

## **Flatbush Public Library Community Garden Proposal**

### **Issue Statement:**

Out of NYC's 59 community district, CD14 has the highest percentage of residents living more than 0.25 miles away from any public green space. This problem is especially acute in the more heavily dense and socially vulnerable areas of CD14 that consist of mostly multi-family buildings with no back yards.

### **CB14Green Project:**

In order to address this issue, CB14, together with Oded Holzinger, a Fellow through the Fund for the City of New York Community Fellowship Program, has initiated the CB14Green Project. CB14Green is intended to identify opportunities based on need, and develop mechanisms for the creation of new, publicly accessible open green spaces and facilitate renovation of existing ones in Brooklyn Community District 14.

### **BPL Flatbush Branch Location:**

The Flatbush branch of Brooklyn Public Library, located on Linden Blvd near Flatbush Avenue, is a prime location for the CB14Green Project. This location is in the center of district 14's most populated area. Based on the 0.25 miles standard, and looking at census tracts that fall almost entirely within that radius, a green space in that location could serve a population of almost 30,000 residents (image 1). The back yard of the library is a large unutilized area of about 2,500 sqft (images 2 & 3). In 2013 a group of local residents, who organized under the name "Friends of the Flatbush Public Library", set up a Caribbean community garden on that lot. Though the garden was a success, it was only maintained for one year due to lack of funding.

### **The Proposal:**

Brooklyn Community Board 14, through the CB14Green Project, is proposing to facilitate a process by which the back area of the Brooklyn Public Library Flatbush Branch could once again become a community garden. To do that, we would first like to assist with the identification of a local community group or organization that would be the stewardship group for the garden. Once a committed stewardship group is identified, we will connect them with organizations such as NYC GreenThumb, 596 Acres, Brooklyn-Queens Land Trust or the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens. These organizations work all throughout Brooklyn and other boroughs to assist local communities with support for planning, fundraising and implementation of community gardens. Some of these organizations have already expressed enthusiasm toward the prospect of utilizing this lot as a community garden.

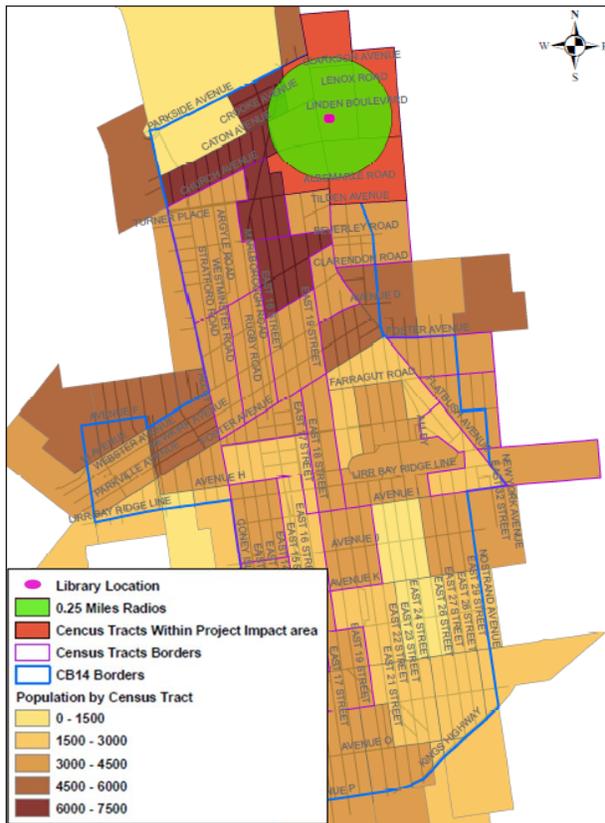
## Expected Library Renovation:

Given that the library is expected to go through general renovation in the next few years, we are proposing two strategies:

- 1- Post-Renovation-Implementation – This strategy proposes that the creation of the garden will be delayed until the renovation takes place. In this case, we propose to include the creation of the garden as part of the general library renovation planning. This would benefit from a participatory process that would bring different community stakeholders into the garden planning process.
- 2- Pre-Renovation-Temporary/Partial-Implementation – Depending on the timing of the renovation, we would be happy to discuss the creation of the community garden prior to the expected renovation. In this case, the garden will be implemented in spring/summer 2018 with the understanding that during the renovation it will not be accessible to the public and would have to be rebuilt after the renovation is over.

## Project Map and Images:

**Image 1** –Brooklyn Public Library Flatbush Branch Location and Impact Area



**Image 2** – Project Location – Aerial View



**Image 3** – Project Location

