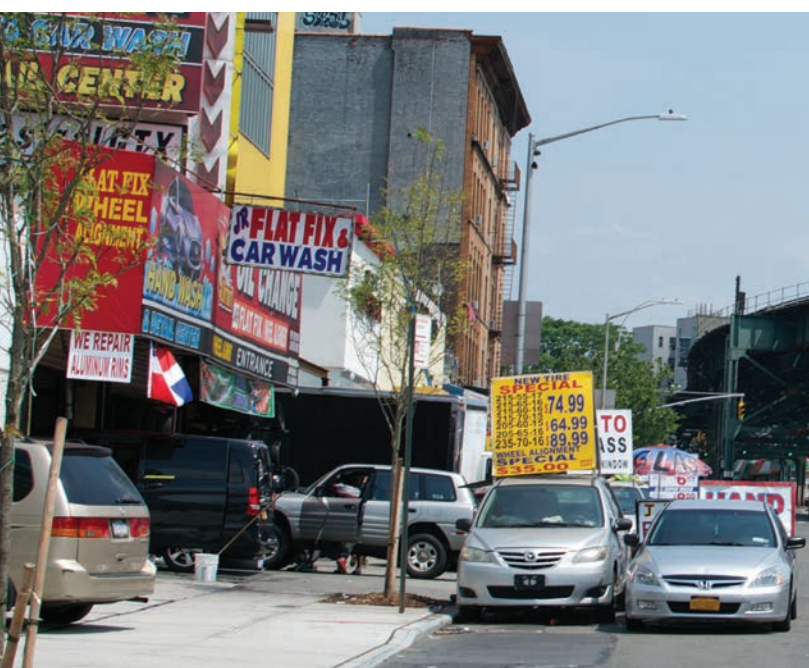


JEROME AVENUE BUSINESS NEEDS STUDY



BARRETTO BAY STRATEGIES

SEPTEMBER 25, 2017

Prepared For The Women's Housing And Economic Development Corporation



The Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDco) contracted Barretto Bay Strategies to conduct the Jerome Avenue Business Needs Study.

The Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDco) is a community development organization founded on the radically simple idea that all people deserve healthy, vibrant communities. We build award winning, sustainable, affordable homes — but our work is not over when our buildings are complete. WHEDco believes that to be successful, affordable housing must be anchored in strong communities that residents can be proud of. WHEDco's mission is to give the South Bronx access to all the resources that create thriving neighborhoods — from high-quality early education and after-school programs, to fresh, healthy food, cultural programming, and economic opportunity. For more information, visit **whedco.org**.

WHEDco would like to thank the United Auto Merchants Association (UAMA) for their assistance with collecting merchant surveys. We would also like to thank all of the merchants and employees who participated in this study.

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Introduction

The 92 block Jerome Avenue corridor is today confronting the leading edge of a wave of change that may at once profoundly rend the district's commercial fabric and at the same time yield the density needed to support a new class of retail businesses. Despite the uncertainty occasioned by an impending re-zoning, which has now entered the seven-month-long Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), the district continues to demonstrate remarkable resiliency. Its businesses evidence an unusual capacity to leverage the corridor's dynamism and in-place assets, while the district itself displays a knack for reinventing itself even as profound new challenges emerge.

The remarkable and longstanding diversity of businesses in the corridor is in part attributable to grandfathered uses that pre-date the 1961 Zoning Resolution as well as the presence of C-8 and M-1 districts, which accommodate a vast array of commercial and light industrial uses. Recent land use studies have identified early and mid-twentieth century industries ranging from paper manufacturing and sign making to the assembly of floor lamps and freezer equipment¹. Geography, large-scale public works projects, and unusually strong and multi-modal transportation access also likely figured in its early success as a commercial corridor. In the 19th century, the construction of the nearby Croton Aqueduct system (1837-1842) and High Bridge (1848) brought 4,000 skilled and semi-skilled laborers to the area, many of whom later settled there², offering a ready labor pool to industrialists. Later in the century, the paving of the full length of Jerome Avenue (1897) offered local businesses convenient access to markets while the construction of the Interborough Rapid Transit line (1913-1918), brought new investment and visibility to the corridor³. Finally, the construction of the Cross-Bronx Expressway (1948-1963) facilitated the movement of goods, raw materials, and labor to and from businesses along Jerome⁴.

Today, the district features several surprising and robust sectors including niche manufacturing, custom woodworking, and the distribution of wholesale surgical supplies, in addition to more traditional retail and the dominant automotive repair and maintenance industry. Ownership and management structures also differentiate many of the businesses in the corridor from competitors elsewhere in the region. Numbered among the 41 businesses interviewed for this study are many Minority-Owned Business Enterprises, Women-Owned Business Enterprises, and at least one employee-owned firm. And finally, the significant share of immigrant-owned enterprises across sectors adds to a narrative of vitality and opportunity that in part defines the corridor.

1 Place-based Community Brownfield Planning Foundation Report on Existing Conditions: Jerome Avenue Corridor, Bronx, NYC Department of City Planning, November 2015

2 *The Water Supply of the City of New York: 1658 - 1895*, Wegman, Edward, 1896

3 *The Northern Borough: A History of The Bronx*, Ultan, Lloyd, 2005

4 Ibid

While the district is dotted with longstanding, multi-generational enterprises—including one that has been in the same location since 1925 — the study also identified emergent businesses and newcomers to the district that have successfully adapted or re-purposed former industrial spaces for new or transitional uses. Notable among these new arrivals are enterprises in the fitness sector that have taken advantage of large floorplates, high ceilings, and excellent transit access. Lastly, the study found multiple synergies and meaningful business-to-business activities and alignments that speak to the interdependence of businesses in the corridor and the potential impacts of significant disruptions to the district ecosystem.

Central Question

The present study has been conducted in order to provide WHEDco and the NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS) with a detailed picture of business service needs throughout the Jerome Avenue Business Corridor. The study's ultimate aims are to inform the design of future services, to provide an accurate and up-to-date snapshot of the issues and challenges faced by small businesses, and to focus new services on areas of greatest need.

Methodology

In order to determine the most pressing business needs on Jerome Avenue, Barretto Bay Strategies (the Consultant Team) has defined a study area which mirrors the area previously defined by the NYC Department of City Planning for its Jerome Avenue Neighborhood Planning Study. As such, the present study focuses on businesses located on Jerome Avenue, between McClellan Street and 184th Street. Several major side streets, which run perpendicular to Jerome, are also included in the study as follows: East 167th Street, East 170th Street, Edward L. Grant Highway, East Mt. Eden Avenue, Tremont Avenue and Burnside Avenue (the study area for these blocks extends several blocks off of Jerome in both directions). The present study also builds upon the 2016 Commercial District Needs Assessment for Jerome Avenue completed by WHEDco and the Davidson Community Center.

The Consultant Team developed three customized surveys in conjunction with WHEDco staff. Also with WHEDco staff and with the United Auto Merchants Association, the Consultant Team conducted a market scan of 41 Jerome Avenue businesses, representing approximately 12 percent of all Jerome Avenue firms. Our scan was designed to capture a wide cross-section of Jerome Avenue merchants so that the Consultant Team could represent the diverse array of businesses that call this district home. As a result, the study includes data provided by retail, wholesale and light manufacturing firms, as well as those in the automotive sector.

Survey Development

Barretto Bay developed two types of business surveys to help guide structured interactions during one-on-one interviews. The first survey focused on automotive businesses, while the second focused on other active sectors in the area. Both surveys were framed to capture specific information regarding the following potential needs: 1) Financing/Access to Capital, 2) Accounting and Cash Flow, 3) Employee Recruitment and Training, 4) Marketing, 5) Cost Control, and 6) Interest in Government Programs. These two survey tools are included for review in Appendix A along with a third survey that was given to employees.

Merchant Outreach and Engagement

As an initial step, Barretto Bay met with WHEDco staff as well as representatives from the United Auto Merchants Association and Spring Bank to identify our initial outreach cohort. All merchants were then interviewed one-on-one at their workplaces and at a time of their choosing to remove any unnecessary barriers to participation. At each 60-minute interview, the interviewers elicited both quantitative and qualitative data from the interviewee. Finally, to incentivize participation, each business owner received a \$10 gift card to Starbucks or iTunes.

There were a number of challenges to engaging merchants on Jerome Avenue. Nearly all merchants were severely pressed for time and multiple firms were unable to speak to the Consultant Team due to time constraints. Language barriers posed difficulty for some of our interviewers, but this challenge was more easily surmounted than the aforementioned time constraints. Notwithstanding the above challenges, the project team was able to complete 41 surveys, including 25 in Spanish and 16 in English. This includes 10 surveys of auto merchants who were introduced to the project by the United Auto Merchants Association.

Statistical Significance

The total sample size of 41 exceeds the threshold⁵ for statistical significance, and, as such, descriptive statistics may be generalized to the larger Jerome Avenue population. That being said, the binary categorization of firms into auto-related and other sectors influences the randomness of the selection and introduces the possibility of selection bias. Notwithstanding this qualification, we are confident the results are representative of the district as a whole and may be used to inform the design of new services for the local business community.

⁵ According to the Quarterly Census of Employees and Wages (QCEW), Third Quarter 2015, the primary study area includes 544 business establishments. While the 41 businesses profiled by the study team represent 8% of this cohort, by convention actual statistical significance is achieved by sample sizes of 30 or more (*Probability and Statistical Inference*, Hogg and Tanis). Though the possibility of selection bias exists, the team believes that these results are representative of the population studied.

BUSINESS PROFILE: SELL-MAR ENTERPRISE



Launched over four decades ago as a small glass shop in Washington Heights, Sell-Mar Enterprises is today a thriving storefront and door fabricator specializing in custom glass and aluminum work. Sell-Mar occupies a distinct place in the corridor ecosystem — it provides living wage manufacturing jobs to 19 skilled and semi-skilled employees who are also owners of the company. As a Minority Owned Business Enterprise certified by New York City, New York State, New Jersey, and the Port Authority, the firm competes for work across the tri-state area.

Its largely immigrant employee-owners enjoy not only competitive wages and profit-sharing but also the security of an in-demand and portable job skill. “We don’t just provide a job,” observed CEO Ramona Mejia, “we provide a trade.” Because she manages a fleet of trucks, Mejia appreciates the density of auto businesses in the corridor. “We know all the businesses in a 3 block radius. We do business with the auto mechanic across the street. The area is special because you can find competitive prices because there are so many businesses in the same sector.”

Business Landscape

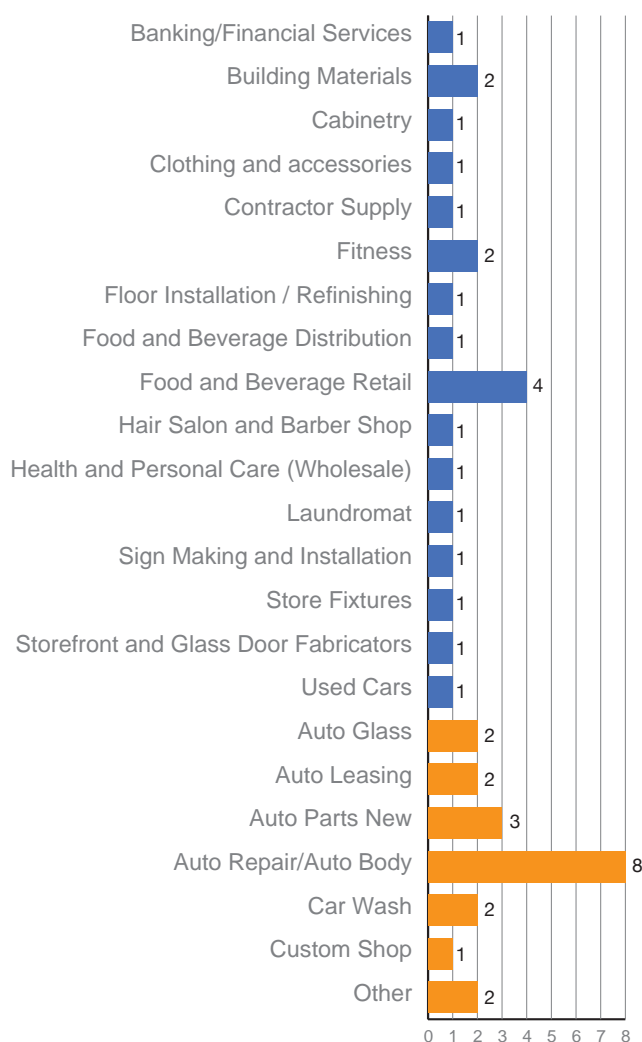
Barretto Bay conducted interviews with merchants (41) and employees (5) throughout the Jerome Avenue corridor. We purposefully sought out a wide cross-section of industry sub-types (as identified in the 2016 Commercial District Needs Assessment).

■ Retail, Wholesale, Industrial (Non-Auto) Businesses

■ Auto Businesses

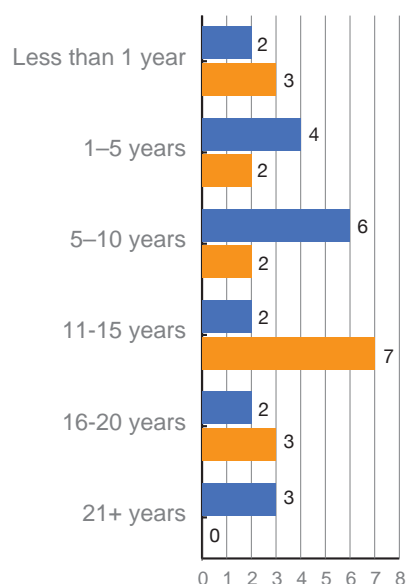
What goods and services does your business provide?

Total Interviews: 41



How many years have you been in business here?

Years in Business



Is this your only location?

77% **23%**
Yes No

Do you own or rent your property?

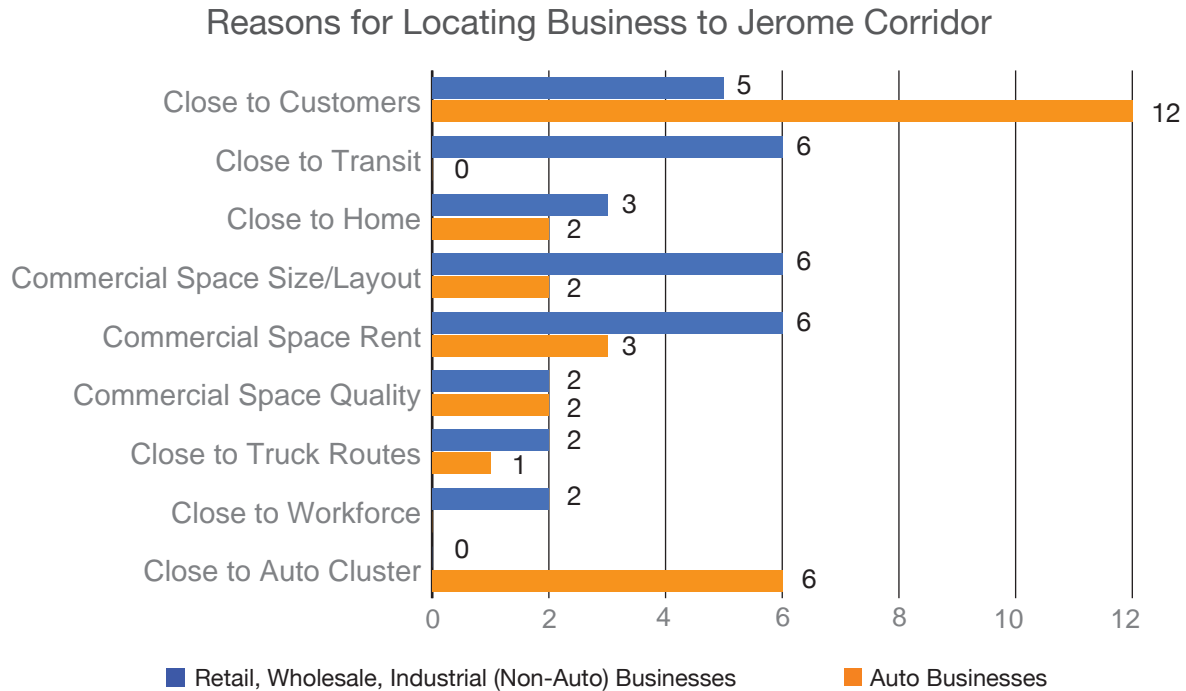
10% **90%**
Own Rent

Do you have plans to expand, close or relocate?

Expand in Current Location	Expand in New Facility (in addition to current location)	Relocate	Close	No Plans / Uncertain
53%	9%	9%	0%	26%

Business Trends

What caused you to locate your business here?



Over the past year, have your sales improved, stayed the same, or decreased?

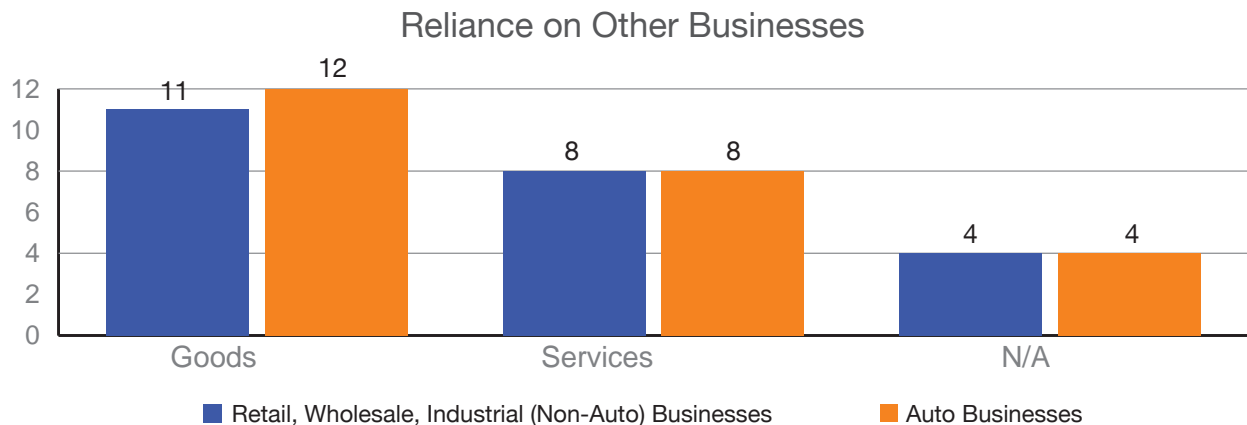
Retail, Wholesale, Industrial Sectors

65% Increased
25% Same
10% Decreased

Auto Sector

24% Increased
29% Same
24% Decreased
24% No response

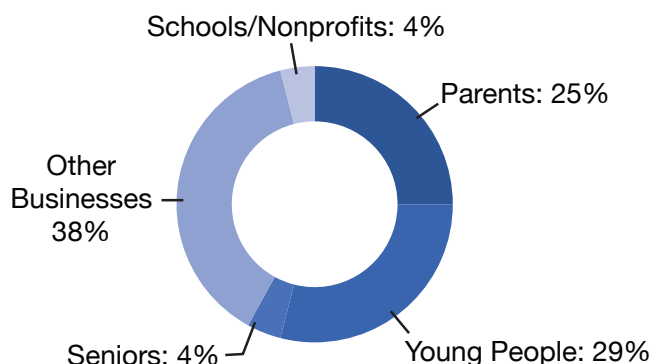
My business relies on other Jerome Avenue businesses for:



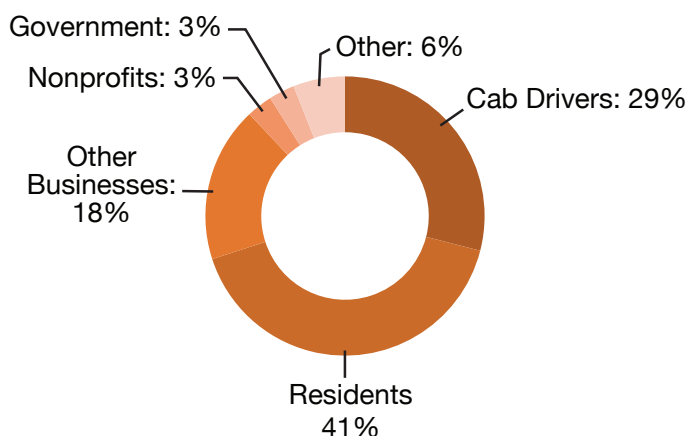
Customers

Who are your typical customers?

Retail, Wholesale, Industrial (Non-Auto)



Auto



*Auto Businesses were asked:**

What other businesses in the Jerome Avenue Commercial District do your customers go to?

41% other auto businesses

35% local restaurants

6% supermarkets

18% said "other"

How do customers hear about your business?

46% word of mouth

21% via online or print marketing

21% referrals from other businesses

12% walk-ins

Where are most of your customers coming from?

26% from the neighborhood

37% from outside the neighborhood but inside the Bronx

37% from outside the Bronx

How do your customers get here?

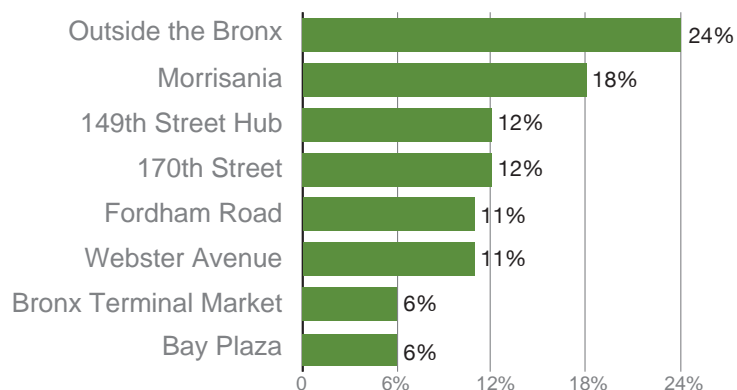
42% by car

35% by public transportation

15% on foot/walk

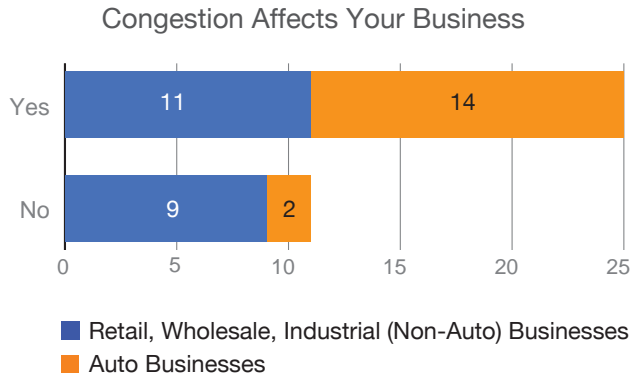
8% my customers don't come here; they mostly receive deliveries

If your customers aren't shopping here, where are they going instead?



Business District Issues

Do you have trouble getting customers or receiving deliveries because of congestion, parking, or meter regulations?



How is this district different from others in the area?

"Nothing like Jerome. You have the 4-line, the Cross Bronx, and foot traffic. Congestion is what makes Jerome."

— Fitness Entrepreneur
(Jerome, near Tremont)

"We have some complaints about vandalism, theft, but the neighborhood is so much better. It changed a lot after they built the affordable housing."

— Manager of Janitorial Supply Company
(Jerome near East Mt. Eden)

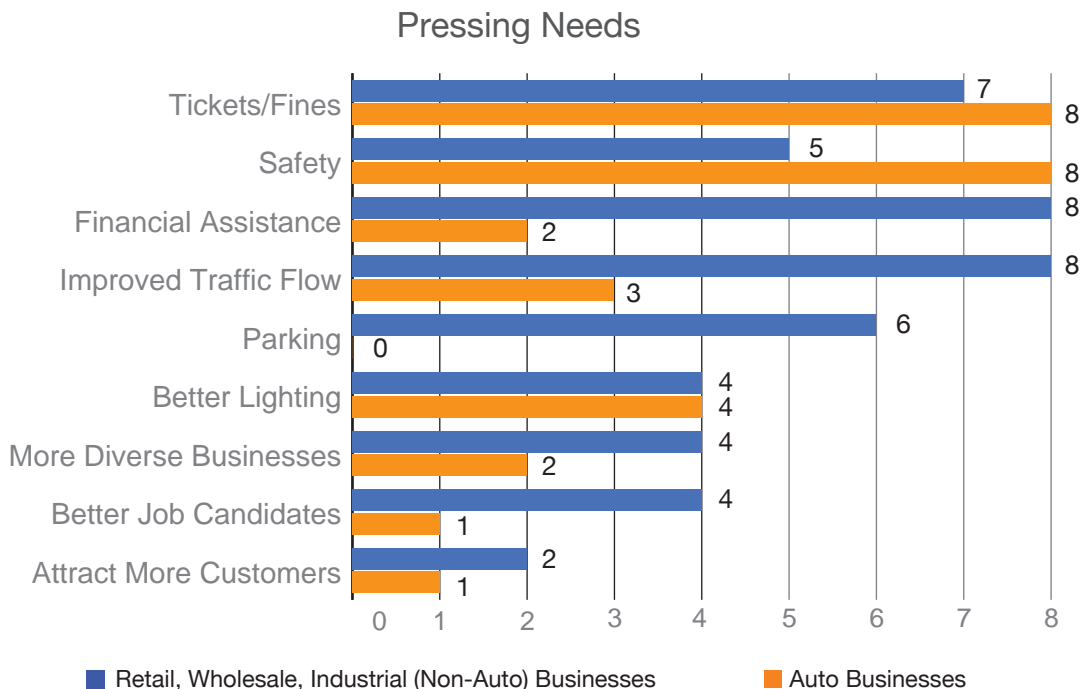
"PARKING HAS IMPROVED. HOWEVER, COSCO STILL CAN'T SEND THEIR TRAILERS HERE."

— Local Distributor (Jerome near Burnside)

"Auto shops — so many"

— Local Bank (167th Street)

What are the most pressing needs of businesses in the district, *other than your own*?



Business-to-Business Activity

Almost all businesses surveyed noted that they or their employees purchase goods and services along the corridor. Firms with delivery or service fleets stated that they relied on local auto repair shops and service stations to ensure business continuity. A janitorial supply wholesaler observed that automotive businesses in the corridor made purchases at least twice a week. The owner of a thriving African market near 176th Street estimated that 10% of her customers are connected to the automotive sector.

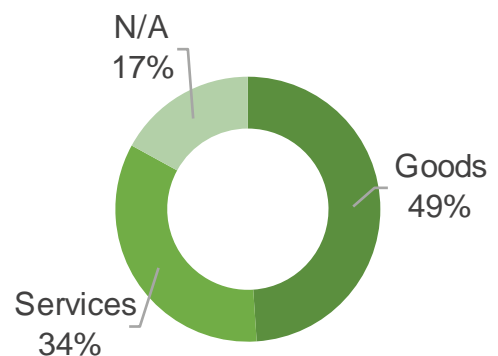
Auto merchants described notable Business-to-Business Activity between their business and other non-auto related small businesses in the Jerome Avenue Commercial District.

45% said that other local businesses often buy products and services from their auto businesses

39% said that other local businesses often refer customers to their auto businesses

16% said they saw no significant business-to-business activity

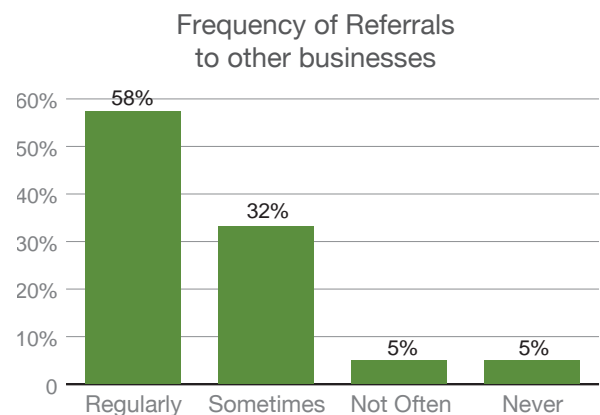
My business relies on other local businesses for:



The biggest benefits to being located near other Jerome Avenue businesses are:

- #1** My business gains new customers from their foot traffic
- #2** Other businesses nearby sell complementary goods/services
- #3** Other business owners and employees are my customers

How often do you recommend customers to other businesses in the area?



Employees

What stores/locations do your employees frequent?

- Restaurants, supermarkets and groceries
- Insurance agencies
- Clothing stores and laundromats

How do your employees get here?

- 62% employees travel by public transportation (bus and train)
- 27% employees walk
- 11% employees travel by car

What we heard from employee interviews⁶:

- All but one of the employees we interviewed were from the Bronx, with one residing in the neighborhood.
- Three of these employees take public transit to work, one walks to work, and one drives.
- Only one employee reported having issues with traffic congestion on the way to and from work.
- Food is the most popular item purchased locally; none of the employees bank in the neighborhood.
- Better parking topped the list of employee suggestions for changes to the area.
- Nearly all interviewees expressed interest in training opportunities ranging from food handling to Commercial Driver License certification to customer service.

Many employees rely on public transportation to get to/from work. Below: East 167th Street.



"THIS NEIGHBORHOOD SHOULD GET WHAT EVERY OTHER NEIGHBORHOOD GETS"

— Employee of African grocery (Jerome Avenue near 176th)

BUSINESS PROFILE: SULLIVAN WOOD FLOORS

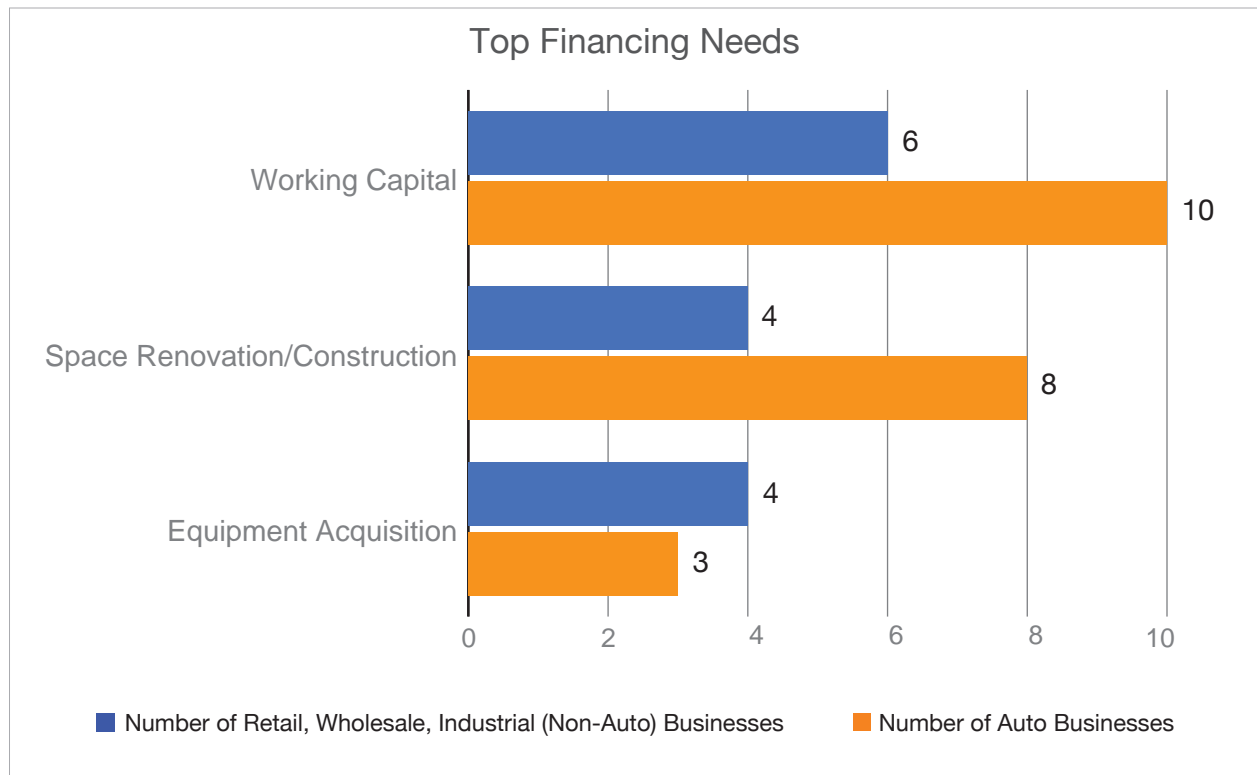


Sullivan Wood Floors moved to Cromwell Avenue in 2000, after losing its lease in East Harlem as a result of local redevelopment efforts. “When we came here in 2000, you could have your choice of parking spaces,” company president Eddie Scott recalled. “The only cars here were on blocks.” A Bronx-owned business, Sullivan installs hardwood floors and provides ongoing maintenance for building management companies, health care institutions, and corporate campuses.

Scott prides himself on the training and ingenuity of Sullivan’s highly-skilled floor mechanics. “We start our entry level workers at \$20/hour. It takes 2-4 years to become a competent mechanic and your earnings can increase substantially.”

All of Sullivan’s craftsmen have a minimum of 10 years in the industry and many have more than 20 years of experience. Scott is grateful for his workers and for his adopted community in the corridor. “We were welcomed with open arms by our new community and we had found an excellent location for transportation and access to our customers... We feel like this is our home and we hope never to be displaced again. We hope to stay here for many many years to come.”

Business Needs

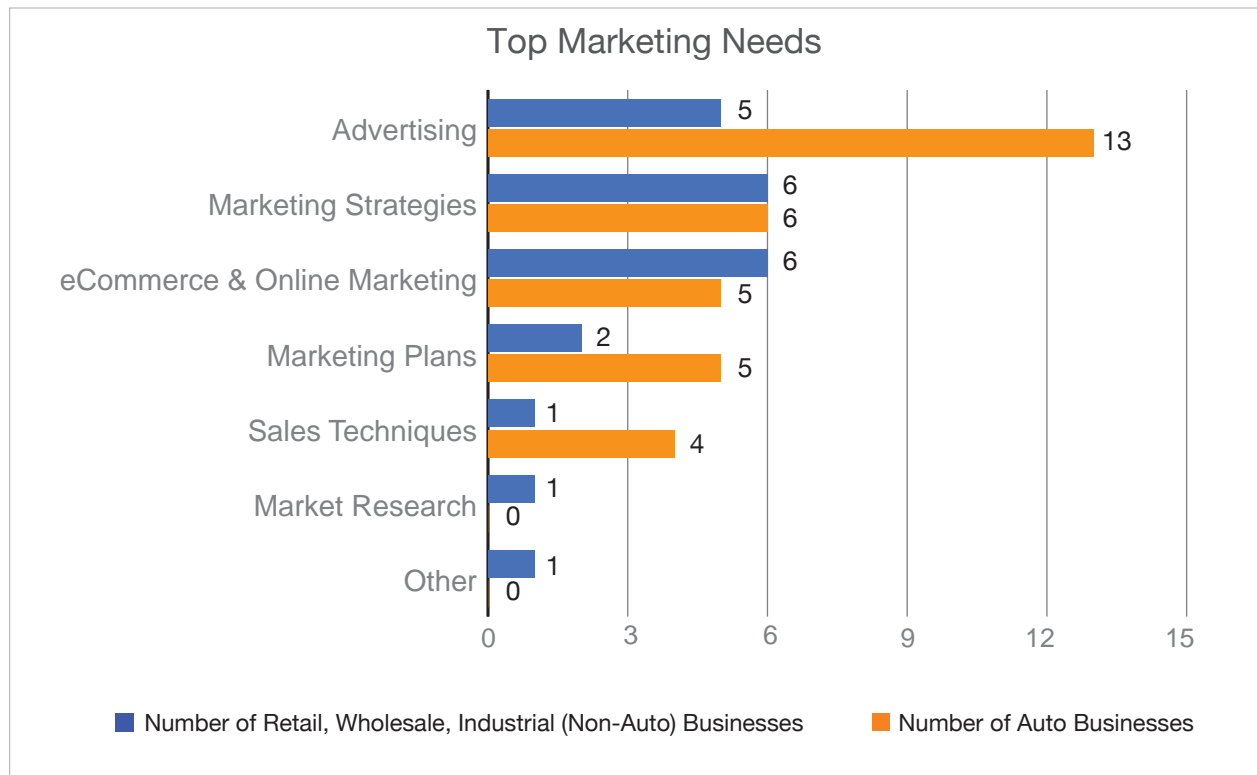


The leading financing need for both the auto and retail, wholesale, industrial sectors was working capital, followed by space renovation. Working capital is essential for a firm's cash flow and operations. Many of the small firms we interviewed operate on tight margins, and have limited time to engage with lenders. As such, it is not surprising that working capital needs take the lead in terms of financing needs. Many times, working capital is conflated with emergency cash flow needs, as opposed to a planned strategy to address working capital needs.

Spring Bank, a federally designated Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), is headquartered on E167th Street, one block from Jerome. When meeting with bank representatives, the Consultant Team was briefed on the bank's Grow Loan Program: a unique solution offering businesses loans in the range of \$10,000, with an extremely quick and flexible underwriting process. The recommendations that follow provide additional detail about how WHEDco might promote this unique resource to corridor businesses.



Business Needs: Marketing



The top three marketing needs were similar across the retail, wholesale, industrial and auto sectors. Advertising topped the list for auto firms, while ecommerce/online marketing and marketing strategies topped the list for the non-auto businesses. Many firms expressed a sincere desire to bring their products and services online and to have technology occupy a more prominent place in their business models. The Consultant Team identified two barriers to these efforts. The first is time, which is a scarce commodity for all the businesses we interviewed. The second is “know-how,” or the technical competency necessary to launch effective ecommerce efforts. These challenges help to explain why marketing strategies are so in demand — businesses need effective strategies for online sales expansion.

**“SALES CAN DOUBLE
IF WE GET ONLINE.”**

-Local Restaurant Supply Company
(Jerome near 167th)

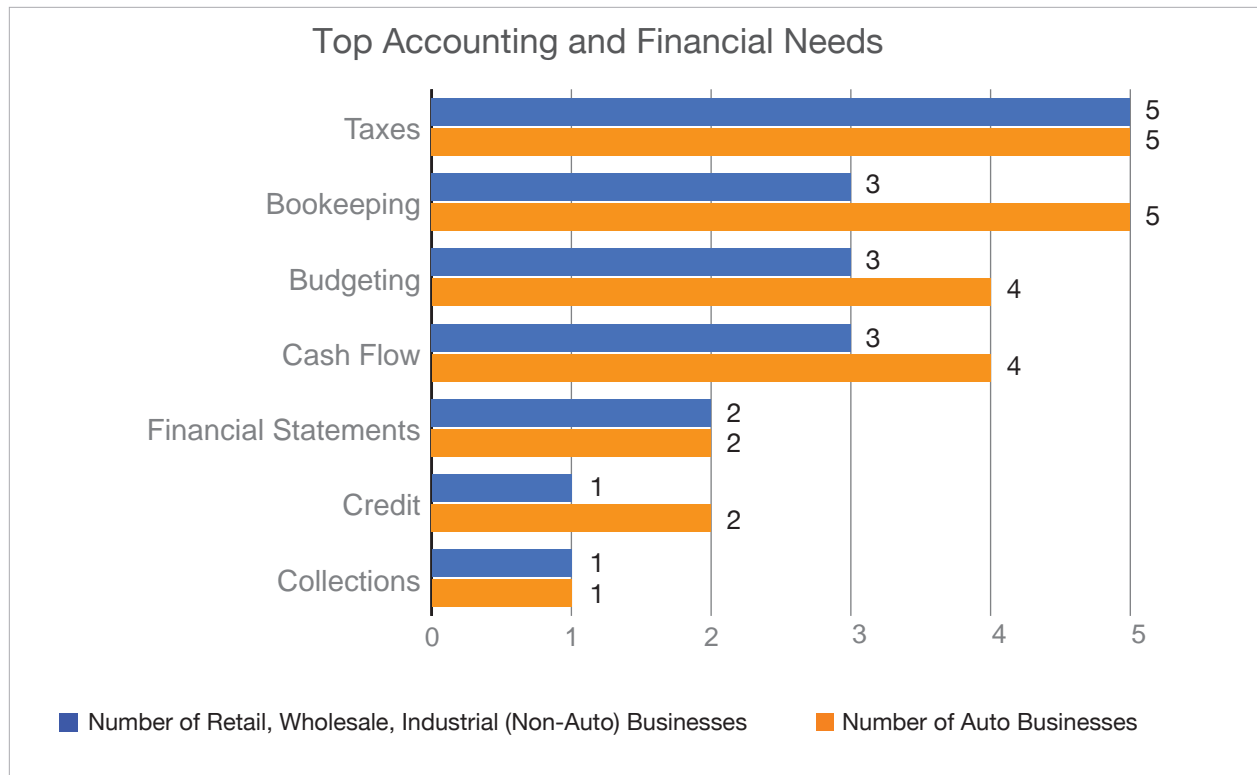
BUSINESS PROFILE: BRUTAL BOXX CROSS FIT



Jose Morales founded Brutal Boxx Cross Fit in 2015 in Washington Heights but departed for a larger and more affordable space on Jerome Avenue in early 2017. The re-purposed auto repair shop Brutal Boxx now occupies features high ceilings, concrete floors, and neighbors accustomed to the clatter and ambient noise associated with a Cross Fit facility.

Morales cited tolerance for noise as a key consideration in locating along the corridor. Amidst auto repair shops, wholesale distributors, and light manufacturers, the crash of dumbbells and weights on concrete was unlikely to prove disruptive to neighbors as it did in his prior location. Morales, who grew up on nearby Davidson Avenue, appreciates the congestion, clamor, and vibrancy of the corridor. “Nothing like Jerome,” he says. “You have the 4 line, the Cross Bronx, and foot traffic. Congestion is what makes Jerome.”

Business Needs: Accounting and Financial Management



Taxes loom large for both the auto and retail, wholesale, industrial sectors, representing a material expense that impacts profitability. A key need identified by the consultant team was assistance preparing and filing tax returns. Assistance with bookkeeping — which is essential for tax preparation — was also cited by many merchants, while budgeting and cash flow management also ranked prominently.

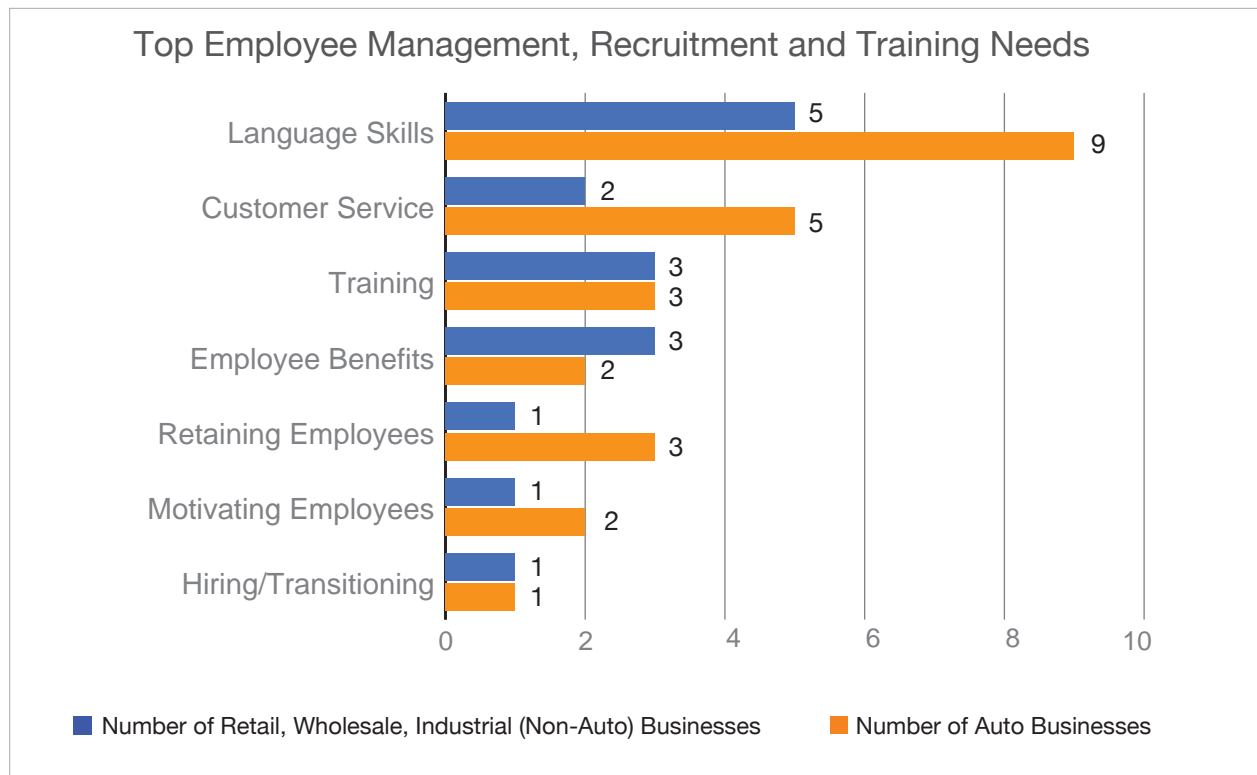
One surprising finding is the lower ranking assigned to financial statements. When the Consultant Team met with Spring Bank, the bank's loan officers stressed the importance of having proper financial statements and other documentation in order to secure credit.

By placing a lower emphasis on financial statements, businesses may effectively be limiting their ability to borrow, and hence expand for the long run. While merchants inherently understand the role of bookkeeping in the process of financial management, a greater focus needs to be placed on balance sheets, profit and loss statements, and cash flow statements.

"BUSINESSES NEED TO KNOW (HOW TO PREPARE) FINANCIAL STATEMENTS."

-Local Bank (167th Street)

Business Needs: Employees



Language skills top the list of employee-related needs as reported by both auto and retail, wholesale, industrial businesses. Other needs in this area are reported far less frequently, but firms have also indicated a need for help with employee benefits, customer service, and employee training and retention.

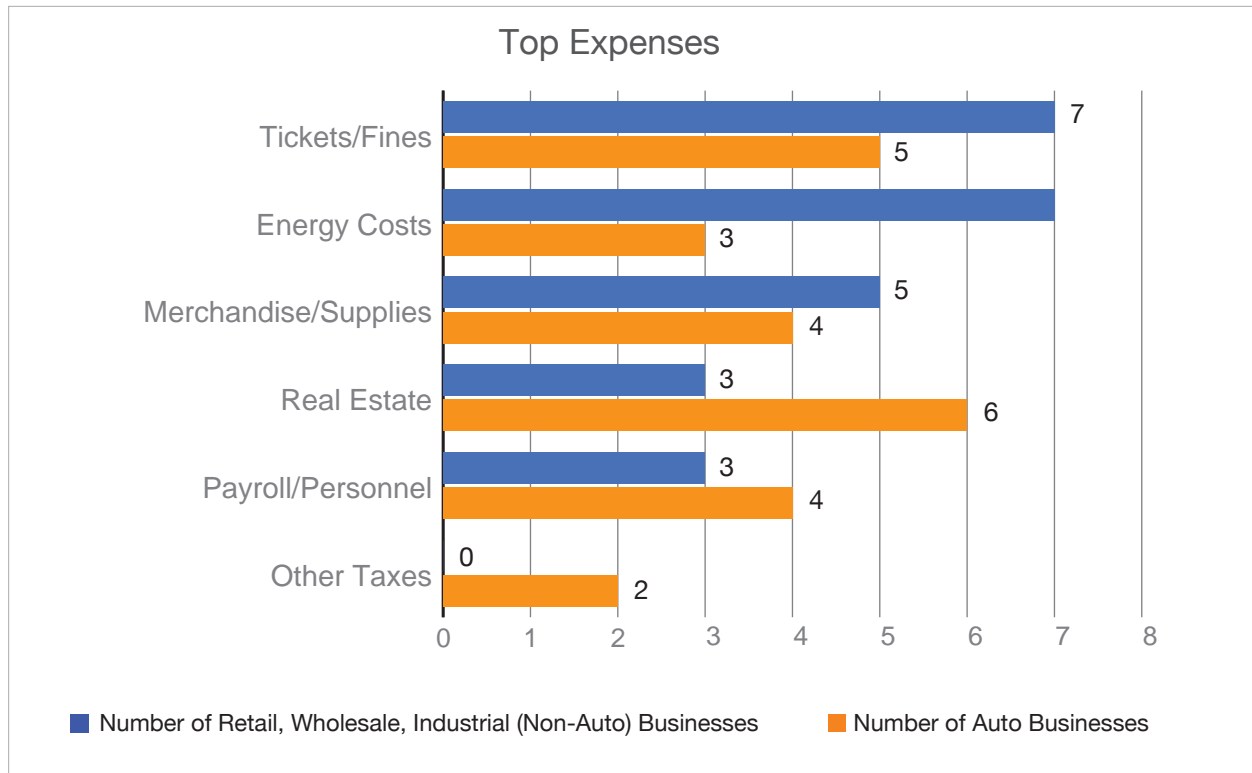
Since many ESL / ESOL providers and resources already exist in the area (and possibly some at WHEDco itself), there is likely an opportunity to leverage existing organizational programming or partnerships to meet a rather significant abusiness need.

Finally, we should note that “language skills” apply to both English and Spanish language skills. As such, the deeper employee training imperative is for improvements in business communication as well as other soft skills.

“ALL EMPLOYEES HAVE 10 -15 YEARS IN. IT’S PRETTY MUCH FAMILY.”

— Manager, custom carpentry shop (Jerome near Tremont)

Business Costs



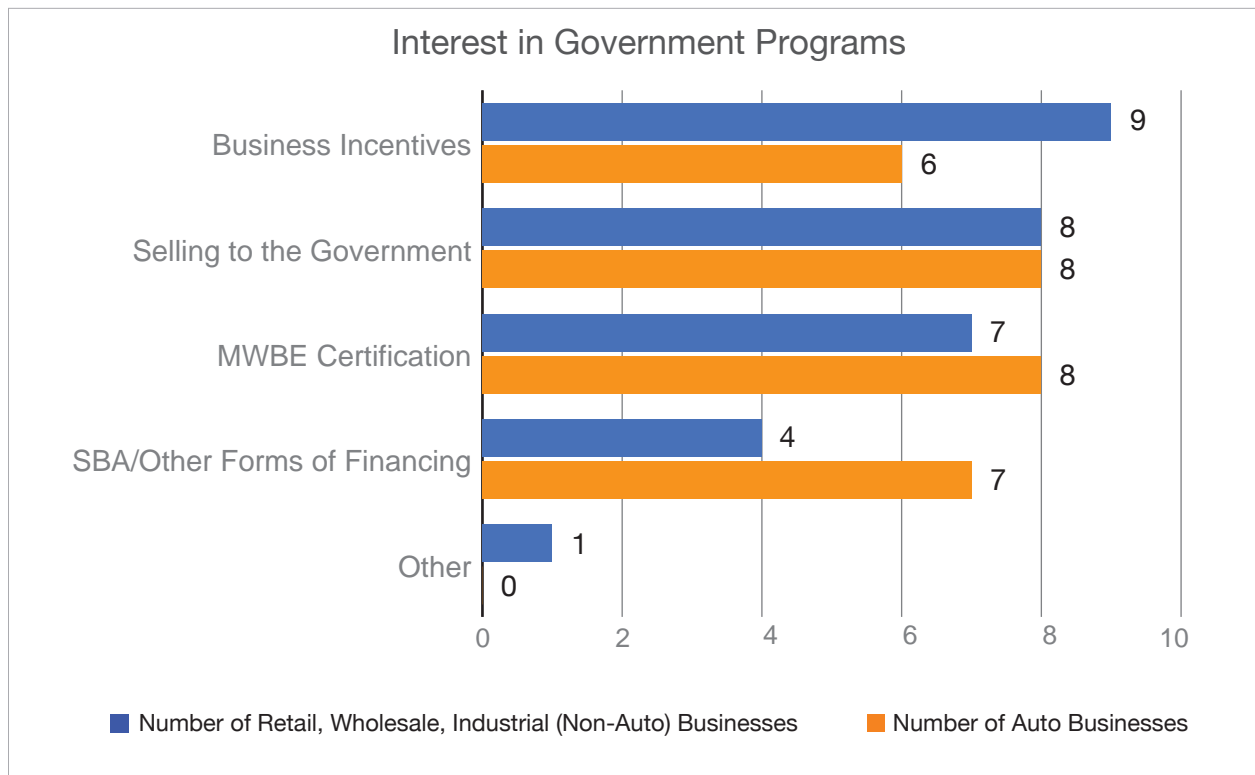
Another method the Consultant Team utilized to identify business service needs was to inquire about the highest cost areas that businesses face on a daily basis. For retail, wholesale, industrial businesses, this was clearly property taxes. For those businesses that own their own properties (two retail, wholesale, industrial and two auto firms own their own property), property tax increases are experienced as bills from the NYC Department of Finance. For tenant firms, however, increases in property taxes typically manifest as rent escalations passed along by landlords.

For retail, wholesale, industrial businesses, the next most highly cited categories of costs are energy costs — including heating and cooling costs — as well as the costs associated with running production machinery (for manufacturing firms). The costs associated with summonses/fines were cited by seven non-auto sector businesses. Auto businesses list real estate/rent as their primary cost driver, as do some retail, wholesale, industrial businesses. Tickets and fines were also cited by five automotive sector firms.

“REAL ESTATE TAXES, THEY ARE KILLING US ”

— Local Restaurant Supply Company (Jerome near 167th)

Government Programs



Jerome Avenue merchants expressed a strong interest in existing government programs, with business incentives, such as the NYC Industrial and Commercial Incentive Program (ICAP), being mentioned directly by several retail, wholesale, industrial businesses, and Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprise certification being the top choice for auto firms. (Note: ICAP is a property tax abatement program that incentivizes property expansion and development). A building supply firm mentioned the US Empowerment Zone, another economic zone designated by the Federal government that offers businesses tax incentives and subsidies to invest and create jobs in certain areas. There was also ample interest in Small Business Administration (SBA) financing programs such as 7A working capital loans and SBA 504 real estate loans.

Finally, while many firms were interested in selling to the government, Jerome Avenue firms face ample hurdles in accessing government procurement opportunities. The construction trades, in particular, require extensive bonding requirements that may prove too cost-prohibitive for smaller firms. Additionally, the NYC Comptroller's 2016 Making the Grade Report highlights the fact that NYC's Minority and Women Owned firms received only a small share of government contracts. As such, we hesitate to recommend that WHEDco develop procurement services at this juncture.

“WHY WERE WE LEFT OUT OF THE EMPOWERMENT ZONE?”

— Local electrical Supply company (Jerome near Tremont)

BUSINESS PROFILE: 1447 POWER MUFFLER INC.



1447 Power Muffler Inc. is an auto repair and diagnostic shop located on Inwood Avenue. Its owner, Alejandro Caba, began as a mechanic working for various businesses along the Jerome Avenue corridor. With aspirations to own his shop, he seized the opportunity to purchase an existing business eight years ago. Although Alejandro has faced cyclical slowdowns in revenue, he expresses contentment in being a business owner. Like many of the auto sector business owners that we interviewed, he attributes much of his success to the high volume of foot-traffic that the auto-business cluster has created, which attracts customers from throughout the greater tri-state area. Many of his clients are generated through word-of-mouth referrals, particularly from related businesses — body, tire, or glass shops — located on the corridor.

Alejandro's business also relies heavily on nearby auto parts dealers (i.e. Big City; Miguel) for day-to-day operations. This interdependence of businesses for clients and related goods is in line with what the majority of auto-related business owners expressed, suggesting its importance to the vitality of the auto sector. Alejandro would like to make improvements to set his business apart from the competition, but is hesitant to make major financial investments to his shop for fear of having to relocate once his lease expires. "I would like to renovate my space," he says, "but I don't know what's going to happen [with the rezoning]."

FINANCING

WORK IN COORDINATION WITH SPRING BANK AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE LENDERS TO PROMOTE LOAN PRODUCTS THAT LOCAL FIRMS CAN ACCESS

As stated above, Spring Bank's Grow Loan Program (<http://bit.ly/GrowLoan>) is a unique resource for small businesses who may not have the time to produce audited financial statements that comply with the rigorous lending standards at commercial banks. In contrast, Grow Loan underwriting procedures only include reviews of bank statements, and firms are not required to present audited or reviewed statements. For firms operating on a cash basis, and who cannot commit the time to refining their accounting processes, these loans can be an essential tool for success.

In addition to Spring Bank, WHEDco should develop relationships with Accion NYC (<http://bit.ly/ac-cionNYC>). Accion specializes in issuing micro loans (under \$50,000). In addition to Accion, the New York Business Development Corporation (<http://www.nybdc.com/>) might be another key partner as they administer the SBA 504 program as well as a host of programming for larger, more established businesses. NYBDC is a better resource for the industrial firms on Jerome Avenue, while Spring Bank and Accion can better serve the needs of smaller retailers and service firms.

Overall, we recommend that WHEDco familiarize itself with these and other programs in order to disseminate information about financing options to the local business community. Establishing a deeper partnership with Spring Bank is essential as this particular lender has both a local presence and a special product tailored to the specific needs of small businesses. Notwithstanding the availability of this product, firms on Jerome Avenue still need to refine their financial management practices if they want to achieve sustainable growth. To this end, we have included specific recommendations in the accounting and financial management section that follows.

Recommendation

MARKETING

CONVENE MARKETING PROFESSIONALS TO TEACH LOCAL BUSINESSES ABOUT THE CONCEPTS OF ONLINE MARKETING AND E-COMMERCE; FOLLOW UP WITH DIRECT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO HELP FIRMS GET THEIR PRODUCTS OR SERVICES ONLINE

For marketing, especially in the retail, wholesale, industrial sectors, there is a clear need for businesses to get their products and services online. Ecommerce, key word search campaigns, website design and online product positioning are extremely important to business growth in the corridor. Although Jerome Avenue businesses are extremely pressed for time, WHEDco may be able to coordinate the appropriate professionals to conduct seminars and direct assistance to the business community on days and times that make sense for local entrepreneurs.

We should note that eCommerce can be as simple as a restaurant signing up for Seamless, and that online marketing, in its most basic form, can include having a business listing on a review site like Yelp! The BronXchange, a local procurement platform aimed at affordable housing developers and institutional purchasers, may offer an alternate scenario for facilitating online marketing and transactions. We encourage WHEDco to think about this category in small introductory steps - even small steps can help to raise a local businesses' profile in the marketplace. As such, seminars and technical assistance can take the form of marketing and ecommerce 101, rather than focusing on the nuances of key word search campaigns and strategic ad placements. No doubt, there are several firms who could benefit from a higher level of intervention, but, given the time constraints faced by local firms, courses and follow up services should focus on the basics.

Recommendation

ACCOUNTING & FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

DEVELOP SERVICES AIMED AT IMPROVING FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND REPORTING AT JEROME AVENUE BUSINESSES

Jerome Avenue businesses typically require a good deal of education in the areas of financial statement preparation, tax returns and bookkeeping. The businesses interviewed by the consultant team appreciated the importance of timely tax returns and thorough bookkeeping and generally noted that these were areas where assistance would be welcomed. At the same time, they did not place a strong emphasis on financial statements. The team's interview with Spring Bank, however, made it abundantly clear that businesses without solid, professionally prepared financials are at a serious disadvantage when seeking access to the credit necessary to grow. As such, on this particular issue, there is a disconnect between what businesses think they need and what lenders know they need.

Unfortunately, many local firms are so time-constrained that financial statement preparation, bookkeeping, and timely filing of tax returns receive less attention than they deserve. In fact, throughout our interviews, the consultant team found many hard-working entrepreneurs who have fallen into a pattern of managing the day-to-day with no time for long term planning. This effectively focuses business owners solely on cash management without time to think about how their day-to-day processes might look to a bank.

In light of the above, WHEDco should consider the benefits and potential impacts of direct financial management assistance and/or financial management seminars. Direct assistance would require enlisting specialized consultants who would be subsidized to provide direct services to businesses. In contrast, financial management seminars can be coordinated with Spring Bank or other local and national banking partners such as Santander, HSBC or Citigroup, and/or with CPA firms. Seminars could focus on topics from bookkeeping, to financial controls, to financial statement preparation.

Recommendation

EMPLOYEE TRAINING

WORK WITH LOCAL TRAINING PROVIDERS, AND/OR WITHIN
WHEDCO'S OWN UNIVERSE OF PROGRAMS TO DEVELOP
THE COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF LOCAL EMPLOYEES

With regard to employee training, it is clear that language skills training services are the highest priority for Jerome Avenue businesses. While basic English and English literacy skills are important concerns, we have found that firms even list Spanish language skills as an area for improvement. As such, trainings would need to include both direct language instruction as well as soft skills and business communication training.

There are a host of providers for ESL services as well as soft skills training providers throughout the South Bronx. WHEDco may consider playing a coordinating role that brings to bear various pre-existing service providers with the intent of improving the language and business communication skills of local employees. WHEDco should also look within its own organization for pre-existing employment and language training programs that can be adapted for use among Jerome Avenue business and their employees.



Petel Yengue Meat and African Market, 1770 Jerome Avenue.

Recommendation

BUSINESS COSTS & INCENTIVES

RESEARCH THE INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL ABATEMENT PROGRAM (ICAP) AND THE COMMERCIAL EXPANSION PROGRAM (CEP) TO DETERMINE WHETHER TO LAUNCH NEW SERVICES RELATING TO THESE PROGRAMS

WHEDco should consider that property taxes were the most noted cost for the retail, wholesale, and industrial sectors, and that new services to reduce this burden might provide substantial value for local businesses. In particular, NYC's Industrial and Commercial Abatement Program (ICAP) and Commercial Expansion Programs (CEP) have been designed to mitigate the effects of property tax increases on small businesses, and there may well be an outreach and/or direct technical assistance role for WHEDco to play with respect to these programs.

The ICAP program incentivizes property improvements by offering businesses property tax abatements of up to 25 years (on NYC property taxes). This program lends itself to property owners, but tenants may also benefit in certain instances. The City's Commercial Expansion Program (CEP) also provides "tax abatements up to \$2.50 per square foot for property owners to help increase tenant occupancy in a designated abatement zone."⁶

At first glance these programs seem to hold the key to reducing a tax burden that can hinder the growth of small businesses on Jerome Avenue. However, these programs can be highly complex and, ultimately, may not readily lend themselves to Jerome Avenue businesses. This is due to the fact that the investment thresholds necessary to trigger ICAP and/or CEP are quite substantial and will likely exceed the capital resources of small retailers and service businesses. On the other hand, industrial and wholesale distribution businesses may indeed qualify for these incentives.

An additional concern for WHEDco to consider is that there are other nonprofit providers in the Bronx, such as SoBRO (<https://sobro.org/>) and BOEDC (<http://www.boedc.com/>) that specialize in providing technical assistance to help firms access ICAP / CEP benefits. As such, our recommendation is to further explore these programs before launching any new services to the community. WHEDco should first become familiar with the eligibility criteria for both programs, and then with the services offered by other providers, to determine whether services in this area will apply to local businesses. If the service providers listed above are already active in the area, there may be a strong case for partnering with these agencies to ensure a deeper level of service. Alternatively, if SoBRO / BOEDC do not currently serve Jerome Avenue businesses, WHEDco could add value to local firms by introducing these providers, and their services to the local community.

⁶ <http://www.nycedc.com/CommercialExpansionProgram>

Recommendation

LEASES AND LEGAL SERVICES

IMPLEMENT LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAMMING AIMED AT REAL ESTATE-RELATED CONCERNS SUCH AS LEASE NEGOTIATIONS AND THE LEGAL ASPECTS OF BUSINESS RELOCATION

Finally, there was a small, but significantly impacted set of businesses operating with month-to-month leases. This issue cut across the retail, wholesale, industrial and auto sectors with three non-auto businesses and three auto businesses indicating they will soon need to move as they have only month-to-month, or expiring, leases. Additionally, auto businesses listed Real Estate as their highest cost control issue.

In order to preserve a stable business climate for these firms, we recommend that WHEDco consider the benefits of launching legal services for real-estate related issues, including lease negotiation, within the district. Business relocation will continue to be an issue for the many small businesses who call Jerome Avenue home, whether due to business expansion, contraction, rising real estate costs, or policy changes. WHEDco could add great value to the Jerome Avenue ecosystem by helping corridor businesses prepare for the extensive legal hurdles that can accompany a lease negotiation, a sale, or landlord-tenant conflict.



Moving sign posted in July 2017 at Morales Hardware, 1862 Jerome Avenue. Morales Hardware has since relocated to 505 East Tremont Avenue. Due to their smaller commercial space and less convenient location, Morales can no longer carry the same range of products and have lost many of their clients in the construction industry. The building at 1862 Jerome Avenue was demolished.

BUSINESS PROFILE: C & C SIGNS



C & C Signs is a custom sign and awning fabricator located on Edward L. Grant Highway. C & C's Manuel Bautiata made the decision to remain in the neighborhood after his business was displaced during the construction of the new Yankee Stadium several blocks south. C & C purchases fuel for its truck in the corridor and sources raw materials for his awnings locally. Bautiata also counts a number of local retail establishments as customers. Five of C & C's employees are from the borough, three of whom live in the neighborhood and walk to work. Bautiata reports that traffic congestion is a concern for C & C "when the Yankees are playing."

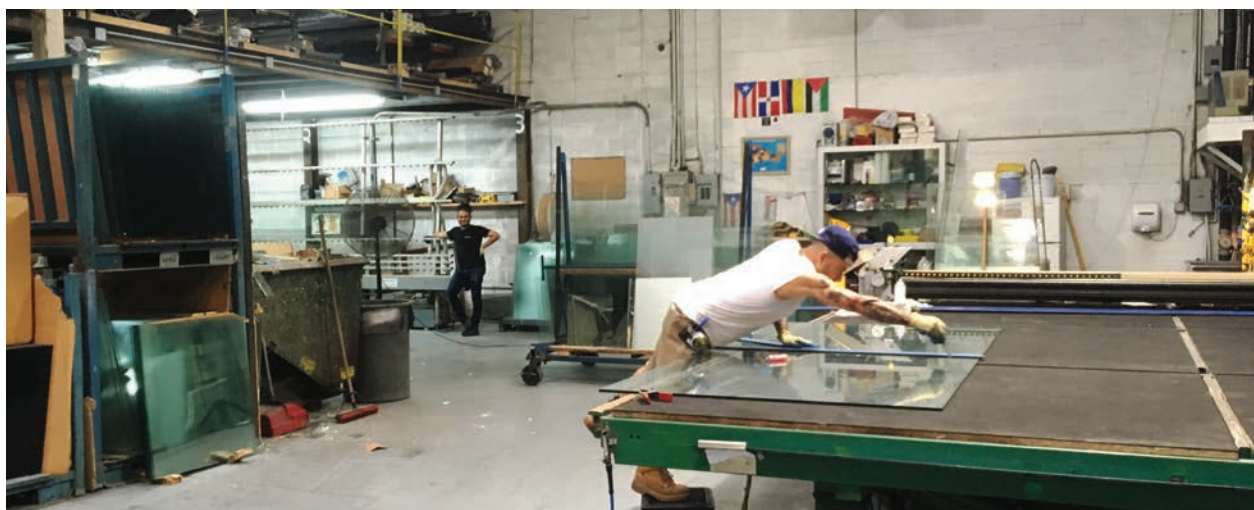
Conclusion

The remarkably diverse ecosystem along the Jerome Avenue corridor includes many firms that fit in neither the traditional retail nor the dominant auto repair and maintenance categories. While some interview subjects spoke to the dichotomy between retail and the automotive sector prevalent in the area, the continued prominence of these light industrial and wholesale distribution enterprises presents a third cluster of businesses in the corridor. The consultant team interviewed nine businesses in this third category, each with interests, concerns, and needs distinct from businesses in the other two clusters. Because the impending rezoning will likely transform Jerome Avenue in ways that could put these businesses at risk, many of the merchants in this third cluster expressed concern about their long-term viability in the area even if they had little detailed information about current zoning proposals.

In many cases, these businesses are resilient holdovers from an earlier era when fabrication, distribution, and light manufacturing could not only co-exist but flourish near multi-family workforce housing. While some, like an electrical supply distributor in place for over 90 years, preceded much of the residential density that emerged in the area, proximity to a skilled and semi-skilled labor pool has historically been a prime advantage for businesses that have located along the corridor.

Encroaching residential development, vehicular congestion, and rising land values have complicated the fortunes of many of these firms, especially those in leased space. For many of their neighbors, however — especially those in the retail trade and service industries — congestion and density are a welcome development in the district. "Congestion is what makes Jerome", commented one fitness business owner. A supermarket operator cited density and foot traffic as the area's differential advantage over its competitors.

High-performance, light industrial stakeholders cite their pay scale, opportunities for advancement, and ability to retain employees as among their principal contributions to the local economy. "We don't just provide a job; we provide a trade," stated Ramona Mejia, the CEO of an employee-owned metal and glass fabrication shop. "All our employees have 10-15 years in; it's pretty much family," remarked the owner of a custom carpentry business.



The workshop at Sell-Mar Enterprises, an employee-owned metal and glass fabrication shop.

While emerging residential development does raise the specter of displacement for businesses in the auto sector as well as light industrial and distribution firms, some of these companies were quick to cite the benefits to the area of new housing. "We have some complaints about vandalism, theft, but the neighborhood is so much better," stated a manager for a janitorial supply business located near 172nd Street. "It changed a lot after they built the affordable housing."

A sign and awning fabricator who was forced to relocate when the new Yankee Stadium was built and is now once again facing displacement, said that he welcomed new development as long as it also brought new ground floor retail. "We need more commercial enterprises in the area. This will create more demand for signs," he remarked. The sign maker's resiliency and even hopefulness is perhaps characteristic of those entrepreneurs who emerge even stronger from a prior setback or displacement. It is, however, also a likely indicator of the vibrant business-to-business dynamic at work in the corridor. Across sectors and among businesses large and small, merchants and employees highlighted the interdependence of corridor businesses and this report has cited numerous examples of local purchasing that help sustain the local economy.

But not all business owners were as philosophical about impending change and current conditions in the corridor as the sign and awning fabricator. Even successful retailers and flourishing service enterprises, presumably optimistic about new residential development in the area, expressed anxiety about change and a marked dissatisfaction with the corridor's commercial fabric. "Rezoning is scary," observed the African market owner. "I'm not sure if it affects supermarkets. Where will the auto businesses go? It could put some of our neighbors out of business."

Newcomers to the district, likely beneficiaries of impending changes in density and land uses, expressed concerns about business conditions and the retail mix. "We need to curate businesses differently," remarked the manager of a niche apparel retailer new to the corridor. "We need national and regional brands. We need street fairs." For others, the imperative is to identify and recruit kindred businesses to build a district of like-minded entrepreneurs. "We should make sure there are more health-conscious businesses to promote a healthier lifestyle for residents," stated the manager of a personal fitness business. "Can the City encourage healthier businesses to open here?"

Across sectors, the businesses surveyed each had their own notions for how the corridor could be improved. Some expressed very granular critiques around infrastructure. "They need to fix the hole in the sidewalk," remarked an employee at the janitorial supply company. The owner of a fitness business expressed concerns about an apparent resurgence in drug addiction in the area. The flooring company president suggested that commercial parking should be more affordable and more prevalent and stated that he was encouraging his employees to car-pool. For others, the critique was broader and encompassed conditions beyond those that immediately impact local businesses. "This neighborhood should get what every other neighborhood gets," observed an employee at the African grocery.

What is clear is that despite the ostensibly divergent interests at play, there exists a deep and abiding interdependence among these businesses as well as patches of common ground among the retail, automotive, and light industrial/distribution stakeholders this study has identified. All but three of the 41 businesses surveyed expressed an interest in learning more about resources available to them or engaging with government to help improve their businesses. And each cited transportation access as a key strength of the corridor. To help these businesses anticipate and prepare for the inevitable transition that their shared community is likely to undergo, this common ground can and should serve as the point of departure for a thorough conversation about interdependence, current conditions, and the future of the corridor. It is the opinion of this study's authors that such a conversation could be both meaningful and transformative.

APPENDIX A: Jerome Avenue Business Owner Survey



Jerome Avenue Business Owner Survey

The Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDco) is a non-profit organization based in the South Bronx. We are conducting this survey to learn more about the businesses in the Jerome Avenue shopping district (**Jerome Avenue between 167th Street and the Cross-Bronx Expressway**). Thank you for your participation!

Business Name _____ Contact Name _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Email _____ Website _____

Your Business

1. What goods and/or services does your business provide?

Retail/Wholesale:

- ☐ Food and beverage retail
- ☐ Clothing and accessories
- ☐ Shoes
- ☐ Electronics and appliances
- ☐ School/office supplies
- ☐ Health & personal care items
- ☐ Household items
- ☐ Furniture
- ☐ Grocery
- ☐ Building materials/Plumbing/Electrical
- ☐ Thrift store
- ☐ Janitorial supplies
- ☐ Import/Export
- ☐ Food/beverage distribution
- ☐ Other _____

Services:

- ☐ Auto (repairs, flat tires, parking, etc.)
- ☐ Dining and entertainment (restaurant, bar)
- ☐ Childcare facilities
- ☐ Design/Fabrication
- ☐ Adult education (GED, trade school, etc.)
- ☐ Hair salon/Barbershop
- ☐ Laundry/Drycleaning
- ☐ Clinics & preventative medicine facilities
- ☐ Banking/financial services
- ☐ Construction
- ☐ Cabinetry
- ☐ Professional services
- ☐ Electrical/plumbing/other skilled trades
- ☐ Fitness
- ☐ Other _____

2. How many years have you been in business here?

☐ Less than 1 Year ☐ 1-5 Years ☐ 6-10 Years ☐ 11-15 Years ☐ 16-20 Years ☐ 21 Years +

3. Is this your only location?

☐ Yes ☐ No. If no, where are your other locations? _____

4. Do you: ☐ Own your commercial space ☐ Rent your commercial space

a. If you rent, do you have a current lease? Yes No

5. What first caused you to locate your business here? (Check all that apply)

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Close to transit | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to my customers | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial space size/layout | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial space rent | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial space quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Close to truck routes/highways | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to workforce | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

APPENDIX A: Jerome Avenue Business Owner Survey

6. Are most your employees from: ☐ **The neighborhood?** ☐ **The Bronx?** ☐ **Outside the Bronx?**
If from outside the borough, where do most reside? _____
7. Do you have plans to:
☐ **Expand my business (in current location)** ☐ **Close my business** ☐ **Relocate my business**
If Close or Relocate, have you had any of the following issues with your landlord: refusing to make repairs, work on building interferes with business, refuse to sign or renew a lease, extreme rent hikes, etc.?
-

8. Over the past year, have your sales:
☐ **Improved** ☐ **Stayed the same** ☐ **Decreased** ☐ **N/A**

Your Customers & Employees

9. Who are your typical customers? *(Check all that apply)*
☐ **Parents** ☐ **Young people** ☐ **Seniors** ☐ **Other businesses**
☐ **Schools/Non-profit institutions** ☐ **Government** ☐ **Other** _____
10. Where do most of your customers come from?
☐ **In the neighborhood** ☐ **Outside the neighborhood but inside the Bronx** ☐ **Outside the Bronx**
11. How do your customers get here?
☐ **Car** ☐ **Bus** ☐ **Train** ☐ **Walk** ☐ **Bike** ☐ **We mostly deliver**

How do your employees typically get here?

☐ **Car** ☐ **Bus** ☐ **Train** ☐ **Walk** ☐ **Bike**

Does congestion, parking or meter regulations interfere with any of the following:

Attracting/retaining customers _____

Attracting/retaining employees _____

Receiving/making deliveries _____

Where (block or intersection) do you have the most trouble? Please describe the issue:

12. Employee spending

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
I/My employees purchase food in the area:				
I/My employees shop for clothes in the area:				
I/My employees use the auto businesses...				

13. How do your customers find out about your business?

☐ **word of mouth** ☐ **referral from other business** ☐ **walk-ins** ☐ **website/social media**

14. If customers aren't shopping here, where do you think they are going instead? *(Check all that apply)*

☐ **149th St Hub** ☐ **Fordham Rd** ☐ **Bay Plaza** ☐ **Bronx Terminal Market**
☐ **Outside of the Bronx** _____ ☐ **Other** _____

15. How is this district different from other commercial districts in the area?

APPENDIX A: Jerome Avenue Business Owner Survey

Jerome Avenue

16. What would you say are the most pressing needs of businesses other than your own in this district? (Check top 3)

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Street improvements/pedestrian safety | <input type="checkbox"/> More diverse businesses | <input type="checkbox"/> Attract more customers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better job candidates | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> Improve flow of traffic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce summonses/fines | <input type="checkbox"/> Better lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Safety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve step streets | | |
| Other _____ | | |

17. My business relies on other businesses in the area for:

- ☐ goods _____
- ☐ services _____

18. How often do you recommend customers to other businesses in the area:

- ☐ never ☐ sometimes ☐ regularly

Business Needs

19. What are your top Financing needs? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Equipment Acquisition ☐ Space Renovations/New Construction
- ☐ Working Capital ☐ Other _____

20. What are your top Marketing needs? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Marketing Strategies ☐ Advertising ☐ Market Research ☐ Sales Techniques
- ☐ Marketing Plans ☐ ecommerce ☐ Other _____

21. What are your top Accounting and Financial Management needs? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Cash Flow Management ☐ Budgeting ☐ Credit ☐ Collections
- ☐ Taxes ☐ Bookkeeping ☐ Financial Statements ☐ Other _____

22. What are your top Employee Management, Recruitment and Training needs? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Hiring/transitioning ☐ Retaining quality employees ☐ Employee benefits ☐ Customer service
- ☐ Training ☐ Motivating employees ☐ Language skills ☐ Other _____

23. Where would you most like to contain costs for your business? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Payroll/personnel ☐ Energy/electric and gas bills ☐ Property Taxes ☐ Other Taxes
- ☐ Tickets/Fines/Violations ☐ Merchandise/Supply costs ☐ Real estate ☐ Other _____

24. Are you interested in any of the following?

- ☐ Minority or Women Owned Business Certification ☐ Selling to the Government
- ☐ Business Incentives ☐ SBA/other forms of financing

25. What is your interest in receiving information and resources to help your business? (Circle one)

Not at all interested 1 2 3 4 5 Very Interested

APPENDIX C: Jerome Avenue Employee Survey



Jerome Avenue Employee Survey

The Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDco) is a non-profit organization based in the South Bronx. We are conducting this survey to learn more about the businesses and workforce in the Jerome Avenue shopping district (**Jerome Avenue between 167th Street and the Cross-Bronx Expressway**). Thank you for your participation!

Employee Name _____ Business _____

Phone (optional) _____ Email (optional) _____

Your Workplace

- How long have you worked here?
☐ Less than 1 Year ☐ 1-5 Years ☐ 6-10 Years ☐ 11-15 Years ☐ 16-20 Years ☐ 21 Years +
- What is your job title? _____
- Where do you live? ☐ The neighborhood ☐ The Bronx ☐ Outside the Bronx. Where? _____
- How do you commute to work? ☐ Car ☐ Bus ☐ Train ☐ Walk ☐ Bike
Do congestion, parking or meter regulations interfere with your commute? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Do you typically shop or spend money near where you work? If so, do you:

	Never	1-2 times a month	1-2 times a week	3-4 times a month
Bank in the area				
Buy lunch				
Get car fixed				
Buy groceries				
Buy clothes				
Other:				

Approximately how much do you spend each week in the area? _____

- Are there any businesses in the area that you'd recommend to co-workers and customers? If so, please specify:

- What changes to the area would make it more likely that you'd shop or dine in this neighborhood more frequently? (Check top 3 choices)
☐ Street improvements/pedestrian safety ☐ More diverse businesses ☐ Better quality merchandise
☐ Better parking ☐ Better lighting ☐ Affordable merchandise
☐ Food/products from my home country ☐ Merchants/salespeople that speak my language
☐ More eating/dining options ☐ More events or activities
Other _____
- Are you interested in any training or additional educational opportunities that may help you in your career?
☐ GED ☐ Language training ☐ Computer training
☐ CDL/driver training ☐ Food handling ☐ Customer service training
☐ Certification/licensing: _____ ☐ Other: _____

APPENDIX B: Jerome Avenue Auto Business Owner Survey



Jerome Avenue Auto Business Owner Survey

The Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDco) is a non-profit organization based in the South Bronx. We are conducting this survey to learn more about the businesses in the Jerome Avenue shopping district (**Jerome Avenue between 167th Street and the Cross-Bronx Expressway**). Thank you for your participation!

Business Name _____ Contact Name _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Email _____ Website _____

Your Business

1. What goods and/or services does your business provide?

Retail/Wholesale:

- ☐ Auto parts new
- ☐ Auto parts after-market/used
- ☐ Car audio equipment
- ☐ Other car electronics
- ☐ Auto paints
- ☐ Tires
- ☐ Batteries
- ☐ Auto glass
- ☐ Other _____

Services:

- ☐ Auto repairs
- ☐ Flat fix
- ☐ Auto body
- ☐ Decaling/painting/tinting
- ☐ Car wash/detailing
- ☐ Oil change/lube
- ☐ Parking
- ☐ Towing/Salvage
- ☐ Other _____

2. How many years have you been in business here?

☐ Less than 1 Year ☐ 1-5 Years ☐ 6-10 Years ☐ 11-15 Years ☐ 16-20 Years ☐ 21 Years +

3. Is this your only location?

☐ Yes ☐ No, If no, where are your other locations? _____

4. Do you: ☐ Own your commercial space ☐ Rent your commercial space

If you rent, do you have a current lease? ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. What first caused you to locate your business here? *(Check all that apply)*

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Close to transit | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to my customers | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial space size/layout | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial space rent | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial space quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Close to truck routes/highways | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to workforce | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

6. Do you have plans to:

☐ Expand my business (in current location) ☐ Close my business ☐ Relocate my business

If Close or Relocate, what are the reasons? _____

APPENDIX B: Jerome Avenue Auto Business Owner Survey

7. over the past year, have your sales:

- ☐ Improved ☐ Stayed the same ☐ Decreased ☐ N/A

Your Customers

8. Who are your typical customers? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Cab drivers ☐ Residents ☐ Fleets/Other businesses
☐ Non-profit institutions ☐ Government ☐ Other _____

9. Where do most of your customers come from?

- ☐ In the neighborhood ☐ Outside the neighborhood but inside the Bronx ☐ Outside the Bronx

10. How do your customers get here?

- ☐ Car ☐ Bus ☐ Train ☐ Walk ☐ Bike
☐ We mostly deliver/work at customer location

11. Do you have trouble getting customers or receiving deliveries because of congestion/parking/meter regulations?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

12. What other locations in the Jerome Avenue shopping district do your customers go to?

13. What would you say are the most pressing needs of businesses in this district? (Check top 3 choices)

- ☐ Street improvements/pedestrian safety ☐ More diverse businesses ☐ Attract more customers
☐ Better job candidates ☐ Financial assistance ☐ Improve flow of traffic
☐ Reduce summonses ☐ Better lighting ☐ Safety
☐ Improve step streets ☐ Other _____

Interaction between Auto Businesses and other Jerome Avenue Businesses

14. Please describe the business-to-business activity which occurs between your automotive business and the other non-auto related small businesses on Jerome Avenue (please check all that apply)

- ☐ Local businesses often buy my products/services ☐ Local businesses often refer their customers to me
☐ No significant business-to-business activity ☐ Other _____

15. Do your employees frequent other businesses on Jerome Avenue? If yes, what types of businesses do they patronize (check all that apply):

- ☐ Restaurants ☐ Pharmacies ☐ Service such as laundromats ☐ Insurance agencies
☐ Electronics ☐ Clothing ☐ Other _____

16. The biggest benefits to being located near other businesses on Jerome Avenue are (check all that apply):

- ☐ Other business owners and employees are my customers ☐ My business gains new customers from other businesses' traffic
☐ Other businesses sell complementary goods/services ☐ Other _____

17. My business utilizes other Jerome Ave. businesses for (check all that apply):

- ☐ Professional services (accounting, legal, etc.) ☐ Janitorial supplies ☐ Office Supplies
☐ Banking/financial services ☐ Other _____

APPENDIX B: Jerome Avenue Auto Business Owner Survey

18. Employees:

- ☐ I often hire employees who have worked at other Jerome Ave. (non-automotive) Businesses
- ☐ Other Jerome Ave. (non-automotive) Businesses have hired my employees
- ☐ Not Applicable

19. Where are most your employees from:

- ☐ the neighborhood
- ☐ the Bronx
- ☐ Outside the Bronx. Where do most reside? _____

Financing Needs

20. Please select the areas of concern for your business

- ☐ Equipment Acquisition
- ☐ Space Renovations/New Construction
- ☐ Working Capital
- ☐ Other _____

Marketing Needs

21. Please select the areas of concern for your business

- ☐ Marketing Strategies
- ☐ Advertising
- ☐ Market Research
- ☐ Sales Techniques
- ☐ Marketing Plans
- ☐ Other _____

Accounting & Financial Management Needs

22. Please select the areas of concern for your business

- ☐ Cash Flow Management
- ☐ Budgeting
- ☐ Credit
- ☐ Collections
- ☐ Taxes
- ☐ Bookkeeping
- ☐ Financial Statements
- ☐ Other _____

Employee Management, Recruitment & Training

23. Please select the areas of concern for your business

- ☐ Hiring/firing
- ☐ Retaining quality employees
- ☐ Employee benefits
- ☐ Customer service
- ☐ Training
- ☐ Motivating employees
- ☐ Language skills
- ☐ Other _____

Cost Control

24. Please select the areas where you would most like to contain costs for your business

- ☐ Payroll/personnel
- ☐ Energy/electric and gas bills
- ☐ Property Taxes
- ☐ Other Taxes
- ☐ Tickets/Fines
- ☐ Merchandise/Supply costs
- ☐ Real estate
- ☐ Other _____

Other

25. Please select any areas of interest

- ☐ Minority or Women Owned Business Certification
- ☐ Selling to the Government
- ☐ Business Incentives
- ☐ SBA/other forms of financing

26. What is your interest in receiving information and resources to help your business? (Circle one)

Not at all interested 1 2 3 4 5 Very Interested



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