



WESTCHESTER SQUARE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

AVENUE NYC FY26 - COMMERCIAL DISTRICT NEEDS ASSESSMENT



About the Westchester Square BID



- Established in 2012
- Provides:
 - Business Support
 - Supplemental Sanitation
 - Beautification Services
 - Event Programming
 - Security
- Received \$350K Avenue NYC Grant from NYC Dept. of Small Business Services (SBS)



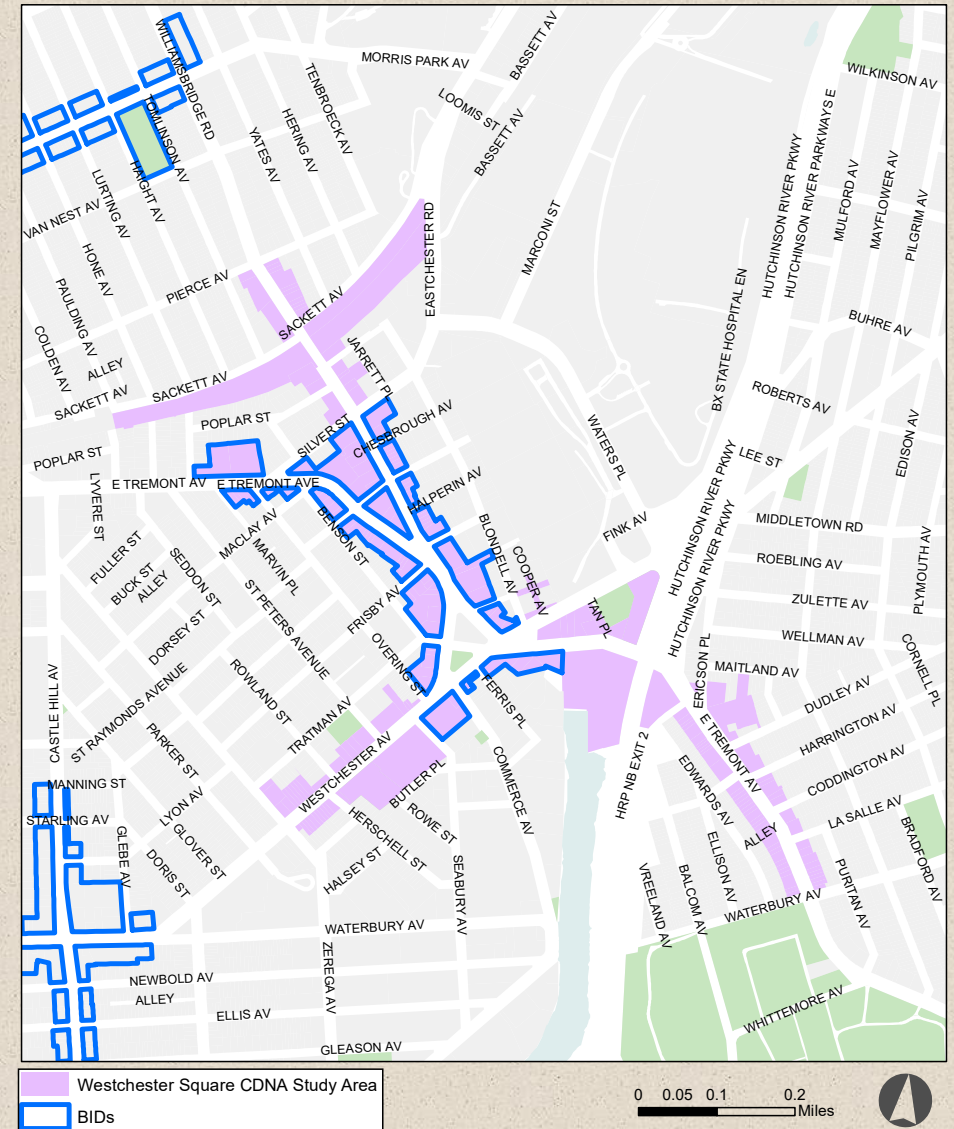
Neighborhood Context

- This CDNA Study was conducted over a five-month period and included a comprehensive inventory of every property within the designated area, as well as surveys of property owners, merchants, and consumers. This study area included four commercial corridors:
 - E Tremont Avenue
 - Westchester Square
 - Williamsbridge Road
 - Zerega Avenue / Westchester Avenue

Brief Comprehensive Census Info for the study area:

- Total Population: 32,207
- 52% Hispanic/Latino
- 20% White
- 16% Asian
- 8% Black
- 4% Other
- Median Household income: \$61,336

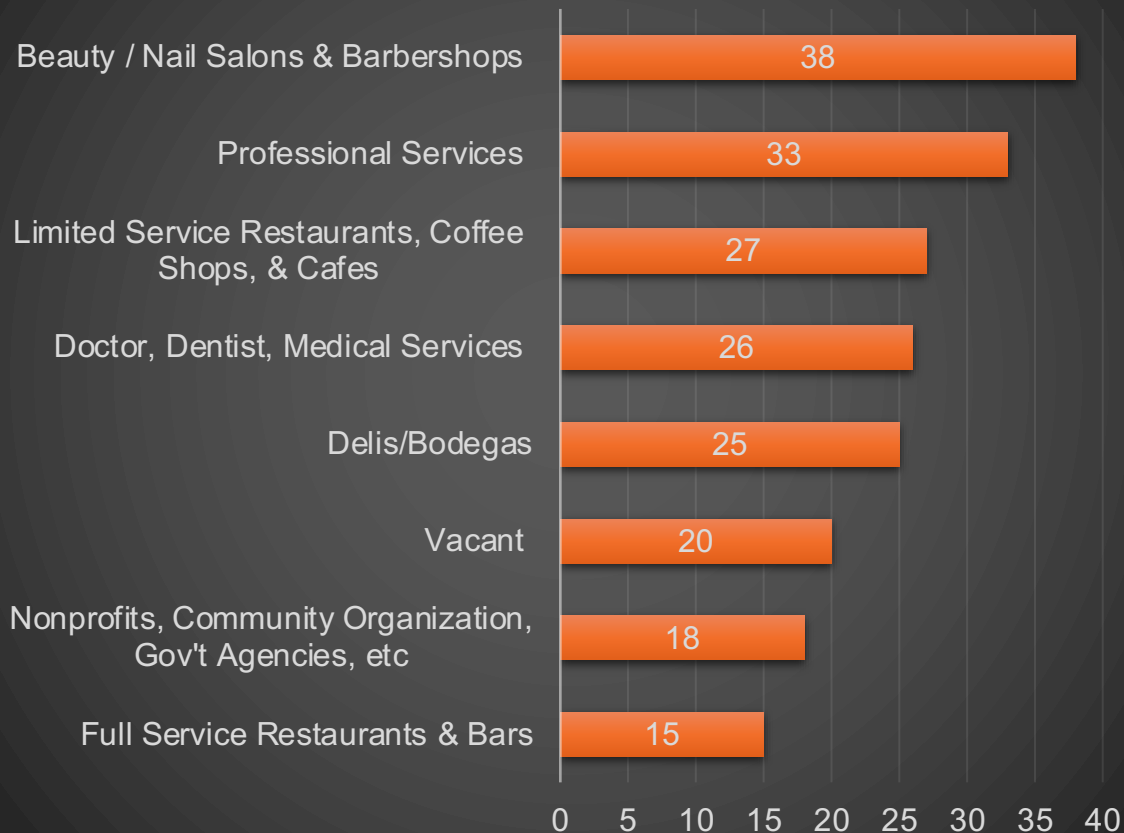
CDNA Study Area Map
Westchester Square



Key Findings: Business Inventory

318 Storefronts Inventoried

Business Type Breakdown



Property Status	Count	Percentage
Occupied	299	94%
Vacant	20	6.3%

Vacancy Breakdown



Key Findings: Storefront Observations

Rating	Count	Percentage
Poor (1 or 2)	4	1%
Average (3)	56	18%
Good (4 or 5)	260	82%



- The vast majority of the businesses are in good condition or better. The small fraction in the poor range are demolished or sustained fire damage.

Key Findings: Streetscape Observations



- Sidewalks along East Tremont Avenue, Williamsbridge Road, and Zerega Avenue tend to feel **more inviting**, in comparison to Westchester Avenue, where the elevated train structure **blocks out the natural light**.
- To enhance the corridors, introduce **planters** and other **landscaping elements**, along with additional lighting, to **brighten and soften** the sidewalks' appearance.
- Long blocks in Westchester Square may discourage pedestrians from walking extended distances, which **reduces foot traffic** at either end of the district.
- Westchester Avenue between St. Peter's Street & Rowland Street / Williamsbridge Road between Eastchester Road & Poplar Street: **debris accumulation / overgrown vegetation / extensive graffiti / dilapidated structures**.
- Some corners build up more refuse than others. **Additional trash bins** can alleviate this buildup.

Key Findings: Merchant Survey Responses

105 BUSINESSES SURVEYED

51% MINORITY OWNED

46% OVER 10 YEARS IN BUSINESS



- Common themes across responses: **close-knit and family-oriented**. **Diversity** of the area is a key strength.
- Businesses expressed concerns re: **rising utility costs, marketing support, low foot traffic, & safety issues**.
- Reported business performance is evenly distributed between increased, decreased, or stable sales.
- Over **80%** indicate **staying** at locations. Around **12%** hope to **expand**.
- Half of the businesses have **five or fewer staff** members.
- Feedback from merchants: **additional clothing retailers, healthy and diverse food options, additional small businesses, and entertainment venues**.

Key Findings: Consumer Survey Responses

177 CONSUMERS SURVEYED

34% SPEND OVER \$100+

77% FEEL SAFE/VERY SAFE - DAYTIME

ONLY 38% AT NIGHTTIME



- Survey responses indicate a **welcoming, family-oriented** atmosphere. Highlight the area's **diversity** and convenience.
- Many consumers recommended enhancements to **public safety and infrastructure**.
- Most respondents **feel safe** during daytime hours, but less so in the evening.
- During the week, the majority of consumers access the corridors on **foot** or by **public transportation**.
- **Discount retailers** and **supermarkets** are highly popular among consumers.
- Feedback from consumers: **additional clothing retailers, healthy and diverse food options, small businesses, and entertainment venues**.

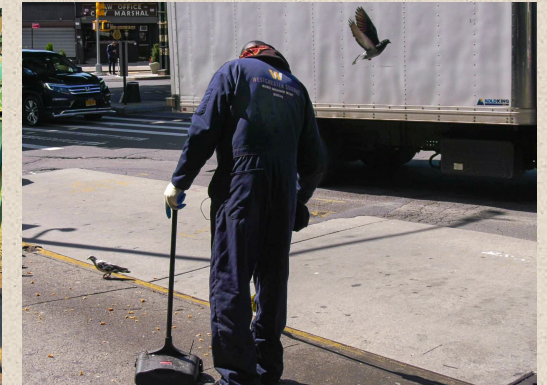
Strengths

- Numerous businesses have been established for over 10 years, reflecting long-standing community presence and stability.
- The vacancy rate rests around 6% combined for all the corridors.
- The area is very accessible: multiple bus lines, shuttle services and a train line connecting the Bronx and Manhattan.
- Several creative organizations are based within these corridors, contributing to the cultural vibrancy.
- Small-town atmosphere. Friendly merchants and residents. Fostering safety and community engagement.
- Businesses in the corridors have a tight-knit sense of community.
- Relationships with the local Police Precincts have allowed quick responses to safety concerns.
- Annual Fair @ The Square brings thousands of consumers to the area. Increases foot traffic throughout the district.



Challenges

- Recent increases in crime have been observed across the corridors.
- Limited parking prompted requests from consumers and merchants for additional parking spots or lots.
- Certain areas remain dimly lit during evening hours despite the presence of streetlights.
- Sections experience lower pedestrian activity, particularly locations farther from public transportation.
- Even with the BID Clean Team members, both consumers and merchants indicated that sanitation could improve.
- Limited activities available to keep youth engaged.



Opportunities

- Additional community events to increase foot traffic.
- Strengthen partnerships with arts organizations to provide free shows for the public and activities to engage youth.
- Develop beautification and landscaping initiatives to attract consumers.
- Identify locations to benefit from enhanced lighting and additional angled parking. Coordinate with the Department of Transportation (DOT).
- Work with the 45th & 43rd Precincts as well as city and state agencies to help improve the perception of safety in the survey area.
- Use social media as well as local news outlets to promote businesses and other opportunities in the corridors.
- Educate businesses about Minority & Women-owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) Certifications & the benefits.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!
Let us know how you can help.
Give us your feedback.
Want to be involved?

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