



2011
STRATEGIC POLICY
STATEMENT

BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT
MARTY MARKOWITZ

INTRODUCTION



Serving the people of Brooklyn as borough president has not only been a fulfillment of a childhood dream, it has been the greatest honor of my life. The City’s borough presidents play a pivotal role in local governance. We can make a real difference in terms of land use, in terms of capital funding for brick-and-mortar projects, and of course, in terms of advocacy and the “bully pulpit.”

During last year’s charter revision process, I argued strongly for beefing up the borough president’s chartered role, giving it more “teeth” in the land use process as well as a role in choosing borough commissioners and, most importantly, giving it independent budgets set by formula each year instead of being subject to the whims of other elected officials. This would allow us to truly be the

independent voices we were elected to be. Notwithstanding, I think my office has a lot to be proud of.

Just pick up the *New York Times*, *New York Magazine* or check out the hippest blogs (most of which are written by Brooklynites these days anyway). Brooklyn is consistently on the top of everyone’s lists. From music to food to film; from architecture to artisanal design; from immigration to innovation; from start-ups to sustainability to star power, the world is looking to Brooklyn—which has truly become the big stage. The days of calling Manhattan “the City” may be over. More and more we hear that visitors, tourists and young people looking to “make it” are not even setting foot in Manhattan! They’re coming straight to Brooklyn. To them, Brooklyn is New York City!

Last fall, we held our 5th Annual *Brooklyn Book Festival*, featuring 250 authors from Brooklyn, across the country and around the world. This annual “festival of ideas,” which draws around 30,000 to Borough Hall Plaza, is now thought of, throughout the publishing world, as New York City’s official literary destination event. By the same token, we’ve seen Brooklyn itself evolve into a destination for those with big ideas. Our borough has, of course, long been famous for its confidence and even in this economy, though more modestly perhaps, our Brooklyn boom continues.

Prime residential housing continues to rise, from Downtown's skyline-changing condos to waterfront housing like *One Brooklyn Bridge Park*, DUMBO's *J-Condo*, Williamsburg-Greenpoint's *Edge*, *Northside Piers*, and soon, *Rose Plaza on the Water* and the huge *New Domino* project, which will give new life to the iconic sugar factory and advance the urban planning goal of opening up still more of Brooklyn's abandoned industrial waterfront to public access. This is the epic re-imagining of Brooklyn's waterfront.

Three-quarters of Brooklyn is surrounded by water. When I was a boy, the only water we saw was the beach at *Coney Island*, the docks at Sheepshead Bay, the man-made lake in *Prospect Park* and open fire hydrants. Now, from Greenpoint to DUMBO to Red Hook to Sunset Park to Bay Ridge to Coney Island, our gorgeous waterfront is being reclaimed for industry and recreation.

Because of Brooklyn's rich diversity, we've always called it "proud home to everyone from everywhere" and now, with all our new hotels going up, we are also thrilled to be the proud host to everyone from everywhere. Once, Brooklyn's hospitality industry was defined by the St. George Hotel in Brooklyn Heights. Now, joining the *New York Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge*, which started the modern boom by wooing the Wall Street business travel set, are newcomers like Downtown Brooklyn's new *Sheraton Brooklyn New York*, Starwood's *Aloft New York Brooklyn* and the soon-to-open *Indigo*, as well as hotels like *Le Blue* in Park Slope, *Le Jolie* in Williamsburg, and still more borough-wide, including *Fairfield Inn & Suites* and several others springing up near the Gowanus Canal, an area which is becoming an arts mecca in its own right, and which after cleanup of the canal is complete, we hope will be Brooklyn's ode to Venice.

In the past five years, major national and international retailers who wouldn't have ever considered opening in Brooklyn continue to establish flagship locations in our borough. Our downtown *Trader Joe's* now leads the nation in sales, as does our huge *IKEA* in Red Hook. European clothier *Aéropostale* has come to our busy *Fulton Mall*, near the site of the emerging *City Point Tower*, which will offer still more retail space and be Brooklyn's tallest building, at over 600 feet. Even *Barney's Co-op* opened this fall on Brooklyn's Atlantic Avenue!

I'm sometimes called a cheerleader or even a pitch-man for Brooklyn. One idea that I pitched on behalf of our borough was a long-held dream of mine that I'm thrilled is now definitely coming to fruition—my promise to bring major league sports back to Brooklyn. As a boyhood fan whose heart was broken when the Brooklyn Dodgers left for "La-La Land" in 1958, I wanted to bring that excitement back to the kids and families of Brooklyn. Nothing brings people together like music, food, religion and sports. I approached Forest City Ratner and expressed my desire for a NBA team in Brooklyn. Now all of Brooklyn awaits the arrival of the *Brooklyn Nets*! The plans evolved for an arena, retail and residential housing, including, at my insistence, 2,500 affordable units, located on the City's third-largest transit hub, making modern use of an

abandoned rail-yard and knitting together previously divided neighborhoods. The Atlantic Yards project will form a new cultural center befitting the nation's fourth largest "city" of 2.6 million.

Of course, we could never have imagined the tough road that lay ahead. Vocal opponents attempted to derail the project and held it up for years in the courts. Fortunately, I could not be more pleased that in every single instance, the courts decided that the project is one with significant public benefits. Now, we have the first foreign owner of an NBA team, Russia's Mikhail Prokhorov, owning a team in the heart of the largest Russian community in America. At the end of last year, confident investors rushed to buy bonds for the Atlantic Yards project. Even with the economic hardships we face, they too believe that Brooklyn is the future.

Soon we will have the affordable housing, union jobs and a state-of-the-art arena, which will not only not only be the home to an NBA franchise, but everything from the recently announced pro tennis exhibitions, to boxing, to major concerts and world-class theatrical productions. Most importantly, this project is about building community, but it's also about making sure our borough has the kinds of projects that keep Brooklyn a city, state and federal priority. It is part of a strategy for downtown development designed to create a lasting synergy with Downtown Manhattan.

As we know, Lower Manhattan is getting more residential and it is geographically closer to Downtown Brooklyn than it is to Midtown! So we've been expanding what we call our "cultural corridor." To ensure that in the days ahead, residents of Downtown Manhattan will increasingly come to Downtown Brooklyn to experience the arts, recreation, sports and entertainment options all along the arteries extending from DUMBO and *Brooklyn Bridge Park* to Fort Greene and the area surrounding Atlantic Yards. Through many mechanisms such as zoning, capital funding and advocacy, we have already been a driving force in its creation.

We count among our successes Brooklyn Bridge Park itself, which is to the 21st century what Prospect Park was to the 19th, and remains to this day. This stunning 85-acre gem has opened two major piers and is expanding as we speak.

The *Brooklyn Academy of Music* is now one of America's premier cultural institutions. We have worked to strengthen the DUMBO art district, improved the streetscapes along the Fulton Mall and Flatbush, found gorgeous new spaces for the avant-garde arts groups *Issue Project Room* and *Roulette*, created low-cost arts offices and galleries near BAM, found spectacular homes for the *Irondale Theater Ensemble* and the *Brooklyn Ballet*, moved forward plans for the Shakespearean *Theatre for a New Audience*. The list goes on and on.

We're also working to create incentives for global corporations to locate regional headquarters in Brooklyn in the years to come. Companies like electronics giant Panasonic Corp. are currently eyeing a relocation to not only to our city but to our borough. Mark my words—ten years from now it will be Midtown and the two downtowns! That being said, it is not only Downtown Brooklyn where we see innovation and creativity and it's not just Downtown that drives Brooklyn's economy. As you can well imagine, the message we're hearing, from every corner of our borough, is that jobs must be "job one." My office is devoted to making sure our borough and our city do not become one of only the very rich and the very poor. My optimism about the future does not mean I don't understand what residents are facing—especially those who are raising their families in the same kind of poverty that I grew up in, or worse.

Creating opportunity is certainly a top priority. To that end, I've been proud to support projects like the expansion of East New York's *Gateway Estates Shopping Center*, which will create 600,000 square feet of retail and thousands of jobs. This project will also create one of the largest affordable housing developments in the city and this, along with the work we did saving the affordability of the nearly 6,000-unit Starrett City complex, at least ensures that many families will not be driven out by market-rate rents.

Naturally, there is always more work to do. We must create incentives to bring in the large-scale employers, manufacturers, call centers and back offices that allow working people to stay and raise their families in Brooklyn. It's wonderful when we hear about the success of start-ups like the artisanal design website *Etsy* or breweries emulating *Brooklyn Brewery* like Williamsburg's *Schmaltz* and Red Hook's *Sixpoint Craft Ales*, but we also need a large manufacturer like LG Electronics, which may find benefits to building an assembly or distribution center in the Navy Yard or East New York. There are so many in our borough who may not have advanced degrees but who are willing to be trained for these skilled jobs.

At the federal level, the President and Congress need to enact legislation that rewards those companies that keep jobs on our shores—manufacturing jobs, not just service jobs. We must convince corporations that continue to outsource to Malaysia, India and China that the workforce in East New York, Brownsville, Bedford-Stuyvesant and all over our borough is ready to build products stamped "Made in Brooklyn, USA."

The small businesses community needs support as well. Ninety percent of Brooklyn businesses employ 20 people or less and that's why our programs like *Dine In Brooklyn* and *Shop Brooklyn* campaign are so important. It's just common sense to support the businesses and when we put that money back into these shops, we quite literally keep the lights on and make our retail corridors safer as well.

One of the most important functions of local government is the investment in major projects that revitalize neighborhoods. Here in Brooklyn I'm proud to be able to say that we have a few projects in the works that will surely anchor neighborhoods and create opportunities for surrounding small business. An example of this is the revitalization of the magnificent *Loew's Kings Theater* in Flatbush, one of last remaining, never sub-divided "wonder theaters," which has been decaying for over 30 years. The City has contracted with an operator who will re-make it as a multi-use performance space that will serve as an economic engine for Flatbush Avenue and all of Central Brooklyn! Other such projects include funding the *Weeksville Heritage Center* in Crown Heights, one of America's premier African-American cultural institutions as well as providing seed money to begin turning two massive, underutilized central Brooklyn armories into much-needed community centers.

In Brooklyn we say "our diversity is our strength" and this strength is all the more evident when it comes to our tourist industry. Since 2002, when Harvard professor Michael Porter's study *Initiative for a Competitive Brooklyn*, identified tourism as one of the borough's four major economic growth clusters, my office has kept tourism front and center. We created the first visitors center outside of Manhattan and since then, we have proudly welcomed the world. Tourists coming through our doors have hailed from 57 nations and 48 states, representing everywhere from New Zealand, Liberia, Dubai, Peru and Fiji, to the foreign lands of New Jersey and Long Island. In keeping with the borough-wide agenda of *Shop Brooklyn*, part of our goal is to push tourism beyond Downtown and our parks and cultural institutions, into our diverse neighborhoods. Last year we had an unprecedented 15 million tourists visiting our borough. We encourage these visitors to explore and experience the boundless character and characters of our global city.

When it comes to diversity, Brooklyn today is truly America tomorrow. We are proud home to the largest African-American population of any city in the nation that is not its own county. We are home to the country's largest Caribbean-American population; the largest Pakistani population; the largest Turkish population; the largest Polish population; and the largest Russian population. We've got one of the fastest-growing Latino populations in America – especially Mexicanos; one of the fastest-growing Muslim populations; and the second-largest Greek population; as well as the third-largest Chinese-American community, soon to be the second in the City. We've got Irish, Italian, Puerto Rican, Syrian, Lebanese, Senegalese, Ukrainian, and of course, you can't leave out our Hasidim, in South Williamsburg, Crown Heights and Borough Park. In fact, we have the largest Orthodox, Hasidic and Sephardic Jewish community outside Israel. We also have, by the way, the largest lesbian population in the Northeast and the City's only lesbian softball league! Every culture and every peaceful lifestyle is welcome here. Where else can you go from Mexico to Minsk, from Fujian to France, Haiti to Haifa, Calabria to County Clare—all in one day? On top of it all, 99.9% of the time, we are living side by side, in harmony. The world has something to learn from Brooklyn, and we're happy to show it off.

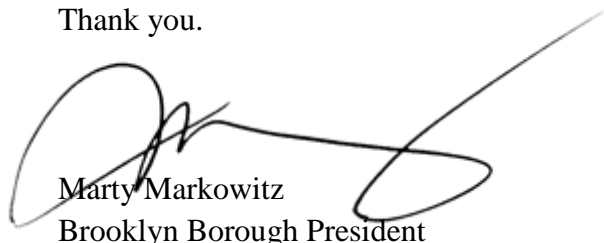
Brooklyn has become a national and international culinary center. We have a restaurant week that's as large as the one across the river, with 220 restaurants participating. Being borough president means that I'm also "Foodie-in-Chief" and *Dine in Brooklyn* is one of my favorite economic development initiatives. From the hip to the authentic to fusions, Brooklyn is cookin'.

The minute you say "Brooklyn," it brings a smile to anyone in any country and when you say "Coney Island," it still conjures "America's playground." I remember, as a child, the excitement in the late 40s and 50s, what Coney Island meant to me and generations of families. The approval of the City's Coney Island Plan this year means the next generation will be able to have the same sweet memories I had. In my recommendations for the Coney Island Plan, I called for more amusements and insisted that local Coney residents benefit from jobs, affordable housing, and discounted amusements as well. I'm especially excited about the *Asser Levy Park* project, which will not only improve the park, but refurbish the historic band shell on the spot where John Philip Sousa once played, making it New York City's first covered amphitheater. Most of all, I'm delighted that, this past summer, Italy's *Zamperla* launched the first half of its 21st century *Luna Park* with more on the way this year! Yet another show of international confidence in Brooklyn and proof that Coney Island and Brooklyn's best days are yet to come!

The Brooklyn brand is worldwide. From the *Brooklyn Diner* in Houston; to *Brooklyn Pizza* in Istanbul; to the "Brooklyn" t-shirts that have become a best-seller in Japan. You can't go anywhere these days without hearing the timeless refrain: "Where's Brooklyn at?!"

As borough president, I of course plan to spend the next three years continuing to work to make all of our dreams a reality— Brooklyn with excellent schools, affordable housing, healthy hospitals, safe streets, showplace parks, thriving neighborhoods, creative energy, and good jobs to carry us into an even brighter future and make sure Brooklyn remains a place where, as we say, legends are made and dreams come true!

Thank you.



Marty Markowitz
Brooklyn Borough President

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The past decade has marked a Brooklyn boom catalyzed by the determination, creativity and uniqueness of Brooklynites old and new. As we look forward, many challenges still exist, but none are too big for Brooklyn to handle. To succeed in our task, it is important to identify potential issues and partner with the City and State governments, private institutions and, most importantly, our citizens. The Office of the Borough President looks to build on our past successes and face new issues head-on as we continue to make Brooklyn the place to be!

ARTS & CULTURE

The arts not only inspire and amaze us but provide economic growth, community development and educational opportunities as well. Brooklyn has become the city's grassroots arts center for creators, performers and their audiences. In order to assist the growth of the arts community, the Borough President looks to expand our cultural base through the development of our institutions, outreach programs and venue accessibility, and by giving artists the tools they need to live, create and share their work here in Brooklyn. The Borough President will: seek funds from the public and private sector to continue the expansion of arts programs and initiatives; continue to expand outreach and marketing efforts for the arts in Brooklyn; support artists' organizations that seek to grow in our communities; and support arts education in our schools.

CONSTITUENT SERVICES

The first priority of the Brooklyn Borough President is to understand concerns and issues affecting our borough and to serve as an ombudsman in assisting Brooklynites with City government. The Office of the Borough President will continue to reach out to its constituents through a number of mediums, including Community Boards, Block and Civic Associations and Borough Hall's Constituent Service Center, all of which must represent all groups and reflect the needs of all of Brooklyn's diverse communities. Additionally, the Office of the Borough President will continue to deepen its understanding of the Borough's problems and enhance its capability to act on these needs. The Borough President will continue to interact with City and State agencies as well as private groups in order to keep them accountable for the services they provide in Brooklyn. Most importantly, the Borough President will continue to fight for equal rights and services for all communities, advocating for them at all levels.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Financial Crisis has affected everyone. Notwithstanding, it also presents an opportunity for growth in new areas that will diversify our economy and provide new jobs and opportunities for our future. Efforts to bring new retailing and manufacturing activities have proved successful in

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different areas in Brooklyn. The expansion in the film, brewing and green technology sectors have provided benefits that spill over to surrounding communities. Continuing such efforts and advocating for tax cuts and employment benefits for Brooklynites is at the heart of continued economic growth. Focusing on the existing resources Brooklyn has is also important to the Borough President's approach. Continuing promotion of local businesses through Business Improvement Districts and expanded local hiring practices enable Brooklynites to help and support each other. Looking outside the box is what has allowed Brooklyn to grow, and continuing that philosophy will ensure ongoing future success.

EDUCATION

Education is the key to our children's growth, the achievement of their dreams and the future of Brooklyn. Although our educational system has faced immense change recently, it is imperative that it uses all available tools, especially parental and community involvement, to carry on its goals. The Borough President will work to ensure that all aspects of our education system receive the funds necessary to impact our children's education, especially early childhood education and the critical middle school segment. He also envisions schools and libraries as community centers where both children and adults have access to enriching resources. With schools as community centers, parents and the overall community will be more involved in educational initiatives and issues. The Borough President's creation of the Brooklyn Parent's Academy as well as other programs that reach out to the community will serve as the building block for higher involvement in education. Lastly, accountability and oversight in our education bureaucracy is necessary to fully create a united team for our children. Accountability at the citywide level as well as access to information by all stakeholders will truly give children the education system they deserve.

HEALTH

Providing adequate healthcare for Brooklyn is a vital issue that impacts our communities' well-being and goes beyond care, affecting us socially and economically. Such a critical issue requires a comprehensive approach that considers the need of each individual and their community as well as the realities of today's healthcare system. These realities, including reduced funding, institutional migration, lack of insurance coverage, an aging population and healthcare disparities, will be addressed in aggressive and creative ways. The Borough President will continue to advocate for adequate funding for all healthcare institutions, with a special emphasis on areas where these institutions serve as the economic backbone of the community. In addition to seeking funding, the Borough President will seek to redress the inequality in healthcare by advocating increased insurance coverage, expanding community based healthcare networks and working with community-based organizations to address issues unique to individual communities. Another key aspect of the Borough President's healthcare vision is increased

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awareness and effective care for people with mental illness and disabilities. Lastly, a new emphasis on preventive care and a healthy lifestyle through programs such as “Lighten Up Brooklyn” and “Take Your Man to the Doctor” should provide new opportunities to reach out to our communities and make Brooklyn a better and healthier place.

HOUSING

Even with programs like the City’s Housing Marketplace Plan and the Borough President’s tireless efforts on behalf of affordable housing, there remains a critical need for continued affordable housing, expanded housing stock and increased quality of life in public housing. The Borough President has been at the forefront of housing reform and advocacy. He led efforts in implementing creative policies and partnerships between private developers and government agencies that use re-zoning, tax breaks and investment to increase housing opportunities throughout the borough. He will continue to pursue a policy against landlord harassment and will push for better governmental oversight of housing and rent regulation. Community and individual tenant involvement is critical in making our voices heard, and the Borough President will continue to facilitate tenant education, tenant protection and community-led legislative efforts to increase the number of available affordable housing. Private sector partnerships and individual ownership are critical for the creation of new housing and the Borough President will look to maintain such processes transparent and make sure they benefit all stakeholders. Creation of new housing is not enough for our residents. The Borough President will advocate increase funding for improvements and renovations in public housing in order to increase quality of life for all residents while retaining affordability. Housing is the foundation for individuals and families. It is integral for our communities and our growth that Brooklyn has an affordable, comfortable and safe nest for all Brooklynites.

PARKS & RECREATION

Brooklyn’s parks and green spaces are more than meeting places; they are community-creating destinations that serve as the lifeblood of the borough. The Borough President seeks to use parks as a platform for development, entertainment, tourism and community building. The Borough President’s efforts will culminate in the restoration of Asser Levy Park to serve as a gateway to Coney Island, the creation of Brooklyn Bridge Park and the continued role of Prospect Park as an oasis of green in Brooklyn. The Borough President will advocate for expanded funds to these parks as well as for other green spaces. Additionally, he will work to increase the availability of other park amenities and services, such as barbeques, ball fields and community pools. Creating spaces for our environment and our communities is a top priority in Brooklyn.

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PUBLIC SAFETY & CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Making Brooklyn safer requires cooperation between law enforcement agencies, community members, individuals and, above all, trust amongst these groups. Public safety is a key component of an increased quality of life. We must reverse cycles of violence in all communities and spur on educational and technical development for youths in these areas, specifically in attacking the gang problem head-on and preventing youths from entering them. The Borough President supports a close working relationship with the NYPD with the goal of keeping the public safe and building trust and confidence in the force through training that makes officers sensitive to community differences and needs. Law enforcement should be integrated into our communities, making their presence felt in a positive way through outreach efforts and partnerships with community and tenant groups. The Borough President will also continue to work with the District Attorney's Office to encourage alternatives to incarceration and higher community involvement while working with other governmental agencies like the Department of Probation to educate and provide opportunities for recently released individuals. Last but not least, the Borough President will strengthen programs that empower and protect all members of our community, including victims of crime and individuals with no access to legal representation.

TRANSPORTATION & TRANSIT

As Brooklyn grows, so do our transportation needs. The current situation is unsustainable and drastic measures need to be taken. The Borough President recognizes the necessity to improve the MTA's finances in order to sustain current service levels and expand it in key areas of Brooklyn. Recent cuts affecting the elderly, those with disabilities and students are unacceptable. The Borough President will continue to propose and advocate for creative proposals, including MTA asset consolidation and federal aid, as ways to improve the current situation. Additionally, the Borough President seeks to improve and maintain our current road network while expanding services to all corners of our community. Aside from advocacy and interaction with the Department of Transportation to improve our road network, the Borough President will advocate for the expansion of 4th Avenue as a new Brooklyn Boulevard and the renovation of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway as two important steps that Brooklyn needs to take to enhance its transportation needs. Additionally, the expansion of bike lanes can be a positive initiative, reducing car volume and providing an important recreational alternative, but it is imperative that such an expansion take into account community needs and concerns. The Borough President feels that a truly enhanced transportation system must explore old and new travel vehicles, such as trolleys and ferries that will unclog our current system and reach areas of the borough in dire need of transportation alternatives. In the coming decades, such a plan will be able to provide Brooklyn with the alternatives and choice that will reduce congestion, be environmentally friendly and better serve its residents.

ARTS AND CULTURE

The Brooklyn arts community has always been at the heart and soul of the borough, invaluable in impacting economic, educational and community development. From our world class institutions and museums to the individual artists and cultural organizations, arts and culture have continuously served Brooklyn in a number of ways. The arts serve as a major economic engine, providing thousands of jobs and attracting tourists. Brooklyn arts organizations provide arts education in schools across the borough, both as part of the school curriculum and in award-winning after-school programs. Furthermore, cultural groups are a focal point in our communities and neighborhoods, with many organizations serving as community centers where residents come together to enjoy music, dance, theatre and the visual arts.

ISSUE 1: BROOKLYN'S VISIBILITY AS A BOROUGH OF THE ARTS

Brooklyn has and continues to be a visible name in the arts community. Art attracts visitors and fuels Brooklyn's economy and vibrancy. The Borough President plays an active role in fomenting arts, by working with arts and cultural organizations, creating outreach and supporting the Brooklyn culture and identity that draws artists and creators. Events, such as the Brooklyn Book Festival, also play a key role in drawing both outsiders and locals. It has grown from a local event with 10,000 visitors in 2006 to a national festival with more than 30,000 attendees in 2009.

Goal: Make Brooklyn the Arts Destination and Cultural Capital of the Country

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to develop the Brooklyn Book Festival into a major international book festival.*
The goal of the festival is to continue to be a multi-day event that will attract visitors from all over the world, providing support to the Brooklyn literary community and directly creating economic benefits for Brooklyn's tourism industry.
- *Continue to develop the SmART Brooklyn Gallery Hop as a platform to support Brooklyn's art galleries and visual arts community.* By bringing together for-profit and not-for-profit galleries, the "Hop" brings attention to Brooklyn's many art districts. SmART successfully attracts domestic and international visitors who enjoy the opportunities to have guided tours of the visual arts community, generating revenue for Brooklyn's economy and expanding the pool of future visitors.
- *Encourage the development of consortia and public-private partnerships among Brooklyn art groups and cultural communities for event development, support and financing.* These initiatives will attract more visitors to Brooklyn, give broad exposure to the arts community in the borough and provide easy access to cultural experiences for our residents.
 - The Borough President's Office would serve at the center of a coalition of arts stakeholders, holding planned meetings and providing staff assistance in developing these new arts initiatives.

Arts and Culture

- *Support the marketing efforts of individual organizations as well as consortia to increase visibility of Brooklyn's arts community.* Marketing efforts in conjunction with the Brooklyn Tourism Center both online and in print will be integral to this process.
- *Promote Brooklyn-based arts organizations and festivals through various online social media platforms, including Facebook and Twitter as well as the blogosphere.*
- *Highlight the unique fashion design culture in Brooklyn and work to expand the Brooklyn brand.*
- *Facilitate the growth of the film sector in Brooklyn by promoting event such as the Brooklyn International Film Festival, Williamsburg International Film Festival and Rooftop Films as well as the development of Brooklyn as a major film production location.*
- *Continue to utilize the Arts Calendar on visitbrooklyn.org to make visitors and residents aware of events in the arts and cultural communities.*

ISSUE 2: SUSTAINING AND EXPANDING BROOKLYN'S CULTURAL COMMUNITY

Arts and culture must permeate to all communities in Brooklyn. Although attracting new artists and creators is the key to continue the expansion of the arts in Brooklyn, there is also room for growth within our communities and population. Identifying cultural partners in underserved communities and spearheading efforts to tap into Brooklyn's arts potential is essential for this growth. Lack of funding for the arts and for art development impairs Brooklyn's creative community. Partnerships with private sector actors, as has occurred with Target, the Arts Council and the Weeksville Heritage Center in Eastern Brooklyn, are accomplishments that should serve as a model to embed and expand arts in our communities.

Nonetheless, we have had immeasurable successes in providing the arts and cultural communities to impact outlying communities. The Borough President partnered with a number of organizations, including the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership and various City agencies to develop a new home for the Brooklyn BRIC Arts & Media, a non-profit arts organization that has been enriching Brooklyn's arts community since 1979. This new BRIC House, located at Fulton Street and Rockwell Place, will provide a multidisciplinary home for the arts with a welcoming lobby, state-of-the-art TV studio, studio/artist workspace, art galleries and performance facilities. BRIC House will also house Urban Glass, a glassblowing collective that provides the community with classes and knowledge about this form of art. BRIC House will help anchor the planned "BAM Cultural District," which would include the Brooklyn Academy of Arts and other arts institutions, such as the Theatre for a New Audience, a renowned Shakespeare theatre company.

Goal: Nurture and Support Brooklyn's Organizations with a Record of Public Service

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to support Brooklyn art institutions and their work.* Organizations like St. Ann's Warehouse and Issue Project Room attract world-renowned performances and productions, providing Brooklyn audiences with exceptional theater. The venues maintained by these groups and supported by the Borough President will continue to dazzle audiences and improve the cultural fabric of Brooklyn.

Arts and Culture

- *Work with organizations that are expanding their public service to and in Brooklyn and provide staff support, board of directors participation and guidance during this period of growth.* Particular attention will be given to underserved communities and organizations that provide new initiatives for Brooklyn.
- *Call for a fair and continued portion of funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs for Brooklyn.* The Department's \$1 billion capital budget for the next five years can be spent to fund cultural organizations that, in return, offer cultural services to NYC residents. It can also go toward subsidies to city-owned cultural institutions as well as spending for construction and renovation at authorized institutions.
- *Secure funding from the New York State Council on the Arts as well as the National Endowment of the Arts.* Although the City has a robust and healthy arts program, Brooklyn should not be overlooked when it comes to other sources of government funding.
- *Work with artists in finding arts endowment funds and potential private donors. Such funds can help Brooklyn artists develop their work.* Organizations such as the Public Art Fund work with both emerging and established artists to present exhibitions in the City's public spaces. Such organizations assist artists and help contribute to public exposure to arts.
- *Work with organizations such as the Brooklyn Community Foundation and the Brooklyn Arts Council to obtain private funds and create private partnerships in the arts.*
- *Create a board development plan to assist small- and mid-sized Brooklyn cultural organizations in identifying board members.* Partnering with organizations in board development addresses one of the main needs of Brooklyn organizations
- *Serve as a clearinghouse for information regarding space issues, technical assistance, government grant programs and other areas of concern for nonprofit arts organizations.*
- *Establish mentoring programs between large, established arts organizations and smaller, emerging ones.* This will help organizations gain expertise in areas of finance, development, marketing and board development, as well as create cooperation and co-development.
- *Facilitate partnerships between artists, as well as smaller arts organizations, in the model of the Heart of Brooklyn consortium, to increase their visibility and provide them with needed publicity.*

Goal: Bring New Arts Organizations to Brooklyn

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Serve as the first point of entry and assistance for organizations seeking to move to Brooklyn.*
- *Provide guidance and direction for newcomers in terms of relocation, community contact and partners, and other assistance.*
- *Work with Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation and Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce to help integrate new organizations into the community.*

Goal: Ensure all Brooklyn Communities have Access to the Arts

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to actively support and work with organizations located in underserved communities to help develop their programming and outreach.*
 - The Borough President will target areas in need and address their unique situation in order to develop viable solutions.
- *Direct capital funding to expanding cultural institutions to ensure that culture grows in all Brooklyn communities.* Funding stability is essential in our support for community-based, quality cultural organizations. These organizations in turn grow and provide arts directly in the community as well as serving as a community building center.

Goal: Increase Access to Arts Education in Schools

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Ensure that all schools in Brooklyn are participating in the Department of Education's ArtsCount program.*
 - *ArtsCount* is a program operated by the Office of the Arts and Special Projects (OASP) that seeks to employ an arts education program in order to increase student access to education in the arts.

ISSUE 3: MAINTAINING BROOKLYN AS A HOME FOR ARTISTS

Brooklyn continues to be a mecca for cultural creators who come to the borough to find affordable residential and work space. However, escalating real estate costs force them out of the very communities in which they settled. Awareness efforts, including the New York Foundation for the Arts housing hotline, are important resources in helping artists find the space they need.

Goal: Create Short- and Long-Term Solutions to the Space Needs of Artists in Brooklyn

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Identify and direct support to organizations that are working towards long-term solutions for affordable workspace for artists.*
- *Convene cultural creators and organizations to address the issue of long-term affordable arts space in Brooklyn.* Creating an ongoing coalition that can plan and address these challenges can provide an important voice for artists.
- *Research and apply for federal grants to develop a comprehensive community arts center within Brooklyn which would include housing.*
- *Utilize the real estate resources and services of the Brooklyn Arts Council.*
 - Identifying organizations based on need and recommending them for membership will expand the Council's base and aid to the arts community.

Arts and Culture

- *Make cultural creators aware of the housing hotline operated by the New York Foundation for the Arts.*
- *Connect artists with organizations such as Fractured Atlas in order to help them obtain much needed services and advocacy.*

CONSTITUENT SERVICES

The first priority of the Brooklyn Borough President is to listen to the concerns and issues affecting Brooklynites and to serve as an ombudsman in assisting Brooklynites with City government. The Borough President provides a number of ways to facilitate outreach and communication lines with all of Brooklyn's communities in order to listen to their concerns, address issues and empower them with tools to seek redress from both government and private parties. Important avenues of communication and constituent services are Community Boards, local organizations and the Community Service Center (CSC).

In 1975 the City Charter was modified transforming what were the New York City Community Planning Boards into 59 Community Boards, 18 of which are in Brooklyn. Community Boards are an essential resource in giving a voice and a helping hand. A Community Board acts as its own agency, with its 50 members working on behalf of its community district. Its leadership consists of an executive board, chairperson and district manager. The Borough President, after receiving recommendations from corresponding City Council members, appoints the 50 members of the Community Boards with half of the Board's seats up for reappointment biannually. Community Boards also act in an advisory capacity on land use projects, budgetary matters, and other issues affecting an individual community. Additionally, the 18 Community Board chairs, along with City Council members and the Borough President, serve on the Borough Board. The Borough Board meets every month to share information and vote on city property matters as mandated by the New York City Charter. Most importantly, the Community Boards are the first line of defense for a community problem, providing a unique and unmatched public resource.

Other important resources for Brooklyn communities are block and civic associations. In 2002, the Borough President established the Federation of Block Associations to initiate and encourage collaboration among the many block and civic associations in Brooklyn. This collaboration allows block and civil associations to better voice local concerns and gain access to services. Other services such as 311 and the CSC are also useful tools for Brooklyn residents. The CSC is a very vital function of the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President. The CSC Unit provides constituents with essential services, allowing them to request assistance, file complaints, ask questions or seek information on various issues via walk-in, emails, letters and telephone calls. By contacting the CSC, constituents receive more personable and hands-on attention to their cases.

The Borough President wants the people of Brooklyn to know that these resources are available to them and that their community members are there to help.

ISSUE 1: COMMUNITY BOARDS

The role of the Borough President, in relation to the Community Boards, has been one of support and service. Each Community Board has a liaison on the Borough President's staff that provides advice, resource and communication. Additionally, our office holds a monthly meeting of the 18 district managers and representatives from city agencies to discuss agency issues and

Constituent Services

Community Board concerns. The Borough President's Office of Human Resources provides a great deal of service to the 18 Brooklyn Community Boards and provides resources and information for Board improvement.

Community Boards must be able to produce tangible results for their districts. These results can most often be measured in the services and funding provided by the City. Community Boards seek out capital funding by submitting budget priority lists to the Mayor's office and through proposals for capital funding allocations to the Borough President. The Borough President will continue to listen and support Community Board requests to improve their communities. This interaction is the way that Brooklyn communities are rewarded with what they deserve in attention and resources. A focus on efficient resource management, outreach to all communities and effective advocacy for all groups will allow Community Boards to empower citizens and increase their quality of life.

Goal: Community Board Membership that Reflects Brooklyn's Diversity

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Institute an outreach campaign to diversify Community Board membership.* Community Boards have many responsibilities, but the most important job they have is to represent their neighborhood as effectively and comprehensively as possible. A truly representative Board allows this to happen.
- *Work to make the work of Community Boards and membership criteria readily available so that interested community members can get involved.*

Goal: More Effective Community Boards

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Work to achieve a City Charter revision that will include district managers from each Community Board to serve on the Borough Service Cabinet.*
 - The Borough President believes that Community Boards have a unique perspective on their neighborhoods and would be an important voice for the people of Brooklyn regarding agency service issues.
- *Serve as ombudsman to City agencies and service-providing organizations.*
- *Help to ensure that Community Boards comply with City Charter mandates and support the Boards with technical assistance.*
- *In the event that another City Charter Revision Commission is called, advocate for Community Boards to receive necessary resources.* The Borough President proposed to the 2010 Charter Revision Commission that Community Boards receive a baseline budget that would be calculated as a percentage of the City Council's budget.

Goal: Community Boards & Commitment to Higher Service Quality

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to work closely with elected officials and Community Boards to maximize resource allocation to the borough.*
- *Continue his commitment to fairly distributing money throughout all of Brooklyn.*
- *Work with Community Board chairs to obtain appropriate funding provisions.*
- *Coordinate and collaborate with residents and Community Boards on community district and borough-wide issues and problems.*
- *Promote the Community Boards as an invaluable resource for the public.*
- *Continue to host the monthly Charter-mandated Borough Service Cabinet. This meeting, attended by Brooklyn’s district managers and City agency officials, provides a forum for City agency and Community Board collaboration and discussion.*

ISSUE 2: COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Empowering communities not only allows Brooklynites to have more avenues to communicate their concerns, but also allows the Borough President to better serve all communities. The Borough President’s Office holds an annual Assembly of Federation of Block Associations to provide a forum for citizens to meet their representatives, various agencies, block and civic associations, faith-based organizations and other community groups to discuss issues specific to their community. Various agencies attend the Assembly to provide information, as well as to address any issues or concerns residents might have. The Borough President also sets aside \$10,000 for the first fifty block associations to request funding for block parties throughout the summer. This has become a special tradition for neighborhoods throughout Brooklyn which would otherwise lack the proper funding for such community building events.

Goal: Empower Residents through Block Associations

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to work with and support the Federation of Block Associations.*
- *Coordinate action between Block Associations, civic groups, Community Boards and Borough Hall.*

Goal: Quality of Life Improvement through Neighborhood-Based Efforts

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Serve as a hub for community and government information and data.*
- *Develop and use strong working relationships with community-based organizations.*
- *Help create neighborhood profiles of each community.*

Constituent Services

- *Help community-based organizations and community development efforts to identify and obtain government grants and programmatic assistance to support their work.*

ISSUE 3: IMPROVING CONSTITUENT RESPONSE TIME & QUALITY OF LIFE

The ability to reach City service agencies and private service providers is a matter of concern for individuals throughout the borough. The Borough President seeks to facilitate such communication through increased funding, further communication with agencies and by truly listening to constituent issues through the CSC. The CSC's Community Assistance Specialists make the necessary contacts to various city, state and federal agencies, as well as private companies to resolve issues and provide services to all who need assistance.

Goal: Improve CSC Response Time to Citizens' Concerns

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Develop closer working relationships with city, state and federal agencies to provide responsive and effective services.*
- *Continue to communicate and schedule meetings with agencies and service delivery providers in order to help improve the quality-of-life of Brooklyn.*
- *Host the monthly Borough Service Cabinet meetings to ensure full involvement and commitment by all of the agencies/companies responsible for service delivery in Brooklyn.*

Goal: Enhance Responses Complaints and Concerns About City Services

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to serve as an effective citizen liaison between citizens, City agencies and Community Boards.*
- *Work closely with City agencies and provide necessary information to Brooklyn residents.*
- *Continue to provide useful information to Brooklynites on housing, accessing City services, cultural events and attractions in Brooklyn on the Borough Hall website.*

ISSUE 4: DIVERSITY & EQUALITY

The Borough President, like all Brooklyn residents, takes pride in the unique diversity that Brooklyn has to offer. Accepting and learning from each other's differences is what makes Brooklyn such a wonderful community. Respecting these differences is essential in our growth.

Goal: Continue to Recognize and Celebrate Brooklyn's Diversity

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to support and celebrate the heritage, accomplishments and contributions of Brooklyn's many ethnic and cultural groups through various liaisons in our office.*

Constituent Services

- *Continue to participate in and host events like Caribbean Heritage Month and the Russian Heritage Festival.*

Goal: Equal Human Rights for all Brooklynites

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to advocate for enactment of comprehensive non-discriminatory legislation at all levels of government. The meaning of “family” has evolved over the past several years, and we will advocate for the legal definition of family to not be limited to blood and marital relationships in applicable situations.*
- *Continue to advocate for measures that encourage employers to extend benefits to domestic partners of employees.*
- *Continue to support measures giving LGBT victims of domestic violence access to service and protection in Family Court.*
- *Work to ensure that all Brooklynites who are victims of abuse and violence are given the same methods of obtaining safety and justice.*
- *Continue to advocate for legislation and policies that promote the dignity of all public school students by preventing harassment and discrimination based on actual or perceived orientation.*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The economic changes over the past few years have greatly transformed business and industry throughout the country. These effects have been felt no less profoundly here in Brooklyn. The economic downturn has been hard on businesses and individuals alike, but it also presents an interesting and exciting opportunity for future growth. As large corporations and small businesses consider their place in the changing economic environment, Brooklyn has presented itself as a leader in the new economy. This is evident by the borough's job growth in 2010, which outpaced the rest of the City. This growth is also a signal of Brooklyn's diverse economic sectors and efficient resource distribution, both of which allowed Brooklyn to quickly bounce back from the financial crisis.

One of the crowning achievements of Brooklyn's development has been the Atlantic Yards project. This project has not been solely about bringing Brooklyn a much deserved major league sports team, our future Brooklyn Nets. This project has always been about community building and economic development. Atlantic Yards has evolved into a state-of-the-art complex that will include the Barclays Center arena, a large retail presence, a seamless transit hub and most importantly housing, including over 2,500 affordable units. Atlantic Yards will not only provide a transformed transit and community hub combined with entertainment and cultural events, but most importantly it will provide long-term jobs and a clear vision of Brooklyn as a place for economic development and investment.

The success of Brooklyn's continuous innovation and development in areas like industry, tourism, retail and the arts serves as the basis for new opportunities. Preservation and strengthening of our small businesses and expansion and attraction of new and large business alike will create the employment opportunities our residents need. The Borough President believes Brooklyn to be an important commercial center and will promote the borough as a smart place to do business. Partnerships with the private sector and the characteristic hard work of our residents will allow Brooklyn to fulfill its economic potential.

ISSUE 1: CORPORATIONS & INDUSTRY

Reinventing manufacturing and partnering with new and innovative industries is essential to the revitalization of Brooklyn's economy. One bright spot of Brooklyn manufacturing has been the brewing industry. Until the middle of the twentieth century, Brooklyn was the center of beer brewing and distribution in the United States, with over one hundred breweries. However, the effects of Prohibition and changing tastes led to the decline of what was once a staple of Brooklyn commerce. Over the past several years, Brooklyn's brewing industry has resurged, with several breweries opening and operating successfully throughout the borough.

Other success stories include the development of Brooklyn as an artisanal food center, home to inventive and successful restaurants and specialty food stores. Likewise, the development of various digital design firms in DUMBO has created a new network for modern creative and artistic business. Brooklyn continues to be a desired location for film production, with Broadway

Economic Development

Stages and Steiner Studios providing ample studio space and resources, not to mention the very streets of Brooklyn serving as dramatic and realistic film locations.

Outside of manufacturing, large retail locations and mixed-space development have created jobs in both construction and in service industries. With the success of such stores as IKEA and Target, the Borough President will encourage the development of similar retail and big-box stores in areas that lack commercial opportunities. An example of the latter is the Gateway Estates in East New York, designed to provide affordable housing and over 600,000 square feet of retail space.

We want these businesses to continue to grow and serve as success stories and models for future Brooklyn businesses.

Goal: Attract Corporations and Industries to Develop in Brooklyn

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Advocate on behalf of Brooklyn as a vibrant manufacturing center to attract industrial prospects.* Brooklyn offers a unique combination of affordable space and a centralized location that would present a unique opportunity for any manufacturer. Brooklyn will benefit from the development of a manufacturing sector, and our office will work to promote the borough as an economical and smart place for industrial enterprises.
- *Advocate for the development and use of modern manufacturing concepts and encourage entrepreneurs to make Brooklyn their home.* Brooklyn is in a position to be a leader in innovative craft and industry.
- *Support and encourage firms and businesses to attract a skilled workforce through innovative manufacturing.* The development of modern businesses will attract a skilled workforce and more service-centered jobs to the area, strengthening the local economy.
- *Promote the newly adopted Excelsior Jobs Program.* This plan replaces the Empire Zone plan that provided tax credits for job creation and retention. The Excelsior Jobs Program retains the same goals of helping industrial and manufacturing businesses receive tax credits. Targets for this program include the biotechnology, pharmaceuticals and clean energy industries, which would bring modern enterprises to Brooklyn.
 - Encouraging industries to implement the Excelsior Jobs Program in more economically disadvantaged neighborhoods to create needed jobs while providing attractive tax incentives to corporations.
- *Increase Brooklyn's competitiveness by highlighting its location, workforce and economic infrastructure.*

Goal: More Large Retail Stores in Brooklyn

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to work to attract big retailers to Brooklyn. This will create more jobs and provide needed shopping resources for many communities.* One such proposed store development is a

Economic Development

Costco to be built in East New York. The Borough President will continue to promote the development of similar projects.

- *Promote the development of mixed-use space.* This kind of development serves lower-income communities by providing housing, jobs and much needed retail stores while strengthening the neighborhood's economy. Gateway Estates in East New York, designed to provide affordable housing and over 600,000 square feet of retail space and large stores like Target, Home Depot and BJ's Wholesale Club provide an excellent model for future developments that promote that strengthen local communities.

ISSUE 2: BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

The foundation of Brooklyn's economy is its local shops and their shoppers. Encouraging Brooklyn shoppers to support Brooklyn businesses is the best economic stimulus one could ask for. With this in mind, the Borough President will continue to promote the "Shop Brooklyn" campaign and encourage participants to offer special "Brooklyn Bonuses" and other special promotions during the holiday shopping season and periodically throughout the year. Additionally, recent commercial developments have provided areas for local shops to start and grow and to serve as cornerstones of community development.

Promoting entrepreneurship and employment among all our diverse communities is one way to empower our citizens and create economic growth. In these areas, Brooklyn has seen quite a few success stories. Organizations such as the Brooklyn Flea have become local institutions. Brooklyn Industries started out as a small clothing line in Brooklyn, and because of local support, has expanded into a chain store throughout all of New York City.

Goal: Enhance and Promote Local Businesses

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Promote and support the emergence of cottage industries.* Such enterprises allow many people to be involved and provide a valuable marketplace for local artisans and craftsmen.
- *Encourage people to start their business in Brooklyn.* Brooklyn offers a start-up friendly environment with affordable space. The Borough President would like to see success stories like Brooklyn Industries that show how Brooklyn is the perfect place for entrepreneurs.
- *Continue the "Shop Brooklyn" campaign.* The "Shop Brooklyn" campaign creates awareness of local businesses by emphasizing the uniqueness of Brooklyn neighborhoods to both Brooklynites and tourists alike. It helps to increase foot traffic through the many shopping corridors of the borough, and the Borough President will continue to promote the program borough-wide.

Goal: Hiring Brooklynites for Local Businesses

The success of local-hiring practices in places like the Brooklyn Navy Yard shows how keeping jobs in Brooklyn promotes local pride and strengthens Brooklyn's financial system. Additionally, tapping into local resources allows individuals and businesses to coexist and build communities as well as reach optimal efficiency and potential.

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to encourage local hiring practices.* As new businesses find a home here and as established enterprises continue to grow, employers should look to local community members to build their workforce.
- *Work to inform consumers, manufacturers and employers about the benefits of hiring locally in Brooklyn.*
 - For example, Community Board 2 helps its community members throughout all stages of the job search process. Continuing to encourage and promote similar actions in existing industries, as well as in emerging industrial sectors as in East New York and Red Hook, serves this purpose
- *Continue to promote fair labor practices.* Hiring Brooklynites for local jobs is only a benefit to the borough if base standards are being met.
- *Work to make Brooklynites more attractive workers to meet the challenges of the new economy.*

Goal: More Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses and Employees

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Encourage the development of minority- and women-owned business enterprises throughout Brooklyn.* The Borough President wants Brooklyn businesses to be representative of the local community and to provide a diverse perspective.
- *Promote the hiring of women and minorities by Brooklyn employers, again emphasizing the importance of empowerment and diversity.*

ISSUE 3: BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (BIDs)

BIDs are a vital part of neighborhoods through Brooklyn, providing security, sanitation and marketing, as well as helping to manage large capital projects. BIDs also help promote the identity and awareness of the many retail corridors in our borough. “Mom and pop” stores are the lifeblood of Brooklyn and help create the unique characteristics of each neighborhood while also helping it to grow.

Goal: Productive Involvement and Coordination between the BIDs

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to coordinate all the BIDs in Brooklyn to act cohesively.* The Borough President supports the BIDs by providing each with a liaison, who monitors issues each district may have.
- *Keep BIDs informed so that they remain aware of issues borough-wide.*
- *Continue to provide the necessary guidance and assistance to the BIDs to better serve each community and Brooklyn as a whole.*

ISSUE 4: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

In the past, Brooklyn was confronted by environmental problems from its heavy industrial past. However today, being green also gives us an opportunity for economic growth. Protecting our environment is an issue of safety, protection of resources and economic vitality. Brooklyn is a major center for green technology development. A new solar panel design and engineering firm is moving to Brooklyn and will hopefully attract more like-minded businesses. The Borough President wants to promote Brooklyn as a place that fosters environmental responsibility and innovative green technology and businesses.

Goal: Increase and Promote the Development and Use of Green Technology

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Promote the use of green technology in new industries.* In the effort to attract large corporations to Brooklyn and encourage small businesses to open here, the Borough President wants to simultaneously endorse environmentally safe practices and technologies. This in turn will create more service sector jobs and put more money back into our local economy.
- *Attract companies who have a “green” philosophy.* To further influence companies and small businesses to adopt more environmentally friendly techniques, the Borough President will welcome to Brooklyn those companies that already practice green methods.

Goal: Efficiency in Development

A key to development is improving the environment and communities around it. Avoiding noise pollution and adverse effects on communities is essential for economic development.

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Advocate for efficient and non-disruptive development projects that consider neighborhoods and communities.*
- *Work with the Borough Service Board to avoid adverse impacts on communities.*
- *Improve neighborhood notifications and work with Community Boards in project approvals.*

ISSUE 5: SPECIAL NEEDS COMMUNITIES

Brooklyn has the largest population of elderly and people with disabilities in New York City. The Mayor, sparked by the World Health Organization, has created over 59 initiatives to make New York City “age-friendly.” The increase in the older adult population will be a bigger issue in the years to come and it is important to make sure our elderly citizens remain active and feel at home in their communities.

Goal: Involve the Elderly in Brooklyn’s Economy

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Educate businesses on the advantages of more experienced employees.*
- *Support pilot programs to make neighborhoods more “age friendly.”* One such program in Community Districts 2 & 6 is working to make neighborhoods more livable for older adults by providing them with amenities such as better curb cuts, wider aisles and sidewalks and more places to rest.
- *Advocate for businesses to be more “age friendly”.* Accommodations for the elderly are inexpensive and will attract a broader clientele. Educating and rewarding businesses that become “age friendly” not only helps our elders but helps the economy.
- *Advocate for more funds to Brooklyn from the “Older Americans Act.”*
- *Support the creation of Senior Community Centers and organizations.*

Goal: Improve Access to Businesses for the Disabled

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Educate businesses on how to make their stores more accessible to people with disabilities.*
 - Making businesses aware that “disability access” can be obtained at low costs.
 - Raising awareness of the need of Service Animals.
 - Developing programs to help those with disabilities, such as “shopper’s assistants.”
- *Work with Community Boards in creating “Disabled Advisory Committees.”* Such committees can advise the Borough President on disabilities-related issues and disseminate relevant information locally.

ISSUE 6: BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS & COMPETIVENESS

Goal: Transparency in Business

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Push for more information sharing to better serve all parties involved in business development in order to promote efficiency.* Brooklyn has a lot to offer both large corporations and “mom and pop shops” alike, and the Borough President will work to make Brooklyn known as an economical, savvy and fair place to do business.

Economic Development

- *Advocate for more entrepreneur and people friendly business transactions.* Making bureaucracies more accessible will provide Brooklyn with a competitive edge in attracting new businesses.

ISSUE 7: TOURISM

Brooklyn is New York's most populated borough and has cultural attractions, activities and sights deserving of tourism promotion and economic benefits. Improving Brooklyn's tourism infrastructure and making it a more comprehensible and viable tourist destination will enhance the borough's finances, economy and provide a showcase for our communities. Tourism is currently the fifth largest economic industry in New York City. In 2010, New York City welcomed more than 48.7 million visitors, whose spending totaled \$31 billion.

During the past six years, tourism in Brooklyn has taken off through a number of initiatives including: opening the Brooklyn Tourism Visitors Center (first one outside Manhattan), which has welcomed people from over 58 countries and 48 states; "tourism pushcarts" as a seasonal outreach platform; the creation of an award-winning website that includes materials in six languages; attracting several hundred thousands of dollars in valued media coverage; and the continued development of the Brooklyn brand, with new hotel development and business from dining, shopping and the arts. This success needs to serve as a springboard for continued development in Brooklyn tourism.

Goal: Increase Brooklyn's Share of, and Competitiveness in, the NYC Tourism Market

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to promote Brooklyn as a major tourist destination.*
 - Increasing the number of both domestic and international visitors.
 - Highlighting Brooklyn's unique, hip and authentic institutions, attractions, festivals, neighborhoods and events.
- *Cultivate promotional press and reviews for Brooklyn in international and national magazines.*
- *Continue to manage the Brooklyn brand with destination campaigns like Dine in Brooklyn, SmART Gallery Hop and the Brooklyn Book Festival.*
- *Manage and expand on the Brooklyn Tourism website, www.visitbrooklyn.org.*
- *Maintain the Brooklyn Tourism Visitors Center, the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal Greeting Center and the Atlantic Terminal as key welcoming points for tourists with information about Brooklyn attractions, festivals and special events.*
- *Continue to use seasonal tourism pushcarts as a way to inform tourists of Brooklyn attractions, festivals and special events.*
- *Advocate for better tourism infrastructure to make Brooklyn more "tourist-friendly."*
- *Strategically work with NYC & Co., the City's official tourism and marketing agency, to increase market share of tourism coming to Brooklyn.*
- *Increase partnerships between the private sector and the Brooklyn Tourism Board.*

Economic Development

- *Continue to work with all tourism stakeholders to create new Brooklyn products and cross promotions.*
- *Take advantage of Brooklyn's water resources and beaches.*
 - Protecting Brooklyn's shores not only benefits our environment but has high tourism industry potential.

Goal: Make Brooklyn Home to Trade Shows, Conferences & Conventions

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Work to tap the conference market in order to draw more conference business in Brooklyn.*
- *Use Brooklyn's location and proximity to Manhattan and to the City's airports to pursue convention business and continue to promote Brooklyn as a major tourist destination.*
 - Highlighting the number of venues and state of the art hotels located in Brooklyn.

EDUCATION & LIBRARIES

The Borough President strongly believes that all children should have high quality learning opportunities that meet their needs. In order to accomplish this goal, a combination of parental and community involvement along with system improvement is necessary to give our children the tools necessary for academic achievement and to compete in today's world. The Borough President is committed to guaranteeing more opportunities for meaningful parent and community involvement at every level of the system. As he often says, "While I am not a parent myself, I do feel as though I have 300,000 children because all of Brooklyn's children are my children. And every single day I will fight to make sure Brooklyn gets its fair share!" He is committed to empowering parents and community leaders to fulfill their rights and responsibilities and participate effectively in efforts to improve the educational experiences of their children.

The Borough President has facilitated community-wide networks to support parents and schools and develop the most efficient, effective and diverse solutions to educational issues. This vision has four essential elements: 1) a strong community network with a shared understanding of educational issues, 2) transparency that provides both clear and unbiased information, 3) analysis of program efficiency and viability and 4) increased parental involvement.

The Borough President feels that we need an education system that motivates students, emphasizes equal opportunity to all children and promotes full involvement and participation of all key constituencies—parents, teachers, local leaders, community groups and students. A custom-tailored system with support from all levels will offer our children the strongest foundation for educational success and eventually their future.

Keeping communities involved has been essential in the Borough President's education accomplishments. In 2010, The Office of the Brooklyn Borough President, along with the United Federation of Teachers, NAACP and many other elected City officials, parents and community members, successfully filed a lawsuit charging city officials with failing to comply with mayoral control laws requiring a significant public role in school-closing decisions and concluded in a ruling that "meaningful community involvement" is necessary in school closings. The Borough President also led the charge in preventing the closing of Long Island College Hospital's school-based health clinics.

The Borough President will continue to make Borough Hall available for educational events, including teacher professional development workshops, DOE family advocacy activities, New School Fairs and the annual Borough Hall College Fair. He will continue to work closely with parents, schools, Brooklyn City Council Members, New York and United States legislators, community groups and businesses to build and mobilize a strong community network to create and implement initiatives that ensure the success of all children.

Education and Libraries

NYC/Brooklyn School Statistics

Serving 1,029,459 students and employing 85,000 teachers, New York City has the largest public education system in the nation. The New York City Department of Education (DOE) operates over 1,533 schools that serve children from pre-school through high school, offering an array of special education and related services. These include: speech, occupational or physical therapy; paraprofessional support; assistive technology; and behavior intervention and modifications. The DOE's annual budget for the 2009-10 school year is \$21.9 billion which provides an average annual funding per student of \$17,929 (general education funding is \$14,641; special education funding is \$48,641).

Brooklyn represents 31 percent of the New York City Schools system, with a current total of 501 public schools, 39 charter schools and 371 private schools. There are 313,000 students in public schools in Brooklyn, of which 79.8 percent (268,000) are entitled to free and reduced price lunch. The Brooklyn students' ethnic breakdown is: 44 percent Black, 27 percent Hispanic, 15 percent White and 13 percent Asian. The high school graduation rate for high schools across Brooklyn is 59 percent.

Educational Structure

There have been three citywide major re-organizations of school management since 2002. These shifts have affected every organizational aspect of the Department of Education and changed the rights, duties and responsibilities for the Department of Education personnel, often leading to confusion and alienation among parents and community members.

The first re-organization, from 2003 to 2007, dismantled the 32 community school district offices and in their place created 10 administrative regions. This centralized the administration of schools but reduced community and parental access. The second re-organization, from 2007 to 2010, removed regions and gave principals more authority over budgets, hiring and curriculum, in exchange for demonstrating steady and marked improvement in student performance. To achieve these goals, principals were offered management and expert help, provided by 11 School-Support Organizations (specialized Department of Education offices, universities and non-profit organizations). Operations, such as food, transportation and supplies, were to be handled by borough-wide Integrated Service Centers.

The third shift in management structure, introduced at the beginning of 2010, collapsed the School-Support Organizations and Integrated Service Centers into Children First Networks. There are 60 networks, each with roughly 25 schools, chosen by the schools to provide similar support services, in many cases across boroughs and neighborhood lines. Every school pays about \$40,000 a year to the network for whatever services it offers. Six "cluster leaders" manage these networks. The shift to giving principals more management discretion has continued and has been accompanied by new accountability demands coming directly from the DOE.

All of these shifting changes have not replaced the critical need for a well organized and thoughtful set of sustainable policies that addresses parental confusion while seeking help and

contact, is fully supported by all constituencies and, most importantly, provides children the tools they need to succeed.

ISSUE 1: EDUCATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Our children require a welcoming and dynamic didactic environment. Overcrowding, poor maintenance and lack of technology hinders educational development and increases costs in the long term. The Borough President has been a key advocate in bringing technology into the classroom so that our students can compete in the information age. In order to reach this goal, the Borough President is dedicated to working to provide our students with the best environment for learning. He has worked to allocate funds for computers and other classroom technologies that will prepare our youths for their future.

Goal: Improve Infrastructure and Technology in our Schools

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Advocate for more capital funding to improve maintenance in our schools. Additionally, a far sighted maintenance approach will improve facilities and reduce costs.*
- *Advocate for increased funding for technology programs.*

ISSUE 2: COMMUNITY NETWORKS

Advocacy for parental and community involvement at every level of the system is the key to the Borough President's ongoing efforts. The Borough President strongly believes that we must empower Community Education Councils (CECs) and give "district offices" back to the communities. Community Education Councils are selected for two-year terms by the Parent Associations or Parent Teacher Associations (PA/PTAs) of the schools in their district. While different CECs may have different priorities, they share the same set of responsibilities established by state law and implemented through regulations of the Chancellor. The Borough President also created the Brooklyn Education Advisory Board, consisting of 24 Borough President appointees to the Community Education Councils. This Board meets monthly to discuss issues and map out strategies to improve education in Brooklyn.

Goal: Establishing Schools as Community Learning Centers

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Advocate for schools as Community Learning Centers.* These schools will provide safe and productive activities within and outside the school day. Children need opportunities for learning and enrichment in a safe environment and working parents want more access to extended learning opportunities.
 - Before- and after-school programs help kids stay on the right track and provide parents and the community with access to valuable educational resources. Additionally, it makes

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use of one of the community's largest and most underutilized capital investments—the school building—in a creative and positive way.

- The Centers (schools) will be open early (7:00am) and remain open late (until 9:00pm). They will offer afternoon, early evening and summer classes for children and adults. Every program will offer opportunities for participant skill building and mastery, with a broad array of enrichment opportunities such as arts, homework help and sports and recreation.

Goal: Strengthen Community Education Councils

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Provide timely information to CECs.*
- *Provide opportunities for each District's CEC to hold education forums at Borough Hall.*
- *Hold an annual Education Summit for CECs across Brooklyn.*

ISSUE 3: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TRANSPARENCY & OVERSIGHT

The City must make a stronger investment in children's welfare—adequate healthcare, house and food security—so that children can come to school each ready to learn. Schools must be equitably funded and we must provide high-quality, effective and well-trained teachers in every community. We must envision a system of reform that is driven by capacity-building of the workforce and strategic investments. This change begins with Department of Education accountability and advocacy for increased funding for our schools.

One of the key accomplishments in the Borough President's educational policy has been the appointment of Mr. Gbubemi Okotieuro to the Panel for Educational Policy. Mr. Okotieuro regularly introduces solutions to pressing problems and speaks out on issues concerning the parents and communities of Brooklyn. When the City quietly announced that it would ask the Panel to approve a resolution giving the city "blanket approval" to enter into all of the contracts negotiated like other City agencies, Mr. Okotieuro, the Borough President and involved parents raised a very loud objection concluding with the City quietly removing the resolution for consideration.

Goal: Citywide Accountability

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Support making the DOE a legal mayoral agency.* This would provide legal oversight from the City Council and hold the Mayor accountable in a timelier fashion. In addition, the City Comptroller would have legal oversight over the education budget and provide reporting on an ongoing basis.

ISSUE 4: PROGRAM ANALYSIS & DATA

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By effectively improving the public's understanding of school quality, families can make more accurate decisions about their children's education. The only way the public will know if education reforms are both stable and sustainable is through information provided by a respected, independent source. Additionally, data must be presented to parents in a less confusing way in order to more effectively improve the public's understanding of school quality.

Clear public access to understandable information regarding our children's education, a diverse community network with a wide array of local stakeholders to address important issues, and leaders who respond to those concerns will help deliver the education our children will need to thrive in next century.

Goal: Publicly Accessible Data and Research

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Support establishing an Independent Education Office (IEO) within the Independent Budget Office.* Such office can deliver true accountability and help attain the goal of giving decision-makers at the school, city and state levels the information they need to transform the City's schools.
 - The IEO will provide independent, dispassionate and continuous reporting and analyses on a wide range of pre K-12 education topics. It will also provide nonpartisan research on what programs are working or not working and why.
 - The IEO must have access to all DOE data. As New York City undergoes sweeping changes, the IEO will address the most pressing issues in New York today.
- *Support giving parents access to non-biased, informational and focused reporting on issues that affect their children, including statistics, program reports and updates on curriculum and organizational changes.*

ISSUE 5: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The Borough President established the Brooklyn Parent Academy in 2007 to provide free workshops for parents around subjects parents themselves selected through a questionnaire. The topics included: helping your child with reading and math, recognizing gang violence, advocating for a child with special needs, money management and saving for college.

The Borough President has stressed the importance of parental involvement as the essential foundation of the educational network and an engaged community as its nourishment. We must give parents concrete information about teaching methods and curricula, involving them as listeners and teachers.

Goal: Parents as Real Partners with Meaningful Participation

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Work to expand the currently established Brooklyn Parent Academy to each of the 12 Brooklyn school districts.*

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- The Parent Academies will offer an array of courses based on the individual needs of parents in a community. Courses will include:
 - Early Childhood Parenting
 - Health and Wellness
 - Helping Your Child Learn
 - Financial Skills
 - Languages
 - Parenting Skills
 - Personal Growth
 - Information Technology
- Parent Academies will serve as neighborhood-based centers that offer a real understanding and knowledge of vital information to parents, such as:
 - The meaning of education terms
 - Obtaining access to school and student data
 - School procedures and guidelines
 - How to identify issues and develop strategies to address local issues
- *Work to create strong, stable partnerships in every community between parents, school personnel and community groups.*
- *Use his unique position to build bridges across the different sectors of the community to support education, help develop trust and a shared understanding around education issues, and forge coalitions to get the job done.*
- *Work directly with parents, community leaders, elected officials and others to focus on all previous goals.* Engaging the public is not a one-time event, but rather an ongoing challenge that will strengthen public education over time.

ISSUE 6: INNOVATION IN EDUCATION

The Borough President believes in providing children with an array of opportunities and support—because “kids succeed when we show them we believe in them.” Education is not a one-size-fits-all mold and all children deserve our best efforts to provide them with the individualized support that will best help them reach their full potential. The Borough President has been at the forefront of creative ideas in education and fully supports programs and initiatives that seek to improve our children’s education. He supported private-public partnerships that led to the creation of two new high schools: The School of Advertising and Media on Rockaway Parkway and The Academy of Global Finance in Central Brooklyn. He worked with the DOE to ensure that Brooklyn got a citywide program for our gifted and talented children, which resulted in the opening of the Brooklyn School of Inquiry. Lastly, the Borough President established an educational working group that brought together district and charter schools to discuss issues such as “space sharing” in extracurricular activities like sports and the arts. The positive outcome of the group led to proposals of extending such programs citywide.

The Borough President acknowledges several shortcomings in our educational system that can be addressed through appropriating the right amount of resources to close educational gaps, better utilize our resources and give children all they need to learn. We must dedicate monies to permanently fund full day pre-K to close the achievement gap that already exists when children enter kindergarten. Expanding summer school programs will not only provide students with more academic opportunities but will also provide a series of activities and involvement in the summer months. Lastly, our high schools will not improve until we dedicate ourselves to fixing our middle schools. Middle schools require fundamental changes regardless of funding.

Goal: Establish Full-Day, Full-Year Pre-K in Every School

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Work with other elected officials to assure that we invest substantial resources in four year-olds, to ensure they are prepared for primary school.*

Goal: Summer School

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Work to help fund summer programs.* These programs provide opportunities for academic activities to enhance students' skills and confidence, and also a variety of arts, recreation and literacy activities
- *Help provide a safe haven where our children are removed from violence, drugs and lack of supervision.* The most successful programs reinforce school-year learning and provide young people opportunities to learn and develop in an enriching environment.

Goal: Make Middle Schools the Highest Priority

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Actively support and work with key constituencies to ensure the key elements of middle school reform are enacted.* These elements include:
 - Improving the application process
 - Adjusting zoning regulations to assure access, equity and diversity
 - Establishing a Teacher License for Grades 6-8
 - Develop middle school leaders who will come from the ranks of teachers with the Middle School Teachers' License
 - Increase the number of Guidance Counselors and make the Guidance Counselor funding component permanent

ISSUE 7: EDUCATIONAL EQUALITY

The Borough President strongly believes that the basic goal of our public schools is to ensure that all children—regardless of race, ethnicity, income, native language, or geographic location—are afforded access to high-quality education. The Borough President has created the Children with Special Needs Working Group to focus on identifying the problems that arise with getting and continuing special education services.

Goal: Facilitate Education for Disabled Children

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Advocate to the DOE the need for barrier-free schools.*
- *Advocate for earlier testing of learning disabilities among children where appropriate.*
- *Work with the DOE to advocate for increase special education funding and staffing. The DOE must enhance the effectiveness of special education programs that allows for both inclusion and focused education.*

Everyone in Brooklyn has a stake in the success of students, a common vision, a sense of urgency and a strong commitment to tackling the critical challenges together. This involves listening as much as speaking, and understanding the perspectives and points of view of all.

Only through community efforts will we be finally be able to answer the basic question: How effectively are the schools and the district educating our children? With information, passion and organization in hand, we can build and sustain the best public schools in the nation.

LIBRARIES - ISSUE 1: PUBLIC LIBRARY ACCESSIBILITY & VITALITY

With 60 locations throughout the borough, the Brooklyn Public Library (“BPL”) is the fifth largest library system in the nation. It serves as a cornerstone of our cultural and educational community, for preserving and transmitting the knowledge, history and culture of our society and for promoting opportunities for learning, recreation and sharing of ideas. The BPL acts as a community center, safe haven, education and research facility, and cultural institution—all essential ingredients for a better, brighter Brooklyn.

Goal: Ensure that Brooklyn Public Library Remains Accessible to All

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to support and encourage all members of Brooklyn to demand that no cuts be made to BPL’s budget. Joined by the voices of the other NYC boroughs, we have already won important battles against budget cuts. When backed by many, the borough voice is strong and we must continue to remain steadfast in these demands.*
- *Continue to appoint motivated and accomplished individuals to serve on the BPL Board of Trustees. Leadership and dedication in the Board of Trustees is essential to the BPL’s continued success.*
- *Encourage the City to retain current service hours and, as funds permit, expand them. Six-day-a-week service hours should remain permanent at all BPL branches and the Central Library should continue to be open daily. Expansion of library service hours should become a priority when the City’s fiscal situation eases. Longer service hours at the Central Library are especially important, it is the system’s major reference repository and the location of a multilingual center, an education and job information center, and a multi-media center.*

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- *Reach out to the Brooklyn community and encourage all Brooklynites to donate their time and energy to the BPL.* Volunteering is not only a rewarding way to help others but also provides community building and personal growth opportunities.
- *Support BPL as it searches for a new executive director and fights to retain current and future employees.* The success of our library is dependent on its devoted and inspirational leaders and its capacity to support a well-rounded staff. We must ensure that BPL is led by strong, driven individuals who have the expertise to navigate us towards an inspired vision of BPL's future.

HEALTH

Improving healthcare in Brooklyn requires a comprehensive approach to a variety of issues that affect our community. Building off past accomplishments, the Borough President seeks to address a number of hurdles and issues that prevent Brooklynites from receiving the health care they deserve. The Borough President will advocate on behalf of Brooklyn's health and healthcare from the institutional level to the individual level and address healthcare issues in a comprehensive manner that considers to local needs.

ISSUE 1: BUILDING HEALTHCARE CAPACITY

The Borough President is committed to building healthcare capacity throughout the borough and making sure that healthcare institutions and community-based organizations receive adequate funding from city, state, and federal sources. During times of crisis or when a much-needed healthcare institution is threatened to be closed, the Borough President has been a leader in rallying support from other elected officials and community members. In 2007, Long Island College Hospital was suffering great financial hardship. Our office worked to facilitate the hospital's revival, and in 2009, Long Island College Hospital partnered with SUNY Downstate and was able to continue operating. The Borough President knows that the health of Brooklyn residents is essential to the state of our borough and will continue to work to keep Brooklyn's healthcare infrastructure intact.

Many institutions have had severe budget cuts and will only continue to experience financial setbacks in the current economic environment. Budget cuts proposed by the State government threaten to reduce millions of dollars in funding to networks throughout Brooklyn. We must be reminded that our hospitals are the centerpiece of a vast healthcare network that not only provides care but provides jobs and services to outlying communities. The Borough President has been involved in discussions with healthcare institutions regarding these cuts and supports these institutions in their fight to retain adequate funding.

Goal: Support Healthcare Institutions in Providing Optimum Care to Brooklynites

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Advocate for healthcare institutions so that they receive adequate funding to continue to provide necessary services.* Through such efforts, the Borough President will work to help healthcare systems remain viable and provide high quality care.
- *Continue to work with the initiatives like the Brooklyn Healthcare Improvement Project (BHIP).* The Borough President's office is a partner of BHIP, which aims to take a comprehensive view of health care in Brooklyn to assess a vision for health care in communities throughout Central and Northern Brooklyn. BHIP also studies issues involving emergency room use and many aspects of primary care. Along with these studies, the project aims for collective information sharing and updating that can be used to better understand various health care needs in Brooklyn. This project involves segments of the public, private

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and corporate sectors and will lead to proposals for many health care institutions, policies and programs throughout the borough.

- *Help to implement new healthcare reform initiatives in healthcare institutions to best strengthen and leverage resources and funding.* As new federal healthcare and insurance programs are implemented over the coming months and years, the Borough President will work with healthcare institutions to integrate these programs in a way that benefits both the institution itself and the Brooklynites served.
- *Continue to work with the Brooklyn Public Health Funding Task Force to determine and increase the amount of money coming into Brooklyn for public health initiatives.* In 2009 a study by the Brooklyn Community Foundation showed inequities in foundation funding to the outer boroughs. The detrimental effects of such inequities can be seen with the borough disparities in HIV/AIDS deaths. While central Brooklyn's rate of HIV incidence is similar to that of Manhattan's Chelsea neighborhood, the death rate from AIDS in Brooklyn is significantly higher. This is a result of less funding and, consequently, less access to proper treatment. The Borough President has initiated a research committee to obtain comparative data so that we can determine the level of funding Brooklyn deserves.

ISSUE 2: STRONGER COMMUNITY BASED HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS

The Borough President works with community based organizations to better serve their communities and assists them in by providing them relevant funding information and other guidance. The Borough President seeks to facilitate the formation of relationships between healthcare institutions, government agencies, community based organizations, and individuals to better implement an integrated approach and foster outreach to better disseminate information to less accessible constituents. The Borough President wants to help develop a seamless system that incorporates all aspects of healthcare so that individuals can receive the most efficient and complete treatment Brooklyn can offer.

Goal: Assist Community Based Organization in Strengthening Health Networks

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Partner with community-based organizations and advocate and provide outreach on their behalf.* Community-based organizations play a crucial role in serving the healthcare needs of Brooklynites, and they are often the first line of defense for people in need of treatment. Because of this role, these organizations must be staffed by local residents who represent the cultural diversity of the neighborhood. The Borough President will work with organizations to ensure that such needs are met.
- *Assist in bringing community-based organizations together with larger healthcare institutions.* To best serve the local community, organizations should team up with healthcare institutions to provide a comprehensive healthcare program. The Borough President will advocate on behalf of organizations to strengthen these relationships.

ISSUE 3: REDUCING HEALTHCARE DISPARITIES

In 2003 the Borough President commissioned a study that found that racial, ethnic and socioeconomic status has a direct correlation to the health of residents in the borough. In comparison to more affluent neighborhoods, low-income neighborhoods have a disproportionate number of health problems such as diabetes, asthma, HIV/AIDS, heart disease and obesity. Central Brooklyn has one of the highest rates of HIV diagnoses, people living with HIV/AIDS, and mortality rates from HIV/AIDS in New York City. Central Brooklyn also has higher rates of hospitalizations for children's asthma and drug use than much of New York City. Such low income neighborhoods also suffer from significantly higher levels of obesity, which has a greater impact on underserved communities. Many of these low income neighborhoods also lack adequate health care facilities and coverage.

Goal: Reduce Brooklyn's High Disease Rates across the Borough

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Support efforts that aim to decrease rates of asthma, diabetes, infant mortality, obesity, heart disease and HIV/AIDS throughout the borough and particularly in low-income neighborhoods.*
- *Continue working with the Brooklyn Center for Health Disparities at SUNY Downstate Medical Center to reduce and eliminate health disparities in underserved communities in the borough.* These disparities are a result of differences in health care coverage, insurance coverage and the availability and quality of treatment as well as various environmental factors. There are larger social issues, however, that also lead to such disparities. Poverty, poor housing and education, and discrimination and stigma influence healthcare choices and the resulting health statistics. The Borough President will work to better understand these health disparities and the best means of diminishing them within each community.
- *Work with community-based organizations to address issues unique to the local population.* Due to the vast ethnic and cultural diversity that characterizes many Brooklyn neighborhoods, the approach to healthcare and treatment must be designed to suit specific needs and remain culturally sensitive. Community-based organizations can recognize and address issues specific to local citizens. The Borough President will work to bring together these organizations with larger healthcare institutions to provide a comprehensive approach to local issues and health concerns with the best resources available.

ISSUE 4: INSURING THE UNINSURED

Currently, about 400,000 Brooklynites are uninsured, and the number of uninsured residents in central Brooklyn has increased in the past years. As a result, people living in areas like Central Brooklyn are faced with greater obstacles to healthcare access, with nearly three in ten residents without a doctor.

Goal: Increase the Number of Insured Brooklyn Residents

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Partner with agencies that have healthcare programs for qualified constituents.* Many people are unaware that they qualify for free or low-cost health coverage. People without health care are far less likely to receive preventative care than those with coverage. The Borough President will advocate on behalf of uninsured citizens to increase awareness about relevant healthcare opportunities and work with community-based organizations to do so.
- *Stay informed of relevant changes in national and state healthcare reform as they develop.* The recent healthcare reform legislation that passed this year presents Brooklyn with potential benefits to uninsured residents. As new policies are initiated and old policies change over the next few years, the Borough President will remain alert to those aspects relevant to various communities and work to keep community-based organizations and citizens informed.

ISSUE 5: PROMOTING HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

Regularly attending to basic medical needs helps avoid severe health complications that could last for a lifetime. This will ultimately save people—and the City—money in healthcare expenses. While working to increase access to healthcare overall, the Borough President will simultaneously emphasize the importance of preventative measures, especially to children and elderly. The Borough President will continue to promote programs that tackle issues specific to Brooklyn, namely obesity and the need to remind Brooklyn men (and their families) of the importance of consistent and proper health care.

Goal: Increase Constituent Awareness of the Benefits of a Healthy Lifestyle

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue initiatives such as “Lighten Up Brooklyn” and “Take Your Man to the Doctor.”* The Borough President will use these programs to encourage Brooklynites to seek out appropriate health care and to take responsibility for their health.
- *Promote the importance of, and awareness for, preventative acts as quitting smoking, cancer screening, regular HIV testing, and immunizations.*
- *Increase awareness of free services.* Many Brooklynites are unaware of free services available to them that offer preventative care.
- *Work to make Brooklynites aware of relevant programs and healthcare information by participating in health fairs and other similar events and programs.*
- *Work to raise awareness of, and reduce the occurrence of, abusive relationships.* Having a healthy lifestyle includes maintaining safe and stable relationships, and the cycle of abuse often begins at a young age. The Borough President created the Task Force for Teenage Violence in an effort to reach out to youth in abusive relationships and to empower them to seek out resources to end violence in their lives. Working to stop abuse among young people will help increase their chances of leading happy and healthy lives as adults.

ISSUE 6: NUTRITION AND FOOD ACCESS

Proper nutrition is just as essential to health as other preventive measures. The unavailability of proper access to nutrition to every citizen of Brooklyn is unacceptable. The Borough President has reached out to New York City's Food Policy Coordinator to address a lack of suitable grocery stores in certain neighborhoods in Brooklyn. The Borough President has assisted the Department of Education in its "Breakfast in the Classroom" program that offers needy children a breakfast they might not receive at home. Programs, such as the New York State Agriculture Commissioner's grants for community gardens, could bring healthy food sources to communities in need here in Brooklyn. The goal is to provide access to healthy food, and the Borough President will work with city and state agencies to see that Brooklynites do not go without suitable food.

Goal: Better Access to Healthy Food in all Brooklyn Neighborhoods

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Work to increase awareness about eligibility for food stamps.* The eligibility requirements for Medicaid and food stamps are virtually the same, and yet the amount of people on Medicaid is double that of food stamp recipients. While not every Medicaid beneficiary is in need of food stamps, there may be many people who are and do not know they are eligible for them. The Borough President wants to make available the information necessary for Brooklynites to determine their eligibility and receive the assistance they deserve.
- *Support local organizations in their efforts to fight hunger.* Groups such as the Bed-Stuy Campaign Against Hunger and the Food Bank For New York City work to provide food and relevant social services to the hungry in Brooklyn. The Borough President will work with them to assist in increasing awareness of and implementing their services to Brooklynites in need.
- *Work with other officials and government agencies to help implement food assistance programs throughout Brooklyn.*

ISSUE 7: MENTAL ILLNESS & DISABILITY

Living with disability is a difficult challenge for many Brooklynites. These individuals face constant challenges at home, at work, at the doctor and everywhere in between. Among these challenges are accessibility issues, lack of awareness by others and lack of funds for care and treatment. The accessibility to venues, including hospitals, is an issue that must be addressed in various fronts. Additionally, individuals with disabilities, especially children, are often misdiagnosed due to their disabilities. Moreover, the populations of elderly and people with disabilities overlap, as older adults become frailer and experience certain health issues that classify them as having disabilities.

Housing

Goal: Compassionate and Effective Care of People with Mental Illness

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Advocate on behalf of those who suffer from mental illness to ensure that proper treatment is being administered in an appropriate manner.* Services for those with mental illness often do not receive sufficient resources, and the Borough President will advocate on behalf of relevant organizations to increase funding as needed.
- *Advocate on behalf of institutions that specialize in psychiatric illness research and treatment.* The Brooklyn Alzheimer's Disease Assistance Center at SUNY Downstate is the only one of its kind in Brooklyn. In addition to housing a research center, it serves those suffering from psychiatric and cognitive diseases, such as Alzheimer's, and provides support for family members. The Borough President will work with such institutions to secure necessary funding to maintain high quality care.
- *Advocate on behalf of detained youths for better mental health care.* New York State suffers from a severe lack of adequate care for youth with mental illness in detention facilities, and the vast majority of juvenile offenders suffer from some form of mental illness. The Borough President will advocate for those children and young adults in Brooklyn to receive improved mental health care.

Goal: Increase Awareness & Provide Help for Individuals with Disabilities

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Hold a health and disability education forum.* The purpose would be to alert the medical field to disabilities and potential problems or situations that can arise when someone has a certain disability.
- *Recommend and advocate for doctors to work with the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (formerly the OMRDD).*
- *Advocate on behalf of those with disabilities to educate health care workers and institutions to update doctors' offices and hospitals to acceptable standards.*
- *Advocate to the Department for the Aging to keep home assistance services for the elderly and disabled.*
- *Advocate for a policy that would speed up replacing durable medical equipment.*
- *Educate the public in general about disabilities.*
- *Work with people with disabilities and elderly individuals so they can learn about the health benefits they are entitled to.*

Goal: Provide Care for the Elderly

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Work to expand the network of programs that protect and help the elderly.*
- *Promote accessibility for the elderly at public venues and throughout Brooklyn.*

HOUSING

While the City's New Housing Marketplace Plan has resulted in the preservation and construction of over 24,000 units in Brooklyn alone, affordable housing and its residents are still under threat. Brooklyn must prepare itself to upgrade, preserve and expand its housing stock. Many affordable units have been lost to demolition, Section 8 and Mitchell-Lama opt-out, harassment, vacancy decontrol, unregulated and unaffordable rent, and subsidy program expiration or satisfaction. In Brooklyn, nearly 45 percent of the housing stock is non-regulated. Furthermore, for the last 45 years, the City continues to be in a state of "housing emergency" (rental vacancy rates of less than five percent) with the most recent rental vacancy rate at 2.91 percent (2008 data).

Over the past decade the City has made significant progress in facilitating the development of thousands of units of affordable housing through initiatives like improving the disposition and use of City-owned property, favorable tax policies, implementing development on former urban renewal areas and rezoning. The City's Inclusionary Housing Program (IHP), as part of area-wide rezoning, has created affordable housing opportunities, particularly when linked to changes to the 421-1 Real Property Tax Law (offering developers tax breaks in exchange for development of affordable units). The expansion of the IHP has produced opportunities in areas like the Greenpoint-Williamsburg waterfront, the Broadway Triangle and Coney Island.

The Borough President has been a key advocate for the expansion of IHP along with other significant actions highlighting tax policy and effective disposition of City-owned property throughout Brooklyn. He was the first to call for using IHP and making 421(a) eligibility on the waterfront contingent upon the provision of affordable housing, a policy which is now City protocol for areas proposed for residential up-zonings. He was the leading voice in urging the Department of Housing and Development (HPD) to redevelop the former Navy Brig (now affordable housing, being constructed as Navy Green). He also led the way in bringing the Brighton Municipal Parking lot to HPD for a future Request for Proposal that would allow the disposition of this property to be used for a mixed-residential development, while retaining public parking.

ISSUE 1: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

According to a 2008 study by the Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy, Brooklyn residents, on average, spend 31.8 percent of their income on rent, whereas only 10.9 percent of Americans spend more than thirty percent of their income on rent. These numbers alone demonstrate the City's grave need for more affordable housing. Despite the community need and benefit of affordable housing programs, building owners have exercised their option to charge market rates once such an opportunity presents itself. Many tenants have seen their rents increase even under the rent-stabilization programs, resulting in less disposable income for other necessities or forced to move in search of more affordable rent or worse, evicted.

Housing

The Borough President has been a leader in the affordable housing movement for over thirty years. His “Affordable Forever” initiative is an integral part of his work and it looks to ensure that the housing stock remains affordable for future generations. During his tenure, his advocacy has been integral to the success of several developments throughout the Brooklyn, including: Habitat for Humanity projects in Bedford-Stuyvesant and Ocean Hill-Brownsville; Pratt Area Community Council (PACC) and Bridge Street LDC projects in Bedford-Stuyvesant; Cypress Hills LDC projects in East New York; Los Sures projects in Williamsburg; North Brooklyn LDC (Greenpoint); North East Brooklyn (Bed-Stuy/Ocean Hill); Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizens Council (RBSCC) in Bushwick; Plaza Residences in Brownsville (formerly known as the Noble Drew Ali Housing Plaza); and the Fifth Avenue Committee’s Atlantic Terrace in Fort Greene. In fiscal year 2009 alone, he supported the creation of 744 affordable units throughout Brooklyn. Throughout his tenure in office, the Borough President has allocated an aggregate of \$33 million to affordable housing.

During the past 10 years, the Mitchell-Lama program for affordable housing has come under fire from developers and landlords seeking to increase their profits. The Borough President has defended Mitchell-Lama and helped pave the way for its preservation. The Borough President has played an integral role in increasing awareness of Mitchell-Lama issues as well as assuring affordability in a number of housing complexes, the most visible one being the Tivoli Towers in Crown Heights. In addition to this, the Borough President created a Mitchell-Lama Task Force, entrusted with the goal to preserve Mitchell-Lama Housing through outreach, education, advocacy and support.

Housing is a key factor in the social and economic welfare of our communities. It is integral to maintain affordable and safe housing in order to maintain our community and improve quality of life for all Brooklynites.

Goal: Retaining Affordable Rental Housing

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Advocate for the repeal of the Urstadt law by lobbying the State Legislature to amend the Local Emergency Housing Rent Control Act.* This will return power to the City government and will allow the City Council to address the worsening housing crisis.
- *Educate tenants and agencies about the passage of State legislation (S2171/A6706) which provides for a moratorium on the voluntary dissolution of limited profit, limited dividend and redevelopment housing companies.*
- *Oppose legislation that allows landlords and property owners to repay and/or waive tax abatements pursuant to Real Property Tax Law §489.* This legislation deregulates units, increasing rates to the market-rate without regard for the income of any future tenants.
- *Press for use of the Inclusionary Housing Program (IHP) Preservation Option.* The preservation option incentivizes developers to preserve affordable housing units by offering bonus square footage in proportion to the square footage of affordable housing preserved. It also benefits individuals in existing low-income housing from being displaced by new developments.

Housing

Goal: Maintain Mitchell-Lama Housing

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Petition the State legislature to pass the Stewart-Cousins legislation (S3326D/A9230) and amend the Emergency Tenant Protection Act of 1974.* This would ensure that aging out of the Mitchell-Lama system will not be considered a “unique or peculiar circumstance” that would allow owners to charge market rates for units.
- *Continue to support the advocacy, outreach and support work of the Mitchell-Lama Task Force.*

Goal: Ensuring Affordability of Newly Created Housing

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Encourage the utilization of City-owned land for development of “affordable forever” units.*
- *Lobby to receive more city, state, and federal funding in order to facilitate housing deals and employ alternative financing.* Resources are limited and an infusion of capital is needed to service the borough and its needs.

Goal: Rent Regulation that Preserves Affordability

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Lobby for the bill to amend the New York City Code and the Emergency Tenant Protection Act of 1974.* This law would repeal vacancy decontrol which allows owners to charge market rate rents in regulated apartments that have increased to \$2,000 (S2237/A2005). The current law has encouraged abusive behavior on the part of owners in their attempts to get residents to vacate their apartments and charge higher rental rates.
- *Notify tenants and organizations about the successful revision of the City’s Administrative Code and the Emergency Tenant Protection Act of 1974.* This change establishes a toll on the limitations period for challenging deregulation of a rent-regulated apartment. This change in the law decreases the number of rent-regulated apartments improperly deregulated.

ISSUE 2: HOUSING STOCK

The cost of creating housing has been steadily increasing relative to the rate of income growth. This is further compounded by the challenge of identifying funding to subsidize the difference between cost to construct and affordability price. Funds must be identified and costs must be kept in check for our limited resources to meet the challenge.

Housing

Goal: Expand Opportunities for Affordable Housing

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Seek to expand the IHP to areas previously up-zoned, such as Downtown Brooklyn, Bridge Plaza, DUMBO, Fourth Avenue in Park Slope, and Washington Avenue in Prospect Heights.*
- *Seek to improve the IHP by requiring a greater percentage of floor area as part of the bonus and more overall percentage of affordable housing.*
- *Seek to leverage no less than 20 percent affordable housing as part of discretionary land use applications.*
- *Advocate development of large city/state holdings. These include: Atlantic Yards, Public Place (Gowanus Green), Brighton Municipal Lot, surplus and underutilized NYCHA open space, former Greenpoint Hospital campus, and the MTA Greenpoint bus depot.*
 - *Continue development of Gateway at Spring Creek and the former Navy Brig (Navy Green)*
- *Advocate for the continued re-zoning of carefully selected manufacturing areas for other uses, including districts that allow for live-work spaces. Such areas include the Gowanus Canal (although clean-up needs to be resolved before extensive rezoning should proceed), the Atlantic Avenue corridor, extending east from the Atlantic Yards, as well as the 62nd street corridor from Eighth to Seventeenth Avenues.*
- *Continue to advocate for up-zoning residential areas where appropriate. A careful review of the City's residential zoning districts is needed to help encourage more housing production. While doing this, the City should continue to provide density incentives based on producing affordable housing in these underdeveloped areas. Considerations like infrastructure, capacity and the feel of neighborhoods should be examined and balanced with development.*
- *Support HPD in pursuing the Third Party Transfer Program. This program allows tax delinquent properties subject to foreclosure proceedings to be conveyed (via court order) to pre-selected, qualified third parties as a way to bring vacated buildings back to use.*

Goal: Environmentally Sustainable Housing

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Support the Mayor's policy to have all new construction projects achieve Enterprise Green Communities certification. Green Building techniques reduce rents in the long run by making buildings more energy efficient.*
- *Raise awareness of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). NYSERDA offers programs to help homeowners and renters reduce energy costs, helps building owners provide energy-efficient apartments for their tenants and reduces the environmental impact of homes.*
- *Promote awareness of the NYC Department of Buildings' efforts to educate homeowners about green technologies.*

Housing

- *Advocate for the reestablishment of the Brooklyn Center for the Urban Environment. The need for an organization dedicated to the promotion not only of green building practices, but sustainable living in general, is necessary in our community.*

Goal: Increased Public and Private Partnerships in Affordable Housing

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Advocate for the expansion of the City's housing capital construction program.*
- *Advocate for increased financing for housing preservation and development. This could be achieved by redirecting some of the repayments from housing loans now going into the City's General Fund to a revolving loan fund to finance housing preservation and development.*
- *Encourage reinvestment from sales of City-owned land to construction on the same site whenever possible. Alternatively, City-owned property can be sold at a nominal price as a form of City subsidy.*
- *Support borough-based affordable housing efforts through the Borough President's Housing Development Fund to reduce the cost of construction of proposed projects.*

ISSUE 3: BUILDING OVERSIGHT & TENANT PROTECTION

Tenant abuse on behalf of landlords is prevalent in our communities. The Borough President seeks to empower tenants against oppressive landlords. Additionally, he seeks to create accountability from those government agencies with the power to protect tenants. Oversight over agencies such as the NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development (HPD) and the NYS Division of Housing & Community Renewal (DHCR) is important for reform and improvements in today's housing situation. Lack of oversight leads to corruption, waste and hurts citizens directly. For example, the State Inspector General's September 2007 review of the DHCR oversight of the Mitchell-Lama program painted a dire picture that needs to be addressed. In order for programs to flourish, administrative organizations must be held accountable to the people they serve.

Goal: Better Government Oversight of Housing

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Encourage DHCR to fulfill its promises to clean up its system and penalize wrongdoers, all at minimal cost to taxpayers.*
- *Champion oversight and policing of HPD to ensure no such corruption is present at the City level.*
- *Motivate the City to increase the number of housing inspectors so as to ensure compliance with codes, monitor building owners, enforce regulations and catch violations as early as possible.*
- *Work to support and maintain the Housing Litigation Division of the HPD.*

Goal: Increase Tenant Protection and Support

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Educate tenants as to their rights and entitlements as tenants in all programs, including Mitchell-Lama housing.* Tenants should be encouraged to report violations by owners and be given the proper tools to demand provision of basic services.
- *Work to provide more aid for tenants in housing court.* A minority of tenants has legal representation in Housing Court, while nearly all owners have representation. Closing this gap will ensure preservation of tenants' rights.
- *Encourage City Council to review and expand the Tenant Protection Act and Anti Harassment Zoning to increase tenant protection.*
- *Increase awareness of the HPD community consultant and neighborhood preservation contracts.* These programs utilize local not-for-profits to help HPD identify early intervention and preservation services as well as support tenant advocacy and organization. They are pivotal in maintaining quality affordable housing throughout the borough.
- *Seek out state and federal funding sources for homeownership education programs.* An example of this is the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Housing Counseling Program.

ISSUE 4: PUBLIC HOUSING

NYCHA housing provides an integral service to our community. Maintaining public housing with proper levels of maintenance and room for improvement is an important goal. In early 2010, the city, state and federal governments approved a plan to federalize twenty-one affordable housing developments across the city, a third of which are in Brooklyn. With such a large percentage of these developments in Brooklyn, it is imperative that the Borough President plays an important and active role on the governing body of any NYCHA change. The Borough President will work to direct resources for much needed repairs and maintenance, and to be the impetus behind project completion. The entire borough has a vested interest in this plan and it is crucial that the Borough President is allowed to properly advocate for Brooklyn on NYCHA's board.

Goal: Preservation of Public Housing

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Lobby for a Borough President seat on the New York City Housing Authority Board.*
- *Work to make sure that federal funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act are spent efficiently and properly.*

Goal: Better Quality-Of-Life in Public Housing

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Increase police patrols in the housing communities with elevated crime rates.* The Borough President would support the NYPD in utilizing the officer training program and increase the police presence in these high-risk complexes.
- *Improve tenant communication mechanisms and complaint resolution.* Make tenants aware of tenant associations and Community Boards that are available to help.
- *Work with all stakeholders to rejuvenate neighborhoods and create community building that would improve resident life.*

Goal: Transparency & Success in the NYCHA “Federalization” Process

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Work to make sure that federal funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act are spent efficiently and properly.*

ISSUE 5: HOME OWNERSHIP

Homeownership builds equity and wealth. Studies have shown that homeowners take better care of their homes than renters and become more involved in their communities. Yet only 33 percent of New York City residents live in homes they own. Nationally, the figures are reversed, with nearly 70 percent owning their residence. In Brooklyn, only 27.1 percent of housing is owner-occupied. Meanwhile, some lower-income homeowners are being threatened with loss of their homes. Predatory lending that results in foreclosure is a significant threat to continued homeownership for some, particularly in African American communities in Central Brooklyn that have been targeted by predatory lenders.

Goal: Maintain and Increase Brooklynites’ Home Ownership

Increased homeownership makes for more stable communities, with residents having a vested interest not only in their home, but in their block and their community.

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Work with HPD to persuade developers to create private ownership housing for small sites that do not lend themselves to rental development.* HPD will provide access to subsidies for developers to aggressively persuade developers to utilize the Zoning Resolution’s Inclusionary Housing Program that can create housing for sale in such small sites.
- *Further utilize the Borough President’s Brooklyn Housing Development Fund to facilitate homeownership.*
- *Continue to host the annual homeowner’s fair to educate buyers about home ownership and financial stability.*

Housing

- *Promote legislation to protect citizens from reckless foreclosure practices.*
- *Incorporate limited equity and standard equity co-ops and condominiums into the new homes development portfolio by partnering with not-for-profit organizations that advocate for affordable housing.*
- *Support the National Association of Housing Cooperative, which brings together defaulting private owners together to form co-ops.*

ISSUE 6: HOUSING FOR SENIORS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Goal: Dedicated, Affordable, Comfortable and Well-Maintained Housing for Seniors

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Work with City officials and Brooklyn's elected officials to increase a large share of funds for senior housing construction. Specifically a larger share of federal funds from Section 202 of the Federal Housing Act of 1959, the sole federal program for senior housing construction.*
- *Seek to address elderly needs while enabling them to remain in, and contribute to, the community.*
- *Promote social services tied to development to support the basic needs of the elderly.*
- *Encourage more developers to pursue creative financing.*
 - *Creative financing and partnerships between public, private and not for-profit institutions allows for new opportunities to develop housing for senior groups. Recent and successful examples of such partnership and creativity was when SKA Marin, Local Development Corporation of Crown Heights and other public and private partners concluded the construction of Crown Heights Apartments, a complex with 143 affordable rental units for seniors and the Quincy Senior Residence, which partnered DHCR, HPD, the Community Preservation Corporation and Bridge Street Development Corp. in a 94-unit rental apartment building for seniors.*

Goal: Avoid Rent Increases for Senior Citizens

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Fight to increase maximum income for Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) via state legislation.*
- *Promote awareness of SCRIE throughout the Brooklyn community.*
- *Petition for more federal and state funding through federal grant programs such as the Community Living Program, which provides anywhere from \$600,000 to \$1,000,000.*

Housing

Goal: Ensure People with Disabilities Acquire and Keep Affordable Housing

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Encourage qualified individuals to apply for Disabled Accessibility Grants. Such grants from the federal and state governments can make housing more accessible to the disabled and elderly.*
- *Provide assistance to individuals with disabilities who are navigating the complex appeals process. Make them aware of the legal services available to them at low or no cost.*
- *Publicize the need and requirements for building and parking accessibility.*

ISSUE 7: HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness affects the whole community and the Borough President seeks to provide help to those that are homeless and those in danger of homelessness as well as to protect their dignity and rights.

Goal: Protect the Homeless and Prevent Homelessness

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Advocate for homeless programs that help individuals and address community issues and concerns.*
- *Promote programs that protect families and individuals at risk of becoming homeless.*

ISSUE 8: LOFT TENANTS

July of 2010 marked a victory for loft tenants throughout the City. The State approved legislation making the Loft Law of 1959 (of the Multiple Dwelling Law) permanent. This law further extended legal protections, i.e. proper eviction and rent increase procedures, to loft dwellings, commercial or manufacturing buildings occupied for residential purposes.

Goal: Extending Protections & Ensuring Affordability for Loft Tenants

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Help educate loft tenants about how to verify that the building is registered with the City's Loft Board.*
- *Urge State & City legislatures to extend upon application full residential tenant rights to loft tenants during the pendency of their application. This extension should serve to protect individuals who seek protections under the new Loft Law from possible harassment and other dangers.*

PARKS & RECREATION

The Office of Brooklyn Borough President supports all parks in Brooklyn and is especially supportive of the continued success of the borough's three major parks: Prospect Park, Coney Island and Brooklyn Bridge Park.

Brooklyn's parks are a part of the lives of all Brooklynites and each resident should feel that they are able to use the parks at any time. The Office of the Borough President seeks to meet the recreational needs of all Brooklynites by fully utilizing and expanding Brooklyn's parks and recreational facilities. One way the parks are promoted effectively is through events that remind residents that they are welcome at the parks and that there are always fun activities for everyone there. The Office of the Brooklyn Borough President fully supports different events in our parks, including: Celebrate Brooklyn! Performing Arts Festival in Prospect Park; Movies with a View and The Metropolitan Opera Summer Recital Series in Brooklyn Bridge Park; and the Seaside Summer Concert Series at Asser Levy Park in Coney Island.

ISSUE 1: CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF BROOKLYN'S PARKS

Prospect Park is the crown jewel of Brooklyn's parks and park designer Frederick Olmsted's crowning achievement. Coney Island remains the premiere summertime destination in Brooklyn and will continue to be with a new amusement park, Luna Park, along with improvements to the beach and boardwalk areas. The newest and now perhaps the most visible park in Brooklyn is Brooklyn Bridge Park ("BBP"). BBP takes advantage of the waterfront along the East River and has breathtaking views of the city skyline, New York Harbor, the Statue of Liberty, and the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges. The opening of the park will occur in stages. Pier 1 opened on March 22, 2010, Pier 6 opened in May 2010, with further piers to open over the next few years. Upon completion, the park will span 85 acres that will stretch 1.3 miles along the East River from the Manhattan Bridge to Atlantic Ave. This Park will transform this once underused and inaccessible waterfront space into areas to be used for recreation and relaxation for every Brooklyn resident and should attract many from all over the greater New York area. It is vital to Brooklyn that Brooklyn Bridge Park is completed. It is the most significant park development in Brooklyn since Prospect Park was constructed 135 years ago. Borough President Markowitz echoed this sentiment when he said, "What Prospect Park was for the 19th century, Brooklyn Bridge Park will be for the 21st."

Goal: Promoting Existing Parks & Expanding Parkland throughout Brooklyn

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Support adding more parkland in private open spaces through zoning.*
- *Seek to maximize unused waterfront land by encouraging new construction projects along the water to build waterfront esplanades that will help beautify Brooklyn. This will give the borough an opportunity to expand parklands, and allow for our residents to enjoy some of the breathtaking views Brooklyn has to offer.*

Parks and Recreation

- *Improve park conditions to make them safe, clean, inviting and reflective of neighborhood needs.*

Goal: New Asser Levy Park

Asser Levy Park dates all the way back to the 1880s and the Brooklyn Borough President has led the renovation and reconstruction efforts for approximately 9.2 acres of the eastern portion of Asser Levy Park in a project that is anticipated to be completed by 2012. The renovation of Asser Levy Park seeks to achieve three goals: provide improved park amenities, create a welcoming icon for Coney Island and create an improved venue for cultural programming.

Asser Levy Park will provide a green face to Coney Island, and will contribute to its skyline. This project will be a complete revitalization of the park, which will include the construction of a state-of-the art 5,000-seat amphitheater that will attract many cultural and special events to the Coney Island Amusement Area. The renovation plan calls for the replacement of the existing outdoor performing arts band shell in Asser Levy with a new, modern, and expanded amphitheater which includes a permanent stage house, removable and seasonal audience seating areas and restroom facilities. The reconstruction project will also reconstruct some existing park facilities such as the playground, pathways, comfort station, chess table areas, and handball court. The playground will be accessible for people with disabilities and will draw inspiration from the landmarks of Coney Island, featuring smaller models of the Cyclone and the Wonder Wheel.

Asser Levy Park's renovation will create major infrastructural upgrades that will stop frequent flooding. New paths and walkways flanked by beautiful foliage will wind through the grounds and showcase the park's classic collection of old growth trees. Through renovation, tree coverage will expand from four trees per 22,000 square feet to 26 trees per 28,000 square feet. Expansion in tree coverage will beautify the park and benefit families not only in the area but across the entire borough.

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to work to make Asser Levy Park a family and tourist friendly gateway to Coney Island.*
- *Oversee the successful renovation and reconstruction of Asser Levy Park.*
- *Continue to provide exciting cultural programming and events for all of Brooklynites in Coney Island and Asser Levy Park.*

ISSUE 2: FUNDING PARKS

Unlike schools, roads, and transit, there is no baseline funding for the parks in New York City, and as a result the parks budget has been decimated. The parks of Brooklyn, as well as all of the boroughs of New York City rely on not for profit organizations and conservancies for funds. These not-for-profit organizations also help fund the upkeep, renovation and expansion of the parks. The Brooklyn Bridge Park has the Brooklyn Bridge Conservancy, Prospect Park has the

Parks and Recreation

Prospect Park Alliance, and Coney Island has the Coney Island Development Corporation. These organizations receive donations from corporations, foundation, individuals and the government.

Goal: Continue and Expand Park Funding

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to support Public/Private partnerships for parks.*
- *Continue to offer these organizations support and funding.*
- *Advocate for baseline funding for parks in New York City's annual budget.*
- *Work to maximize the opportunities to make Brooklyn "greener."*

ISSUE 3: PARK ACCESSIBILITY

The parks in Brooklyn are intended for the use of the residents of our communities and all residents should be able to feel that they are able to use the parks at any time whether it be to go for a walk, jog or to spend time with friends. Brooklyn parks should be made easily available for all of Brooklynites.

Goal: Make Brooklyn's Parks More User-Friendly

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Advocate for more user-friendly park permit process.* Such process requires cutting down the amount of time needed to apply in advance for an approved activity and reducing the amount of non-refundable fees. If the parks are more user friendly, residents will be more likely to use them. The more people get involved in the parks the more likely they are to become involved in the community, and as a result Brooklyn would benefit and be a far better place for it.
- *Advocate for the addition of more amenities in our parks.*
 - More fire pits and grills.
 - Better access for local Little Leagues and other athletic events.
- *Promote recreational opportunities and active lifestyles through activities like organized sports.*

ISSUE 4: COMMUNITY GREEN SPACE

A simple and cost effective way that Brooklyn has been beautified over the years has been the cultivation of local community gardens. Community gardens can come about from the most modest beginnings and the City should strive to create green space through their use.

Goal: Protect, Cultivate, and Expand Community Gardens

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Strongly advocate the promotion, growth, and expansion of community gardens.*
- *Continue to aid the expansion of community gardens by giving away tree guards. Since 2004, this office and the Parks Department through the Neighborhood Beautification Fund has given away 4,000 tree guards on over 35 residential blocks throughout Brooklyn.*
- *Oppose laws that will take community gardens away from the residents of Brooklyn into the hands of developers.*
- *Advocate preservation of the 2002 Law protecting community gardens.*

ISSUE 5: PUBLIC POOLS

In the beginning of the summer of 2010, the City announced that the Douglass-Degraw Pool (“Double-D Pool”) on Douglass Street and Nevins Street would not open in order to save \$200,000 or the equivalent of three-millionths of the city budget. The city was willing to keep the pool closed even though in the previous summer it had served over 40,000 people in the surrounding Gowanus and Wyckoff housing projects. The Borough President fought the decision, and with the helpful efforts of council members and constituents, kept the Double-D pool open.

Goal: Keep Brooklyn Facilities Open

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Advocate for open facilities during the summer months.*
- *Work with city agencies to facilitate accessibility to recreational facilities with a focus on community needs.*

PUBLIC SAFETY & CRIMINAL JUSTICE

All citizens are entitled to a safe and secure environment, and over the last 15 years thanks to the cooperative efforts of the community, New York City has been one of the safest large cities in the United States. The New York Police Department (“NYPD”), The District Attorney’s Office, and community groups should all be commended for their efforts for helping to make and keeping New York a safe place to live and work.

ISSUE 1: EFFECTIVE POLICING

Goal: Effective and Community Sensitive Policing

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Support effective policing that is sensitive to our communities. In order to be effective, our police officers have to be sensitive to the issues that are facing each of our culturally diverse neighborhoods. The more sensitivity officers show toward our residents, the more our residents will trust our police officers. Gaining and keeping the public’s trust in the NYPD is vital in the fight against crime in our neighborhoods.*
- *Support the Police Department’s enforcement efforts against quality of life crimes.*
- *Maintain the close working relationship between Borough Hall and police commanders.*

ISSUE 2: ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION

The Drug Treatment Alternative to Prison Program (“DTAP”) diverts drug addicted, non-violent repeat felony offenders, following a guilty plea, into residential substance abuse treatment in lieu of mandatory prison. Upon successful completion of the program, the plea is withdrawn and the charges are dismissed. In the event of failure a prison sentence is imposed. DTAP is based on the premise that defendants would return to society in a better position to resist drugs and crime after treatment than if they had spent a comparable time in prison at nearly twice the cost.

The effect of this program has been immeasurable not only for the defendants but for the City’s budget. DTAP graduates had re-arrest rates that were 33 percent lower, reconviction rates of 45 percent and were 87 percent less likely to return to prison than those of a matched comparison group. DTAP graduates are three and one-half times likelier to be employed that they were before arrest. These results are achieved at half the cost of incarceration. Since DTAP’s inception in 1990, of those who were accepted by the program and entered treatment, 1,192 (43 percent) have graduated, 350 (13 percent) are currently in treatment, 44 (2 percent) have been transferred to Treatment Alternatives for the Dually Diagnosed (“TADD”), a diversion program dedicated to mentally ill defendants with a concurrent substance abuse disorder and 1,183 (43 percent) have dropped out of treatment.

Goal: Increase Alternatives to Prison Programs for Non-Violent Offenders

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to support the work of the Kings County District Attorney's Office ("KCDA") and Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes. Mr. Hynes is currently serving his fifth term as the District Attorney of Kings County and has been a trailblazer in the criminal justice community for the programs he has instituted here in Brooklyn.*
- *Continue to strongly support the funding and continuance of the Drug Treatment Alternative to Prison Program ("DTAP").*

ISSUE 3: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

One of the most powerful tools to help prevent and fight crime is a community that is involved, aware and educated on matters like crime in their neighborhood and legal issues they face.

Goal: Educate and Involve Brooklyn Communities on Crime and Legal Matters

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Promote and raise awareness of the educational programs that the Kings County District Attorney's Office offers. One of these programs, "The People's Law School" is a public information initiative established by DA Hynes in 1991 to educate citizens about the DA's Office and the criminal justice system. At the People's Law School residents can learn about various aspects of the criminal justice system such as: bias crimes, immigrants rights, parents and children's rights, juvenile and family court, Megan's Law, senior citizen abuse, teenage date rape, narcotics eviction programs, fraud/scams, civil rights and victim/witness rights.*

ISSUE 4: RESIDENT VICTIMIZATION

The frequent buying and selling of drugs in the public areas of multi-dwelling apartment buildings is a problem that many law abiding tenants and landlords face every day. Many times these tenants and landlords are powerless to rid their buildings of drug trafficking and the criminal activity that comes with it.

Goal: Help Residents Fight Crime

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Raise awareness of the Kings County District Attorney's Office Formal Trespass Affidavit Program ("F-TAP"). Through F-TAP, residents and landlords can address these concerns with the DA's office and their local precinct where managing agents are asked to sign an affidavit, authorizing their local police to perform vertical patrols in their building. This program is the latest effort to rid these buildings of drug dealers.*

ISSUE 5: GANGS

Gangs are a serious problem plaguing Brooklyn and New York City overall. Gangs threaten the streets of our communities with drugs and violence. Between 2005 and 2008 the New York City Police Department reported an 11 percent increase in the number of gang motivated incidents. Youths from inner city neighborhoods are being recruited by and joining gangs at an alarming rate.

In order to combat gang violence and the growth of gangs in the community, the Borough President supports a number of initiatives and legislation in addition to proposing ideas on how to stop youths from entering gangs and to get communities together to share their ideas on how to combat this problem. It is imperative for all groups, from the State Legislature to local community organizations to join forces to protect our youth by standing up against gangs and gang violence.

Goal: Reduce Number of Brooklyn Youths Joining Gangs & Overall Gang Violence

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Work to develop better alternatives for youths.*
- *Organize a youth summit where youths from various high schools and grade schools can voice their opinions on gangs and related issues. This will be an opportunity to learn from teens about what they face every day and what they think needs to be done. Through them we can have a better understanding of what kind of alternatives to gangs can be created and would be effective.*

Goal: Combat Gang Initiation through Legislation

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Support the passing of the amendment to Title 10 of the New York Administrative Code. This act that makes it a Class-D Misdemeanor to participate in gang initiation and can be an invaluable tool to drive down the number of gang initiations.*

Goal: Build Community Partnerships against Gangs

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Support building community partnerships with anti-gang organizations. Such organizations, include the Brooklyn Community Roots, Cyprus Hills Community Development Corp., and the Coney Island Coalition Against Violence. These organizations have roots in the community and will work with members of the community as well as elected officials, religious groups and other community groups to coordinate events that will carry an anti-violence and anti-gang message.*

Public Safety and Criminal Justice

- *Support any study that will explore different ways on how to get an anti-gang message across to inner city youths.* This office seeks to find which avenue would be the best way to get a message to youths regarding alternatives to joining gangs.

Goal: Support Alternative to Incarceration for Youths Involved in Gangs

The Youth and Congregations in Partnership Program, founded in 1997, is a community-based intervention program for court-involved and at risk juveniles which provides year long intensive intervention for juveniles. During this time, the youth will be mentored by a committee of at least three trained volunteers. The Youth and Congregations Partnership Program offers a good alternative to incarceration while providing the support services the youths need in order to prevent recidivism. Overall this program will help end the vicious cycle of repeat offenders and reduce youth crime.

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- Continue to strongly support District Attorney's Charles Hynes Youth and Congregations in Partnership Program.

ISSUE 6: PRESENCE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT IN THE COMMUNITIES

The Kings County District Attorney's Office has established neighborhood offices throughout Brooklyn. In order to have a presence in local communities, the KCDA currently has programs in 25 different neighborhoods throughout Brooklyn in order to meet the needs of all Brooklyn residents, establishing a local presence borough-wide.

In addition, The Red Hook Community Justice Center ("Red Hook Center") has been established to better serve the residents of this remote neighborhood. The Red Hook Center has been credited with crime reduction and economic development in its community. The Red Hook Center was founded after Principal Patrick Daly was killed by cross fire by rival gangs while looking for a student who had left school after a fight. It houses a multi-jurisdictional problem solving court which handles criminal, housing and family court matters and recognizes the needs of Red Hook and several neighboring communities that encompass three police precincts and over 200,000 people which make up generally isolated communities. Other services include: intensive drug treatment, mediation, anger management, high school equivalency classes, youth groups and vehicular programs.

Goal: Expand Law Enforcement Agencies in the Communities

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Supports the continued expansion of these "Justice Centers."* These Centers give all Brooklyn residents an opportunity to seek out the help they may need from the District Attorney's Office without having to travel a great distance.

Public Safety and Criminal Justice

- *Support the opening of the Brownsville Community Justice Center.* This Center will serve as a neighborhood resource center and court. It will provide social, education and health services that target juveniles, and low-level offenders. With a integrated system of justice, counseling, training and mentoring, this center will help prevent escalation of minor law enforcement issues, embed itself in the community and reduce the role of the institutional placement in rehabilitation and reformation.

ISSUE 7: SENIOR AFFAIRS

Brooklyn has the largest senior population in New York City. Seniors are an often neglected group that requires extensive assistance with legal affairs.

Goal: Ensure Brooklyn Seniors Have Their Legal Needs Met

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Support District Attorney Hynes and his efforts to help senior citizens who are vulnerable and are in need of help with their legal affairs.* The District Attorney has appointed retired and semi-retired attorneys as goodwill ambassadors to seniors throughout the borough and they congregate in convenient places for seniors like senior centers, places of worship and AARP gatherings.

ISSUE 8: PROTECTING VICTIMS OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Goal: Provide Support for Victims in all of Brooklyn

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Support the Victims Service Unit of the KCDA.* The Victims Services Unit of the KCDA helps people who are victims and witnesses to a crime. It provides crisis counseling, safety planning, court escorts, physical and mental health referrals and assistance to eligible applicants in filing for financial and medical bill reimbursement through the New York State Crime Victims Board.
- *Support other specialized victims' services.* These include:
 - Project Eden for domestic violence victims from the Orthodox Jewish community
 - Central Brooklyn Domestic Violence Program for domestic violence from the Arab-American, Caribbean, Chinese, South Asian, and Latina communities
 - Project Nyet for domestic violence victims in the Russian community
 - Project Shield for victims of sexual assault who have mental retardation and development disabilities
 - Brooklyn S.T.A.R. Project
 - AWARE Project
 - Barrier Free Justice

ISSUE 9: FAIRNESS IN THE JUDICIAL PROCESS

Goal: Ensure the Underprivileged Receive Legal Representation

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Support organizations that provide defense attorneys for residents who cannot afford to hire an attorney.* These organizations are filled with passionate lawyers who will advocate for their clients and ensure that the scale of justice is balanced. One of those organizations is Brooklyn Defender Services (“BDS”) which represents 18,000 people each year and has represented over 160,000 people who found themselves in police custody. BDS has achieved a national reputation among public defender offices for the excellent quality of advocacy the attorneys provide on behalf of their clients.

TRANSPORTATION & TRANSIT

Much of what makes Brooklyn great is its prime location in the heart of New York City. Brooklyn is the most populated borough in New York City with approximately 2.5 million residents, nearly 900,000 more than Manhattan. Despite Brooklyn's massive population, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority ("MTA") has continued to respond to budgetary concerns by targeting our borough for subway and bus service. Brooklyn's transportation system is essential to its residents. It serves as conduit for commerce and people as well as an essential source for jobs. Brooklyn needs to develop a multi-faced transportation system and travel alternatives that reduce congestion, are environmentally responsible and better serve the residents of Brooklyn.

ISSUE 1: FINANCIAL PROBLEMS OF THE MTA

Financial instability is a perennial issue for the MTA, resulting in continuous fare hikes and bus and subway service cuts. Often Brooklyn gets hit the hardest during budgetary cuts. One in every three public transit users in the United States rides the MTA, yet the system is one of the least subsidized in the nation.

Goal: Make the MTA More Self Sufficient

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to propose and strongly advocate for alternative funding solutions to the MTA budget crisis.* The Office of the Brooklyn Borough President is constantly working on proposals that will protect the residents of Brooklyn from any unfair tax and rejects proposals that would put an unfair share of the MTA's burden on Brooklyn residents.
- *Advocate the following proposals:*
 - **Dedicated Gasoline Tax:** An implementation of a modest increase in the gasoline tax levied in the entire 12 county Metropolitan Commuter Transportation District ("MCTD") with the money dedicated to public transit.
 - **Vehicle Registration Fees:** Raise the fees on vehicle registration based on weight and model type; equalizing the vehicle use tax in the entire MCTD—a tax for which New York City residents currently pay more.
 - **Lottery:** The MCTD can have a mega millions lottery that is solely dedicated to mass transit.
 - **Consolidating Assets:** The MTA could cut costs by consolidating its property assets including the blighted building at 370 Jay Street in Downtown Brooklyn. The Borough President believes that 370 Jay Street could be sold or leased to attract one or more major corporate tenants, including retail. Currently the MTA has budgeted \$159 million toward renovating the building for its back office's, but it will not be fully occupied until 2016.
- *Continue to reach out to the federal government to provide New York City with help in this MTA crisis and get the fair share of transit money that this City deserves.*

ISSUE 2: TRANSPORTATION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND ELDERLY

Brooklyn has the largest population of elderly and people with disabilities in New York City. The provision of ample bus and subway service for these communities is of the highest priority. Barrier-free transportation services are essential in giving the elderly those with disabilities the ability to contribute to our social and economic life. It is unacceptable that the MTA makes budget reducing decisions targeting these valuable services.

Goal: Continue to Provide Transportation for People with Disabilities and the Elderly

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Support continued service to the elderly and people with disabilities.* The MTA should not consider cuts based solely on numbers or statistics but on who uses their services.
- *Support the continuation and expansion of Access-A-Ride.* Access-A-Ride provides the only way of transportation for many individuals with disabilities. These important programs should be expanded instead of cut and should be more flexible to the needs of the people they serve.
- *Advocate for more ramps and accommodations that will help the elderly and those with disabilities to freely use these services.*

ISSUE 3: TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENTS

Goal: Provide Students with Free Transportation to School

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to strongly support the continuation of the free Metro Card program for students.*
- *Strongly oppose any attempt by the MTA to eliminate free Metro Cards for students as a cost saving measure.*

ISSUE 4: FREE BRIDGES

Three of the un-tolled Bridges in New York—the Brooklyn Bridge, Manhattan Bridge, and Williamsburg Bridge—are in Brooklyn. Due to Brooklyn’s geographical mass, some parts of our borough have limited or no access to mass transit. Residents of these areas must commute by car and have no choice but to use these bridges. A toll on them would create an unfair burden on the backs of hard working Brooklynites.

Goals: Find Alternatives to Tolling Free Bridges

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Strongly oppose bridge tolls that have been proposed for East River and Harlem River crossings.*

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- *Continue to oppose these tolls, advocating for a commuter tax instead.*
- *Continue to advocate for the burdens of the transit system to be shared equally across the 12-county Metropolitan Commuter Transportation District.*

ISSUE 5: ROAD CONDITIONS

As many of the streets in Brooklyn continue to be in disrepair, the Department of Transportation's ("DOT") efforts for addressing deteriorating road conditions and maintaining our roads must be improved. Noise pollution and disruptions in the community must be kept at a minimum.

Goal: Improve Road Conditions throughout Brooklyn

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Work to improve communication between private parties and the DOT in street repair. The goal is to avoid instances in which utilities dig and cause congestion because of insufficient planning and coordination. Efficient coordination with the DOT would allow it to be able to repair roads in a timely fashion preventing their deterioration.*
- *Involve communities in the process of road work.*
- *Call upon DOT to review truck routes on a regular basis and to prioritize those routes for street maintenance.*
- *Call for DOT to revise traffic and construction restrictions in order to reduce negative effects on neighborhoods and communities.*

ISSUE 6: 4TH AVENUE

In order for transit and transportation to improve in Brooklyn our roads must meet higher standards in both efficiency and safety. The improvement of our roads begins with 4th Avenue, which currently is in deplorable condition. In fact, 4th Avenue in Brooklyn is considered one of the most dangerous thoroughfares in all of New York City with six pedestrian fatalities between 2006 and 2008.

Goal: Transform 4th Avenue into "Brooklyn Boulevard"

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Continue to advocate for the plan to improve the safety of Fourth Avenue by transforming it into Brooklyn Boulevard. This vision for 4th Avenue, which was a collaborative effort with urban planning students from New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, was released by the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President on May 14, 2010. The 4th Avenue plan outlines ways to improve the 6.2 mile artery, which goes from downtown Brooklyn to the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge. Changes include: installing temporary median improvements—from artwork, plantings, additional benches and trees—*

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and better lighting, textured cross walks and other amenities such as increasing the size of pedestrian refuges in the middle of the road medians.

ISSUE 7: THE BROOKLYN-QUEENS EXPRESSWAY (BQE)

Goal: Renovate and Repair Brooklyn-Queens Expressway

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Support a plan that will offer a safe way to reconstruct the BQE with minimal impact on the surrounding communities.* While repair, renovation and restoration of the BQE is a high priority, we must still give priority to the protection of our beautiful neighborhoods and their residents.

ISSUE 8: BICYCLE LANES

Goal: Increase Bicycle Lanes in Brooklyn

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Support the expansion of bicycle lanes on our roads as long as the expansion is balanced and appropriate.* The addition of bicycle lanes must be limited to roads where the safety of both bicycle riders and motorists can be ensured.

ISSUE 9: ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

Once upon a time Brooklyn was known as the borough of trolleys. On October 31, 1956, the last trolley line in the borough was shut down for good. In the future, we may see the return of trolley and light rail service in Brooklyn as an alternative to the subways and buses.

Goal: Explore New Forms of Transport for Brooklyn's Future

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Support any study into the expansion of alternative transportation.* These alternatives would serve as a supplement to subway and bus service, improving transportation by connecting remote areas of Brooklyn, such as Red Hook and Greenpoint, to the main MTA service lines as well as attracting tourism.
- *Support studies into the creation of alternative fuel transportation systems.*

ISSUE 10: FERRY SERVICE

Brooklyn's large waterways and coastline could provide inexpensive and important commercial and transportation links. Ferry service will prove to be vital to Brooklyn and to the entire City in both times of prosperity and in times of emergency. By having a ferry service that runs between

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Brooklyn and surrounding boroughs, there would be less congestion on our roads, and it can spell relief for our overcrowded subways and buses. With fewer cars on the road there would be fewer emissions and pollutants which would ultimately help improve our air. It would also lessen the burden on an already overburdened subway and bus system.

While the benefits of a ferry service would be immeasurable in day to day life, it would also have a profound impact in a time of emergency. During such an emergency, an advanced ferry network would be vital in transporting people and supplies across areas of immediate danger to other points throughout the City. Brooklyn and all of New York City would benefit if the infrastructure of a new and increased ferry service is in place for times of emergency.

Goal: Increase Ferry Service throughout Brooklyn and NYC Waterways

THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT WILL:

- *Advocate for increased service between Brooklyn and adjacent boroughs.*
- *Support studies identifying new ferry terminal sites.*
- *Work to institute a ferry service that can connect various parts of Brooklyn as well as Staten Island and Queens. Ferry service would also provide for an alternative commercial route.*

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