <<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dhs/downloads/pdf/hope-2019-results.pdf>>

⁶⁰ NYC HPD. (2020). “Housing New York Units by Building.”

<<http://hpd.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=192d198f84e04b8896e6b9cad8760f22>>

⁶¹ U.S. Census. *2014-2018 American Community Survey*. (2020). NYC Population Fact Finder <

<https://popfactfinder.planning.nyc.gov/profile/396/economic>>.

⁶² Brenzel, Kathryn. (2020) “City’s Housing Plan Suffers Major Blow in Painful Budget.” <<https://therealdeal.com/2020/06/30/citys-housing-plan-suffers-major-blow-in-painful-budget/>>

⁶³ NYC Housing Preservation & Development. (2020). “Fiscal 2021 Preliminary Budget Fact Sheet.”

<<https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2020/04/HPD-Fact-Sheet.pdf>>

senior housing, supportive housing, and housing for the formerly homeless, and existing affordable housing must be preserved in perpetuity. CD 3 also needs more family-sized affordable housing, with higher volumes of 2- and 3-bedroom affordable units than the typical affordable unit mix. This will require sufficient funding for capital projects and housing subsidy programs from the City to ensure much needed affordable housing continues to be constructed. Community based organizations in CD 3, including Cooper Square Committee, CAAAV, GOLES and AAFE, which provide essential services to tenants who are dealing with the termination of basic services, egregious building code violations, and frivolous evictions, need expanded support to make sure tenants can remain in their homes and that existing affordable housing is protected.

Provide Support for the Expansion of Community Land Trusts (CLTs)

CLTs are increasingly recognized as an effective mechanism for permanently preserving affordable housing. In CD 3, the Cooper Square CLT owns the land under 24 buildings, and the Cooper Square Mutual Housing Association manages 27 total buildings, with 418 housing units and more than 2 dozen storefronts, ensuring that they are a permanently affordable resource in the area. There is also interest from a number of small property owners, community-based organizations, and non-profit affordable housing developers to establish a new Community Land Trust in Chinatown. In CD 3 there is a need for more support for planning and operations of established CLTs that are looking to expand and as well as support for emerging CLTs that need technical assistance and education. CLTs also need priority consideration when disposing of City-owned property and need financial incentives to encourage the transition of City-foreclosed properties into CLT ownership.

Preserve the Viability of HDFC Buildings

Increasing operating costs, a lack of affordable refinancing options, and gentrification-fueled property value escalation has resulted in many Housing Development Fund Cooperatives (HDFCs) being converted to market-rate housing or being lost to foreclosure.⁶⁴ To ensure they remain a financially solvent and safe source of affordable housing in our district, HDFC need expanded support services, financial training, enhanced and stronger resale restrictions including sales price caps, and long-term tax abatements.

Expand Support for Residential Resiliency Upgrades

In CD 3, over 21,000 dwelling units are located within the 2015 FEMA-identified 100-year floodplain— and over 27,500 units are located within the 500-year floodplain.⁶⁵ Current programs that finance residential resiliency upgrades are not being widely used in CD 3, and there is a need for the City to tailor programs to the specific financial needs of low- and moderate-income housing providers, including HDFC co-op boards, so that they can complete critical building infrastructure upgrades and take proactive steps to become environmentally resilient.

NYCHA and Section 8 Housing

The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) owns and manages over 14,000 units of low-income housing in CD 3 and the preservation of these apartments as viable, secure, publicly-owned housing is vital to ensure that our community remains diverse and economically integrated. Changes in agency leadership, new federal monitoring, uncertain funding from HUD, and proposals for increasing public-private partnerships underscores the fragile condition of NYCHA funding and operations in CD 3. The latest reports now show \$40 billion of capital and repair needs over the next five years, significantly more than the \$31.8 estimated in a 2018 report.⁶⁶ CB 3 has identified the following as pressing district needs:

⁶⁴ Stewart, Nikita. New York Times. (2018). “Under City Program, Renters-Turned-Homeowners Could Become Renters Again” <<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/29/nyregion/co-op-low-income-nyc-rent.html>>

⁶⁵ NYC Department of City Planning. (2020). *Manhattan CD 3 Community Profile*. <<https://communityprofiles.planning.nyc.gov/manhattan/3>>

⁶⁶ Brenzel, Kathryn. (2020). “NYCHA Head: Agency Now Needs \$40B in Repairs.” <<https://therealdeal.com/2020/01/14/nycha-head-agency-now-needs-40b-in-repairs/>>

- **Community Participation in NextGen NYCHA and RAD**

The NYCHA 2.0 programs, including NextGen NYCHA infill and Permanent Affordability Commitment Together (PACT), the local iteration of the federal Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program, as well as the Blueprint for Change proposal to create a preservation trust, are new models for public housing that may introduce the private sector into NYCHA properties and could dramatically change the way developments are managed and funded. Several developments in CD 3 have been discussed as possible sites for implementation of both programs. There must be increased community engagement and transparency from NYCHA regarding these new programs, to better understand how they would impact public housing stock and public housing residents in our community district.

Landmarks

CD 3 is rich in buildings of historic, cultural, and architectural significance. Compared to other areas of Manhattan, CD 3 is significantly under-designated, with only three historic districts and a modest number of individual landmarks. The most recent designations in CD 3 were the Bialystoker Home and the Seward Park Library in 2013 and the East Village/Lower East Side Historic District in 2012. The Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) should expedite designation of historic districts and individual landmarks in a community whose character is rapidly changing under the onslaught of new development.

Potential Historic Districts in need of full Commission consideration are:

- The Lower East Side Historic District north of Grand Street, south of Delancey Street, east of Essex Street and west of Forsyth Street (long under consideration)
- Extension of the East Village/Lower East Side Historic District
- Extension of the East 10th Street Historic District to include the area surrounding Tompkins Square
- A Chinatown Historic District
- Shtiebel Row (East Broadway between Clinton Street and Montgomery Street)
- Al Smith Historic District (St. James Place to Madison Street, James Street to Oliver Street)
- Bowery Historic District
- The area south of 14th Street included in the Union Square South Hotel Special Permit application. Note that this area spans CD 3 and CD 2.

Potential Individual Landmarks long on the CB 3 Landmarks Committee list include:

- James R. Whiting House (22 East Broadway)
- 2 Oliver Street
- 206 Bowery House (early 19C)
- Congregation Chasam Sopher (8-10 Clinton Street)
- Eastern Dispensary (75 Essex Street)

- 311 East Broadway (at Grand Street) 1905 (former Young Men’s Benevolent Association)
- 197 East Broadway between Jefferson and Clinton 1891 (Educational Alliance)
- 371-379 Madison Street (corner of Jackson) 1891 (former PS 12 by C.B.J. Snyder; presently apartments called “The School House.”)
- 83 Mott Street (corner of Canal) ca. 1950 (includes Chinese thematic elements; architect Poy Gum Lee)
- 60 Mott Street (between Canal and Bayard) ca. 1960 (unique for New York; screen is noteworthy; includes Chinese thematic elements; architect Poy Gum Lee)
- Baruch Bathhouse
- Henry Street Firehouse, 269 Henry Street, Engine Company 55

In CD 3, emphasis also needs to be given to designation of buildings of historical and cultural significance, including buildings on the Bowery. In addition, meticulous regulation of the currently designated Landmarks and Historic Districts requires strict application of the law, including that against “demolition by neglect.” For example:

- 605 East 9th, PS 64 (aka CHARAS/El Bohio) has been neglected and intentionally damaged by the owner (removal of white stone facing on the East 10th Street side of the building and failure to properly protect exposed brickwork on dormers and façade where stonework has been removed). The gutters have been damaged leading to potential water damage. The façade has cracked leading to action by the Department of Buildings (DOB). The building is not sealed against intruders. People have been on the roof hacking at the bricks with a pickaxe. Also, people are using the scaffolding in front of the building on 9th Street to enter the building. Police have stated that they cannot access the building without a warrant. We fear that the arson that destroyed Beth Hamredash Hagodol might be repeated here.

Given the onerous deadlines between calendaring and designation imposed upon LPC, CB 3 requests that LPC be given an increased budget and additional staff in order to handle both the proposed designations described above and the regulatory workload, which increases as each new Landmark or Historic District is designated.

Transportation, Public Safety and Environment

Accessibility and Safety

Accessibility and pedestrian safety are a CB 3 priority, especially with 8.7% of residents of the area reporting ambulatory difficulty.⁶⁷ There are several ways to address this issue in the district:

- Improved accessibility of bus stops, which is necessary for seniors and people with disabilities. There are complaints to the community board and observations of bus stops being used as loading zones and short-term parking, which render the stops inaccessible for those in wheelchairs and walkers. NYPD needs to direct enforcement of bus stop regulations

Pedestrian and Traffic Safety

⁶⁷ U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey 2014-2018. 20

In 2020, CD 3 has had the most traffic crash fatalities and the 3rd most traffic crash injuries in Manhattan. The highest volume of crash incidents were located on:

- East Houston Street (between Avenue A and Bowery)
- Delancey Street (between Bowery and Clinton)
- Grand Street (between Bowery and Clinton)⁶⁸

The DOT Manhattan Pedestrian Safety Action Plan 2019 Update also identified priority intersections in CD 3 that are exceptionally dangerous for pedestrians. Intersections with 3 to 4 incidents where a pedestrian was killed or severely injured between 2012-2016 are considered a high priority for safety interventions according to DOT and the Vision Zero program. CD 3 has 6 such intersections:

- Ludlow St & Delancey St
- South St & Rutgers Slip
- East Houston St & Avenue B
- Essex St & Delancey St
- Hester St & Bowery
- Manhattan Bridge & Bowery⁶⁹

Pedestrian safety improvements and traffic calming measures are needed on these key corridors and high priority intersections to reduce overall traffic crashes and ensure the safety of pedestrians on our most dangerous streets.

Coordination and Planning at Large Scale Construction Projects

Lack of coordination in planning at large scale construction projects such as Essex Crossing and an adjacent private site development have created significant safety problems and traffic congestion to the level of creating additional pedestrian safety issues. Residents of the Lower East Side have been working with the local precinct, Community Board, and DOT but have been unsuccessful in mitigating these problems. Coordinated planning with DOT and other City agencies, developers, and stakeholders should be implemented to have the safest and best-planned process.

Delivery and Curbside Management

The demand for deliveries driven by on-line shopping, the proliferation of cargo delivery bicycles, and the need for loading/unloading zones by local businesses necessitate planning to ensure safety. The proliferation of mid-box stores with ongoing delivery needs but without appropriate loading zones exacerbates these problems. The effect on traffic due to commercial and residential deliveries calls for overall planning by the City to address these issues and develop a plan that will allow traffic to move and allow safe access to sidewalks.

Intercity Bus Management

The intercity bus permit system has not been effective because there is not a means to enforce compliance and issue violations. Complaints to the Community Board center around blocking sidewalks and businesses and use of sidewalks. However, work by the NYPD and Sheriff to implement more effective enforcement has resulted in a

⁶⁸ “Vision Zero View.” <<https://vzv.nyc/>>

⁶⁹ “Borough Pedestrian Safety Action Plans Vision Zero Update, 2019.” NYC DOT, February 2019.
<<https://www1.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/vz-2019-update-city-hall.pdf>>

decrease in the number of complaints. The Community Board will continue to work with elected officials, NYPD and the Sheriff's office to investigate how to further increase the effectiveness of summonses issued to result in compliance.

Public Transportation

CD 3 is underserved by public transportation, although 87.4% of workers in the district do not use a car to commute to work. Many residents are poorly served by the subway system, with 15% living more than ½ mile from the nearest subway stop.⁷⁰ Therefore:

- There is a need for more east/west bus service south of 8th Street. The ease of East/West travel has been diminished by the elimination of the Grand Street Bus in the early 1980's and by the limited number of M14A buses.
- There is a need to take strong, creative measures in CD 3 to reduce traffic congestion, which contributes to a vicious cycle of reduced ridership and reduced service. The MTA/NYCT will reduce service after ridership on a bus route drops below a certain threshold. Service cuts have a severely negative impact on vulnerable populations, including the elderly and disabled, who rely on public transportation.

Rodents

CD 3 is the core rat reduction neighborhood in Manhattan. The program included \$32 million mostly going to city agencies and funded for 5 years. In the 3 years since this program has been in effect, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) has reported success in working with NYCHA to reduce rat activity in NYCHA buildings. DOHMH has also reported great success in working with the Department of Parks to have zero to very few burrows in CD3 parks. However, The DOHMH reports that rat activity in private buildings has been stubbornly high at around 11 to 12 percent. It is clear that the continued need to reduce rodents requires a plan that will work with private landlords to cooperate in proven rat-reducing measures that have worked in city-managed properties.

Environment

Air pollution is a significant environmental threat to the health of CD 3 residents. The New York City Community Air Survey (NYCCAS) measurements of air pollutants in CD 3 were among the highest in NYC in 2018.⁷¹ A key finding of their 2018 report is that some air pollutants (PM2.5, NO₂, NO, and BC) are highest in areas of higher traffic density. The Williamsburg Bridge causes these conditions in CD 3, with vehicles heading to the bridge using residential streets surrounding Grand and Clinton St, and vehicles, especially trucks, crossing to the Holland Tunnel using Canal St.

- Airborne particulate matter: CD 3 ranks 13th of the 59 CDs for PM 2.5 (Fine Particulate Matter), and 8th for BC (Black Carbon), 6th for Nitric Oxide and 7th for Nitrogen Dioxide. These pollutants are particularly harmful, worsening respiratory and cardiovascular disease, and causing hospital admissions and deaths. *(See appendix for further discussion of health impacts)*

Climate change is causing more weather events with extreme heat and stormwater. CD 3 is a high priority area for planting trees to reduce air temperature, according to the US Forest Service. We are one of the warmest parts of the city with the most people, and have the fourth highest air temperature planting index (heat stress index)

⁷⁰ Furman Center. (2019). State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2018. <http://furmancenter.org/files/sotc/SOC_2018_Full_2018-05-22.pdf>

⁷¹ New York City Community Air Survey (NYCCAS) - *Neighborhood Air Quality 2008-2018* <<https://nyc-ehs.net/nyccas2020/web/report>>

among the 59 NYC community districts.⁷² Increasing tree canopy will help reduce peak temperatures in the summer and improve air quality by directly removing air pollutants, including PM2.5, NOx, sulfur dioxide and ozone. CD 3 currently has 21.1% tree cover, with a further 27.3% that is space where trees can be planted.

Noise is the number one complaint in CD 3 and is increasing in frequency. From March 2019 to March 2020, there were 14,992 total 311 noise complaints in CD 3, up from 13,906 from March 2018 to March 2019.⁷³ Most of these complaints are regarding residential noise followed by nightlife business noise complaints. There are resident requests for legislation to address residential noise. (*See appendix for further discussion of health impacts.*)

Public Safety

The serious crime rate in CD 3 was 14.5 serious crimes per 1,000 residents in 2019, compared to 11.3 serious crimes per 1,000 residents citywide.⁷⁴ There have been a significant increase in the number of complaints to the Community Board regarding open drug use and other crime. However, the current COVID-19 crisis makes it impossible to predict what the situation will be for the 2022 Fiscal Year. From working with NYPD and Homeless Outreach, it appears that these crimes are largely committed by several populations including people experiencing homeless and others struggling with substance abuse. The recent reforms in the Criminal Justice system, and the release of the inmates from jails throughout the city due to the COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated a need for more services for this population in CD 3 beyond homeless outreach. There is a need for stronger and more streamlined communication between the Department of Corrections and other services such as the Department of Homeless Services, as well as other city agencies to secure the needs of this population as they reintegrate into CD 3. There is also a need for halfway services and supportive housing for those leaving incarceration.

Nightlife and Licensing

Within the past year, CD 3 has struggled to adapt to a changing environment as a consequence of COVID-19. While CD 3 is a primarily residential district, it has one of the highest volumes of licensed eating and drinking businesses of any community district in the City. Eating and drinking businesses within CD 3 have been hard hit by the pandemic. As the City and State shut down to decrease the spread of the virus, business owners had to abruptly close or reconfigure their businesses and then endured a phased-in reopening to a vastly reduced occupancy. The resumption of indoor dining was delayed due to extreme increases in diagnoses of COVID-19 in states where indoor eating and drinking had been allowed. It is unclear if many of these businesses will survive given these constraints or what the community will look like a year after the pandemic began. CB 3 will watch these developments closely to see how needs have changed in this community and what action may be needed over the next fiscal year.

As a result of having so many nightlife businesses, CD 3 has had the largest number of 311 commercial noise complaints per year for the past five years of any Manhattan community district, regularly registering more than 2,500 complaints each year. Yearly commercial noise complaint numbers from March of 2017 through March of 2020 are:

⁷² USDA Resource Bulletin. (2018). *The Urban Forest of New York City*. In <https://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/57234> and https://www.fs.fed.us/nrs/pubs/rb/rb_nrs117.pdf

⁷³ New York City 311 Service Requests. (2020). NYC Open Data. <https://data.cityofnewyork.us/Social-Services/311-Service-Requests-from-2010-to-Present/erm2-nwe9>

⁷⁴ Furman Center. (2020). State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2019. <https://furmancenter.org/neighborhoods/view/lower-east-side-chinatown>

- March 2017 to March 2018: 3,794 complaints
- March 2018 to March 2019: 3,294 complaints
- March 2019 to March 2020: 2,742 complaints⁷⁵

The number of complaints has been trending downward each year, decreasing from 3,645 to 2,994 complaints between FY18 and FY19 and continuing to decrease in FY20. There are several possible reasons for decreasing numbers, such as complaints that were once directed to 311 now being addressed by neighborhood coordination officers, reduced noise in the district, and changes in resident demographics.

The yearly decrease in 311 commercial noise complaints has recently reversed, however, with the City and State response to the closure of eating and drinking businesses because of COVID-19. As the City and State governments permitted the temporary retail sale of alcohol and outdoor dining by eating and drinking businesses to allow them to reopen in a limited capacity, 311 commercial noise complaints spiked because of complaints about patrons congregating outside.

These conditions have highlighted the ongoing issues associated with allowing numerous licensed businesses within a small area. Complaints related to nightlife are difficult to resolve because no agency has sole jurisdiction over noisy crowds and loud music, traffic congestion and horn honking outside businesses. The SLA, which issues licenses and has jurisdiction over license compliance, has limited investigation and enforcement abilities and expects the NYPD to document and enforce noise and other quality of life problems caused by licensed businesses. Yet conditions resulting from the saturation of nightlife businesses are often not criminal and are thus not prioritized by police, or the police do not have the resources to adequately address these conditions.

CD 3 needs coordinated and effective oversight and enforcement between City and State agencies to address the high volume of liquor licenses in primarily residential areas which has led to many conflicts between residents and commercial establishments and a diminished quality of life, as well as chronic noncompliant businesses that violate State and local laws and their individual liquor license stipulations.

Sidewalk Cafés

Sidewalk cafés enhance street vitality but also create congestion and noise by extending businesses to otherwise public sidewalks. Sidewalk cafés also push waiting patrons into smaller areas of public sidewalk, often forcing pedestrians navigating around patrons into the street. Permittees often illegally increase the footprint of their cafes and allow wait staff to serve customers from the sidewalk, which also encroaches on public sidewalk space. Lack of Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) staffing has resulted in the loss of much needed routine, night and weekend inspections for permit compliance and puts the burden on residents to police the sidewalk cafes themselves and register their complaints via 311.

As the City and State sought to lessen restrictions placed on businesses after the stay-at-home order, eating and drinking businesses were allowed to open outdoor dining areas contiguous to the businesses and/or on the streets in front of businesses. The City elected to continue this use until June of 2021. This outdoor dining, which has effectively expanded sidewalk seating in areas where sidewalk cafés were permitted and created sidewalk seating in areas where there were no permits, has exacerbated noise and patron crowds on the sidewalks and streets around businesses, as well as further encroached on diminishing public walkways. These conditions have highlighted the need for all-hours enforcement of outdoor dining areas and cafés.

⁷⁵ “New York City 311 Service Requests.” (2020). NYC Open Data. <<https://data.cityofnewyork.us/Social-Services/311-Service-Requests-from-2010-to-Present/erm2-nwe9>>

To address sidewalk café issues, CB 3 requests that:

- DCA create rules to distinguish between sidewalk cafes for bars and sidewalk cafes for restaurants. This would allow communities to identify appropriate locations where sidewalk cafes will not conflict with residential living.
- DCA create rules for evaluating sidewalk cafe applications that would examine the clearance needed at the proposed location in relation to the existing sidewalk congestion, as well as the 8- foot sidewalk clearance, including locations near subway entrances or bus stops, to ensure sufficient sidewalk access for pedestrians and people in wheelchairs.
- DCA use flex time, rotating shifts and other creative methods to monitor and enforce existing sidewalk café regulations at times when violations are most often occurring, such as on weekends and in the evenings.
- DCA consider earlier closing hours for sidewalk cafes in residential areas.

Appendix

Noise Complaints

Period	Noise - Commercial	Noise - Residential	Noise - Park	Noise - Street/Side walk	Noise - Vehicle	Noise - Misc, Including Construction After Hours	Total Noise Complaints
Mar 2018 - Mar 2019	3294	5596	176	2119	597	2124	13906
Mar 2019 - Mar 2020	2742	7121	161	2501	537	1930	14992
Change	-552	+1525	-15	+382	-60	-194	+1086

311 Noise Complaints - Commercial

Zip Code	10002	10003	10009	10013
Mar 2018 - Mar 2019	1664	425	1150	52
Mar 2019 - Mar 2020	1074	458	1131	75
Change	-590	+33	-19	+23

311 Noise Complaints – Residential

Zip Code	10002	10003	10009	10013
Mar 2018 - Mar 2019	2151	815	2476	24
Mar 2019 - Mar 2020	2550	1159	3167	97
Change	+399	+344	+691	+73

311 Noise Complaints - Street/Sidewalk

Zip Code	10002	10003	10009	10013
Mar 2018 - Mar 2019	937	284	825	34
Mar 2019 - Mar 2020	1176	317	908	39
Change	+239	+33	+83	+5

Health Impacts of Types of Pollution

This appendix explains in more detail the health impacts of various types of pollution mentioned in the body of the District Needs statement:

Airborne particulate matter

PM2.5 (Fine Particulate Matter) is the most harmful urban air pollutant, worsening respiratory and cardiovascular disease, and causing hospital admissions and deaths.⁷⁶

Up to 20% of PM2.5 is BC (Black Carbon), which is associated with cancer and birth defects.⁷⁷

Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx) - Nitric Oxide, and Nitrogen Dioxide

NOx are linked to increased emergency department visits and hospitalizations for respiratory conditions, particularly asthma.⁷⁸

NOx also reacts with other compounds in the atmosphere to form PM2.5 and ozone.⁷⁹

Noise Pollution

Noise pollution in the community, even at levels that are too low to cause hearing loss, can affect mental and physical health.⁸⁰

In young children, exposure to noise can cause problems with reading comprehension, concentration, memory and attention span.⁸¹

Extended exposure to noise can increase the risk of high blood pressure, and stress related illnesses.⁸²

⁷⁶ New York City Community Air Survey (NYCCAS) - *Neighborhood Air Quality 2008-2018* <<https://nyc-ehs.net/nyccas2020/web/report>>

⁷⁷ Ibid

⁷⁸ New York City Community Air Survey (NYCCAS) - *Neighborhood Air Quality 2008-2018* <<https://nyc-ehs.net/nyccas2020/web/report>>

⁷⁹ Ibid

⁸⁰ NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) - <<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/noise.page>>

⁸¹ EPA – *Noise and Its Effect on Children* <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-07/documents/ochp_noise_fs_rev1.pdf>

⁸² EPA - *Clean Air Act Overview* <<https://www.epa.gov/clean-air-act-overview/clean-air-act-title-iv-noise-pollution>>

Park Inspections & Rat Burrow Counts for the Manhattan Rat Mitigation Zone – July-Dec 2019

Most parks have zero burrows, two parks have had increases in burrows: East River & Allen Malls. We are still conducting park surveys so there may be some updates to these burrow counts but this is where we ended the calendar year.

Park	Jul 2019 burrow count	Aug 2019 burrow count	Sep 2019 burrow count	Oct 2019 burrow count	Nov 2019 burrow count	Dec 2019 burrow count
ABC Playground	0	0	0	0	0	0
Abe Lebewohl Park	2	3	2	0	0	3
Ahearn Park	0	0	0	0	0	0
Allen Mall One	19	44	11	14	0	22
Baruch Playground	2	10	0	0	31	no access
Captain Jacob Joseph Playground	0	0	0	0	0	0
Columbus Park	5	18	4	6	12	2
Cooper Triangle	0	0	0	0	1	1
Dry Dock Playground	2		2	0	0	0
First Park	11	6	8	4	11	6
Gustave Hartman Square	0		0	0	0	0
Hamilton Fish Park	0	0	0	0	0	0
Henry M. Jackson Playground	0	0	0	0	0	0
James Madison Plaza	6	3	3	0	0	0
John V. Lindsay East River Park	72	46	40	50	23	39
Joseph C. Sauer Park	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kimlau Square	3	9	0	2	3	5
Lower East Side Playground	4	2	4	0	5	0
Luther Gulick Playground	0	3	5	0	1	4
McKinley Playground	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nathan Straus Playground	0	0	0	0	0	0
Peretz Square	0	0	3	3	0	0
Playground One	1	1	0	0	0	0
Sara D. Roosevelt Park	40	43	44	7	3	11
Seward Park	33	35	10	8	2	5
Sidney Hillman Playground	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sol Lain Plgd	1	1	0	0	0	3
Sophie Irene Loeb	0	4	0	1	4	3
St. James Triangle	0	0	0	0	0	0
Straus Square	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tompkins Square Park	16	25	26	49	58	4
Wald Playground	0	0	0	0	0	0

NORCs in Community District 3

Program Name	Sponsor	Site	Zip Code
VILLAGE VIEW	UNIVERSITY SETTLEMENT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK	175 East 4th Street	10009
HAMILTON MADISON KNICKERBOCKER NORC	HAMILTON MADISON HOUSE INC	36 MONROE STREET	10002
EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCE CO OP VILLAGE NORC	THE EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCE INC	465 GRAND STREET	10002
COOPER SQUARE COMMITTEE NEIBORHOOD NORC	COOPER SQUARE COMMITTEE	61 East 4th Street	10003
GRAND STREET SETTLEMENT Elder Services - NORC Program	GRAND STREET SETTLEMENT	72 Columbia Street	10002
CHINATOWN NEIGBORHOOD NORC	VISITING NURSE SERVICES	273 Bowery	10002
VISION URBANA SENIOR CENTER NORC	VISION URBANA	175 Delancey Street	10002
CONFUCIUS PLAZA NORC	HAMILTON MADISON HOUSE	17 Bowery	10002