

Report to Queens Community Board 13 on City Charter Commission June 22, 2026

Submitted by Corey Bearak, member, QCB13; Chair, Special Committee on Charter Revision.

Dear QCB13 members and the community,

May 28, 2026, the Mayor appointed a “Commission on Government Efficiency, COGE, a Charter Revision Commission tasked with changing the NYC Charter to make City government work better for New Yorkers.”

This presents an opportunity to present changes previously advanced by Queens Community Board 13 to recommend improvements in New York City governance with respect to land use, budget and delivery of city services – all items within its purview under the City Charter. The problem we face as a community board is two-fold. The Mayor announced the commission on May 28 – 10 days after we already met May 18. That leaves little time to consider recommendations for consideration when we meet next on June 22. Secondly, in order to get its recommendations placed on the November 2026 ballot, the commission would need to finalize its recommendations before our Community Board meets after the summer on September 28.

Thus, I recommend the Community Board meet over the summer early enough to propose meaningful changes to the City Charter that the mayor’s commission could review and consider. Attached please find a Draft Resolution based on proposals the board previously approved of in 2010 that I recommend that current members of Queens Community Board 13 consider and discuss this summer in committee and then at a special purpose meeting of the full community board. I propose this path instead of a hasty discussion at our June 22 meeting to give members time to meaningfully consider and discuss these draft recommendations. Also, I will make myself available ahead of any committee meeting to discuss these items with board members.

[Queens Community Board 13Q Resolution on Charter Revision presented June 22, 2026
follows on the next page]

Queens Community Board 13Q Resolution on Charter Revision June 22, 2026

Whereas on May 28, 2026, the Mayor appointed a “Commission on Government Efficiency, COGE, a Charter Revision Commission tasked with changing the NYC Charter to make City government work better for New Yorkers;”

Whereas, Queens Community Board 13 welcomes this opportunity to recommend improvements in New York City governance with respect to land use, budget and delivery of city services – all items within its purview under the City Charter;

Whereas New York City should be recognized as a region;

Whereas the boroughs and local communities should be meaningfully involved in decisions on the delivery and effective allocation of municipal services and City resources;

Whereas the City budget never reflects the need to allocate resources and services to reflect different neighborhood priorities as represented and identified by Community Boards;

Whereas New York City should explore regional models for funding agencies;

Whereas there should be a greater role for the borough presidents in land use planning for their boroughs, allocation of agency resources within the boroughs, overseeing local implementation of the capital budget and oversight of delivery of local services;

Whereas a need exists to strengthen the role of Community Boards and the Offices of the Borough Presidents and empower these institutions with the resources to carry out their responsibilities under the City Charter;

Whereas a need exists to correct the 1989 mistakes that removed legislative review of decisions of the Board of Standards and Appeals, and the failure to include rules for major concessions;

Whereas New York City's policies wrongly subsidize extra illegal occupancies that crowd schools and overburden services;

Whereas community boards remain important partners in smart growth policies to provide needed housing, especially housing that remains affordable for our seniors, our children as they leave their family nests and new families starting out – as exemplified by Queens Community Board 13’s role in the development planned on the Creedmoor campus; and

Whereas, Queens Community Board 13 notes the timing of this charter commission’s appointment and the placement of any recommendations it makes for consideration at the November 2026 election limits this community board’s ability to timely offer any proposals and thus requires the community hold special meetings to consider and approve recommendations to this commission.

Therefore Queens Community Board 13 makes the following recommendations that address how to make the city of New York work better for its residents and urges the Charter Revision Commission (“Commission on Government Efficiency”) to include each in its proposal it makes to the voters:

Land Use Items

- Provide the Community Boards, Borough Presidents and the Public Advocate with the resources to empower each to carry out their charter functions and help New York City weather the current fiscal crisis; use the IBO/OMB analogy to assure each of the offices adequate funding by baselining funding for those offices and setting funding for each office against a set percentage of the overall expense budget.
- Subject all residential, commercial, industrial and public (agency) developments that occupy a city block or more, and all public agencies’ projects to ULURP public review (which includes Community Board, Borough President and City Council review and oversight and approvals), whether or not a zoning or permit change is required.
- Create distinct borough-based planning and zoning offices under supervision of each borough president;
- Maximize community participation in City approval of major concessions for private use of public spaces, including parkland, by involving the Borough Presidents, Council Members and Community Boards in formulating rules defining and governing major concessions.
- Empower the City Council to review all Board of Standards and Appeals dispositions.
- Provide for Council oversight of all decisions by the City Planning Commission.

Government Structure

- Expand the role of borough presidents in local land use planning for their boroughs, allocation of agency resources within the boroughs, overseeing local implementation of the capital budget and greater oversight of the delivery of city services in their boroughs.

Budget

- Budget for the delivery of city services where appropriate by borough and community district.
- Set up a mechanism that devolves resources and service delivery to the appropriate borough or local level that directs City resources to address community needs such as precinct staffing, code enforcement, tree pruning/ removal, traffic studies and signal installation, and programs for youth and seniors.
- Make elected officials accountable by barring mayoral rate-setting boards and authorities from imposing budget allocations unless the Council grants such authority, as in the example of the Water Board setting rates after, rather than, as it does now, before the budget’s adoption.

Oversight

- Shift responsibility for preparation of the Mayor's Management Report (MMR) to the Independent Budget Office and renaming the document the Independent Management Report.
- Create an independent Civilian Complaint Review Board ("CCRB") by base-lining its funding as a percent of the NYPD budget, and establishing a mechanism to make the appointed CCRB members more reflective of the City and controlled less by the administration.
- Make City Charter Revision recommendations for approval by the electorate on a subject matter basis that empowers voters to vote separately and distinctly on each item for their consideration and approval.