

The City of New York
Bronx Community Board Four
"The Capitol District"

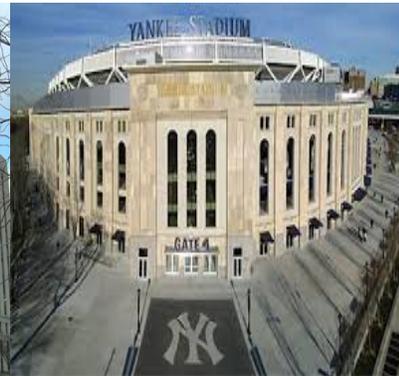
DISTRICT NEEDS STATEMENT, FY' 2016



Bronx Museum of the Arts



Mario Merola Building



Yankee Stadium



The Highbridge



Lorelei Fountain-Joyce Kilmer Park

Ruben Diaz, Jr.
Borough President

Ms. Kathleen Saunders
Board Chair

Mr. José Rodriguez
District Manager

The process of developing our needs is an important and constructive measure taken by Community Boards in shaping our service and budget requests. This ongoing process requires the involvement of each Board Member, Committee and the input from Board Member's personal observations, published surveys, public hearings, and discussions with local service chiefs. In developing our needs statement our goal is not to assign blame but to re-enforce community involvement, identify patterns or areas of concern and to improve upon what has been developed.

Community District Four, the Capital District is made up of the following Bronx neighborhoods: Mt. Eden, Highbridge, West Concourse, East Concourse, Morrisania and Concourse Village. Our strong, vibrant neighborhoods encompass East 149th Street on the South, East 174th Street on the North, The Harlem River on the West and Webster to Park Avenue on the East with easy access through major rail lines, roadways, and public transit, both surface and underground. Nearly 140,000 residents celebrate our distinct and varied positive contributions.

We are the host community to the world renown, Yankee Organization, Mill Pond Park, Macombs Park, The Gateway Center Mall, the Borough's Court System, the Bronx Museum of the Arts and many Art Deco buildings along the Grand Concourse Historic District. We are at the very center of the metropolitan region, only minutes from Manhattan, New Jersey, Long Island, and Westchester. We are the administrative center of the County, housing the offices of the Borough President, The District Attorney, the County and City Clerk.

As we prepare our Statement we are reminded that the responsibility of municipal government to provide the services and resources to community districts that will enable them to thrive and meet their goals. The service demands of each neighborhood and constituency in our district must be matched with the appropriate response, not only from the appropriate City agency but from all our residents—especially parents—in order to create healthy living conditions in our fast-growing community.

We will do our best to ensure that our community board receives its 'fair share' of charter-mandated resources and stand at the forefront in protecting and servicing our citizenry.

COMMUNITY BOARDS (Increase in funding to \$350, 000): The City Charter states with vigor the importance and obligations mandated to Community Boards. Experience has taught us that intended programs are without meaning when they are without funds. We are currently operating on an internal budget of \$198,895 for a district with nearly 140,000 residents. Actually, the financial figure is far less than that since much of the Board's budget is pre-allocated for fixed expenses. Community Boards provide direct and almost immediate access between community residents and city government. That link must be strengthened. Instead, we have been weakened because of past agency service reductions, we were being called upon with greater urgency to fill the gaps without the adequate financial resources. We recognize existing difficulties but we believe that Community Boards are the best thing to have happened for New York City.

We are gratified that the City Council with Mayoral support spared Community Boards from budget cuts this time, but while we have regained an inch, we are still miles behind when it comes to an equitable allocation of city funding. Let us conclude this portion of our commentary by saying that with the adequate fiscal support, Community Boards can provide the proverbial "ounce of prevention" that makes it unnecessary for the city to pay dearly for the "pound of cure" often needed.

TRANSPORTATION: 153rd Street Bridge: We continue to voice our concerns about traffic conditions in our District and so we continue to advocate for the development of the East 153rd Street Bridge. While we understand the project remains in the projected capital plan we stand firm in our support for the bridge development, which we believe would ease traffic congestion along 149th and 161st Streets, as well as alleviate some of the congestion on local streets in the neighborhood.

Transportation and traffic are of particular importance to us since aside from being the "Capitol District" of this County; Community District Four is also the geographic center of the metropolitan region. In 2006 construction was to commence and the Department of Transportation received the Art Commission Award for Excellence in Design. The proposed bridge is a single tower cable stayed bridge, located over the Old Mott Haven Rail yard, connecting Concourse Village West at the west end and Park Avenue at the east end. It would have been the first new bridge built in 50 years and the first cable-stayed vehicular bridge in New York City.

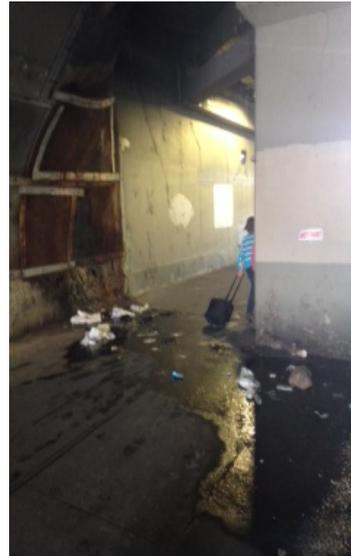
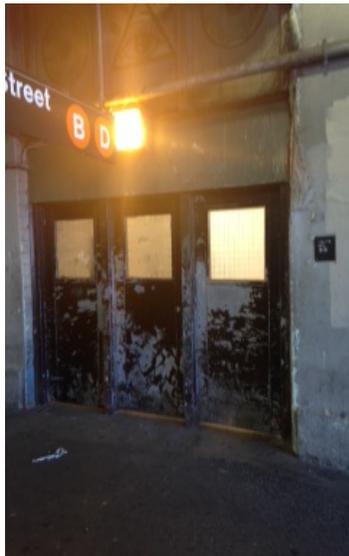


The residents of this community district long ago voiced their anxieties and concerns about today's traffic conditions. No one listened then, and the situation has grown evermore harrowing each day. Consequently, this community is calling for clarity on a traffic reconfiguration plan for the "Court Corridor". The City needs to place permanent traffic control agents at said "Corridor" area for traffic relief assistance.

Parking The Community Board has long advocated for measures that allow for making parking easier while reducing congestion and improving safety. We again inquire about the permit parking initiative (149th Street to 161st street from the Grand Concourse to River Avenue). The hardship that many residents and neighboring businesses endure due to stadium events would be eased with the advent of said initiative.

Areas of Concern:

- Repairs of the 174th Street Underpass? We have been told the Underpass is structurally sound based on Federal guidelines however, we request DOT engineers liaise with DEP and MTA personnel to determine responsibility of not only renovation but maintenance?



- Jerome/Shakespeare/Cromwell (167th) Triangle's concrete configuration to be widened to allow for safe pedestrian movement along that corridor and complement the Macomb's Road Project.
- Survey and placement of Bus Pads along our commercial corridors 161st, 167th & 170th Street from Jerome to Morris Avenue and along the Grand Concourse at 161st, 167th, 170th & Mt Eden North and South bound.

- The implementation based on DOT's survey of the Jerome Traffic Study from Mt Eden and 174th Street and Cross Bronx Expressway must be redone. The traffic measures implemented have not resolved the continuous traffic congestion at said corridor and remain a concern.
- Dedicated allocation (Separate and apart from our District resurfacing needs) for resurfacing of the Grand Concourse. (149th Street to 174th) The Grand Concourse is a major thoroughfare not only in our district but the Borough.
- Repair slope at 161st Street and Gerard Avenue and the removal of redbrick. We have asked for this to no avail.
- In addition to Structural improvements Increase maintenance (clean up) of District Four underpasses 161st Street, 167th, 170th and Cross Bronx Expressway.

HOUSING, LAND USE & PLANNING:

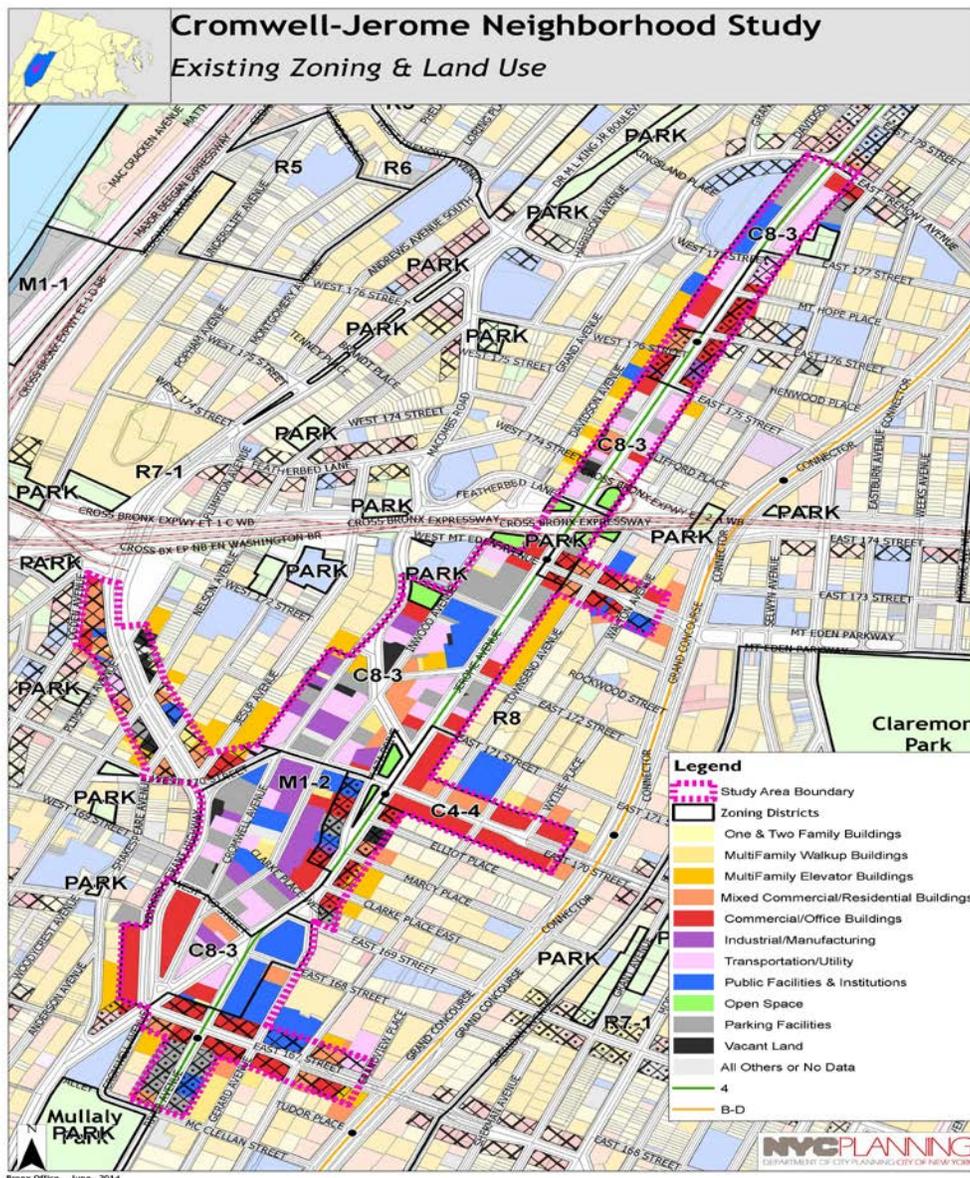
Affordable Housing: It is in the interest of our Community District to promote economic diversity which is why we support the development of affordable housing for moderate and middle-income individuals. The lack of affordable housing for this demographic continues to leave our District at a disadvantage.

We support this policy because we feel it will stabilize our district's quality of life and by having a mixed representation of income we serve to promote economic growth.

We are specifically focusing on multi-dwellings in the form of rentals, condominiums and cooperatives. Our Housing and Land Use Committee recommends the following sites: the vacant lands at the west side of Grant Avenue, between E. 167th and E. 169th Streets; University Avenue, between W. 167th and W. 170th Streets (including the privately owned vacant land); and Concourse Village West, between E. 153rd and E. 156th Streets.

The Cromwell-Jerome Community Development:

Brownfield Development: The Cromwell-Jerome study area is comprised of 19 blocks in the South Bronx, Bronx, NY. The general boundaries of the proposed study area are: Cross Bronx Expressway (Interstate 95) to the north, Jerome Avenue to the east, 167th Street to the south, Edward L. Grant highway, and Macombs Road to the west. DCP has identified 30 potential brownfield sites in the study area. The pilot initiative aims to foster community involvement in the local planning process specifically with regard to the assessment, cleanup and reuse of brownfield properties in the aforementioned area. We believe that an analysis and planning of this sort will serve the economic development interests and vision of Community Board Four.



The Cromwell-Jerome study area is heavily automotive and borders stable but high-need residential communities with growing new-immigrant populations. Development and investment in the 19-block Cromwell-Jerome study area have been thwarted by a number of factors, and the area has therefore failed to reach its potential as a viable commercial / mixed-use district serving the surrounding communities. First, due to the overwhelming number of auto related uses, it is suspected that subsurface contamination exists in soil and groundwater throughout the area; the costs of potential brownfield remediation are unknown and therefore daunting. Second, local economic conditions and historical perceptions of the market and its viability have typically required enhanced government subsidies for residential development. These incentives, on the City, State and Federal levels, have steadily decreased in recent years to the point of creating a fiercely competitive environment which favors development unimpeded by these additional environmental challenges. Finally, the current

zoning, established back in 1961, restricts permitted uses to light manufacturing and heavy commercial uses such as auto-repair and gas stations, and does not allow residential uses. For these reasons, the City must find ways to encourage investment in underserved areas such as Cromwell-Jerome. Today the Cromwell-Jerome area is **overburdened by auto-related uses**. Both Cromwell and Jerome Avenues, despite their proximity to mass transit stations, are lined with auto chop shops, junk yards, and make-shift auto-repair shops whose operations frequently spill over into the public street. Most of these enterprises have seen little or no investment or clean-up in decades. The most recent development in the study area has been self-storage facilities. In fact, there are three large self-storage facilities and a notable 48 open parking lots/auto-related facilities within the 19-block area. Not only do these uses not generate significant jobs or provide basic services to local residents, they make for a disjointed unattractive streetscape and barren streets after hours and on the weekends. The overall lack of investment and development leaves brownfield-impacted lots unremediated and blighted, adversely affecting neighboring residential populations. DCP has so far identified 30 potential brownfield sites in the proposed study area (based on past industrial uses) that hold important opportunity for reaching community revitalization goals in the Cromwell-Jerome area.

Preliminary assessment clearly points to high need in the area for affordable housing (income-limited), local services such as banks and supermarkets, and access to jobs in the Cromwell-Jerome community. A 2009 DCP study also categorized the area as “high need” in terms of increased access to fresh food – the existing retail environment offers limited opportunities to purchase fresh foods, and data show consumption of produce is low, and the rates of the twin epidemics - diabetes and obesity - are high among area residents. The community also has need to improve links to existing mass transit by improving streetscape, pedestrian crossings, and active ground-floor uses in the area surrounding the subway stations.

MX Re-zoning Development: Will address the residential and commercial needs of the Cromwell-Jerome area, with the goal of rezoning the main commercial corridor to a Mixed-Use (MX) district. Rezoning the area to MX would allow for much needed mixed-income residential development, as well as encourage new and vibrant retail activity in this important commercial-industrial area as previously stated.

New School and Community Center: About half a square block between Jerome & Inwood Avenues to the east and west, and W. 172nd & Goble Place to the north and south. This city-contracted project in-conjunction with New Settlement Apartments will contain a new K-12 public school and community center this upcoming school year. This significant development will pave the way for further investment that would likely be spurred by a new MX zone.

Encourage the development of new Affordable Housing

Establishing the Cromwell-Jerome Community as an Inclusionary Zoning area would encourage the provision of new permanently-affordable housing in order to help meet this goal. Under the Inclusionary Zoning program, developers would only be able to reach the maximum allowable residential FAR if they provide permanently affordable housing either on site or off site in new or

existing buildings. The Cromwell-Jerome Community contains sites that would be ideal for housing and encourage the reuse of underutilized lots and parking garages.

Connect the Ogden Avenue and the Cromwell-Jerome Community : Local residents and workers in the neighborhoods surrounding Cromwell-Jerome frequently walk from West 170th Street to reach the IRT #4 train stop at East 170th Street and Jerome Avenue to travel to work and a myriad other destinations served by the #4 train. Revitalization of the Cromwell-Jerome area would make for a livelier and potentially safer connection to surrounding communities.

Provide a new community Park: The Cromwell-Jerome area contains one small park at the intersection of Inwood Avenue and Goble Place; however the park is surrounded by garages, a medical center and an SRO Transitional Facility making it unattractive for use by residents residing in proximity. The acquisition of vacant land near East 170th Street and development of new park space would provide a refreshing new amenity for the community, and improve the overall physical appearance of the Valley.

The physical appearance of a neighborhood has a significant impact on an individual's perception of his or her community, feelings of civic pride, and overall quality of life, all which directly correlate with whether or not residents support revitalization efforts and new neighborhood investment. The Cromwell-Jerome area would benefit greatly from aesthetic improvements such as new street trees, street lights, and street furniture, trash receptacles, upgraded property line fences and graffiti removal. These seemingly minor additions can significantly affect the local residential and business communities in the Cromwell-Jerome area, offering a sense of hope, ownership and participation in the revitalization of the area.

Potential Development Projects: DCP to study the area directly east of the Gateway Center for rezoning. The area is prime for a more robust mixed-used development. The Office of the Borough President believes and we concur that reviewing this area would preserve existing structures and fill important zoning gaps to enhance further renewal of the Lower Concourse.

Rezoning along Jerome Avenue from 167th street to 174th Street: DCP to conduct a study of existing business to determine a potential rezoning and redevelopment of the area. This area too, is overburdened by auto-related uses-auto chop shops, glass repair shops whose operations frequently spill over into the public street. Most of these enterprises have seen little or no investment or clean-up in decades

Harlem River Initiative

Restoration

- Ensure clean water by employing proven grey infrastructure technologies, and expanding the use of green infrastructure for storm water retention and treatment.
- Transform elevated portions of the Major Deegan Expressway into green infrastructure to capture storm water. Transform the street-level into a lively social space with lighting and public art.

- Remediate and build a park at Pier 5, showcasing BMPs for storm water management on former brownfields, and restore wetlands.
- Wherever possible, restore the natural waterfront edge to rebuild the river ecosystem. Specific sites where this restoration could be accomplished include: Spuyten Duyvil, Roberto Clemente State Park, Depot Place Park, Mill Pond Park, Pier 5, and the river edge at the Harlem River Railyards.

Access

- Create new waterfront public open space by converting street ends into vest pocket parks that combine access, boat launches, and water transport hubs. Encourage boating on the river by adding capacity for boat launching and storage. Prioritize locations in close proximity to underserved areas.
- Reclaim for public use the waterfront park property currently used by the Yankees for parking.
- Provide access to the river from various points along the Harlem River Yards.
- Change how people utilize and think about the river by transforming it into a “water trail,” where water buses or ferries transport patrons to Yankee Stadium on game days and Bronx residents from place to place along the river.



Greenway

- Build the greenway along the water, where feasible. This might result in a tow path or decked waterfront platform in areas made inaccessible by rail line or other obstructions.

- Add access by extending the 161st Street pedestrian bridge to the waterfront.

Neighborhood Connections

- Add bikeshare stations at key transit stops in upland areas both as a mode of transportation to the waterfront and as a way to enjoy the Greenway.
- Add signage and wayfinding to key streets leading to the river. Make sure that all future transportation projects, such as planned improvements to University Bridge, increase people's ability to bring boats and bicycles to the water.





Programming

- Engage public interest in use of the river and the Greenway through creative programming.
- Add vending and retail options along the river in the form of carts, concession stands, and locally-owned and operated restaurants.
- Create opportunities along the river to educate and celebrate the culture of the Bronx through the creation of a “moving museum” that runs on rail, or a “science barge” that moves up and down the river.
- Encourage the City of New York and Bronx cultural institutions to sponsor arts and botanical events, and temporary sculpture installations.

YOUTH: Year after year we have advocated for the increase in funding for youth programs and services. We strongly urge DYCD to consult with Community Boards on budgetary matters for we cannot continue to state that our youth are our future and at the same time, because of decisions made not provide them with the economic, educational and social opportunities they need to compete in an ever-changing global market.

The lack of adequate funding for the Summer Youth Employment Program is a continual concern for the youth of our district. Year after year, summer job opportunities become less and less, which makes it very difficult to assure teens the life and work experience skills they need to enhance their development. Without these opportunities, our young people will be relegated to hanging out in the streets causing disruption to the quality of life of our community residents. In the end, the cost of addressing problems associated with at-risk youth will be far greater than providing them with the resources they need to enhance their productive growth.

We draw your attention to a few key indicators:

- The large number of youth and youth density: Among Bronx neighborhoods, CD4 has the highest total population [N=138,518] and the largest number of youth under 18 years [N=43,868]. In terms of total number of children per square mile [N=21,934], CD4 ranks as the 3rd most dense neighborhood in NYC.
- Children in CD4 are also among the very poorest in NYC: In CD 4, 22.4% of children aged 0-17 receive cash assistance – the 3rd highest rate in the Bronx and the 3rd highest rate in all of NYC. CD4 also has the 3rd lowest median household income [N=\$26,934] in all of NYC.
- CD4 has the very highest teen birth rate (70.6 births per 1,000 girls aged 15-19) in all of New York City. It also has the highest number of births to teen mothers (aged 14-16) in the Bronx [N=55] and the 3rd highest number of births to teen mothers (aged 17-19) in all of NYC [N=269].
- Youth are at very high risk of involvement in juvenile and criminal justice systems: Juvenile felony arrests (youth under 16 years old) in CD4 [N=182 in 2008] are the very highest in the Bronx and 2nd highest in NYC. And youth misdemeanor arrests (youth aged 16-20) in CD4 [N=2,002 in 2008] are 2nd highest in the Bronx and 3rd highest in NYC.

SAFETY, QUALITY OF LIFE & EMERGENCY SERVICES: As one of the most populous Bronx districts, we continue to urge that our need for Public Safety be measured against our service area and high-density population. Particularly, because of our unique status as the "Capital District," we host Yankee Stadium, the Civic Center, several commercial strips, the entire County Court System and more, which adds to an unusual and extensive drain on city resources.

It is imperative that sufficient funding is provided to place additional School Safety and Police Officers in the confines of the 44th Precinct. We feel that a focused aggressive enforcement and deterrence strategy applied on relatively minor offenses such as graffiti, loitering, loud music and petty crimes would enhance our quality of life. The Board calls for an increase in MARCH operations and aggressive condition unit monitoring of loitering around building and other public spaces.

Due to the hardship neighboring residents and businesses face as a result of Stadium events we call upon the department re-evaluate the vehicular barriers around the stadium.

Hot Spot Initiative: Center for Court Innovation Initiative:

The Hot Spot Initiative (working title) would work to reduce crime by addressing discrete conditions of disorder in certain neighborhoods. The Initiative would seek to leverage the expertise and resources of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York and Bronx Community Solutions, the Center for Court Innovations' alternative-to-incarceration program, along with other government and non-profit partners.

The Hot Spot Initiative would target the intersection of crime and place. In doing so, it would build on cutting-edge criminal justice research and theory. For example, David Weisburd, the winner of the Stockholm Prize for Criminology, has demonstrated that crime is often concentrated in small areas – parts of neighborhoods or even individual blocks – and that these crime concentrations remain stable

over time. Weisburd also has shown that targeted intervention can reduce disorder and offending in hot spots (as well as neighboring areas) without displacing the crime elsewhere. (See, for example, Anthony Braga and David Weisburd, *Policing Problem Places: Crime Hot Spots and Effective Prevention*, Oxford University Press, 2010.)

In a similar vein, David Kennedy of John Jay College has written extensively about how to use various carrots and sticks to change the behavior of offenders. Kennedy's strategies go by various names (Operation Ceasefire, Drug Market Intervention, pulling levers, focused deterrence, etc.) but the underlying idea is basically the same: the criminal justice system can reduce offending by clearly and directly communicating to chronic offenders that there will be real consequences for continued misbehavior – and real opportunities, should they decided to change lives. (See David Kennedy, *Pulling Levers: Getting Deterrence Right*, National Institute of Justice, 1998.)

The basic idea behind the Hot Spot Initiative is to address local hot spots and eye sores by combing aggressive enforcement with positive, pro-social activities. The Initiative would have four principal components:

- **Analysis:** Local police precincts would provide sector reports of crime incidents to allow researchers from the Center for Court Innovation to map areas where crime most frequently occurs. The goal here is to be as granular as possible, identifying specific street segments, park locations, and other areas where crime has clustered over time.
- **Convening:** After identifying the target areas, the US Attorney's Office would convene municipal agency and non-profit partners (e.g. Sanitation, Transportation, the local community board, area service providers) to

discuss a set of concrete interventions to address the hot spots. Rather than focusing on offenders, the conversation would focus on place, asking the question: what can be done to transform the physical space to make it less attractive to would-be criminals?

- **Intervention:** While the response would vary from place to place depending upon the nature of the location, the Hot Spot Initiative would seek to use a number of tools to address local disorder. Within each hot spot, the U.S. Attorney's Office would target known drug locations for civil drug enforcement and housing foreclosure proceedings. As a complement, Bronx Community Solutions would dispatch teams of offenders to perform ongoing community service in these areas, painting over graffiti, sweeping the streets, cleaning up illegal dumping. Other interventions might include working with Sanitation to improve trash pick-up or working with Parks and Recreation to enhance lighting in a dark corner. The goal is to come up with multiple interventions, to make them highly visible, and to communicate clearly too local residents that an effort is being made to transform both the hot spots and the behavior they help to engender.

- Evaluation: Researchers from the Center for Court Innovation would inventory the street conditions (e.g., broken street lights, abandoned lots, garbage dumping locations, graffiti-covered buildings) of each selected hot spot area before and after the targeted interventions. They would also conduct pre- and post- intervention surveys with local residents and merchants on their perceptions of public safety and government effectiveness. Finally, they would analyze NYPD data to see if the Initiative had any impact on arrest rates in the hot spot areas, including analyzing adjacent sectors in order to measure displacement.

Density of Crimes around Selected 44th Precinct Addresses:

Density around 1565 Townsend Avenue, 1540 Sheridan Avenue, 1405 College Avenue, 1265 Collage Avenue, 1011 Sheridan Avenue, 280 East 161st Street, East 158th Street/Gerard Avenue, East 153rd Street/ Gerard Avenue, and 280 East 161st Street.

SANITATION: The cleanliness level, or lack of in our streets, characterizes our district. We want to ensure that our image is a clean one and as such, we urge the restoration of D.O.S. personnel, including "hand" cleaners, to adequately maintain our streets and sidewalks.

Community Board Four experiences **difficulties having no regular cleaning and maintenance schedules for the extraordinary number of underpasses, step streets and sitting areas.**

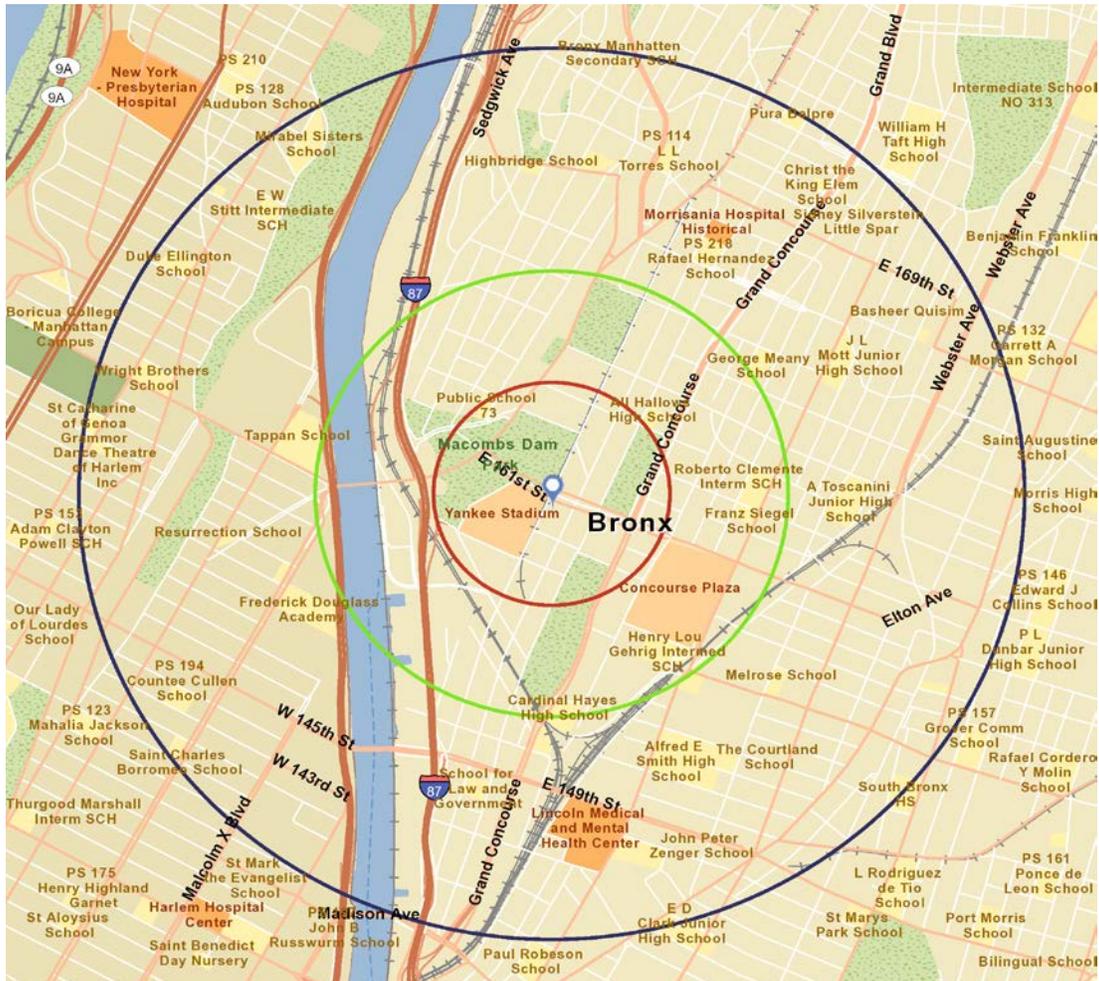
BUSINESS SERVICES/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: We are hopeful that the Economic Development Corporation will work in conjunction with the Department of Business Services, to assist the Community Board in calling for funding for the development of tying in economic development and tourism. Our district could serve as a catalyst for increased development and local entrepreneurship, resulting in job creation and business development opportunities and services to our community residents.

Community Board Four would like to seek funding from either SBS or EDC for the development of a study that would focus on business and properties along Ogden Avenue from the Cross Bronx Expressway to West 161st Street and Yankee Stadium. The area in question is located in the Highbridge area of District Four. The Ogden corridor, the neighborhood's primary commercial corridor rest within access to the George Washington Bridge, Major Deegan and the Cross Bronx Expressway making this it ideal for business to develop and thrive. For many years areas similar to Highbridge have suffered due to disinvestment. Although SBS and EDC rely on private development and provide guidance on best practices for private investors to employ, we encourage the agencies to take on a more proactive role and work with the Community Board to create a plan that would allow for the attraction of a diversified group of retailers.

The overall goal is to enhance the socio-economic conditions of the neighborhood by:

- Development of a market assessment
- Evaluation of zoning changes
- Survey of existing properties vacant and occupied
- Service needs (social and economic)
- Outline the areas positives
- Beautification needs
- Quality life issues to address
- Streetscape/Street amenities
- Partner with residents to incorporate residential needs.

Commercial District Initial Assessment Outline



Purpose of a District Assessment:

- Provides an unbiased snapshot of your district, so that you have the information to make strategic decisions about how to help existing businesses respond to changing market conditions and improve their competitiveness; and how to attract new businesses to meet the needs of consumers in your district, including residents, workers, and visitors.
- Begins to collect information that helps answer key questions, including:
 - Community configuration: What type of businesses will work best given your current community configuration?
 - Space configuration: What type of businesses will work best in the physical spaces that are available?

- Market/Retail Analysis: What types of businesses are best-suited based on the market/retail analysis?
- Retail synergy: What types of businesses will create retail synergy through co-tenancy or merchandising the district?

Potential Tasks in a District Assessment:

- Observatory walk-through of the district to understand physical conditions, current retail mix, etc.
- On-site visit with commercial district program staff and other important stakeholders to determine support for programming
- Mini-market analysis to identify retail categories that should be targeted
- Recommendations for next steps and best practices

Potential Information in a District Assessment (excerpted from the Southern Boulevard district assessment)

Observations – district attributes

- Geographical area and size of the district (# of blocks, total acreage, length)
- Visual imagery
- Transportation access
- Infrastructure (# of businesses, # of empty lots)

Observations – retail mix

- General, qualitative observations (# of anchors, destinations; # of 1-story buildings, etc.)
- Business mix (% distribution between retail categories)

Observations – audience (target consumers)

- Qualitative description
- Transit ridership
- Car traffic and foot traffic

Economics – trade analysis by .50 mile and 1.0 mile radius

- Sales & Leasing: total # of properties for lease, total amount of SF, range of largest and smallest space available, and average asking rent
- Under-served retail categories
- Unmet consumer demand

Conclusions

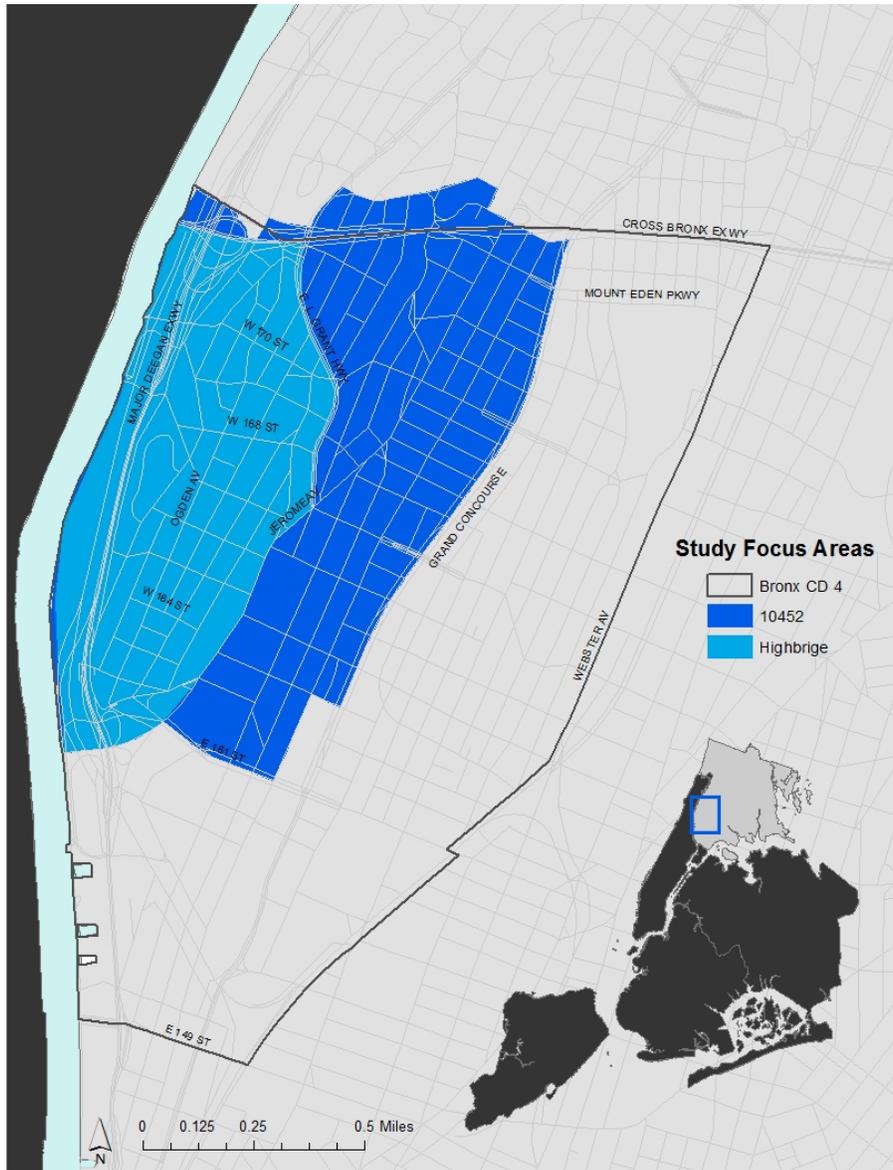
- Recommendations: retail strategy and retail categories to target

Ogden Avenue Commercial Revitalization & Development Study

Introduction

This Existing Conditions Report serves as the first part of the Ogden Avenue commercial revitalization study being conducted on behalf of Bronx Community Board 4. This short report will share the findings so far, including demographic and economic base analysis and a preliminary land use study.

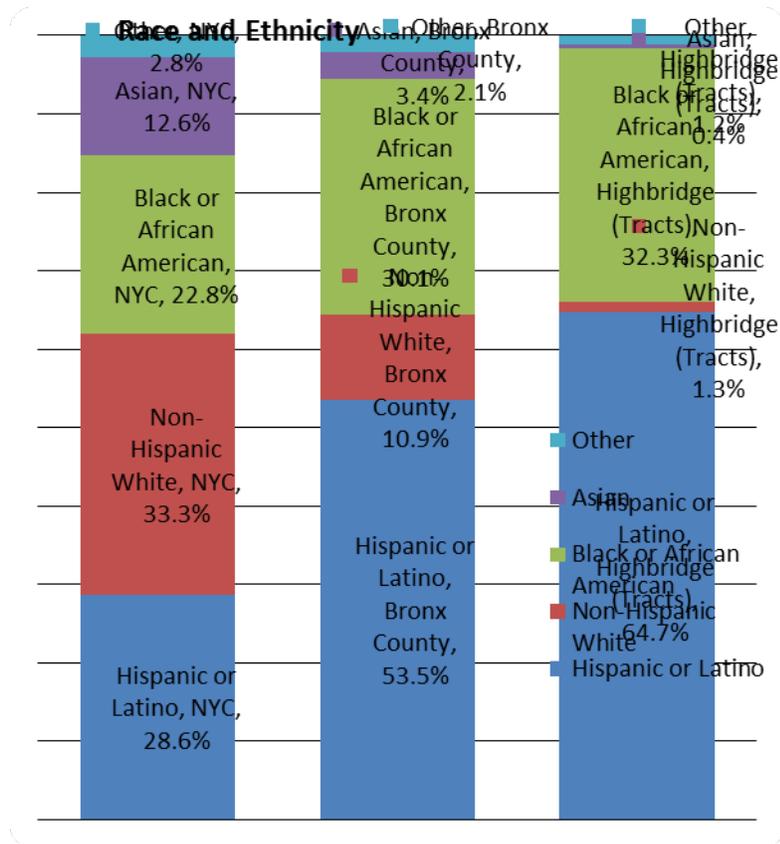
Focus Area Map



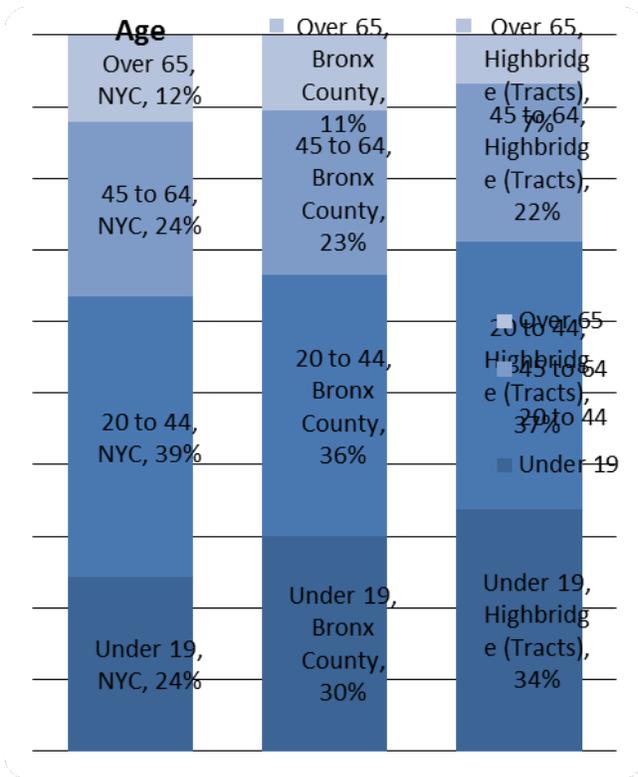
The focus of this study will be the Highbridge area of Community District 4 (CD4) in Bronx County. Much of the necessary data is available at varying scales, and therefore the Highbridge neighborhood will be measured using a few different geographies. New York City and Bronx County will be used for comparison purposes in much of the report. Highbridge (zip code) refers to the Zip code 10452, which is used for a large section of CD4, west of the Grand Concourse, bounded by 161st St. and the Cross Bronx Expressway (in dark blue, above). The 2010 U.S. Census tracts that comprise the Highbridge neighborhood at a smaller scale are tracts 189, 193, 199, 201 and 211, west of the E.L. Grant Highway from 161st St. to the Cross Bronx Expressway (in light blue in the map, above).

Demographics

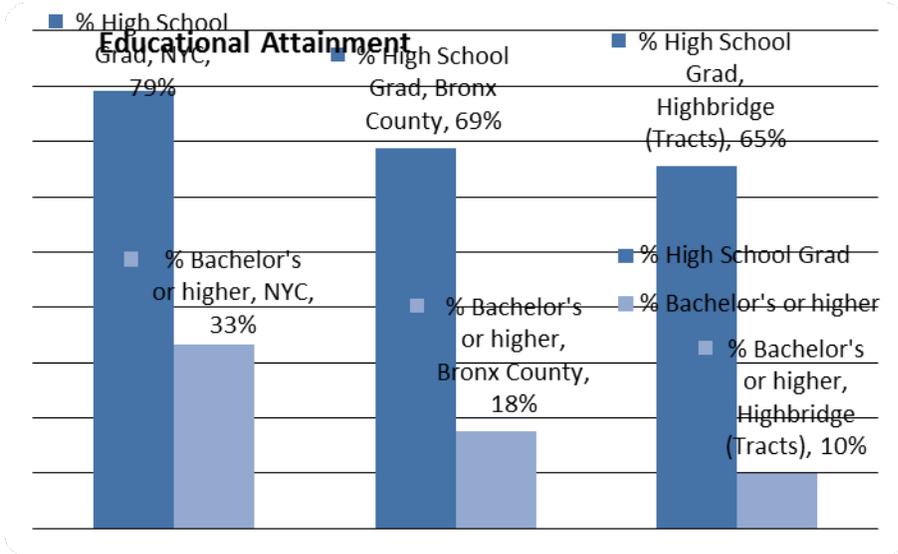
The racial and ethnic makeup of the Highbridge neighborhood varies greatly from the Bronx, and all of New York City. In Highbridge, the total population of almost 31,000 is almost two-thirds Hispanic or Latino origin, compared to less than one-third in the city as a whole. The neighborhood also has a higher representation of Black or African American residents, and a much lower population of Non-Hispanic white and Asian residents.



The neighborhood has an overrepresentation of young people. Just over 1 in 3 residents is under 19 years old. In the city, only 1 in 4 residents is under 19. Highbridge has similar proportion of middle age groups, but a smaller portion of residents over 65 years old.



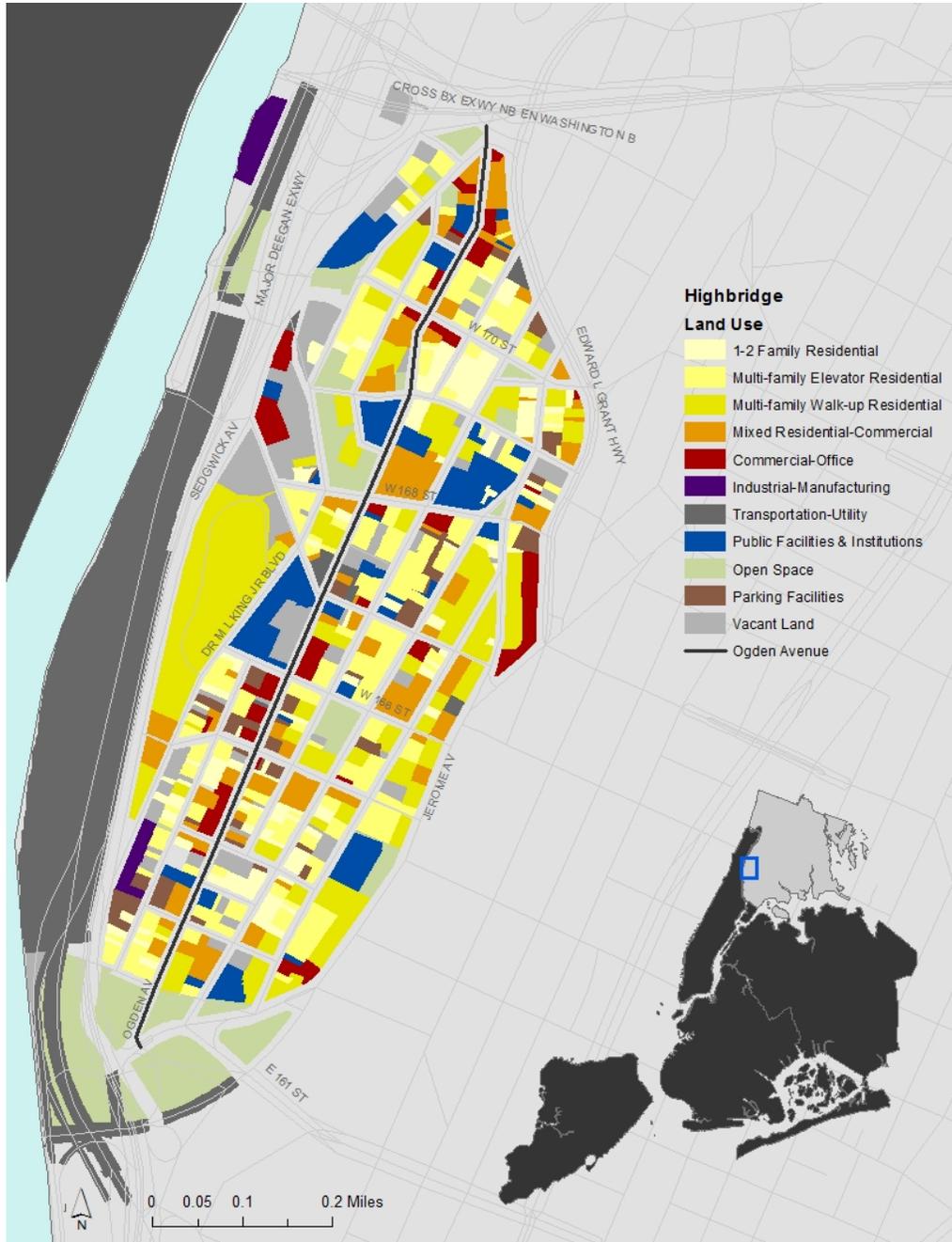
In Highbridge, just under two-thirds (65%) of the population over 25 years old has graduated high school, compared to almost 80% city-wide. 10% of Highbridge residents have a Bachelor's degree or higher, where this figure is 18% in the Bronx, and 33% in NYC.



The Highbridge neighborhood also lags behind in terms of economic indicators. In 2010, the unemployment rate was 9% citywide, 12% in the Bronx, and 15% in the Highbridge Census tracts. And with only 60% of the population over 16 participating in the labor force, this presents a real economic issue. High unemployment often also leads to high underemployment – when people take jobs that are lower paying than their education or qualifications could garner and incomes go down. The median

household income in 2010 in Highbridge was around \$25,000, which is significantly lower than both the Bronx median income of \$35,000 and the city-wide median income of \$50,000.

Land Use Inventory



This map of the five census tracts that comprise Highbridge shows the land use in the neighborhood. The street in the center, Ogden Avenue, is the focus of the study. From the map it is clear that Ogden Ave. is the main commercial corridor; most of the red lots which represent commercial and office space are along this avenue as well as the orange lots that represent a mix of residential and commercial use.

In addition, the avenue is home to many of the public facilities and institutions, represented in blue. Some of the issues facing the corridor are also represented through the map. There is a high concentration of multi-family housing, but a lack of open space and parks. Also, there are a lot of parking facilities (in brown) and vacant land (in light grey) along Ogden Avenue that may present opportunities to revitalize the corridor through these inactive lots.

Economic Analysis

Analysis of the economic base in Highbridge helps to explain what industries are overrepresented and which are lacking to determine an economic development strategy. This first table shows the industrial mix of establishments in Highbridge (by zip code), the Bronx, and New York City by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code.

Industrial Mix and Location Quotient, Highbridge									
		Number of Establishments							
		Highbridge (Zipcode)		Bronx		NYC		Location Quotient Highbridge to NYC	
NAICS Code	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Location Quotient Highbridge to NYC
31-33 Manufacturing	7	1%	393	3%	6626	4%			0.32
42 Wholesale trade	9	2%	695	5%	16230	9%			0.17
44-45 Retail trade	181	31%	3462	26%	31459	18%			1.73
51 Information	6	1%	177	1%	5729	3%			0.32
53 Real estate and rent	112	19%	2274	17%	18972	11%			1.78
54 Professional, scienti	16	3%	644	5%	25138	14%			0.19
56 Administrative and s	11	2%	429	3%	8539	5%			0.39
61 Educational services	12	2%	108	1%	1946	1%			1.86
62 Health care and soci	75	13%	1997	15%	20839	12%			1.08
71 Arts, entertainment	1	0%	146	1%	5322	3%			0.06
72 Accommodation anc	58	10%	1368	10%	17494	10%			1.00
81 Other services (exce	101	17%	1621	12%	19105	11%			1.59
Total Establishments	589	100%	13314	100%	177399	100%			

Total industrial mix (BRONX_NYC_LQ sheet 3 table)

There are 589 establishments in Highbridge, measured by the zip code. Retail trade is the largest industry in Highbridge, making up over 30% of all establishments in the neighborhood, followed by Real estate and rental services, Other services, and Health care and social assistance. Location Quotient (LQ) is a calculation that shows the size of an industry relative to a reference area, in this case New York City. Industries with high LQs like Retail trade, Real estate and Educational services means that these are overrepresented compared to the city. These industries may have a competitive advantage and present an opportunity to build upon. Industries like Wholesale trade, Professional, scientific and technological have low LQs, showing that these sectors are weak compared to the city.

Other Tables

Total Shift share (BRONX_NYC_LQ sheet 3 table)

Retail mix (All_Retail sheet 2)

Retail Shift share (All_Retail sheet 3)

Retail Location Quotient, Highbridge (2007)								
2007 NAICS code	Number of Establishments							Location Quotient
	Highbridge, Zipcode		Bronx		NYC		Highbridge to NYC	
441110 New car dealers	2	1%	24	1%	162	1%	1.66	
441120 Used car dealers	5	3%	56	2%	281	1%	2.40	
441310 Automotive parts and acces	6	4%	65	2%	262	1%	3.08	
441320 Tire dealers	5	3%	33	1%	116	1%	5.80	
442110 Furniture stores	2	1%	115	4%	872	4%	0.31	
442210 Floor covering stores	1	1%	26	1%	240	1%	0.56	
442299 All other home furnishings	2	1%	16	1%	430	2%	0.63	
443112 Radio, television, and other	4	2%	112	4%	991	4%	0.54	
445110 Supermarkets and other gro	58	35%	852	31%	4811	22%	1.62	
445210 Meat markets	4	2%	81	3%	554	2%	0.97	
445310 Beer, wine, and liquor store	6	4%	110	4%	936	4%	0.86	
446110 Pharmacies and drug stores	21	13%	285	10%	2004	9%	1.41	
446120 Cosmetics, beauty supplies	1	1%	54	2%	555	2%	0.24	
446130 Optical goods stores	2	1%	33	1%	524	2%	0.51	
446191 Food (health) supplement s	1	1%	17	1%	292	1%	0.46	
447190 Other gasoline stations	5	3%	68	2%	441	2%	1.53	
448110 Men's clothing stores	4	2%	70	3%	515	2%	1.05	
448120 Women's clothing stores	2	1%	132	5%	1644	7%	0.16	
448130 Children's and infants' cloth	5	3%	34	1%	287	1%	2.35	
448140 Family clothing stores	1	1%	57	2%	814	4%	0.17	
448190 Other clothing stores	2	1%	28	1%	415	2%	0.65	
448210 Shoe stores	7	4%	112	4%	1093	5%	0.86	
448310 Jewelry stores	4	2%	82	3%	1423	6%	0.38	
451110 Sporting goods stores	1	1%	20	1%	231	1%	0.58	
452990 All other general merchand	10	6%	183	7%	911	4%	1.48	
453220 Gift, novelty, and souvenir	2	1%	46	2%	909	4%	0.30	
454390 Other direct selling establis	2	1%	39	1%	506	2%	0.53	
	165	100%	2750	100%	22219	100%		

Retail Location Quotient shows the comparative advantage of retail subsectors in Highbridge relative to New York City. In the first four rows, New and used car dealers, automotive parts and tire dealers are overrepresented in the neighborhood. These are not very community-oriented businesses, and may present an opportunity to increase retail establishments that meet the needs of the community. Supermarkets, Pharmacies, and Gasoline stations are also strong subsectors. Children’s clothing stores are relatively strong, but Women’s and Family clothing stores are weak relative to the city.

Conclusion

Using demographic, land use and economic data, it is clear that the Highbridge neighborhood and Ogden Avenue in particular is in need of commercial revitalization and economic development. Bringing in new retail businesses and creating a more attractive corridor will enhance economic opportunities for residents. This research, supplemented with a more specific land use inventory and community input, will serve as the basis for recommendations for commercial revitalization of the Ogden corridor.

HOMELESS & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES: There is at no point that Bronx Community Board 4 desires to be viewed as a community that is insensitive to a population of people that clearly need support and consideration. Homelessness is a serious issue in New York City and CB4 has done its part in working with organizations that provide supportive housing in our community.

There are concerns in which DHS has heard from the Board regarding the communication process to the community district and how DHS handles communication to elected officials. This issue still needs to be resolved and it is the opinion of the board that DHS or the applicant organizations should be sending notification to all elected officials concerned.

There are concerns specifically regarding homeless shelters, CB4 has one 200 bed men's facility and one 200 female facility, both placed across from schools and It is our opinion that we have our "fair share". We will continue to view each request and review each on a case by case basis. We will always review the make-up of our community's facilities to insure that we are not inundated with housing that overburdens the community at large.

OPEN SPACES: What is the status of maintenance along the Grand Concourse planters and replacement of dead shrubs? We understand that an MOU has been signed by DPR and DOT regarding the GC planters, please confirm.

- What are the overall budget and staffing for Bronx District Four general maintenance and horticultural programs?
- What is the current full time and seasonal staffing for maintenance and cleaning, and the budget, for the DPR in Bronx District Four? How have the PEGs for this fiscal year impacted staffing and services? How so?
- What are the responsibilities of, and budget for, PEP? In addition to daily parks monitoring and enforcement, does PEP cover activities and events in parks? How many Bronx PEPs are dedicated to District Four parks? Which ones? What is the projected need for additional PEP in District Four? What is the cost for each additional PEP?
- Are there any City funds in the budget allocated for capital projects that were not obtained from State, Federal, Councilmanic and private sources? What does DPR fund through the agency's capital budget, and in what amount? What types of capital projects depend on funds from

elected officials, including the Mayor’s office? What is the overall strategy for prioritizing DPR’s capital needs? In District Four Nelson Playground’s frog statues need to be replaced, Claremont Park’s retaining wall is in need of repair.

- What expense and capital budget priorities does DPR ask Bronx community boards to support in the FY216 budget?
- What is the possibility of obtaining an additional Park Administrator?

We are fully aware of your agencies fiscal constraints however; this cannot and will not be the standard for our neighborhood playgrounds and recreational spaces.

Again we continue to be distressed at progressive financial cuts suffered by your agency limiting both its capital and expense budget. We particularly deplore the losses experienced re: **Parks Enforcement Patrol. Providing adequate Parks Enforcement personnel is essential to the entire Park program, coupled with an appropriate amount of funding for public safety enhancement.** Money spent on maintenance upgrades should be matched with an equal amount spent on safety enhancements. They both go hand and hand.

HEALTH: The County Health Rankings and Roadmaps systems rank counties using a composite measure of health that accounts for mortality, morbidity, and other risk factors.¹ Of the 62 counties, including the five boroughs, in New York State, Bronx County ranks last. Within the Bronx, some neighborhoods, including those that comprise the Bronx Lebanon Hospital Center's service area namely, Crotona-Tremont, (**High Bridge-Morrisania CB4**), and Hunts Point-Mott Haven,(Board 1,2,3,4,5, & 6) are disproportionately affected by serious health issues and risk factors. Below is a description of these three neighborhoods.

Demographics 2

The service area is home to 582,132 predominantly young, minority residents. Only 17% of residents identify as white, 37% are Black, and, measured separately from race, 65% are Hispanic. Their average age is 29 (younger than the national average age of 37). The median household income is less than \$25,000 (lower than the national median income of \$52,700).

Health Risk Factors 3

Smoking, binge drinking, lack of physical activity, lack of fruit and vegetables, overweight/obesity, and health insurance status are risk factors for many diseases.

Risk Factors	Service Area	U.S.
Current Smoker	21%	21%
Binge Drinking	11%	18%
Ate < 5 fruit/veg per day	94%	77%

No exercise in last month	25%	26%
Overweight	32%	36%
Obese (BMI > 30)	33%	28%
Uninsured	22%	18%

Compared to the United States, the prevalence of smoking, binge drinking, overweight, and exercise in the service area is similar or lower (better); but adequate fruit and vegetable consumption, obesity, and insurance status are higher (worse) in the service area.

Disease Prevalence 4

Compared to the U.S., the prevalence of hypertension, high cholesterol, and depression is similar or lower (better) in the service area.

Disease Prevalence	Service Area	United States
HIV/AIDS	2.4%	0.4%
Diabetes	14%	10%
Hypertension	33%	31%
High cholesterol	29%	38%
Asthma (Adults)	17%	14%
Depression	18%	18%

The prevalence of diabetes in the service area is 40% higher than the U.S. This difference may be driven by the higher prevalence of risk factors in the service area, including obesity and lack of fruits and vegetables and exercise. HIV/AIDS remains an important health issue in these Bronx communities. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the service area is six times that of the U.S. as a whole. In 2011, there were more than 11,300 people living with HIV/AIDS in the service area, 5 which is more than the number of people living with HIV/AIDS statewide in 33 of the 50 states/6

The prevalence of adults who have ever been diagnosed with asthma is more than 20% higher in the service area compared to the U.S. In the Bronx, various environmental factors, including pollution and household pests, aggravate asthma.

Mortality 7

Across the U.S., including New York State and the Bronx, the two leading causes of death are heart disease and cancer; however, beyond that, people in the Bronx die from different causes including diabetes and pneumonia/influenza. Notably, both of these conditions are also prevention quality indicators that can typically be managed in the ambulatory Care setting.

"Premature death" refers to mortality before age 75. Compared to New York State, the causes of premature death in the Bronx are similar with one major exception – death caused by complications arising from AIDS.

Causes of Death (Rates per 100,000)	Bronx	NY State
1. Heart Disease	221	198
2. Cancer	159	162
3. Pneumonia and Influenza	37	Not leading cause
4. Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	30	31
5. Diabetes	27	Not leading cause

Causes of Premature Death	Bronx	NY State
1. Cancer	288	274
2. Heart Disease	249	188
3. AIDS	66	Not leading cause
4. Unintentional Injury	51	54
5. Diabetes	46	28

Given the high prevalence HIV/AIDS in the service area, the fact that AIDS is a leading cause of death is not entirely unexpected; still it underscores an ongoing important health issue is unique to the Bronx and a few other major metropolitan centers in the U.S.

Children's Health 8

Compared to the U.S., perinatal outcomes are worse in the service area: 13.8% of babies are born premature (U.S. 11.7%) and 10% are low birth weight (U.S. 8%).

Pediatric Hospitalizations (Rates per 10,000)	Bronx NY	State
Asthma, Ages 0-17	84	29
Gastroenteritis (stomach flu), Ages 0-4	21	16
Otitis media (ear infection), Ages 0-4	4	3
Pneumonia, Ages 0-4	76	45
High blood lead level, Ages 0-6	32	53

Compared to New York State, children in the Bronx are hospitalized for asthma, gastroenteritis, otitis media, and pneumonia much more frequently; but Bronx children have fewer incidents of high blood lead levels.

Prevention Quality Indicators 9

Prevention Quality Indicators (PQI) are measurements of the quality of outpatient care for ambulatory care sensitive conditions - conditions for which good outpatient care can typically prevent the need for hospitalization.

In this table, the PQIs for the service area are expressed as the hospital discharge rates per 100,000 people. When above 100%, the percent of the expected discharge rate indicates how much the observed rate exceeded the expected rate. For example, the discharge rate for bacterial pneumonia was double (200%) the expected rate. The readmission rates for all of the conditions are worse than the expected rates.

PQIs	Service Area	% of Expected
Bacterial Pneumonia	373	200
Dehydration	109	191
Urinary Tract Infection	296	251
Angina (chest pain)	77	309
Congestive Heart Failure	611	285
Hypertension	243	434
Diabetes	669	359
Asthma	796	502
COPD	242	201
<i>(Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)</i>		
All Conditions	3,416	305

Health Disparities

In the Bronx, racial health disparities exist for many of the aforementioned risk factors, diseases, and causes of mortality. Typically, Black/African-American and Hispanic residents are at higher risk. For example, in the Bronx, Black/African American and Hispanic residents are more likely to: be uninsured (16% and 27% vs. 11% of white non-Hispanic residents); be obese (35% and 31% vs. 21% of white non-Hispanic residents); consume less than 5 fruits or vegetables per day (93% and 94% vs. 89% of white non-Hispanic residents); have diabetes (16% and 15% vs. 3% of white non-Hispanic residents); have

hypertension (38% and 31% vs. 28% of white non- Hispanic residents); have asthma (15% and 20% vs. 14% of white non-Hispanic residents); and have HIV/AIDS (97% of cases are among Black/African-American and Hispanic residents). Compared to white and Hispanic residents, Black residents are more likely to be hospitalized for nearly all of the prevention quality indicators conditions.

Summary

The neighborhoods of Croton a-Tremont, High Bridge- Morrisania, and Hunts Point-Mott Haven, are home to a young, predominantly minority population. Some risk factors and diseases are more prevalent in the service area. Compared to the U.S., the prevalence of some health risk factors, including obesity, lack of fruits and vegetables, and not having health insurance, as well as diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, diabetes, and asthma are worse in the service area. The universally high prevention quality indicators and unusual mortality patterns indicate that regardless of the prevalence, diseases are not well managed in the community. There are many complex factors, such as physician shortages, limited educational attainment, language barriers, and reliance on public transportation, that likely contribute to this pattern. It may be that people do not know they have the disease, people with disease are not getting the care they need, and/or people who have disease and receive care are not able to manage it on their own.

References

- 1 County Health Rankings <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>
- 2 2008-2010 3-Year American Community Survey and 2010 U.S. Census
- 3 New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Community Health Survey 2011/2010/2009; Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System 2011/2010/2009
- 4 New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Community Health Survey 2011/2010/2009; Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System 2011/2010/2009; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2013
- 5 AIDSvu. Emory University Rollins School of Public Health. Available at <http://aidsvu.org/downloadable-maps-and-resources> Accessed May 30, 2013.
- 6 Kaiser Family Foundation. People Living with *HIV/AIDS* (data through December 2008). Available at <http://kff.org/hiv/aids/state-indicator/people-living-with-hiv/aids/> Accessed May 30, 2013.
- 7 New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Biometrics and Health Statistics, 2012 http://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/leadingcauses/leadingcauses_death/

82008-20122 Perinatal Data NYS DOH <https://bronx.lehman.cuny.edu/Health/2008-2010->

Bronx-ZIP-Code-Perinatal-Data-Profile/9zgg-ja76; 2012 March of Dimes

<http://www.marchofdimes.com/peristats/pdflib/998JUS.pdf>

<http://www.marchofdimes.com/baby/low-birthweight.aspx>; NYSDOH Community Health

Indicator Reports, 2012 <http://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/chac/indicators/cah.htm>

9New York State Department of Health. Based on 2008-2009 SPARCS data

https://apps.health.ny.gov/statistics/prevention/quality_indicators/mapaction.map Accessed June 4, 2013.

IN CONCLUSION: As always, we take this moment to reflect on the past year and the years preceding. All too often, we find ourselves in an adversarial position with agencies' policies, but we have never considered their representatives as our adversaries. On the contrary, we have often found the agency representatives to be cooperative, responsive and helpful. We could never achieve our successes alone...It has always been a joint effort of New York's best and brightest and for that the people of Community District Four are most grateful.

As we encounter new challenges, we believe that together we can succeed and come up with creative solutions that will improve the quality of life of our residents.