DOWNTOWN JAMAICA QUEENS
Commercial District Needs Assessment
ABOUT DOWNTOWN JAMAICA

Avenue NYC is a competitive grant program created by the NYC Department of Small Business Services to fund and build the capacity of community-based development organizations to execute commercial revitalization initiatives. Avenue NYC is funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, which targets investments in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.

Avenue NYC Commercial Revitalization grants provide multi-year commitments aimed at building the capacity of partner organizations to better understand and neighborhood needs, develop impactful programs, and sustain their work in the community for at least three years.

The Commercial District Needs Assessment (CDNA) highlights a neighborhood’s existing business landscape and consumer characteristics.

This CDNA features Jamaica Avenue, Sutphin Boulevard, and 165th Street commercial corridors in Downtown Jamaica which was conducted by the Jamaica Center Business Improvement District between July 2018 and January 2019.

Key issues and opportunities identified through this assessment will help prioritize SBS-supported local investments, and serve as an informational and marketing resource for the neighborhood.

In This Report

Existing conditions, business data, and qualitative depictions of the neighborhood were gathered from more than 832 surveys and various stakeholder meetings with neighborhood merchants, shoppers, workers, property owners, and residents.

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Background

One of Queens’ three regional business districts, Downtown Jamaica is home to a variety of civic, cultural, and transportation networks, and serves as a gateway to New York City. This commercial destination boasts three performing arts centers, dozens of landmarked structures, an 11-acre park, two colleges, a major transportation hub, hundreds of independent businesses, and several national retailers.

Development of Jamaica began in the early 20th century, with the extension of the elevated transit lines and completion of the Long Island Rail Road’s Jamaica station. Between 1920 and 1940, Downtown Jamaica’s commercial real estate significantly expanded to support the growing residential population. Neighborhood fixtures included prominent department stores Gertz, Macy’s, and May’s; the first modern supermarket, King Kullen; and Loew’s Valencia Theatre.

The neighborhood remains home to many historically significant buildings: King Manor, a historic house museum that focuses on the role of Rufus King (a signer of the U.S. Constitution) and his sons as national figures in the early anti-slavery movement; the First Reformed Church of Jamaica, initially erected in 1715, rebuilt in 1862, and enlarged in 1902; the Grace Episcopal Church, which was completed in 1862 and enlarged in 1901-1902; and the Jamaica Avenue Sidewalk Ouck which was originally built in 1900 at 161-11 Jamaica Avenue, designated a New York City landmark in 1981, and moved to the intersection of Jamaica Avenue and Union Hall Street in 1889.

Today, Downtown Jamaica is a major transportation hub with 560,000 people passing through daily. This includes, four subway lines, 48 bus lines (including 10 Long Island bus lines), the Long Island Railroad, and the AirTrain JFK which connects the district to the rest of New York City, Long Island, John F. Kennedy International Airport, and beyond. This immense transportation hub serves Downtown Jamaica’s four vibrant commercial corridors: Jamaica Avenue is home to a dynamic mix of national and local businesses and a variety of retail and food services; Sutphin Boulevard features the AirTrain Jamaica Station, courthouses, and other professional services; Hillside Avenue has large automotive-related businesses, cultural retail stores, and restaurants catering to a large Bangladeshi population; 165th Street Mall is a pedestrian area lined with small businesses and the Jamaica Colosseum Mall.

Neighborhood Demographics

Downtown Jamaica is demographically and socioeconomically diverse, with an approximate population of 68,000, and 61% of the population is foreign-born. Downtown Jamaica has a large presence of Hispanic or Latino (36%) and Asian (36%) residents, and a median household income of $46,778, somewhat lower than the borough-wide ($59,758) and citywide ($55,191) medians. Downtown Jamaica’s diversity is present in its unique restaurants and shops, historic landmarks, arts and cultural institutions, and vibrant commercial corridors.

Future Opportunities

Since 2000, Downtown Jamaica has been the focus of significant public investment. Major investments include the $350 million AirTrain terminal; an extensive rezoning effort; and more recently, a $153 million commitment from the City of New York through the Jamaica Now! Action Plan to support equitable growth in Downtown Jamaica. Currently there is more than $1 billion of private investment, resulting in more than 4,800 new apartments, 2,400 hotel rooms, and 500,000 square feet of commercial space completed and pending. Most recently, Downtown Jamaica received $10 million in Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding from New York State which in part aims to prepare the local workforce for sustainable careers and make investments to draw residents and visitors.

These investments and recent refreshed efforts at collaboration between various stakeholders are helping the community create and jointly pursue a shared vision for the district. With strategic aligning of resources focusing on the strengthening of businesses through commercial revitalization projects, both long-standing small businesses and new businesses in Downtown Jamaica will be better positioned to leverage these investments and serve a growing population in the years to come.

See more on page 16

See more on page 5
Downtown Jamaica

Points of Interest
- Assessed Commercial Corridors
- Arts, Culture, Educational Institutions
- Public Facilities
- Public Spaces

Neighborhood Events
- Downtown Jazz Festival
- Greater Jamaica Development Corporation Harvest Festival
- Jamaica Arts & Music Summer (JAMS) Festival
- Jamaica Avenue Weekend Walks: A Family Stroll
- Queens International Children’s Festival
- Sutphin Boulevard BID Harvest Festival

Merchant & Business Groups
- 165th Street Mall Improvement Association
- Association of Women Construction Workers of America, Inc. (AWCWA)
- Greater Jamaica Development Corporation
- Jamaica Center Business Improvement District
- Sutphin Boulevard Business Improvement District

Notable Places
1. Queens County Supreme Court
2. Jamaica Center BID
3. Sutphin Boulevard BID
4. Workforce1 Career Center
5. Queens County Supreme Court
6. Sutphin Boulevard Public Space
KEY FINDINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

Strengths

- Home to three performing arts centers, dozens of landmarked historic sites, an 11-acre park, two colleges, a major transportation hub, hundreds of independent businesses, and several national destination retailers
- Proximity to major institutional anchors and destinations like Queens Supreme and Civil Courts, Social Security Administration, JFK International Airport, St. John’s University, YMCA, and York College
- Major transportation hub with 300,000 people passing through every day on four subway lines, 14 bus lines, the LIRR, and AirTrain JFK
- Low vacancy rate (9%) across the entire commercial district and an abundance of affordable retail
- A wide variety of goods and services that are accessible to consumers of all income levels
- High foot traffic during daytime hours which is appreciated by merchants, residents, and visitors
- Wide sidewalks on Jamaica Avenue encourage window shopping and provide space for spontaneous social interactions
- Strong sense of community and nostalgic retro feel adds to the character of the neighborhood
- Many active and engaged community organizations that promote small businesses in the area and celebrate the neighborhood

Challenges

- Substance abuse and sales around the subway station make visitors, residents, and merchants feel unsafe
- Lack of family-oriented spaces and activities, like sit-down restaurants and community events
- Limited nighttime activities contributes to a negative perception of safety
- Lack of trees, street furniture, and other amenities throughout portions of the district makes it feel unwelcoming
- Traffic congestion, limited parking, broken and empty tree pits, and a lack of open space negatively affect both the pedestrian and driving experience along the commercial corridors
- While the commercial district overall boasts a diverse retail mix, certain corridors are underrepresented in specific business categories; ex. both Jamaica Avenue and 165th Street lack sit-down restaurants
Opportunities

- Explore opportunities within the district for activating existing open spaces along corridors to enhance quality of life
- Host community events and family activities that are inclusive of all groups to activate commercial corridors
- Host community and merchant-focused events that encourage shoppers to rediscover and regularly support local businesses
- Coordinate with businesses, local NYPD precincts, NYC Department of Homeless Services, and social service providers to improve perceptions of safety along key commercial corridors
- Increase communication among merchants and connect them to business support services to help them attract customers and thrive
- Support existing community-based organizations and actively encourage stakeholder collaboration to address various community needs
- Create programming, wayfinding, and marketing to guide people to businesses, key points of interest, and other community destinations
- Host workshops to educate business owners on digital and social media marketing to improve their online presence
- Attract new businesses to vacant storefronts that meet the neighborhood’s demand for healthy food, family-friendly restaurants, arts, and entertainment

What’s Next?

To address these key findings and opportunities, Avenue NYC Grants have been awarded by SBS to nonprofit organizations. For more information, visit: nyc.gov/avenuenyc
## BUSINESS LANDSCAPE

### Business Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Number of Storefronts</th>
<th>Storefront Vacancy*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,064</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Storefront & Retail Mix

*Note: In 2018, New York City’s 76 Business Improvement Districts reported an average ground floor vacancy rate of 8.9% and median ground floor vacancy rate of 7.3% (SBS BIDs Trends Report, 2018).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clothing &amp; Shoe Stores</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Services</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty/Nail Salons &amp; Barbershops</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited Service Restaurants</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Services</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics, Cellphone Sales, &amp; Repairs</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewelry Stores &amp; Perfume Stores</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Furniture, Department, &amp; Hardware Stores</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Merchandise</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodegas &amp; Delis</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houses of Worship, Nonprofit Organizations, &amp; Public Administration</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Businesses</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day Care, Preschool, &amp; Education Services</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supermarkets, Grocery Stores, &amp; Specialty Food Stores</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Supply, Stationary, Shipping, Gift Stores, &amp; Bookstores</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacies &amp; Health Stores</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check Cashing, Money Transfer Services, &amp; Pawn Shops</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Service Restaurants</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banks &amp; Credit Unions</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Cleaners, Laundromats, &amp; Tailor Shops</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tattoo Parlors</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars, Clubs, Event Spaces, &amp; Liquor Stores</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee Shops/Cafés</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts &amp; Entertainment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction, Manufacturing, &amp; Wholesale Businesses</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gyms, Martial Arts, &amp; Dance Studios</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Business inventory and retail mix data were gathered by Jamaica Center BID through a comprehensive area inventory of storefront businesses located along Hillside Avenue, Jamaica Avenue, 165th Street, and Sutphin Boulevard. (October 2018 to April 2019).
What We’ve Heard from Downtown Jamaica Merchants

How many years have you been in business here?

- 0-2: 13%
- 3-5: 21%
- 6-10: 35%
- 11-20: 19%
- 21+: 12%

Year in Business

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years in Business</th>
<th>Businesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-2</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21+</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean: 11
Median: 9
Mode: 10

How many employees do you have?

- 4
- 3
- 2

Mean: 4
Median: 3
Mode: 2

What kinds of resources would help you grow your business?

- Marketing support: 24%
- Lease support: 13%
- Space improvements: 13%
- Technology improvements (internet access): 13%
- New equipment: 10%
- Training for staff: 8%
- Access to financing: 6%
- Assistance with regulatory compliance: 3%
- Legal services: 1%
- Other services: 9%

Do you own or rent your property?

- 89% Rent
- 5% Own
- 6% No Response

Over the past year, has your business improved, stayed the same, or decreased?

- 16% Improved
- 41% Stayed the Same
- 34% Decreased
- 9% N/A or No Response

What are the 3 biggest challenges facing your business?

- Lack of parking/transit
- Crime/safety
- Marketing/advertising costs

*Note: The mean is the average of all responses, the median is the middle number when all responses are arranged in ascending order, and the mode is the most common response.

Source: Based on 247 merchant surveys conducted by Jamaica Center BID in Winter 2019.
### What We’ve Heard from Downtown Jamaica Merchants

**What do you like about the commercial corridor?**
- "High foot traffic."
- "Many businesses have been here for a long time."
- "Its proximity to public transportation."

**What makes this commercial district unique?**
- "Product meets demand, it serves the demographic of customers."
- "Diversity within businesses."
- "Convenience to everything."

### What We’ve Heard from Downtown Jamaica Shoppers

**What would you like to see more of in this commercial district?**
- "Better quality of merchandise and better customer service."
- "More things to do when you come other than shopping and eating..."
- "Specialty stores, stores with more character rather than generic chains."

**What changes need to occur in Downtown Jamaica to attract more visitors/shoppers?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>% Merchant Response</th>
<th>% Consumer Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community events</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscaping/beautification</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storefront improvements</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant collaboration</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitation</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street lighting</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Avenue NYC Commercial District Needs Assessment
165th Street

Business Inventory & Retail Mix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Storefronts</th>
<th>Storefront Vacancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you own or rent your property?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rent</th>
<th>Own</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most Common Businesses

- Clothing & Shoe Stores: 32
- Beauty/Nail Salons & Barbershops: 25
- Electronics, Cell Phone Sales, & Repair: 6
- Limited Service Restaurants: 6
- General Merchandise Stores: 5

What kinds of resources would help you grow your business?

- Safety: 31%
- Space improvements: 20%
- Marketing support: 17%
- Lease support: 16%
- New equipment: 5%
- Training for staff: 5%
- Assistance with regulatory compliance: 3%
- Technology improvements (internet access): 3%

Hillside Avenue

Business Inventory & Retail Mix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Storefronts</th>
<th>Storefront Vacancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>293</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you own or rent your property?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rent</th>
<th>Own</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>69%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most Common Businesses

- Professional Services: 61
- Medical Services, Pharmacies, Optical & Health Stores: 27
- Auto-Related Businesses: 21
- Day Care, Preschool, & Education Services: 21
- Limited Service Restaurants: 20

What kinds of resources would help you grow your business?

- Marketing support: 24%
- Space improvements: 18%
- New equipment: 16%
- Access to financing: 12%
- Other: 10%
- Technology improvements (internet access): 10%
- Lease support: 5%
- Training for staff: 5%
BUSINESS LANDSCAPE

Jamaica Avenue

Business Inventory & Retail Mix

373
Total Storefronts

10%
Storefront Vacancy

Most Common Businesses

- Clothing & Shoe Stores: 59
- Beauty/Nail Salons & Barbershops: 35
- Medical Services, Pharmacies, Optical, & Health Stores: 34
- Home, Furniture, Department, & Hardware Stores: 31
- Limited Service Restaurants: 31

What kinds of resources would help you grow your business?

- Marketing support: 31%
- Technology improvements (internet access): 18%
- Lease support: 15%
- Other: 13%
- New equipment: 7%
- Training for staff: 7%
- Space improvements: 5%
- Access to financing: 4%

Do you own or rent your property?

94% Rent
2% Own
4% No Response

Sutphin Boulevard

Business Inventory & Retail Mix

108
Total Storefronts

5%
Storefront Vacancy

Most Common Businesses

- Professional Services: 24
- Limited Service Restaurants: 13
- Medical Services, Pharmacies, Optical, & Health Stores: 9
- Beauty/Nail Salons & Barbershops: 8
- Bodegas & Delis: 6

What kinds of resources would help you grow your business?

- Lease support: 18%
- Space improvements: 17%
- Training for staff: 17%
- Marketing support: 15%
- Technology improvements (internet access): 14%
- New equipment: 12%
- Access to financing: 7%

Do you own or rent your property?

100% Rent
0% Own
0% No Response

Avenue NYC Commercial District Needs Assessment
**Downtown Jamaica Retail Opportunity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residents spend</th>
<th>Local businesses make</th>
<th>Every year,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1.56B each year in goods and services</td>
<td>$201M each year in retail sales</td>
<td>$22M is spent outside the neighborhood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Retail Leakage & Surplus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Leakage</th>
<th>Surplus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department Stores (Excluding Leased Depts.)</td>
<td>$73M</td>
<td>$11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasoline Stations</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other General Merchandise Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, &amp; Music Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants/Other Eating Places</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Furnishings Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewelry, Luggage, &amp; Leather Goods Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Supplies, Stationery, &amp; Gift Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawn/Garden Equipment &amp; Supply Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Food Services</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used Merchandise Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer, Wine, &amp; Liquor Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book, Periodical, &amp; Music Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty Food Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florists</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics &amp; Appliance Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoe Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Parts, Accessories, &amp; Tire Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Personal Care Stores</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Material &amp; Supplies Dealers</td>
<td>$71M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Retail leakage and surplus is the difference between estimated spending by local residents on retail goods and estimated sales by local retail businesses. Retail leakage occurs when consumer demand exceeds retail supply in a designated trade area. On the chart, a positive value indicates leakage of retail sales and represents net consumer spending that is being captured by retailers outside of the trade area. Retail surplus occurs when retail supply exceeds consumer demand in a designated trade area. On the chart, a negative value indicates a surplus of retail sales and may signify a market where retailers are drawing customers from outside the trade area.

Source: ESRI and Infogroup, March 2019.
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Business Trends

Change in Total Business Sales, 2011-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Downtown Jamaica</th>
<th>Queens</th>
<th>NYC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▲ 30%</td>
<td>▲ 50%</td>
<td>▲ 61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Change in Median Sales by Business, 2011-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Downtown Jamaica</th>
<th>Queens</th>
<th>NYC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▲ 91%</td>
<td>▲ 180%</td>
<td>▲ 150%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Downtown Jamaica Total Business Sales

![Business Sales Chart]

Source: Division of Tax Policy, NYC Department of Finance

What We’ve Heard from Shoppers

What additional types of businesses would you like to see?

- Department and chain stores
- Healthy food options
- Restaurant and eating options
- Arts, entertainment, and community centers
- Family and kid-friendly businesses

When do you usually go shop in Downtown Jamaica?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Weekdays</th>
<th>Weekday evenings</th>
<th>Weekend days</th>
<th>Weekend evenings</th>
<th>No set time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do you usually get to Downtown Jamaica?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Subway</th>
<th>Bus</th>
<th>Personal car</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Taxi/Ride share</th>
<th>Bike</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often do you shop in Downtown Jamaica?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>2 to 4 times a week</th>
<th>Rarely/Never</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>Twice a month</th>
<th>Once a month</th>
<th>3 to 6 times a year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on 535 consumer surveys conducted by Jamaica Center BID in Winter 2019.
## Physical Environment

### Public Space Study: Parsons Boulevard Public Space

The NYC Department of Transportation created a public space on the east side of Parsons Boulevard between Jamaica and Archer avenues to enhance the pedestrian experience and provide safer crossings along a Vision Zero priority area. This public space is part of the City's Jamaica Now Action Plan, a $153 million neighborhood revitalization initiative announced in 2015 by Mayor Bill de Blasio, Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, and the NYC Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC). Funding for the project comes as part of New York State’s Downtown Revitalization Initiative. The project provides a vibrant space for community activities and events as well as amenities like tables, chairs, and planters for residents, shoppers, workers, commuters, and visitors. The former roadbed was transformed into a 26-foot sidewalk extension using paint, signage, and streetscape amenities. The movable tables, chairs, planters, and granite blocks help create a safer expanded space for pedestrians while elevating the look and feel of this area.

### What is your relationship to this space?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Space User Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Live in neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How often do you visit this space?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Space User Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How do you typically use this space?

#### Commuting/Passing Through: 49%
- Shopping: 13%
- Public Programs/Events: 11%
- Socializing/Meeting Friends: 10%
- Eating: 8%
- Farmers Market: 8%
- Exercising: 1%

### How did you get here?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Space User Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commuting/Passing Through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi/Rideshare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How much time do you typically spend here?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Space User Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walking through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 or more hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on 72 public space surveys conducted by Jamaica Center BID in Spring 2019.
Public Space Study: Parsons Boulevard Public Space

Downtown Jamaica is a lively, diverse, and densely populated community that is home to a variety of civic, cultural, and commercial anchors. Parsons Boulevard between Archer and Jamaica Avenue (the current location of the temporary Parsons Boulevard Public Space) serves as an entry point (an important node for first impressions!) to the E, J, and Z subway lines and numerous bus lines.

When visiting Parsons Boulevard Public Space, do you shop at nearby businesses?

74% Yes 26% No

On the scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high), please rate your level of satisfaction with:

- Cleanliness 3
- Lighting 3
- Attractiveness 3
- Accessibility 4
- Overall safety 3
- Physical conditions/amenities 3
- Programs/events 3

What are the top 3 things you like best about this space?

- Summer events and farmers market
- Welcoming and inviting space
- Accessibility

Source: Based on 72 public space surveys conducted by Jamaica Center BID in Spring 2019.
An analysis of 809 storefronts along Jamaica Avenue, Hillside Avenue, Sutphin Boulevard, and 165th Street revealed that 39% of storefronts are in poor condition, 29% are in average condition, and 32% are in good condition.

**Streetscape Observations**

- There’s a limited number of trees and greenery throughout the commercial district. Tree pits are empty or in disrepair (missing or broken tree guards) making the corridors feel uninviting.
- Most blocks throughout the district appear to be well illuminated at night from both streetlights and storefronts.
- Jamaica Avenue lacks street furniture, plantings, public art, signage, and other visually appealing enhancements to improve the pedestrian experience.
- Auto-related businesses on Hillside Avenue park cars on the sidewalk, which, along with frequent curb cuts, disrupt pedestrian circulation and contribute to a negative safety perception of the corridor.
- Poor street and sidewalk conditions are evident across the neighborhood.
- Lack of traffic lights and faded or missing crosswalks at various intersections negatively impact pedestrian safety.
- Due to heavy bus traffic, commuter vans, high parking demand, and high pedestrian foot traffic, traffic congestion continues to be a challenge in Downtown Jamaica.
Area Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Downtown Jamaica</th>
<th>Queens</th>
<th>New York City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>67,768</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,310,011</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,461,961</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Density (per square mile)</th>
<th>Downtown Jamaica</th>
<th>Queens</th>
<th>New York City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>33,710</strong></td>
<td><strong>21,150</strong></td>
<td><strong>27,986</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average Household Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Household Size</th>
<th>Downtown Jamaica</th>
<th>Queens</th>
<th>New York City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.27</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.93</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.65</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Car Ownership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Car Ownership</th>
<th>Downtown Jamaica</th>
<th>Queens</th>
<th>New York City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>49%</strong></td>
<td><strong>63%</strong></td>
<td><strong>45%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Commuting Patterns

- **22,126** Work in Downtown Jamaica, live elsewhere
- **1,381** Live & Work in Downtown Jamaica
- **21,567** Live in Downtown Jamaica, work elsewhere

Assessed Commercial Corridors

Primary data on Downtown Jamaica storefront businesses presented on pg. 6-8 was gathered along Jamaica Avenue, Hillside Avenue, Sutphin Boulevard, and 165th Street commercial corridors.

Downtown Jamaica Context Area

Demographic and employment data on pg. 17-18 correspond to the Downtown Jamaica neighborhood context area.

Trade Area

Retail leakage, surplus, and retail opportunity data on pg. 11 correspond to the 0.75 mile trade area.
Area Demographics

Race/Background

- Hispanic or Latino (of any race): 36%, 28%, 29%
- White alone: 5%, 26%, 32%
- Black or African American alone: 13%, 17%, 22%
- Asian alone: 36%, 25%, 14%
- Two or more races: 4%, 2%, 2%
- Some other race alone: 5%, 2%, 1%
- American Indian and Alaska Native alone: 1%, 0%, 0%
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander: 0%, 0%, 0%

Population Age

- Under 5 Years: 8%, 6%, 6%
- 5–14 Years: 12%, 11%, 11%
- 15–24 Years: 13%, 12%, 13%
- 25–44 Years: 32%, 31%, 32%
- 45–64 Years: 24%, 26%, 25%
- 65+ Years: 11%, 14%, 13%

Income

- Median Household Income: $46,778 Downtown Jamaica, $59,758 Queens, $55,191 New York City

Educational Attainment

- 12th Grade or Less, No Diploma: 28%, 19%, 19%
- High School Graduate: 26%, 27%, 24%
- Some College, No Degree: 12%, 15%, 14%
- Associate’s Degree: 7%, 8%, 7%
- Bachelor’s Degree: 18%, 20%, 21%
- Graduate or Professional Degree: 9%, 11%, 15%

Median Age

- 35.3 Downtown Jamaica, 37.9 Queens, 35.9 New York City

Foreign-Born Population

- 61% Downtown Jamaica, 48% Queens, 37% New York City

Employment

- Population in Labor Force: 65% Downtown Jamaica, 64% Queens, 64% New York City
- Unemployment*: 10.8% Downtown Jamaica, 7.8% Queens, 8.6% New York City

Local Jobs and Employment

Local Residents’ Employment

- Educational Services, Health Care, Social Assistance: 21%
- Accommodation, Food Services, Arts, & Entertainment: 14%
- Retail Trade: 13%
- Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services: 10%
- Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities: 10%
- Construction: 7%
- Finance, Insurance, Real Estate: 6%
- Manufacturing: 5%
- Public Administration: 3%
- Other Services: 10%

Jobs Located in Downtown Jamaica

- Educational Services, Health Care, Social Assistance: 41%
- Accommodation, Food Services, Arts, & Entertainment: 5%
- Retail Trade: 14%
- Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services: 2%
- Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities: 2%
- Construction: 4%
- Finance, Insurance, Real Estate: 3%
- Manufacturing: 3%
- Public Administration: 10%
- Other Services: 17%

*Note: Unemployment figures are based on data from 2010-2014. As of December 2018, the unemployment rate is 3.4% for Queens and 3.9% for New York City (NYSDOL); updated neighborhood-level data for Downtown Jamaica is not available.

DATA APPENDIX

Downtown Jamaica Transportation

MTA Annual Bus Ridership
5.1M
Q17
4.5M
Q20
6.1M
Q25
4.3M
Q43
9.0M
Q44
3.5M
Q64
4.7M
Q60
6.1M
Q65
3.5M
Q111

Bus Routes
36
Total MTA Bus Routes
2
Express Bus Routes X64, X68

Vehicular Traffic (2015)
16,895
Jamaica Avenue from Sutphin Boulevard to Merrick Boulevard
12,578
Jamaica Avenue from Van Wyck Expressway to Sutphin Boulevard
22,032
Jamaica Avenue from Merrick Boulevard to 188th Street
8,974
Sutphin Boulevard from 90th Avenue to Hillside Avenue
29,033
Hillside Avenue from Queens Boulevard to Francis Lewis Boulevard
8,098
Merrick Boulevard from Hillside Avenue to Liberty Avenue
3,682
150th Street from Hillside Avenue to Jamaica Avenue
10,159
Parsons Boulevard from Hillside Avenue to 93rd Avenue

Average Weekday Subway Ridership (2017)
39,326
Jamaica Center-Parsons-Archer
23,843
Sutphin Boulevard/Archer Avenue/JFK Airport
22,421
Jamaica/179 Street
6,593
Parsons Boulevard
4,496
Sutphin Boulevard
8,671
169 Street
4,972
Jamaica-Van Wyck

Sources: MTA 2017; NYCDOT March, 2019; NYS DOT, 2016 Annual Average Daily Traffic data.
Recent SBS Neighborhood Investments

- **Commercial Revitalization**, Avenue NYC multi-year grant, awarded to the Jamaica Center BID, 2018-2021.
- **Downtown Jamaica Storefront Improvement Program**, $500,000 awarded in storefront improvement grants (privately funded by the NYC Economic Development Corporation) to 32 storefronts in Downtown Jamaica, 2017-2020.
- **Neighborhood Design Lab services**, awarded to the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation, 2019.
- **Façade Improvements**, Avenue NYC grant of $30,000 awarded to the Sutphin Boulevard BID, 2017.
- **Business Attraction**, Avenue NYC grant of $30,000 awarded to the Sutphin Boulevard BID, 2016.
- **Façade Improvements**, Avenue NYC grant of $25,000 awarded to the Sutphin Boulevard BID, 2016.
- **Merchant Organizing**, Avenue NYC grant of $25,000 awarded to the Queens Chamber of Commerce, 2016.
- **Placemaking**, Avenue NYC grant of $30,000 awarded to the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation, 2016.
- **Activating the Ave with Arts**, Neighborhood Challenge grant of $75,000 awarded to No Longer Empty and Jamaica Center BID, 2016.
- **Business Attraction and Placemaking**, Avenue NYC grant of $25,000 awarded to the Jamaica Center BID, 2015.
- **Business Attraction**, Avenue NYC grant of $35,000 awarded to the Sutphin Boulevard BID, 2015.
- **Sutphin Boulevard Storefront Improvement Project**, Neighborhood Challenge grant of $95,000 awarded to the Sutphin Boulevard BID, 2015.

Existing Plans & Studies

**Atlantic Avenue Extension**

- A planned $20 million project by the NYC Department of Transportation that will ease vehicular flow to the Jamaica Station area and create a new Gateway Park to serve as a western entranceway to Downtown Jamaica.

**Jamaica Now Action Plan**

- The Jamaica Now Action Plan is a $153 million dollar neighborhood revitalization initiative announced in 2015 by the de Blasio Administration, Queens Borough President Melinda Katz and the NYC Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC). The plan outlines a strategic path to economically revitalize Jamaica, Queens, by providing workforce training and small business support, and improving the livability of the neighborhood through investments in safety measures, green spaces and more.

Sources

ESRI and Infogroup, Inc. 2019 ESRI Retail MarketPlace Profile.

Metropolitan Transportation Authority. 2017. Average Weekday Subway Ridership and Annual Bus Ridership.

NYS Department of Labor. December 2018. Unemployment Rate Rankings by County.

NYS Department of Transportation. 2016 Annual Average Daily Traffic, using Traffic Data Viewer.

NYC Department of Finance, Division of Tax Policy, using data from NYS Department of Taxation and Finance. Business sales are reported by tax year, which runs from March 1st to February 28th. Sales data are compiled from sales tax returns, which are rolled up by tax filer within a year, excluding returns with negative sales amounts. For each year, each tax filer is reported according to the address listed on their latest return. Large outliers were removed.


Photo Credits: Jamaica Center BID; NYC SBS.
The NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS) helps unlock economic potential and create economic security for all New Yorkers by connecting New Yorkers to good jobs, creating stronger businesses, and building thriving neighborhoods across the five boroughs.

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NYC Council Member Rory I. Lancman
Queens Community Boards 8 and 12
165th Street Mall Improvement Association
Association of Women Construction Workers of America, Inc. (AWOWA)
Downtown Jamaica Merchants
Downtown Jamaica Shoppers and Residents

nyc.gov/avenuenyc