

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 1998

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**QUEENS CIVIC CONGRESS COMMENTS ON DRAFT 1998  
STRATEGIC POLICY STATEMENT FOR QUEENS**

In testimony presented Thursday, August 13, 1998 to the Queens Borough President, the Queens Civic Congress [QCC] commented on the Queens Borough President's Draft 1998 Strategic Policy Statement. The Statement, presented by QCC Economic Development Chair, Chris Collett of Forest Hills, covers Land Use and Zoning, Parks, the JFK-Jamaica rail link, and Creedmoor. The collaborative QCC testimony was coordinated by Vice President for Public Affairs, Corey Bearak. The Queens Civic Congress represents more than 90 of Queens' major neighborhood and community organizations.

**Statement of Queens Civic Congress  
on the  
Queens Borough President's Draft 1998 Strategic Policy Statement  
August 13, 1998**

presented by Chris Collett, QCC Economic Development Chair  
prepared by Corey Bearak, QCC Vice President for Public Affairs

On behalf of the Queens Civic Congress, a coalition of more than 90 of Queens' major neighborhood and community organizations, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft 1998 Strategic Policy Statement [The "Draft"].

The Draft addresses our major concerns. At our 1998 Annual Meeting in April, Congress member organizations unanimously adopted a Platform that includes many of the same issues in the Draft [We append a copy of the Congress Platform\*]. We limit our comments to five areas: Land Use and Zoning, Parks, the JFK-Jamaica rail link, Creedmoor and Sanitation.

**Land Use and Zoning**

*Contextual Districts*

The Queens Borough President's Planning Office and the Zoning Task Force have supported many neighborhoods' efforts to address the problem of inappropriate zoning. They achieved this through the application of the contextual zoning amendments. There is a need for additional contextual districts to match existing housing: districts that will enable one-family, attached, semi-attached blocks to be zoned to reflect their built up character.

*Rules for Major Concessions*

There continues to be a need, 10 years after the 1989 Charter mandate, for rules governing major concessions. Rules need to include meaningful public review of concessions that can impact on affected neighborhoods. Both the Borough Presidents, the Congress and civic groups have proposed rules. There should be no further delay.

### **Parks**

The Congress shares the Borough President's concern for our parks. Flagship status for the Alley Pond Watershed and its components will protect Alley Pond's integrity as a natural wonder. Similar status should be considered for other Queens Parks.

### **Airport Access**

The Congress fully recognizes the importance of airports and related business to the economy of Queens and the region.

The Congress also recognizes the need for a one-seat public transit link from Manhattan to the airports that will provide accessible, inexpensive and reliable transportation to travelers, airport employees and other airport users. A rail link must be technologically compatible with other regional transit providers (NYC Transit, LIRR), and be complementary to its neighbors.

The Port Authority's Van Wyck Light Rail Spur meets neither criteria. It is, moreover, an overpriced, ill-designed intrusion on the south Queens neighborhoods through which it would pass.

The Congress urges the Draft be reconsidered in its support for the Port Authority's plan. The Port Authority can and should design an access projects that will serve New Yorkers, airport users and its neighbors. A study for a Manhattan to LaGuardia one seat access plan will serve all New Yorkers.

### **Creedmoor**

New York state's decision to dispose of the Creedmoor property in eastern Queens presents a unique opportunity to plan and design the orderly redevelopment of one of New York City's major open spaces. We are grateful that the Draft recognizes the Creedmoor Working Group's efforts to create a plan for the two sites. The Congress has adopted and refined a Master Plan for Creedmoor. This will serve Queens and Creedmoor's neighbors. We append the Congress Plan.\*

### **Sanitation**

The Draft should recognize the long-standing concerns of Eastern and Northeastern Queens neighborhoods over the siting of a new Sanitation garage to house trucks that serve Community Board 13.

Thank you.

[\*The Creedmoor Plan, distributed last month, and the QCC Platform, released in April, remain available. Call (718) 343-6779 and leave your fax number, the contact person to whom the material should be directed and the information requested.]