



COLLEGE POINT

QUEENS

Commercial District Needs Assessment



NYC
Small Business
Services

careers
businesses
neighborhoods

in
partnership
with

Queens Chamber of Commerce



ABOUT COLLEGE POINT

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

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

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

This CDNA features the commercial corridors of **14th Avenue, 20th Avenue, and College Point Boulevard in College Point**, and was conducted in partnership with the **Queens Chamber of Commerce** between September 2024 and June 2025.

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

In This Report

Existing conditions, business data, and qualitative depictions of the neighborhood were gathered from more than **450 surveys** and various stakeholder meetings with neighborhood merchants, shoppers, workers, property owners, and residents.

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Background

College Point is a waterfront neighborhood in northeast Queens, bordered by the East River to the north, Flushing Bay to the west, Whitestone to the east, and Flushing to the south. Key local landmarks include Hermon A. MacNeil Park and the Poppenhusen Institute. College Point Boulevard serves as the main commercial corridor, stretching from Flushing through College Point. Lined with a mix of small businesses, restaurants, supermarkets, residences, and service providers, the thoroughfare reflects the area's diverse mix of Asian, Hispanic, and European cultures. The neighborhood is easily accessible via major roadways like the Whitestone Expressway and several bus lines. Its proximity to LaGuardia Airport, the Downtown Flushing transit hub, and the Bronx make it a strategic location for businesses.

College Point's history begins with the Matinecock people, an Algonquin group who inhabited the North Shore of Long Island before the arrival of Europeans. Stretching from College Point to Smithtown, they hunted and fished for generations until being displaced by Dutch and English colonists in the 1600s. The area took its present name from St. Paul's College and Grammar School, an Episcopalian seminary that operated in the area from 1838 to 1850. Conrad Poppenhusen, a German entrepreneur and immigrant, played a key role in College Point's development by establishing a successful rubber factory in the area, building affordable worker housing, founding the first free U.S. kindergarten through the Poppenhusen Institute, and building a rail link between College Point and Flushing.

Residential construction has increased steadily over the years, especially in the 1990s and 2000s, and College Point has continued to serve as a home for working class families. Numerous commercial ventures have called College Point home over the years, including a short-lived amusement park, commercial airport, the College Point Corporate Park, and many warehouses and factories that continue the area's industrial legacy – such as the New York Times printing plant and the Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company. The neighborhood's architectural landscape reflects its transformation from a manufacturing hub to a mixed-use commercial district.

College Point's commercial activity centers on College Point Boulevard, lined with diverse small businesses, family-owned restaurants, supermarkets, and professional services that reflect its multicultural identity. The streetscape blends historic low-rise buildings with modern retail storefronts, showing their ongoing evolution. To the east, 14th and 20th avenues are also active business corridors featuring big-box stores, shopping plazas, warehouses, and autobody shops.

Neighborhood Demographics

[See more on page 12](#)

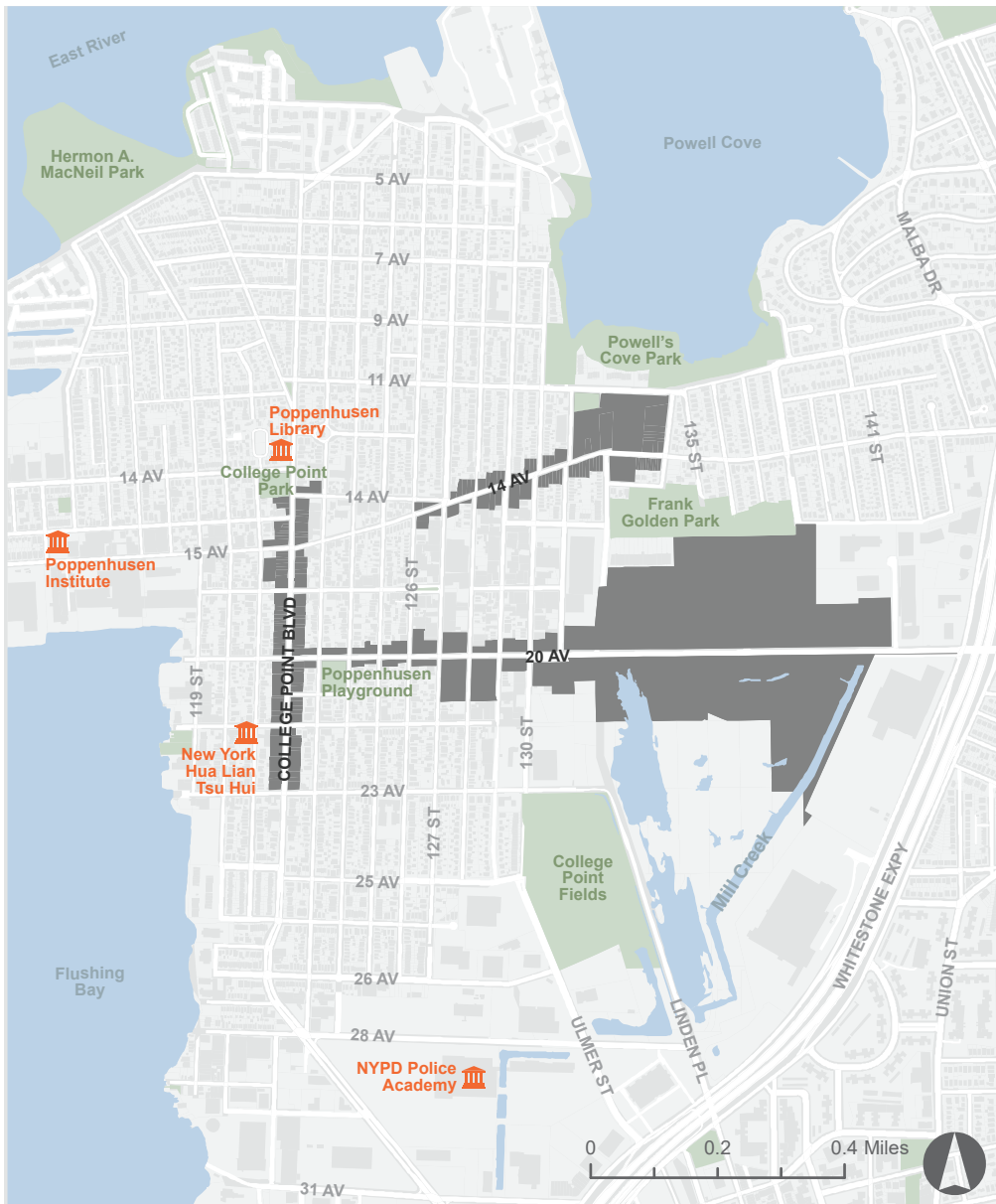
College Point has a population of 30,880 people. 39% are Hispanic (mostly Ecuadorian, Colombian, Dominican, and Puerto Rican), 35% are Asian (mostly Chinese), and 23% are white (mostly Italian). The median household income for College Point is \$91,788, which is higher than the citywide average of \$79,713. 59% of College Point residents have moved into the neighborhood since 2010, while 13% have lived there since at least 1989.

Future Opportunities

[See more on page 5](#)

Despite boasting multiple MTA bus lines and proximity to the Whitestone and Throggs Neck bridges, the lack of subway access remains a challenge to neighborhood accessibility, although road upgrades could improve accessibility and attract investment. College Point's diverse culinary scene, including Hispanic, Asian, American, and Italian offerings, has made it a hidden gem for food lovers, fueling the success of the neighborhood's Restaurant Week and gaining thousands of views and significant traction on social media. The NYC Economic Development Corporation is leading an effort to redevelop the 80-acre former Flushing Airport site on the eastern edge of the neighborhood with opportunities for new housing, which along with new residential developments along College Point Boulevard signals a growing consumer base. The Coastal Preservation Network has become active in efforts to revitalize the waterfront and expand access for residents and visitors, which can help further drive foot traffic to local businesses. Community stakeholders hope to form a Business Improvement District to better promote local businesses and improve the public realm. College Point retains a small town feel and strong local character, secluded from the city yet home to a bustling local economy.

College Point



◀ Notable Places



▲ Points of Interest

Assessed Commercial Corridors
 Parks and Public Spaces
 Public Facilities

Neighborhood Events

College Point Memorial Day Parade
 College Point Restaurant Week
 College Point Street Fair
 MacNeil Park Christmas Tree Lighting

Merchant & Community Groups

A Better College Point Civic Association
 Angelo Petromelis Senior Center
 College Point Board of Trade
 College Point Civic and Taxpayers Association

College Point Community Ambulance Corps
 Mi Gente Community Center
 New York Hua Lian Tsu Hui
 Poppenhusen Institute

KEY FINDINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

Strengths

- ▶ College Point is home to a diverse community, fostering a mix of cultures that enrich the local business environment and neighborhood life
- ▶ The area's close-knit, community-oriented atmosphere helps support a mix of small businesses and family-owned establishments that contribute to a unique and authentic commercial identity
- ▶ The neighborhood's location near Flushing, Citi Field, USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center (home of the US Open), and LaGuardia Airport makes it a strategic location for business and tourism, facilitated by easy access to the Whitestone Expressway and Cross Island Parkway
- ▶ Events such as the annual College Point Street Fair and College Point Restaurant Week attract strong crowds, bringing community members together to support local businesses, especially its strong food scene with marketable cuisine reflecting its cultural diversity
- ▶ College Point's rich historical background contributes to its unique identity, reflecting its long-standing community roots and architectural heritage
- ▶ Parks like Hermon A. MacNeil Park and College Point Fields offer outdoor activities, attracting a diverse mix of families, sports leagues, and conservationists

Challenges

- ▶ Lack of unified coordination and strong digital presence among merchants and community groups presents challenges in marketing, advocating for small businesses, and organizing collective initiatives
- ▶ Ongoing and intermittent construction projects, along with significant truck and bus traffic, disrupt foot traffic, limit business visibility, and contribute to congestion; heavy vehicle traffic also accelerates road wear and deterioration, increasing the need for frequent maintenance
- ▶ The waterfront is mostly inaccessible and underdeveloped, limiting its potential as a community asset and economic driver
- ▶ There are some tensions between long-term residents and newer arrivals, stemming from generational, cultural, and lifestyle differences, as well as varying perspectives on neighborhood change and quality of life
- ▶ Poorly maintained and vacant storefronts, including ghost kitchens, undermine the area's sense of safety and are unappealing for shoppers, while limited pedestrian-friendly infrastructure and streetscape elements make certain areas feel less inviting for shoppers and visitors





Opportunities

- ▶ Revitalize the College Point Board of Trade to foster coordination among merchant leaders and community groups and strengthen local business advocacy
- ▶ Expand College Point Restaurant Week by increasing business participation and neighborhood engagement
- ▶ Enhance neighborhood events such as the annual street fair to highlight more local businesses, artisans, and cultural organizations to promote the arts, offer pop-up experiences, foster stronger community ties, and attract visitors
- ▶ Increase the neighborhood's digital presence and launch marketing through social media campaigns, an online business directory, and "hidden gem" or "daytrip within NYC" branding initiative to boost tourism and local spending; College Point's rich history also offers a unique opportunity for heritage-based marketing efforts
- ▶ Develop the waterfront into an economic and social hub by opening access, improving parks, and attracting waterfront dining and recreational activities
- ▶ Develop a storefront improvement program to upgrade the visual appeal of the commercial corridor and attract more customers
- ▶ Foster corporate and industrial engagement by encouraging businesses to hire neighborhood residents and contribute to community initiatives, strengthening ties between the community
- ▶ Advocate for a new subway line, improved bus routes, shuttle services, or other transit enhancements to address accessibility challenges and increase foot traffic; explore the feasibility of establishing a College Point ferry stop to connect the neighborhood with the Bronx and other boroughs
- ▶ Launch a beautification initiative focused on improving lighting, street maintenance, and green space enhancements to create a more welcoming commercial environment

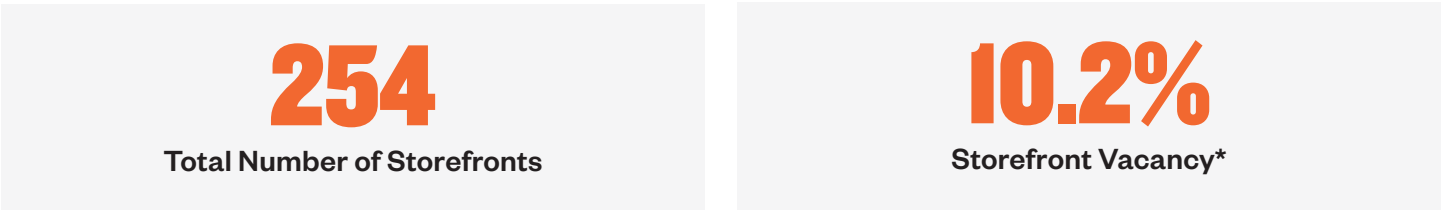
What's Next?

To address these key findings and opportunities, Avenue NYC Grants have been awarded by SBS to nonprofit organizations.

For more information, visit: nyc.gov/avenuenyc

BUSINESS LANDSCAPE: COLLEGE POINT

Business Inventory



*Note: As of June 2025, New York City's commercial corridors have an average storefront vacancy of 12.1% and median storefront vacancy of 10.9% (LiveXYZ).

Storefront & Retail Mix

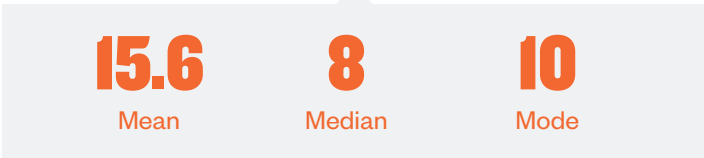
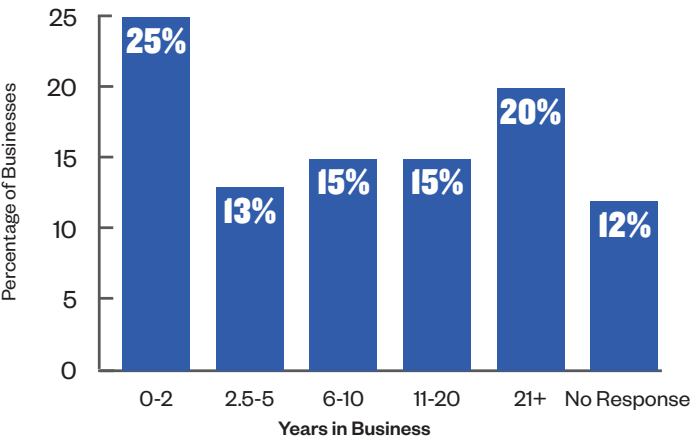


Business inventory and retail mix data were gathered by the Queens Chamber of Commerce through a comprehensive area inventory of storefront businesses located along 14th Avenue, 20th Avenue, and College Point Boulevard from October to December 2024.



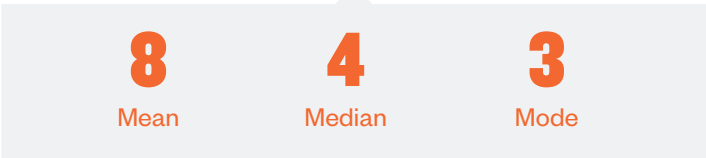
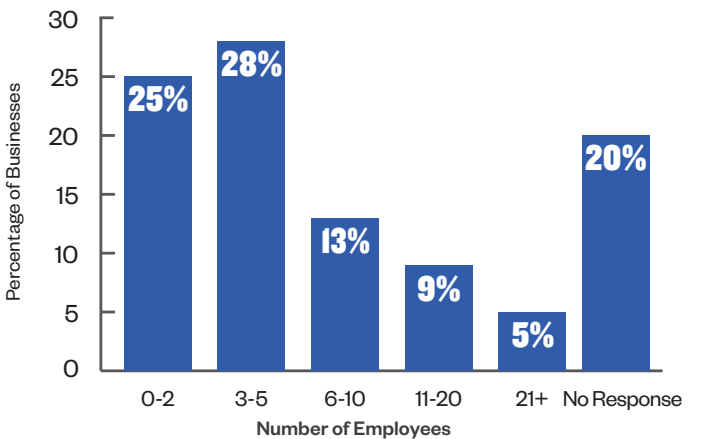
What We've Heard from College Point Merchants

How many years have you been in business here?

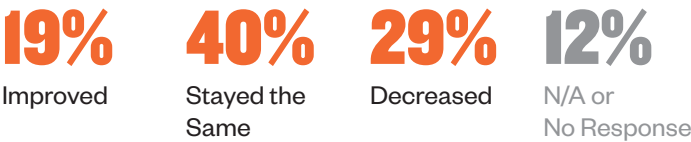


Note: The mean is the average of all responses, the median is the middle number when all responses are arranged in ascending order, and the mode is the most common response.

How many full-time employees do you have?



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



How would you characterize your relationship with your landlord?

	% Merchant Responses
▶ Good/Cooperative	54%
▶ Fair	23%
▶ Poor/Difficult	8%
▶ Limited/None	3%
▶ No Response	10%

Do you own or rent your property?



Does your business currently have an online presence?

	% Merchant Responses
▶ Website and Social Media	45%
▶ Website Only	18%
▶ Social Media Only	13%
▶ None	18%
▶ No Response	6%

Are you a minority or woman-owned business?



Source: Based on 130 merchant surveys conducted by the Queens Chamber of Commerce in Fall 2024 and Winter 2025.

BUSINESS LANDSCAPE

What We've Heard from College Point Merchants and Shoppers

What do you like about the commercial district?

"Neighborhood feel, friendly, sense of community, lots of history."

"Relatively affordable rent, especially for young workers."

"Walkable, friendliness of store employees, small town feel."

"Authentic varieties of Latin food, Salvadoran, Dominican, Chinese, Columbian. Mix of Spanish, Chinese, and white families."

"Neighborhood is small, yet very multicultural and family-oriented."

What makes the College Point commercial district unique?

"Ample parking, proximity to parks and waterfront."

"A combination of mom & pop and big box stores."

"MacNeil Park is a gem and it's nice to walk to get a bite to eat or a small treat."

"We have water on three sides. No one is here unless they want to be here."

"Different languages, like Spanish and Mandarin."

What changes need to occur to attract more visitors/shoppers?

	% Merchant Response	% Consumer Response
▶ Safety	53%	45%
▶ Other	32%	17%
▶ Sanitation	29%	40%
▶ Community Events	26%	23%
▶ Landscaping/Beautification	26%	34%
▶ Transportation Improvements	22%	34%
▶ Merchant Collaboration	22%	21%
▶ Storefront Improvements	22%	20%
▶ More Open Space	18%	11%
▶ Street Lighting	17%	27%
▶ Graffiti Removal	10%	11%

What changes would you like to see to improve the commercial district?

"Power wash commercial district sidewalks, street cleaning, increased police foot patrols, ticket double parked vehicles."

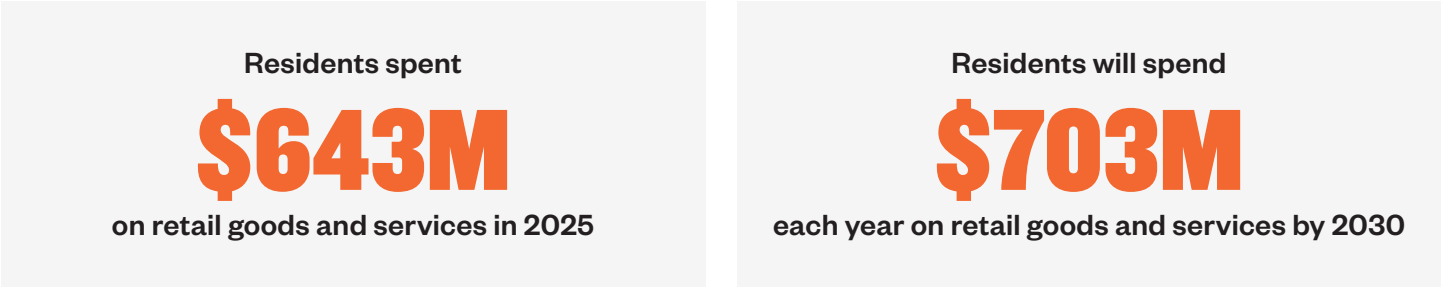
"More local fairs, events, street lights, beautification, parking! NYC Ferry!"

"Merchant collaboration, LinkNYC so people can charge their phones and spend more time there, merchant accountability on maintaining storefronts, better transportation."

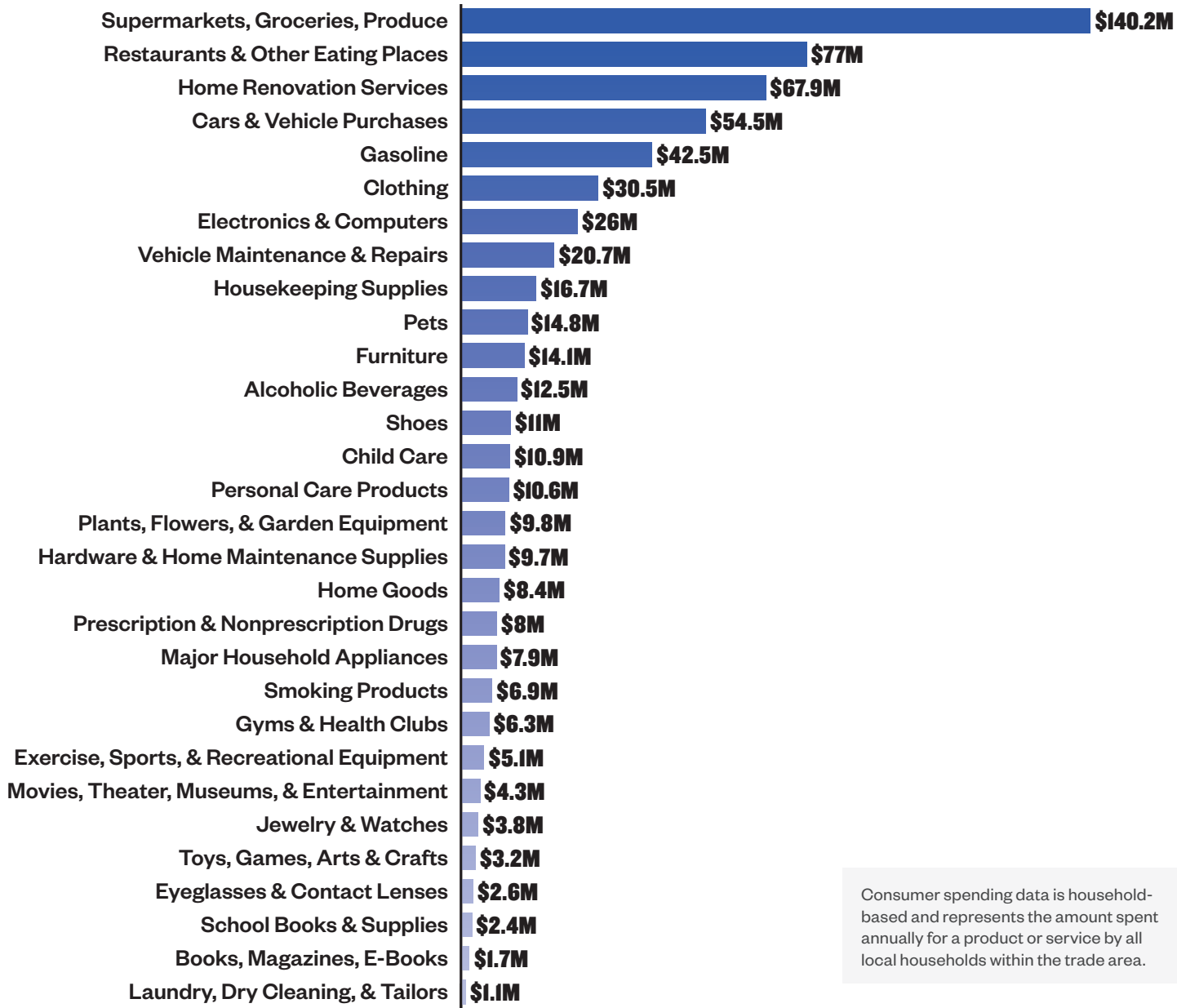
"Too much truck traffic on College Point Blvd. It gives the neighborhood an industrial rather than residential/business feel. Divert trucks to reduce traffic and provide quieter boulevard."

Source: Based on 130 merchant surveys and 350 consumer surveys conducted by Queens Chamber of Commerce in Fall 2024 and Winter 2025.

College Point Retail Demand



2025 Consumer Spending

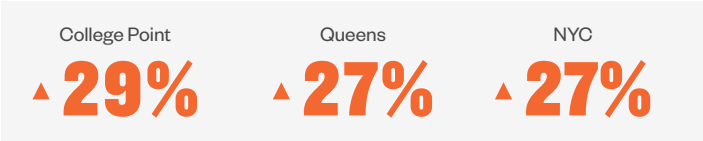


Source: Esri forecasts for 2025 and 2030; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2022 and 2023 Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

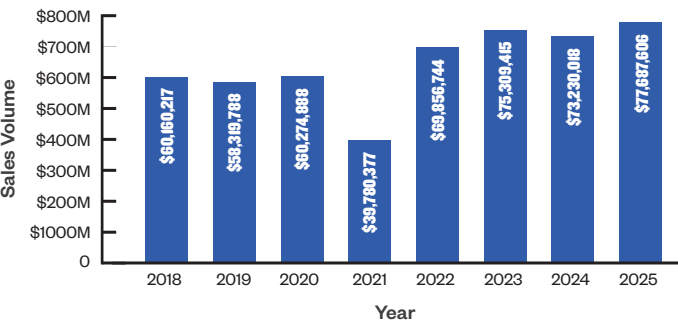
BUSINESS OUTLOOK

Business Trends

Change in Total Business Sales, 2018-2025

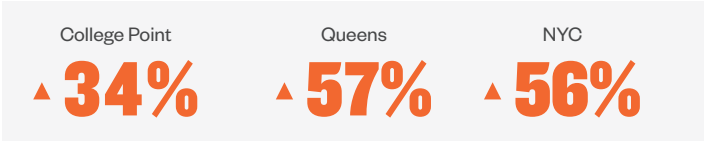


College Point Total Business Sales

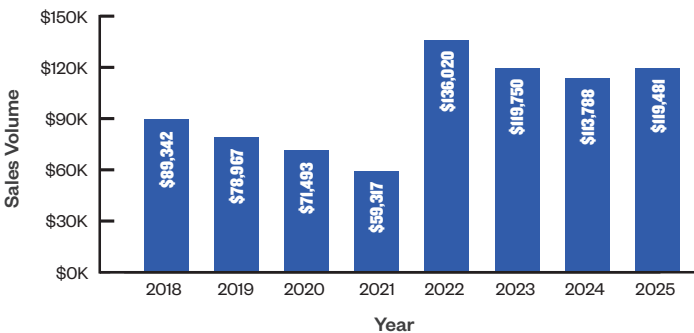


*Year 2025 reflects data gathered up until March 2024. Source: Division of Tax Policy, NYC Department of Finance

Change in Median Sales by Business, 2018-2025



College Point Median Sales by Business

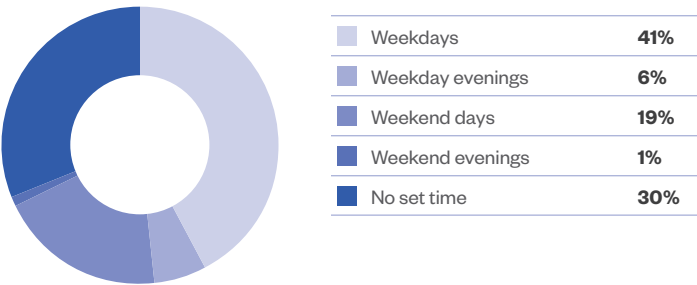


What We've Heard from Shoppers

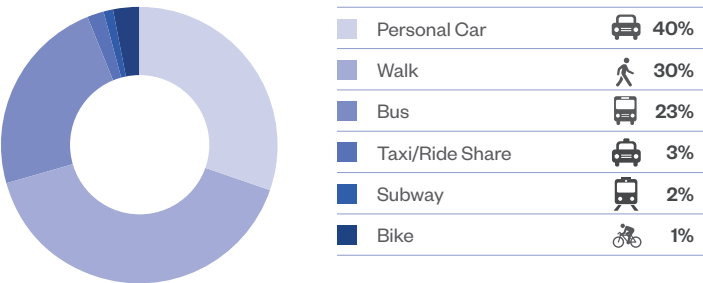
What additional types of businesses would you like to see in College Point?

► Supermarkets, fresh produce	
► Restaurants	
► Specialty retail	
► Movie theaters, arcades, entertainment	
► Clothing & shoe stores	
► Banks	

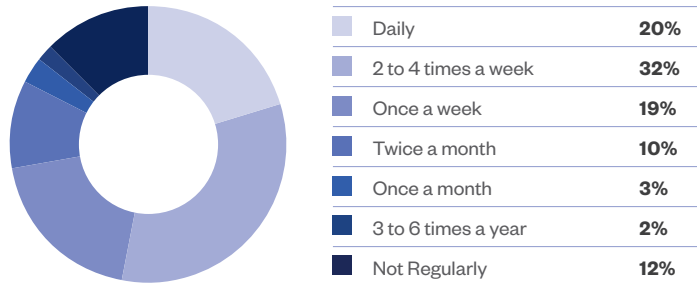
When do you usually shop in College Point?



How do you usually travel to College Point?

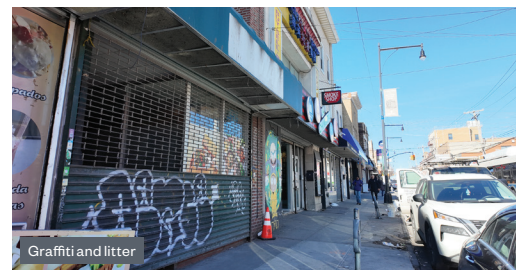
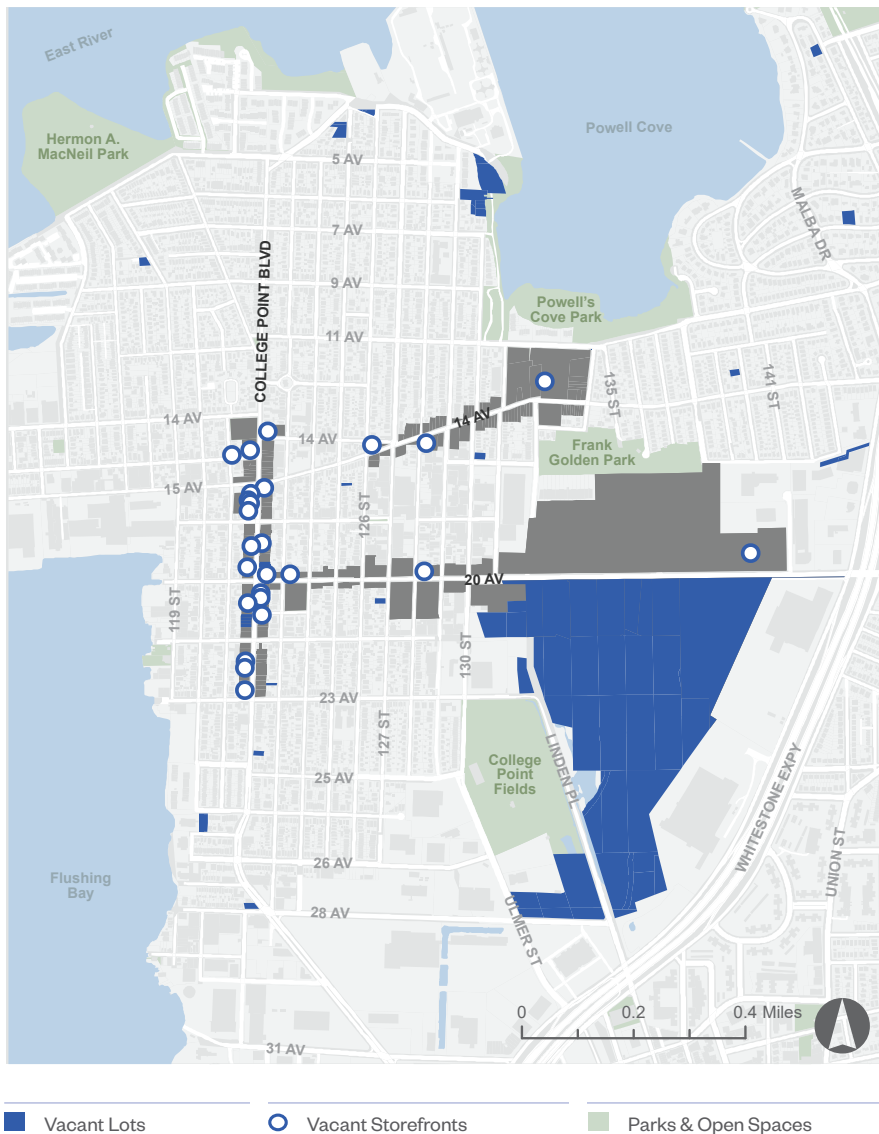


How often do you shop in College Point?



Source: Based on 350 consumer surveys conducted by the Queens Chamber of Commerce in Fall 2024 and Winter 2025.

Storefront Vacancies



An analysis of 254 storefronts along 14th Avenue, 20th Avenue, and College Point Boulevard revealed that 23% of storefronts are in poor condition, 35% are in average condition, and 43% are in good condition.

Streetscape Observations

- ▶ The juxtaposition of prewar charm with modern design creates a unique architectural fabric that bridges the past and the present
- ▶ A diverse mix of Asian, Latin, and European-American businesses creates a lively and dynamic streetscape
- ▶ Insufficient street lighting on all corridors presents safety concerns at night; merchants and shoppers report poor visibility and walkability in dimly lit areas
- ▶ Many areas could benefit from more trees or greenery to improve aesthetics and provide shade; overgrown tree pits on 20th Avenue contribute to a neglected appearance, and there is an inconsistent distribution of trees on the sidewalks of College Point Boulevard and 14th Avenue
- ▶ More trash cans, recycling bins, and better waste management are needed throughout the area's sidewalks and parks; trash often overflows at Poppenhusen Playground, and litter in the local shopping center's landscaped area also presents sanitation issues
- ▶ Several business façades are rusty, outdated, or not well-maintained, making them look uninviting; ghost kitchens, windowless delis, and deteriorating storefronts detract from the area's appeal
- ▶ Ongoing and intermittent construction on College Point Boulevard, 14th, and 20th avenues continues to cause congestion and pedestrian access issues
- ▶ Trucking activity contributes to congestion, dirty sidewalks, and infrastructure wear, requiring more frequent maintenance and better traffic management

DATA APPENDIX

Study Area Boundaries

■	Assessed Commercial Corridors
Primary data on College Point storefront businesses presented on pg. 6-8 was gathered along the following commercial corridors:	
▶ 14th Avenue between 126th Street and 133rd Place	
▶ 20th Avenue between College Point Boulevard and Petracca Place	
▶ College Point Boulevard between 14th and 23rd avenues	

■	College Point Context Area	●●●	Trade Area
Demographic and employment data on pg. 12-13 represents the population within the College Point neighborhood context area.		Consumer spending data on pg. 9 corresponds to the 0.75 mile trade area.	



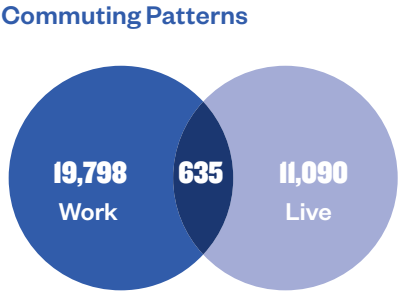
Area Demographics

Total Population	
30,880	College Point
2,330,124	Queens
8,516,202	New York City

Population Density (per square mile)	
12,908	College Point
21,335	Queens
28,165	New York City

Average Household Size	
3.11	College Point
2.77	Queens
2.51	New York City

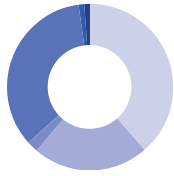
Car Ownership	
80.7%	College Point
63.0%	Queens
45.1%	New York City



19,798	Work in College Point, live elsewhere
635	Live & Work in College Point
11,090	Live in College Point, work elsewhere

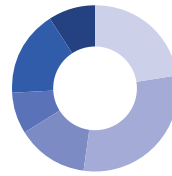
Area Demographics

Race/Background



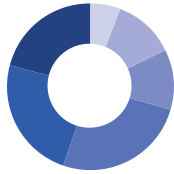
	College Point	Queens	NYC
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	39%	28%	28%
White alone	23%	24%	31%
Black or African American alone	2%	17%	21%
Asian alone	35%	26%	15%
Two or more races	1%	4%	3%
Some other race alone	1%	2%	1%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0%	0%	0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%

Educational Attainment



	College Point	Queens	NYC
12th Grade or Less, No Diploma	23%	17%	16%
High School Graduate	30%	26%	23%
Some College, No Degree	14%	14%	13%
Associate's Degree	8%	8%	7%
Bachelor's Degree	17%	22%	24%
Graduate or Professional Degree	9%	14%	17%

Population Age



	College Point	Queens	NYC
Under 5 Years	6%	6%	6%
5–14 Years	12%	11%	11%
15–24 Years	12%	11%	11%
25–44 Years	26%	29%	31%
45–64 Years	24%	27%	25%
65+ Years	21%	17%	16%

Median Age

40.7	College Point
40.4	Queens
38	New York City

Foreign-Born Population

53%	College Point
48%	Queens
37%	New York City

Income

Median Household Income

\$91,788	College Point
\$84,961	Queens
\$79,713	New York City

Pop. Below Poverty Line

9%	College Point
12%	Queens
17%	New York City

Employment

Population in Labor Force

61%	College Point
64%	Queens
63%	New York City

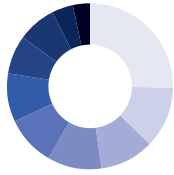
Unemployment*

9.4%	College Point
7%	Queens
7.7%	New York City

*Note: As of April 2025, the unemployment rate is 4.1% for Queens and 4.6% for New York City (NYSDOL); updated neighborhood-level data for College Point is not available.

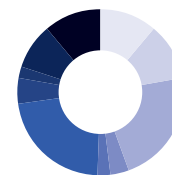
Local Jobs and Employment

Local Residents' Employment



Educational Services, Health Care, Social Assistance	24%
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	11%
Construction	10%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	10%
Accommodation, Food Services, Arts, Entertainment	9%
Retail Trade	9%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	7%
Other Services	7%
Manufacturing	4%
Public Administration	3%

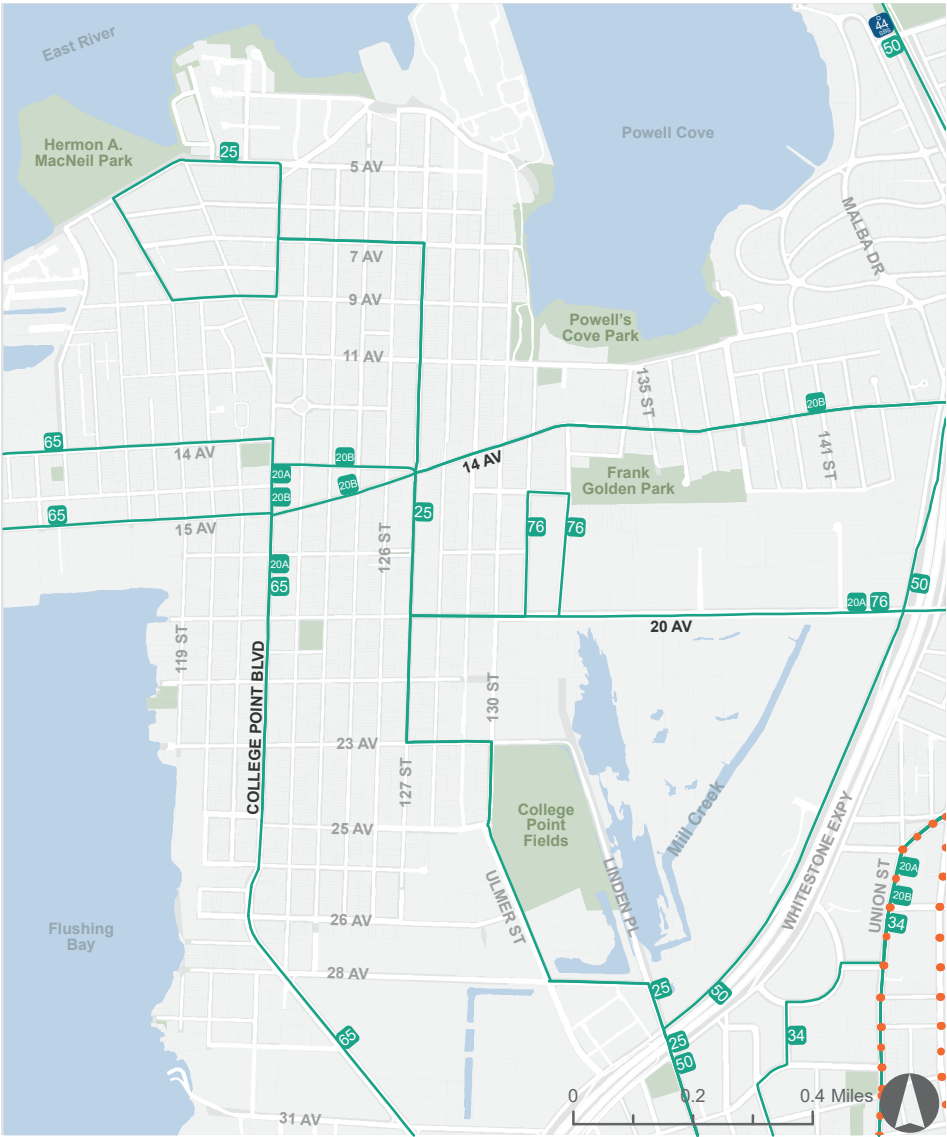
Jobs Located in College Point



Educational Services, Health Care, Social Assistance	9%
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	9%
Construction	18%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	3%
Accommodation, Food Services, Arts, Entertainment	2%
Retail Trade	18%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	4%
Other Services	2%
Manufacturing	7%
Public Administration	9%

DATA APPENDIX

College Point Transportation



▲ College Point Transportation



Average Weekday Bus Ridership (2024)

16,304	Q65
15,066	Q25
10,374	Q20
4,910	Q34
3,964	Q76
2,598	Q50

Average Daily Vehicular Traffic (2024)

21,669	20th Avenue from Parsons Boulevard to 119th Street
12,597	14th Avenue from College Point Boulevard to Whitestone Expressway
6,745	College Point Boulevard from 15th Avenue to College Place

Source: MTA 2024; NYS DOT, 2024 Annual Average Daily Traffic data.

Recent SBS Neighborhood Investments

- ▶ *Commercial Revitalization*, Avenue NYC multi-year grant awarded to Queens County Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2024-2027.
- ▶ *Merchant Organizing* grant of \$90,000 awarded to Queens County Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2023.

Current & Planned Developments

Redevelopment of Former Flushing Airport Site

- ▶ The NYC Economic Development Corporation has announced a proposal to build approximately 3,000 homes and 60 acres of public space on the site of the former Flushing Airport in College Point, Queens. The development is projected to generate \$3.2 billion in economic activity over the next 30 years, creating over 1,300 union construction jobs and 530 permanent careers. The proposal also includes sustainable design elements and high-quality, park-like landscaping to integrate the buildings into the surrounding wetlands environment. Following the completion of a successful Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) and a robust environmental review, construction is expected to begin in 2028.

Existing Plans & Studies

College Point Transportation Study, NYC Department of Transportation, 2010.

College Point Transportation Study, NYC Department of Transportation, 2006.

College Point Rezoning, NYC Department of City Planning, 2005.

Sources

ESRI and Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2025 ESRI Retail Demand Outlook.

Metropolitan Transportation Authority, 2024. Average Weekday Bus Ridership.

NYS Department of Labor. April 2025. Unemployment Rate Rankings by County.

NYS Department of Transportation. 2024 Annual Average Daily Traffic, using Traffic Data Viewer.

NYC Department of Finance, Division of Tax Policy, using data from NYS Department of Taxation and Finance. Business sales are reported by tax year, which runs from March 1st to February 28th. Sales data are compiled from sales tax returns, which are rolled up by tax filer within a year, excluding returns with negative sales amounts. For each year, each tax filer is reported according to the address listed on their latest return. Large outliers were removed from the analysis, and the top 5% of filers from Manhattan and the top 1% of filers from the outer boroughs by sales were removed.

Live XYZ, NYC Storefront Data, June 2025. Average and median storefront vacancy rates were determined through an SBS analysis of each commercial corridor in New York City.

U.S. Census Bureau. 2022. OnTheMap Application. Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program.

U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, using NYC Population FactFinder. College Point Census Tracts: 929, 945, 907, 919, 925, 939, 947.

Photo Credits: Queens County Chamber of Commerce Foundation: Franchette Zamudio.

ABOUT SBS

The NYC Department of Small Business Services helps unlock economic potential and create economic security for all New Yorkers by connecting New Yorkers to good jobs, creating stronger businesses, and building a fairer economy in neighborhoods across the five boroughs.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to recognize and thank the following individuals and organizations for their contributions to the development of the College Point Commercial District Needs Assessment:

Queens Borough President Donovan Richards
NYC Council Member Vickie Paladino
Queens Community Board 7
Queens Chamber of Commerce
College Point Board of Trade
College Point Merchants
College Point Shoppers and Residents