

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

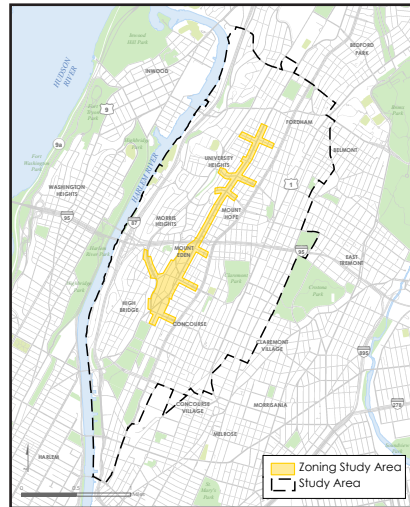
Cromwell Avenue-Jerome Avenue Transportation Study

Executive Summary

Introduction

The goal of the Cromwell Avenue-Jerome Avenue Transportation Study is to improve transportation conditions in and around the study area for all roadway users, including pedestrians, cyclists, motorists and public transportation riders. The study focuses primarily on pedestrian safety issues, the overall pedestrian environment and access to transit. In addition, the report identifies intersections and corridors with challenges related to traffic circulation and operation with an eye to improving the efficiency of the area's roadways. Finally, the study assesses the availability of parking for local residents and workers and provides recommendations for increasing parking availability.

The study area is located along Jerome Avenue, in the southwestern section of the Bronx. The transportation study looks at a portion of the geography that is the focus of DCP's Jerome Avenue Neighborhood Study. That geography will hereinafter be referred to as the "zoning study area." This area runs along Jerome Avenue from 167th Street to 184th Street, straddling Bronx Community Districts 4 and 5. For the purposes of providing a context for the transportation study, an area was defined that extends a half mile further in each direction from the zoning study area and will hereinafter be referred to as the "study area."



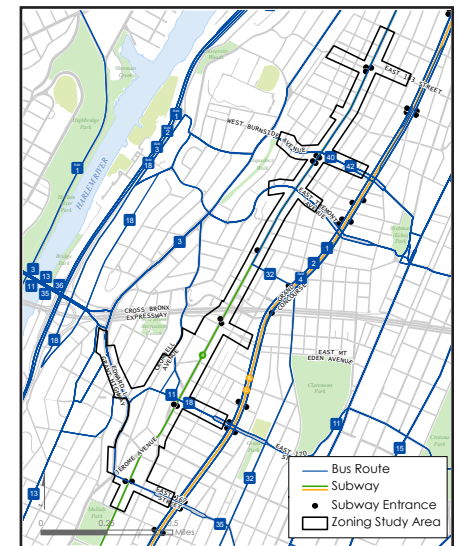
Methods

This report documents and evaluates existing transportation conditions, presents the results of field visits and community meetings and proposes recommendations for improving the zoning study area. As part of the transportation planning process, DCP met with community stakeholders at a series of walking tours, focus groups and visioning workshops, resulting in the development of a list of issues, concerns and opportunities related to the transportation system and the public spaces in the study area. These are provided in detail in Appendix III. DCP also conducted several targeted site visits, analyzed crash data in the zoning study area, conducted traffic counts and level of service analyses at key locations and analyzed Census data in order to determine how best to respond to the transportation challenges in this area.

Existing Conditions

The study area is well-served by both regional highways and public transportation networks. Interstate 95 (I-95), a major regional highway, known as the Cross Bronx Expressway as it runs through the Bronx, bisects the study area and links it to northern Manhattan and New Jersey to the west, and the eastern Bronx and Connecticut to the east. The elevated 4-train line runs along Jerome Avenue and the B and D subway lines run along the Grand Concourse, connecting the study area with Manhattan. Several bus routes run through the study area.

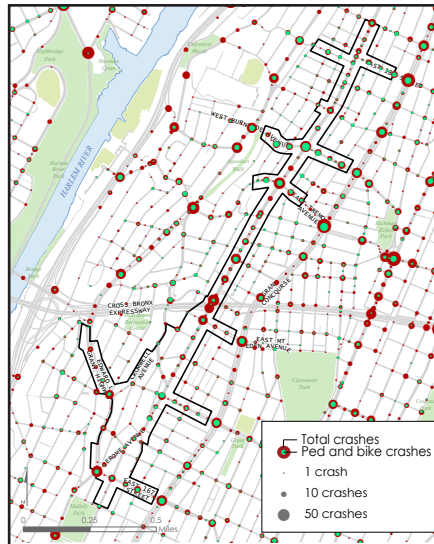
There are also several major and local roadways in the study area,



including Jerome Avenue which provides north-south access. The Grand Concourse, a wide road with service lanes in each direction, runs parallel to Jerome. Edward L. Grant Highway runs along the west side of the study area providing access to the Washington Bridge to Manhattan. There are several east-west connections as well, including 170th Street and Burnside Avenue which serve as important local retail destinations and intermodal transfer points.

The study area's bicycle network largely consists of north-south routes, with one east-west connection running along East 167th Street. Local truck routes run along several streets including Jerome Avenue, while a regional truck route runs along the Cross Bronx Expressway.

A detailed crash analysis revealed several locations throughout the zoning study area where safety is a significant concern. These include 167th Street and Jerome Avenue, 170th Street and Jerome, the entrance to the Cross Bronx Expressway on Jerome, 175th Street and Jerome, Tremont Avenue and Jerome and Burnside Avenue. There are several additional high-crash locations along the Grand Concourse, parallel to the zoning study area.



The zoning study area has a significant concentration of off-street public parking facilities, which a DCP survey showed to have available capacity at current prices.

The study area's population, which has grown modestly in recent years, resides mostly to the east and west of the zoning study area in large residential districts. The population is largely black and Hispanic, with the proportion of Hispanics having increased somewhat in recent years. Median

income in the study area was \$26,226 in 2012, which is less than both the 2012 median income of \$34,300 for the Bronx and \$51,865 for New York City as a whole. Unemployment and poverty statistics for the study area show a similar disparity.

Transportation data reveals that the vast majority of the residential population relies on public transportation to commute. In addition, the vast majority of residents have no vehicles available.

The zoning for the study area includes a mix of commercial and residential districts, along with a manufacturing district and some commercial overlays. The majority of the commercial zones are dominated by auto repair shops, parking lots, and retail stores. On both sides of the zoning study area, there are large residential zoning districts. The manufacturing district consists mostly of warehouses and storage companies, but contains some residential buildings as well.

Recommendations

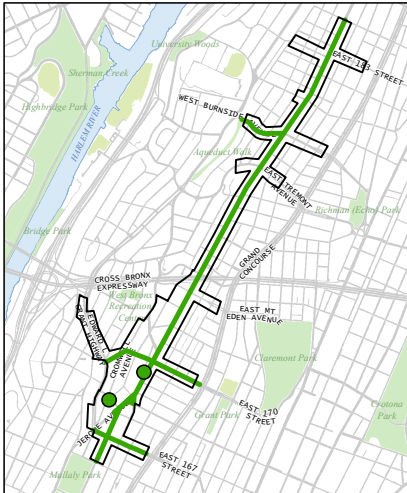
The recommendations fall into four focus areas: enhanced pedestrian space, pedestrian and bicycle safety measures, improved connections to transit and additional traffic control measures. This section provides a brief summary of the recommendations for each location analyzed.

170th Street Corridor

The 170th Street corridor is heavily used by pedestrians on a daily basis and lacks pedestrian amenities. Crash data indicates a high proportion of crashes from 2009 to 2013 involved pedestrians or cyclists. The intersection of 170th Street and Jerome Avenue is an im-



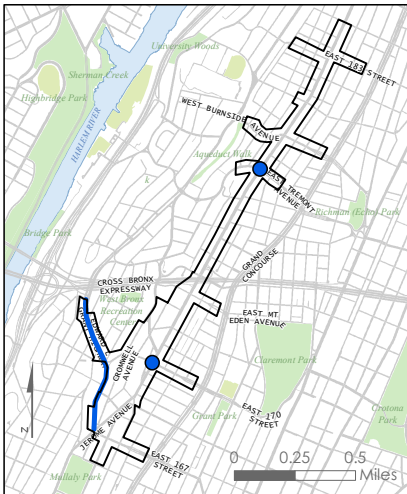
Enhanced Pedestrian Space



Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Measures



Improved Connections to Transit



Additional Traffic Control



portant hub that includes an intermodal transfer point between buses and the subway. These locations present transportation challenges along with opportunities to improve efficiency and safety for roadway users. Recommendations for the 170th Street-Jerome Avenue-Plaza Drive area include:

- Close the southern portion of Plaza Drive to traffic and convert it to pedestrian space.
- Build a sidewalk along Jerome Avenue at the Plaza Drive parking area to increase pedestrian safety.
- Add neckdowns at several locations to calm traffic and decrease pedestrian crossing distances.
- Redesign Keltch Park to facilitate greater pedestrian access and circulation.
- Adjust sidewalk widths to improve pedestrian safety.
- Implement additional improvements to increase pedestrian safety and access to public transit.

Additional recommendations along 170th Street include:

- Install a bike route from the Grand Concourse to Edward L. Grant Highway to increase east-west access for cyclists.
- Install neckdowns and a loading zone along East 170th Street between Jerome Avenue and the Grand Concourse in order to ease access to this busy retail corridor.
- Redesign the park at East 170th Street and the Grand Concourse to allow greater pedestrian access and circulation.
- At West 170th Street and Cromwell Avenue, add an additional crosswalk and a pedestrian-only signal phase.

An alternative set of potential recommendations includes keeping Plaza Drive open and building a wide sidewalk in the parking and service lanes on the west side of Jerome to expand the pedestrian space adjacent to the parking lot. Additionally the relocation of the bus stops for both eastbound

and westbound buses on 170th Street could better respond to transit access challenges.

Under the Jerome Avenue Elevated Rail Line

As part of the transportation study, the City looked at ways to promote a more walkable and attractive environment under the elevated rail line on Jerome Avenue. One potential intervention the City is considering is to create an Under the El Opportunity Zone centered on community focal points along the corridor located, for example, at 170th Street and/or Burnside Avenue. Any particular treatments will place an emphasis on pedestrian safety measures. In addition, NYCDOT is currently installing Bus Stops under the El at several locations along Jerome Avenue to enhance safety and the streetscape. These treatments will expand sidewalks into the roadway at bus stops to allow for safer bus boarding.

Edward L. Grant Highway Corridor

Edward L. Grant Highway is a wide road that includes a buffered bicycle lane and a bus route. Pedestrian crossings tend to be long. At the same time, the wide roadway provides opportunities to enhance conditions for roadway users. Recommendations include:

- Move the bicycle lane against the curb and build a protected bike lane with planted islands near intersections for pedestrian and cyclist safety.
- Install raised concrete bus stops in the buffer strip of the bike lane, providing a safe place for bus riders to wait and board the bus.
- Reconfigure the Greenstreet at West 170th Street and add a pedestrian crossing to respond to the desire line that pedestrians have cut through the Greenstreet.
- Add neckdowns and other amenities at West 170th Street.

An alternative option would be to move the bike lane next to the median and leave the bus stops as they are.

East 167th Street Corridor

The intersection of East 167th Street and Jerome Avenue is complex, with four different streets intersecting and a high crash rate relative to the zoning study area. DCP's recommendations span the East 167th Street corridor from Jerome Avenue to Walton Avenue. They include:

- Close the left turn from northbound Cromwell Avenue onto Jerome to simplify the intersection and provide a safer crossing. This area can be converted to a planted pedestrian seating area.
- Add curb extensions and signage at select locations to reduce traffic conflicts.
- At East 167th Street and Walton Avenue, extend the existing pedestrian islands to increase pedestrian safety and paint street markings to better channelize traffic.



Jerome Avenue: East 168th Street to Gerard Avenue

Pedestrians in this part of the study area have to navigate a series of streets where cars are parked on the sidewalk and in pedestrian areas, creating an unpleasant and unsafe environment for pedestrians. At the intersection of Gerard and Jerome Avenues, there is a pedestrian plaza that is largely blocked by parked vehicles. The City has two alternative recommendations for this area. The first alternative includes the following:

- Close off Gerard Avenue to through-traffic between East 169th Street and Jerome Avenue.
- Extend the plaza space north through the closed Gerard Avenue so that it is contiguous with the sidewalk on the northeast corner of the intersection.

- Extend the parking lot at Gerard Avenue and East 169th Street into the closed-off roadway to accommodate precinct-related vehicles.

The second alternative includes the following:

- Build on the existing plaza space by expanding it into Jerome Avenue.
- Add angle parking to formally designate a space for precinct-related vehicles to park.
- Convert West 169th Street between Gerard and Jerome to one-way eastbound.
- Add a neckdown at the northeast corner of Gerard and Jerome to shorten the crossing distance and normalize the intersection.

The City also developed recommendations for the intersection of River and Jerome Avenues:

- Extend the pedestrian space between River and Jerome Avenues north so that it is even with the south corner of East 168th Street.
- Add a planted pedestrian island in the existing striped area.
- Provide a north-south pedestrian crosswalk at the East 168th Street crossing and a traffic signal for northbound cars on Jerome turning right onto East 168th Street.



Jerome Avenue: 174th Street to 175th Street

As part of the Jerome Avenue corridor, the stretch of road from East 174th Street to East 175th Street is an important link connecting neighborhoods north and south of the Cross Bronx Expressway. There are no pedestrian crossings on Jerome Avenue between these two streets. Safety is a concern at East 175th Street and Jerome Avenue as the crash rate is high relative to the rest of the study area. Recommendations include:

- Conduct a warrant analysis for a signalized intersection at Clifford Place and Jerome Avenue.
- Build curb extensions where pedestrians are likely to cross on the north side of the intersection.
- Add a signal at East 175th Street for the currently unsignalized Dunkin' Donuts driveway.

Cross Bronx Expressway Area

The area around the entrance and exit ramps for the Cross Bronx Expressway along Jerome Avenue is congested. The main reason for the congestion is the heavy use of the Cross Bronx. Illegal and unsafe vehicle movements at this location have also been observed. In 2013, NYCDOT completed a transportation study of the area—the Jerome Avenue Transportation Study—which included several recommendations that have already been implemented. To address remaining challenges, the City's recommendations include:

- Add pavement markings and signage at the northbound Cross Bronx ramps to better guide turning movements through this area.



- At this same intersection, stagger the signal timing for northbound and southbound through traffic on Jerome Avenue to help alleviate the congestion.

Tremont and Jerome Avenues

The intersection of Tremont Avenue and Jerome Avenue stands out as one of the intersections with the highest crash rates in the zoning study area. Twelve out of 45 total crashes from 2009 to 2013 at this location involved pedestrians or cyclists. The City's proposal for this intersection is to implement NYCDOT's Bus Stops under the EI program, which would entail building large curb extensions at the northwest and southeast corners to accommodate bus riders who currently have to wait in the roadway. These treatments would also have a traffic calming effect.

NYCDOT plans to implement Bus Stops under the EI at this intersection as well as at five other locations along Jerome Avenue.

Macombs Road: Inwood Avenue to Featherbed Lane

NYCDOT recently did extensive work on Macombs Road, installing several pedestrian refuge islands and striping in the roadbed to guide traffic, improvements that have significantly increased safety. However there are still no pedestrian crossings along Macombs from Inwood Avenue to Featherbed Lane and vehicles continue to speed down Macombs. A warrant analysis to determine whether or not to add a pedestrian crossing was recently conducted at the intersection of Goble Place and Macombs. The City recommends revisiting this warrant analysis to find a suitable pedestrian crossing along this stretch of Macombs and installing additional pedestrian safety improvements along this road.

West 169th Street and Inwood Avenue

Traffic volumes are low at this intersection and several vehicles park at the triangular median or on the sidewalks or double-park in the roadway. The City recommends closing off the small Inwood Avenue slip road just south

of the intersection. This would allow for increased pedestrian space, a treatment similar to other locations in the study area.

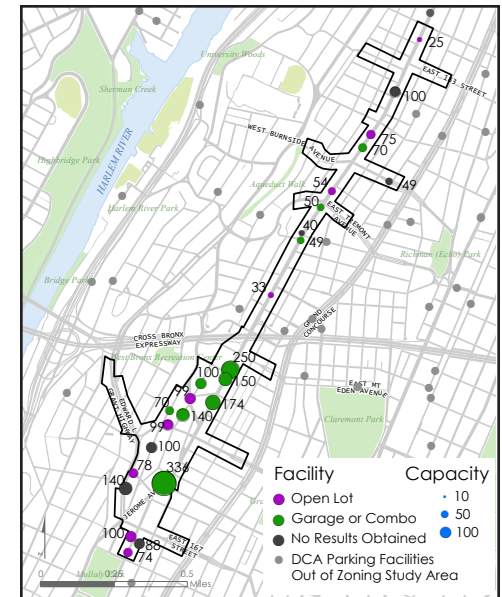
Aqueduct Walk

Aqueduct Walk is located three blocks west of Jerome Avenue. The City's recommendation here is to improve access to this park by adding wayfinding signage along West 183rd Street that can guide visitors from the Jerome Avenue elevated rail line. Additional signage and pavement markings along the walkway would be useful in separating pedestrians from cyclists. In the long term, the City recommends converting this park into a greenway and linking it to the rest of the bicycle network.

Parking Survey

In response to community concerns about the availability of parking, DCP conducted a parking survey as part of the transportation study. The goal of the survey was to ascertain utilization rates at Department of Consumer Affairs-licensed facilities, who uses the facilities and how much different facilities are used. DCP obtained results for 19 of 24 parking lots and garages. Results include the following:

- Department of Consumer Affairs parking capacity is significantly higher south of the Cross Bronx Expressway than to the north.
- Parking is priced at a similar level to the nearby high-density Bronx neighborhoods, and at a much lower level than northern Manhattan.



- There is substantial excess capacity of off-street parking spaces at the current prices, especially in the southern portion of the study area where capacity is higher.
- The majority of customers are local residents, with others including teachers, hospital workers, police officers and taxi drivers.

Angle Parking

In response to community concerns over the availability of parking, DCP studied ways to increase parking supply in and around the zoning study area. Implementing angle parking, which involves drivers parking their cars at a 60-degree angle to the curb, as opposed to parallel parking, would be the best way to increase parking supply. When implemented properly, 60-degree angle parking provides up to twice as many parking spaces as typical parallel parking does. DCP surveyed the streets in and around the zoning study area to find those with the most optimal conditions to implement angle parking. The streets that were found most optimal for angle parking included two road segments on Macombs Road and two on University Avenue.



Conclusions and Next Steps

This package of recommendations will help improve traffic circulation for all roadway users in the study area. The City will be involved in ongoing discussions with the community in order to identify high-priority projects that can be implemented in the short-term as well as projects that require a longer-term focus.