A COMMUNITY’S VISION:
A Shared Space for South Asians

Final Report December 2011

Founding Partners:
Chhaya Community Development Corporation
Adhikaar, India Home, South Asian Council for Social Services,
South Asian Youth Action

prepared by
hester street collaborative
Chhaya Community Development Corporation (Chhaya CDC) is pleased to publish this report on the need for a South Asian community center in Queens. Annetta Seecharran worked with Hester Street Collaborative in leading the feasibility study and producing this report.

Chhaya CDC partnered with Adhikaar, India Home, South Asian Council for Social Services and South Asian Youth Action in launching this project to explore the possibility of building a multi-service South Asian community center in Queens. Special thanks the organizations leaders and key staff who formed the founding advisory committee for this project: Afreen Alam, Arshiah Khan, Kamla Motihar, Luna Ranjit, Seema Agnani, Sudha Acharya, Vasundhara Kalasapudi and Udai Tambar.

Chhaya CDC and its partners are grateful to the Surdna Foundation for funding toward predevelopment planning for the creation of a shared space for South Asians.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Chhaya CDC
Based in Jackson Heights, Queens, New York, Chhaya Community Development Corporation (Chhaya) - meaning “shelter or shade” is dedicated to creating more stable and sustainable communities by increasing civic participation and addressing the housing and community development needs of New York's South Asians, new immigrants and their neighbors. Its work encompasses tenant rights, homeownership, foreclosure prevention, housing rights, civic engagement, and advocating for affordable housing opportunities; as well as research and advocacy around community needs. Each year, Chhaya CDC works with thousands of individuals through its organizing, education and counseling services; and hundreds of thousands through partnerships with the media. Chhaya’s eleven staff speak more than five languages including: Bangla/Bengali, Hindi, Nepali, Tibetan, & Urdu.

Hester Street Collaborative
Hester Street Collaborative’s (HSC) mission is to empower residents of underserved communities by providing them with the tools and resources necessary to have a direct impact on shaping their built environment. We do this through a hands-on approach that combines design, education, and advocacy. HSC seeks to create more equitable, sustainable, and vibrant neighborhoods where community voices lead the way in improving their environment and neglected public spaces.

Annetta Seecharran, Independent Consultant
Annetta Seecharran is a Queens-based community leader who has 20 years of experience in the social justice field. She has spent the last decade working to level the playing field for low-income South Asians and immigrants in New York City. For eight of those years she served as executive director for South Asian Youth Action.
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In the summer of 2011 Chhaya CDC led a historic process engaging nearly 200 South Asians who live throughout the borough of Queens in envisioning the establishment of a center which meets needs for community, connection and culturally sensitive services are met under one roof.

For the first time ever in New York City, South Asian American elders, youth, domestic workers and others were given the opportunity to participate in shaping a vision for a community center. In a series of visioning sessions across Queens, community members shared insights about their daily journeys, gaps in services they encounter as they go about their lives, and specific ideas about what kind of programs and space might meet their needs.

Chhaya CDC partnered with the following four Queens-based South Asian organizations in the visioning process: Adhikaar, India Home, South Asian Council for South Services (SACSS) and South Asian Youth Action (SAYA!). Collectively these groups meet some of the core needs of the growing South Asian communities in Queens and other boroughs. Yet, coordination of services and limited resources remain a challenge for most of these and other organizations serving New York City’s South Asian communities. There is also a burgeoning need for a safe, shared space for intercultural and intergenerational activities, celebrating the diversity of the South Asian community in New York City. South Asian families who face a host of obstacles accessing linguistically and culturally appropriate support are left on their own to navigate the social services landscape. Community workers have long recognized the need for pooling efforts and resources for greater efficiency and effectiveness in our work. What’s more, over the last decade community members themselves have been expressing the need for a dedicated South Asian center.

The five founding partner organizations hosted six visioning sessions that sought answer two questions:
1) What location would best serve the community? And, 2) What are the key spatial and operational considerations that would best serve the community?

We felt a mapping exercise would be the most effective way to document communities’ daily trajectory—where they live/study, work, play, pray and shop. At the visioning sessions participants were given colored dots representing their different daily activities and were asked to place them on a map.

To answer the second question participants were asked to imagine their dream center. They were then asked to write on post-it notes services the center provides, its physical attributes and what it feels like to be in the space.

These exercises resulted in a large volume of data that poignantly and powerfully capture participants’ specific service needs as well as their concrete ideas for having these needs met under one roof. Recognizing that one center alone could not fulfill all of the communities aspirations, a town hall was held with the objective of engaging a larger representation of organizations and community members in building on and then prioritizing the needs and aspirations of the previous visioning sessions.
The South Asian communities in Queens, from organizers to individual residents to business owners, feel that a community space which provides culturally and linguistically sensitive services is important and critical at this juncture in the communities’ growth.

**KEY FINDINGS:**

1. The South Asian communities in Queens, from organizers to individual residents to business owners, feel that a community space which provides culturally and linguistically sensitive services is important and critical at this juncture in the communities’ growth.

2. The center should be located in the Jackson Heights area as this is a major thoroughfare of the communities’ daily activities, and it meets a transportation requirement. It was noted that the southeastern Queens communities that include Richmond Hill and South Ozone Park would not be adequately served by a center located in the Jackson Heights. It is recommended that a separate effort be launched to explore the feasibility of establishing a center in that part of Queens.

3. The center should have the capacity to serve at least 100 individuals daily. It should house programs of all the major South Asian organizations, and be available for community-driven cultural activities. The space should also be large enough to host 300-person events and should provide space for cultural and recreational activities in addition to social services. The ideal estimated square footage is 20,000.

4. While the center should be dedicated to serving the South Asian communities in Queens and serve as space to celebrate and promote the South Asian cultures, it should also welcome anyone who seeks its services and be inclusive of all religions and ethnicities.

5. The center should be community-driven and truly reflect the diversity of the South Asian communities—no one ethnicity or religion should dominate, it should be intergenerational and safe space for LGBTQI individuals.

6. In order for the center to be sustainable in the long run, some partners will be required to serve as anchor tenants. Chhaya CDC, India Home, and SAYA as well as other partner’s surveyed have indicated that they are willing to serve as anchor tenants; while other groups such as Adhikaar and SACSS will run programming and move only a portion of operations to the center.
I. INTRODUCTION

Who are South Asians?
The South Asian population in New York City is diverse and geographically dispersed across New York City, with the greatest concentration in Queens. The largest groups include Bangladeshi, Indian, Indo-Caribbean, Nepali and Pakistani.

South Asians in Queens are among the elderly, youth and working families. The largest groups include Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. A significant number of Queens-based South Asians are low-income, limited English proficient, foreign born and undocumented. They struggle with a range of challenges including unsteady and insecure work, lack access to health care, overcrowded housing, low performing schools and social and cultural isolation.

The Need for a South Asian Community Center
South Asians are among the fastest growing ethnic groups in New York City. Over the last 20 years the Bangladeshi population increased 973%, Pakistani 210% and Indians 103%. The Nepali community continues to grow and is estimated to be nearly 30,000 in New York City. Community leaders believe that the Indo-Caribbean population is over 100,000, but the exact figure is unclear as this group is not properly counted in the US census. According to the latest census data there are approximately 315,000 South Asians living in New York City. However, when we account for the documented undercount and include those that are unlikely to complete the census forms and Indo-Caribbeans, who did not have a clear ethnic category, the figure is probably closer to 500,000.

As the South Asian population in New York City continues to grow so has the number of organizations dedicated to addressing their emerging needs. There are approximately twenty South Asian focused groups in New York City that provide direct social services and advocate on behalf of the community. These organizations range from the two decades old to the newly formed, with an equal spread of capacities. Some are fully established operations, while others are volunteer-led. Nearly all grapple with the challenges of sustainability and how to best meet the mounting demand for their services.

Despite the growing number of South Asian organizations, the South Asian community is severely underserved. Individuals and families are often not aware of services available to them or are left having to navigate the social services landscape on their own, usually with limited English proficiency, fear around immigration issues and little time due to long work days.

The increasing number of organizations, the pressing demand for more and better services and the limited resources available to South Asian organizations point to a need for greater coordination and efficiency in meeting the needs of the communities. Leaders of this project believe that a shared, multi-purpose, multi-service space would result in tremendous benefit for their communities as well as for South Asian organizations.

Some of the key benefits of a one-stop center:
- A holistic approach to community development, whereby members are better able to take advantage of multiple resources that substantially increase the impact of any singular program or service.
- A greater sense of connection and community.
- Opportunities to contribute through volunteering.
- Organizations maximizing costs—lower rent from shared space, sharing of back offices, pooling fundraising efforts, etc.
- Better coordination among the service providers for increased efficiency and cohesiveness.

We recognize that one center alone cannot fully meet the communities’ needs; however there is tremendous urgency in finding a solution to maximize what is currently available.

1 Chhaya CDC Community Needs Assessment, 2010
2 Asian American Federation’s analysis of the 2010 US Census.
SOUTH ASIAN DEMOGRAPHICS in NYC: GROWTH 1990 - 2010

- **BANGLADESHI**: 53,000 - 973% INCREASE
- **PAKISTANI**: 42,000 - 210% INCREASE
- **INDIAN**: 192,000 - 103% INCREASE
II. WHO WE ARE:

Five Queens-based community organizations partnered in this feasibility study. Key staff members from the organizations formed the founding advisory committee.

ADHIKAAR

Adhikaar, meaning rights in Nepali, is a women-led non-profit organization promoting human rights and social justice in Nepali-speaking communities. Adhikaar is the only organization mobilizing the Nepali-speaking community in New York area through organizing, community education, grassroots advocacy, and leadership development. The organization currently works in three program areas: workers' rights, immigrant rights, and access to healthcare. Adhikaar played an important role in the New York State Domestic Workers Bill of Rights becoming a law.

CHHAYA

Based in Jackson Heights, Queens, New York, Chhaya Community Development Corporation (Chhaya) - meaning “shelter or shade” is dedicated to creating more stable and sustainable communities by increasing civic participation and addressing the housing and community development needs of New York’s South Asians, new immigrants and their neighbors. Its work encompasses tenant rights, homeownership, foreclosure prevention, housing rights, civic engagement, and advocating for affordable housing opportunities; as well as research and advocacy around community needs.

INDIA HOME

India Home was started as a not-for-profit organization by health care providers, who both personally and professionally witnessed the social, psychological and medical problems of seniors and people with special needs. India Home is committed to providing services for seniors and people with special needs in a culturally sensitive environment. The organization's goal is to provide quality care by adding life to the years. India Home operates three senior care centers in Queens and one in Long Island and collaborates with other like-minded organizations, individuals, health care professionals and Government organizations. The organization plans to open its fifth center in Flushing in January 2012.

SOUTH ASIAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICES

South Asian Council for Social Services (SACSS) is a not-for-profit organization that was created in 2000 to empower underserved South Asians to actively engage in the civic and economic life of New York. The organization's core program areas are healthcare access, awareness and advocacy; parent education and preventive services; mental health education for seniors; and English and computer literacy classes. SACSS also advocates with elected officials on our community's behalf. All the organization’s services are free and are provided by culturally competent staff members who speak Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Gujarati, and Bengali.

SOUTH ASIAN YOUTH ACTION

South Asian Youth Action (SAYA!) provides comprehensive youth development programs for low-income South Asian youth in New York City. Through academic, leadership, sports, arts, and counseling programs, SAYA! presents youth with the possibility to expand their horizons and realize their dreams. In our 15-year history, SAYA! has opened the door to over 7,700 youth who are often the first in their families to attend high school and pursue college in the U.S.
There were two main objectives of this study:
1) To engage community members in a visioning process and document their specific ideas for a community center.
2) To understand the spatial requirements of key South Asian organizations and gauge their interests in providing services in a shared space.

The overall process of engaging nearly 200 people included three components:
1) Visioning Sessions with constituents organized by each of the partner organizations.
2) A Town Hall bringing all these participants as well as other stakeholders together to reaffirm findings from the visioning sessions.
3) A survey of organizations providing services and conducting community organizing in the South Asian community around the City.

Visioning Sessions with Partner Organizations
Six visioning sessions, hosted by partner organizations, were held in various parts of Queens over a three-month period. Collectively over 100 individuals participated in the sessions—those held in Northwestern Queens having the highest participation rates. Sessions were held in Elmhurst, Flushing, Glen Oaks, Jackson Heights, Woodside, and Richmond Hill. One session was held with a diverse base of youth, one with seniors, one with predominantly Indian individuals, another with all Nepali speakers, and another with predominantly Bangladeshi and Pakistani speakers. Translation was provided in all sessions. Our goal was to offer community members the opportunity to help shape the vision and the specifics of a center that would meet their needs—particularly the services and space the center should provide. In addition, we sought to map the community's daily activities to better understand what location might be ideal for the center.
MAPPING ACTIVITY:

WHERE DO YOU...

LIVE? WORK/STUDY? SHOP? PLAY/PRAY?

Participants were given maps of Queens and were asked to place colored dots to show where they work or study, live, play, pray and shop:
- Red dots for where they live.
- Blue dots for where they work or study.
- Green or yellow for where they shop, pray and play.

After participants mapped their daily activities, they were asked to put a star where they think the center should be located based on what they observe as the daily routes of participants.

MY CENTER ACTIVITY:

NEEDS FOR A SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITY CENTER

MY COMMUNITY CENTER

The above poster was created to give participants a visual of what their center might look like—possibly a store-front, a typical Queens row-house or a church building. Participants were then asked to imagine their ideal center and think about what it would look like, feel like and offer. They were then asked to complete the following sentences on post-it notes:
- My Center Is ...
- My Center has...
- My Center provides...

Workshop participants were encouraged to dream big and write as many post-it notes as they would like. They were then asked to post them on the poster and collectively group the ideas and choose a representative to report back.
A town hall was held to create an opportunity for a wider cross-section of community members to contribute to the vision and to help prioritize the ideas gathered from the previous six visioning sessions. Jackson Heights residents and organizations, business leaders and all known South Asian organizations in New York City were invited to join. Participants of the previous visioning sessions also were invited back. Approximately 100 individuals attended the town hall.

The results of the six earlier visioning sessions were presented, and participants were divided into smaller groups and invited to contribute any new ideas. They were then asked to look at all the ideas, old and new, and choose their top priorities, which were then presented back to the larger group.

Given that South Asian organizations are a key constituent of the project, a survey was conducted in order to ensure their perspectives were integrated in the study. A total of 15 South Asian organizations were invited to complete the survey. Organizations were selected to participate in the survey based on two criteria: 1) if South Asians were their primary target population; and 2) if they had a presence in Queens.

The eight-question survey was designed with the following objectives:

1. To check the assumption that a shared community space would be beneficial to the organization.
2. To gauge organizations’ interest in being part of a collective space.
3. To understand organizations’ specific spatial needs including location.
4. To learn what their overall vision is for the center.

A list of organizations surveyed and a summary of findings is attached in the appendices.
IV. KEY FINDINGS:

GEOGRAPHIC DATA - THE MAPPING ACTIVITY RESULTS

The results of the mapping exercise pointed to Jackson Heights as the ideal location for the center. In every category of the participants’ daily activities Jackson Heights had the largest number of dots:

- **PLAY/PRAY:** 57%
- **SHOP:** 52%
- **LIVE:** 43%
- **WORK/STUDY:** 27%

The maps showed that South Asians in Queens are dispersed across the borough; however Jackson Heights is a major thoroughfare for the members who participated in the visioning sessions.

It is also important to note that the steering committee members and the majority of the participants in the visioning sessions represented northwestern Queens, which skewed the results of the study. The neighborhoods of Richmond Hill, Ozone Park and South Ozone in southeastern Queens are home to another large concentration of South Asians. The founding partners are keenly aware that a community center in northwestern Queens would not meet the needs of the community in southeastern Queens due to distance and poor public transportation access between these two areas in Queens.
COMMUNITY NEEDS - THE MY CENTER ACTIVITY RESULTS

Ideas that showed up more than once were deemed important and were categorized into three major areas: programs and services; space; and operations. They were then ranked according to the number of times they showed up.

Highest Ranked Needs:

#1 Social Services
and support navigating services (health, legal, and immigration)

#2 Arts & Culture
(arts & crafts, music & dance, cultural activities)

#3 Job Prep & Search Assistance

#4 Youth Programs/ Senior Services

Other Noted Needs:

- Computer Classes
- Counseling
- Senior programs
- Translation & Interpretation
- South Asian Language Classes
- ESL Classes
- Childcare
Participants shared a number of spatial needs:

- Recreational Facilities (Pool, Basketball Courts, Gym)
- Kitchen / Dining Room
- Prayer Room/Religious Program
- Arts Facilities (Music/Visual/Dance/Theater)
- Conference Rooms
- Party Hall
- Computer Lab
- Other Noted Needs: Library, Office Space, Elderly Rooms, Children’s Rooms
Participants shared a number of operational requirements:

Access to parking
Parking was considered important for many participants. It is anticipated that community members will travel from other parts of Queens and other boroughs. Parking would also be important for special events.

Open Long Hours
*(days, evenings & weekends)*
The elders might use the center in the morning, young people in the after school hours and working adults in the evening. Individuals expressed interest in having the center be accessible in weekends for cultural and family events.

Close to transportation
Many families, young people and elderly do not drive and rely on public transportation.

Safe
Safety was raised as important concern. Participants said that they want to feel comfortable and safe in the center.

Interpretation & Translation Services
A significant number Queens-based South Asians are limited English proficient. Translation and interpretation in Bengali, Nepali, Hindi and Urdu would be essential for success.

Gender & Age Specific Spaces
Participants cited the importance of having designated rooms for men and women, children and elderly.
Town Hall attendees included previous participants of visioning sessions as well as many participants who did not have an organizational affiliation. It also included professionals living in the area that were not necessarily the target beneficiaries of the center’s social services programs. The results powerfully affirmed the findings from the visioning sessions.

Participants reported the following programmatic priorities for the center:

- Social services
- Cultural Activities
- Jobs Prep
- Children & youth
- Seniors

In addition, participants affirmed all the space requirements previously recommended in the visioning sessions. One new idea that was strongly suggested is the importance of the center being “green” and making use of energy efficient technologies such as solar power. Participants were also keen on confidentiality as an important space requirement so that community members can seek any services without fear.

With regard to programs and services two additional needs were emphasized: 1) transportation for seniors; and 2) childcare.

Open discussions led to the following additional recommendations:

1. Early Literacy
cited as an important issue for new immigrant children. Library partnerships might be a potential resource.

2. Broadened membership
It was suggested that the leaders consider broadening the scope of the center beyond South Asians as a target populations. Others stressed the importance of a dedicated South Asian space.

3. Inter-faith activities
participants saw the center as a potential space to promote interfaith collaboration.

4. Volunteerism
many shared the opinion that a center would lend for the promotion of volunteerism among community members. The example of young people and the elderly coming together and benefiting from each other’s presence was cited.

5. All organizations housed in same space
having a central space for South Asian organizations was viewed to be important.

6. Sustainability
participants were concerned about the financial sustainability of the center. Rental space was suggested as an option.

7. Community garden
an outdoor green space was discussed as important.
KEY FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY

As noted earlier a total of 15 organizations were invited to take the survey, however only five surveys were completed. The results from the five completed surveys showed unequivocal support for the center.

The following summarizes the key survey findings:

Need for shared space.
All five respondents said a shared space would benefit their work and that they would be interested in offering programs and/or locating their offices in the center. One group said that it would also retain separate program and office spaces as it is not a pan-South Asian organization.

Spatial needs.
The space needs ranged from ten offices spaces to a large conference/event room to private counseling rooms. These space requirements are consistent with what was heard in the visioning sessions.

Location.
Of the five respondents only two specified a location—one suggested Jackson Heights and the other Richmond Hill. Respondents were concerned about accessibility by public transportation and the space being inviting, warm and friendly. Collectively the constituents of the responding organizations live throughout Queens, with one group dominating in the Northwestern area and another in the Southeastern neighborhoods. All but one of the respondents said that their members travel by public transportation. No one neighborhood dominated as priority in terms of need for South Asian community center—almost every major area in Queens was mentioned.

Emerging needs.
Survey respondents identified the following emerging needs: ESOL, translation and interpretation, health services, affordable housing, services for the aging, legal services, immigration, help accessing public benefits, recreational and cultural programs, youth programs and SAT prep—all of which were identified in the visioning sessions and town hall as well.

Follow-up.
All five organizations were interested in follow-up conversations about the center.

Vision. In their own words:

“A one-stop shop for all services needed by the South Asian Community.”

“Something that is for everyone, where every staff person or group head is LGBTQI sensitive, and we all work together to help each other.”

“Ideally an Indo-Caribbean Community & Cultural Center to serve the unique needs of these residents.”
In order to identify the size of building that would best serve the South Asian community in northwestern Queens, the organizations involved in the study were asked to share their administrative and programmatic space requirements. When we consider these requirements and the key aspects of a center that are important to community members we concluded that the ideal space for the community center is a large commercial building that is approximately 20,000 square feet.

The following diagrams sketch how the space might be utilized based on assumptions derived from ideal programmatic services, surveys, and needs of anchor tenants. These are meant only to inform the space search and are not necessarily indicative of center’s final layout. Ultimately, the building that is purchased/or leased will determine what the center looks like. Another prioritization process will happen once a space has been identified.
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<th>ROOM</th>
<th>SQ FT / ROOM</th>
<th>DIMENSIONS</th>
<th>TOTAL SQ FEET / FLOOR</th>
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<td><strong>BASEMENT</strong></td>
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<td>Exercise Room</td>
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<td>18'-0&quot; x 25'-0&quot;</td>
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<td>Prayer Room</td>
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<td>Restroom (2)</td>
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<td><strong>1ST FLOOR</strong></td>
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<td>Multi-Age Lounge</td>
<td>600</td>
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<td>Restroom (2)</td>
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<td><strong>2ND FLOOR</strong></td>
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<td><strong>3RD FLOOR</strong></td>
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<td>Library/Computer Room</td>
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<td>Conference Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open Office</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>12'-0&quot; x 20'-0&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office (4)</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>10'-0&quot; x 12'-0&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling Room (5)</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>8'-0&quot; x 8'-0&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restroom (2)</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>8'-0&quot; x 8'-0&quot;</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
BASEMENT
5100 SQ FEET TOTAL

FIRST FLOOR
6500 SQ FEET TOTAL
SECOND FLOOR
4600 SQ FEET TOTAL

Visual Art Studio
2,500 sq. ft.
Capacity: 500
Natural Light
Potential Revenue Generator

Classroom
1,000 sq. ft.
Capacity: 40

Offices (2)
120 sq. ft.
Capacity: 1-3

Open Office
250 sq. ft.
Capacity: 5 desks
Reception in this area

Restrooms (2)
64 sq. ft.
Capacity: 2

Circulation/Hallways

Elevator/Stairs

THIRD FLOOR
4600 SQ FEET TOTAL

Counseling Rooms (5)
64 sq. ft.
Capacity: 2-4
Individual and Family Counseling

Conference Room
450 sq. ft.
Capacity: 30
Double as classroom

Library/Computer Room
1,500 sq. ft.
30 stations
Books/periodicals & computers

Classroom
1,000 sq. ft.
Capacity: 40

Restrooms (2)
64 sq. ft.
Capacity: 2

Open Office
250 sq. ft.
Capacity: 5 desks
Reception in this area

Offices (4)
120 sq. ft.
Capacity: 1-3
CHALLENGES TO CONSIDER

Richmond Hill
In the Richmond Hill session participants expressed concern that a center in northwestern Queens would not serve Richmond Hill, South Ozone Park, and Ozone Park. The South Asian population in those neighborhoods is large enough to warrant a separate center.

Diversity in constituents
As noted earlier the South Asian population in Queens is diverse. It is important that there is ongoing intentional effort to promote true diversity at the center. All constituents should feel welcomed. In the visioning sessions participants expressed the importance of ensuring that the center is inclusive of all religions, ethnic groups and LGBTQI individuals.

Inclusion of non-South Asians and neighborhood residents
Participants were clear that they want a South Asian focused center, but they also cited the importance having the center be available to anyone who might need its services, regardless of ethnicity. In the current anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant environment, the center may face backlash. A messaging strategy will be important.

Management
A fully functioning and populated center as is envisioned by community members will likely require two layers of management—property and programs. It is anticipated that programs management will require ongoing coordination. Organizations housed at and/or providing services at the center may consider sharing back offices in order to maximize resources. Center management will require careful consideration. It recommended that a separate management entity, such as an LLC be created.

Governance
In order to ensure that the project remains inclusive and responsive to the communities’ needs the founding partners should ensure that the steering committee include South Asians from a wide range of organizational affiliations, professional backgrounds and neighborhoods.

Sustainability
The long-term financial sustainability of the center should be considered in the early planning stages. In addition to securing anchor tenants, it is recommended that income-generating sources such as rental space for special events, rental of parking spaces, gym membership and fees for arts and fitness classes be considered.
VI. APPENDICES

a. Survey

b. Input gathering activities

c. Draft budgets

d. List of South Asian focused organizations (direct service and community organizing) in New York City.
MY COMMUNITY CENTER

my center is... my center has... my center provides...

What if my community center were in an old building like a church, school or firehouse?

What if my community center were in a storefront?

What if my community center were in a row house?