



LAW DEPARTMENT

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Attorney-Client; Privileged

DRAFT

Dear [Community Planning Board Chairman^{PERSON}]:

I am writing to you and to the chairmen of all community boards in the City to ask your help in our continuing efforts to meet the needs of the City's unfortunate homeless population. As you know, we now shelter over 4000 homeless men and women in shelters and armories located throughout the City. The problems of homeless men and women are not just their problems, they are also our -- and your -- problem and concern.

Quite aside from any court or consent decree that we may be involved in, it is our policy not to turn away any homeless person who seeks shelter. The consent decree into which we entered two years ago has a similar requirement. While other cities may do far less, I am sure that you agree with me that New York City's commitment not to turn away any homeless people who seek shelter is a just and correct policy and entirely consistent with this City's compassionate history, and especially so during difficult economic times.

We have made and are making many efforts to meet our commitment. Some of you are particularly familiar with these efforts, and have contributed to them, because you have within your ^{district} planning board area shelters or other facilities

together?

servicing the homeless. But we must do more and do so co-operatively. In asking for your help and ideas I want to address directly what each one of you knows is a key problem in this area. All of you probably agree that it is a decent and correct policy to provide shelter. Where shall the shelters be located? The answer cannot be, as it often has been, that "it's a wonderful program, but not in my neighborhood." If not in any particular neighborhood, then where?

What I am asking you to do ^{is} ~~is~~ to let me know what buildings or other facilities in your ^{district} ~~planning~~/area might possibly serve as sites for shelters for homeless people if and when the need arises to open additional shelters. The fact that you may cite a particular building does not of course mean it will necessarily be used as a shelter. Buildings may ultimately be found to be unacceptable or inappropriate for shelter use for various ^{ADMINISTRATIVE, COST} ~~programmatic~~ or legal reasons. But few people know ^{the} ~~what~~ building stock of your communities (both privately and publicly owned) as well as you do and I am asking for your help, all of you, (in helping) to meet what may be an unpopular but is nevertheless a real City-wide problem. I know that a few communities which already have shelters have done much more than others. It is only fair that we all try to meet this responsibility.

Our commitment has been to provide the necessary shelter space as needs have increased. We have met this commitment and we will continue to meet it. As a result, we have opened a number of new shelters in the past few years, including one in the past two weeks. Circumstances require that we continue to do this as needs dictate and sometimes, if necessary, on short notice and without prior consultation. However, with more cooperation from all districts and more buildings identified as potential shelter sites, we will be able to act cooperatively, and with more prior consultation.

I would like you to provide us with a list of potential buildings which contain at least 10,000 square foot (which normally translates into a capacity of about 100 people). As a secondary list, you may provide a list of buildings that are smaller. Larger buildings are more efficient and ^{economical} ~~efficient~~ and are the ones we have used thus far, but we will consider, if appropriate, some smaller sites.

Please write your response directly to me as soon as possible so that we can evaluate any future steps. ^{with} (I look forward to) your cooperation.

Sincerely,

EDWARD I. KOCH
M A Y O R