

## QUEENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (QAC) INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Queens Advisory Committee (QAC) opposes the jail the Mayor proposes to build in Kew Gardens. The following Guidelines and Principles are set-forth by the QAC under the overarching position that the vast majority of QAC members do not support the City's proposed borough-based jails system.

Attached to this document are two documents that were submitted by the Community Preservation Coalition and the Briarwood Community for inclusion in the QAC's Guidelines and Principles as addenda. The opinions expressed in the addenda represent the opinions of the two groups on the City's proposed borough based jail plan in Queens.

### **1. CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM**

- 1.1 The QAC believes the City should wait for the passage of Criminal Justice reform in Albany. One cannot project the bed capacity needed New York City's jail system without having the details of the legislation that gets signed into law.
- 1.2 The QAC demands that the City evaluate other locations as potential sites for a jail facility.
- 1.3 The QAC wants an evaluation conducted on building new modern jails on Rikers Island to meet the City's criminal justice reform goals rather than creating a borough-based jail system. To that end, the QAC calls on the Administration to support the passage of Council Member Holden's bill.
- 1.4 The QAC supports establishing State criminal court facilities adjacent to Rikers Island and improving the transportation system to Rikers Island for visitors.
- 1.5 The QAC supports investing the billions of "jail" dollars in communities - providing decent, permanent and affordable housing, better education and educational opportunities, job training, recreation facilities, etc. that can help prevent young people from entering the criminal justice system in the first place.

### **2. SITE LOCATION AND PROPOSED PROGRAM**

- 2.1 Jails should not be in residential neighborhoods, as stated in the Lippman Commission Report
- 2.2 The QAC supports that any new jail be designed to treat detainees in a humane manner.

- 2.3 The QAC supports State criminal justice legislative reforms that can reduce case delays and safely lower the jail population. Queens QAC supports hiring more judges, district attorneys, public defense attorneys, court clerks, court officers, and support staff, while also adding more courtroom facilities, in order to ensure speedy trials.
- 2.4 The QAC supports the City working with the State to reform the bail system and find other alternatives to housing people in jails.
- 2.5 The QAC supports that any kind of new facilities anywhere should be built correctly, and the City should ensure that those facilities will not be poorly funded or operated in the future.
- 2.6 The QAC supports a continued commitment to programming for detainees, as well as expansion of physical and other activities as strategies to reduce violence within the jails.
- 2.7 The QAC supports DOC hiring staff from different professions, such as social workers and mental health clinicians to perform the non-security related staffing needs within the agency's correctional facilities.

### **3. BUILDING HEIGHT AND DENSITY**

- 3.1 The QAC is opposed to vertical jails.
- 3.2 The QAC believes any jail should be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, which basically means they should not be in residential communities, as stated earlier.

### **4. TRAFFIC, CIRCULATION AND PARKING**

- 4.1 The QAC recommends the City consider how a surrounding neighborhood suffers from significant congestion.