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The **ROCKAWAY COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER** works with community-based organizations, police, elected officials, civic leaders, and residents to provide restorative-justice based solutions to local crime. Through this innovative approach, the Center positively addresses the justice needs of the victim, the offender, and the community. This peer and community-led alternative ensures accountability and works collaboratively with stakeholders and local police to build relationships and trust. Through alignment with recent State criminal justice reforms, this project relieves the burden of investigation, prosecution, and incarceration on the City's criminal justice system.

NEED FOR COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER IN THE ROCKAWAYS

Every year, the NYPD 100 and 101 Precincts in the Rockaways make 6,000+ arrests for misdemeanors and non-violent felonies, including 900+ arrests of young adults under 24 years old. Once arrested, court-involved residents of the Rockaways must travel nearly two hours by public transportation to appear at Queens County Criminal Court in Kew Gardens. Missing an arraignment compounds legal issues by leading to a warrant and potentially a night in jail, fines they cannot afford to pay, and a criminal record.

THE SOLUTION: MANY OF THESE CASES CAN BE HANDLED AT THE ROCKAWAY COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER.

BENEFIT TO THE COMMUNITY

Community leaders including heads of churches and houses of worship, members of community-based organizations, business leaders, and other community residents will administer the court and play an integral role in their local justice system. Benefits include:

- Improved relationships between community members, the NYPD, and the City's criminal justice system and a reduction in crime.
- Increased satisfaction with the justice system for both victim and offender.
- Training and technical assistance delivered by Queens Defenders and other community-based organizations to administer the Justice Center hearings.
- Access to mediation, housing mediation, and restorative-justice focused programming including restorative circles.

BENEFIT TO INDIVIDUALS

Residents of the Rockaways charged with misdemeanors have the opportunity to appear at community-led hearings located near their homes. Benefits include:

- Opportunities for the offender to repay their community via rehabilitative methods that maintain their dignity.
- Skill development, job-training, and networking opportunities with local businesses and community leaders, leading to lower rates of recidivism.
- Reduced financial impact of involvement with the criminal justice system.