



DOWNTOWN FAR ROCKAWAY QUEENS

Commercial District Needs Assessment



NYC
Small Business
Services

Bill de Blasio
Mayor

Gregg Bishop
Commissioner



Joseph P. Addabbo Family Health Center
Rockaway Development & Revitalization Corporation
Rockaway East Merchants Association
Rockaway Youth Task Force



ABOUT DOWNTOWN FAR ROCKAWAY



The Neighborhood 360° program was created by the **NYC Department of Small Business Services** to identify, develop and launch commercial revitalization projects in partnership with local stakeholders. Through proactive planning and targeted investments, Neighborhood 360° supports projects that strengthen and revitalize the streets, small businesses, and community-based organizations that anchor New York City neighborhoods.

The Neighborhood 360° **Commercial District Needs Assessment (CDNA)** highlights a neighborhood's existing business landscape and consumer characteristics.

This CDNA features Mott Avenue, Central Avenue, Cornaga Avenue, and Beach 20th Street commercial corridors in **Downtown Far Rockaway** which was conducted in partnership with the **Joseph P. Addabbo Family Health Center, Rockaway East Merchants Association, Rockaway Development and Revitalization Corporation, and Rockaway Youth Task Force** between November 2018 and April 2019.

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 **622 surveys** and various stakeholder meetings with neighborhood merchants, shoppers, workers, property owners, and residents.

Jump to...

Key Findings	4-5
Business Inventory	6
What Merchants Say	7-10
Business Outlook & Trends	11-12
What Shoppers Say	8, 12
Physical Environment	13-15
Data Appendix	16-18

Background

Far Rockaway is a diverse community that extends midway between Jamaica Bay and the Atlantic Ocean, sitting at the southernmost portion of Queens and the easternmost end of the Rockaway Peninsula. Far Rockaway is a multi-modal transportation hub with the Mott Avenue A subway station, the Far Rockaway Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) station, the QM17 Express bus to Midtown Manhattan, bus services to Queens and Nassau counties, informal care shares, dockless bike shares, and a 20-minute drive to John F. Kennedy (JFK) International Airport. Furthermore, it encompasses cross-peninsular roads with connections to multiple regional expressways to Manhattan.

In the last decades, Far Rockaway has suffered from disinvestment and decline. At its prime in the late 19th and early 20th century, Far Rockaway was known as “The Village,” serving as the commercial and entertainment core for the entire peninsula. It was packed with shops, movie houses, as well as civic and religious organizations. Following World War II, the community faced a severe economic decline, and middle-class residents migrated to other parts of New York City. In 1950, a fire destroyed train service to and from the peninsula, leaving the area inaccessible to those without cars and further isolating residents with limited incomes who had rely on public transportation. Although rail access was eventually restored and re-integrated into the city subway system, car ownership began to increase, resulting in a rise in highway use — by Far Rockaway residents — to reach alternative commercial destinations. In 2012, the Rockaways encountered another challenge: climate change. Hurricane Sandy battered the peninsula with 30-foot offshore waves and flood levels of more than six feet inland. Although Far Rockaway was physically less devastated compared to the rest of the peninsula due to its higher elevation, the local economy took a substantial hit. The community suffered blackouts, reduction in employment opportunities, and lack of access to needed resources, making it impossible for local businesses to reopen for an extensive period.

Today, the resiliency of the Far Rockaway community is evident. Many small businesses once again operate along Mott Avenue, Central Avenue, Cornaga Avenue, and Beach 20th Street; these include, professional services, a wide variety of ethnic and fast food restaurants, and small-scale retail stores. Beach 20th Street from Brookhaven Avenue to Seagirt Boulevard has a high concentration of medical offices and healthcare services — serving as a satellite to the peninsula's only remaining full-service emergency room and hospital, St. John's Episcopal Hospital, the largest employer in the community.

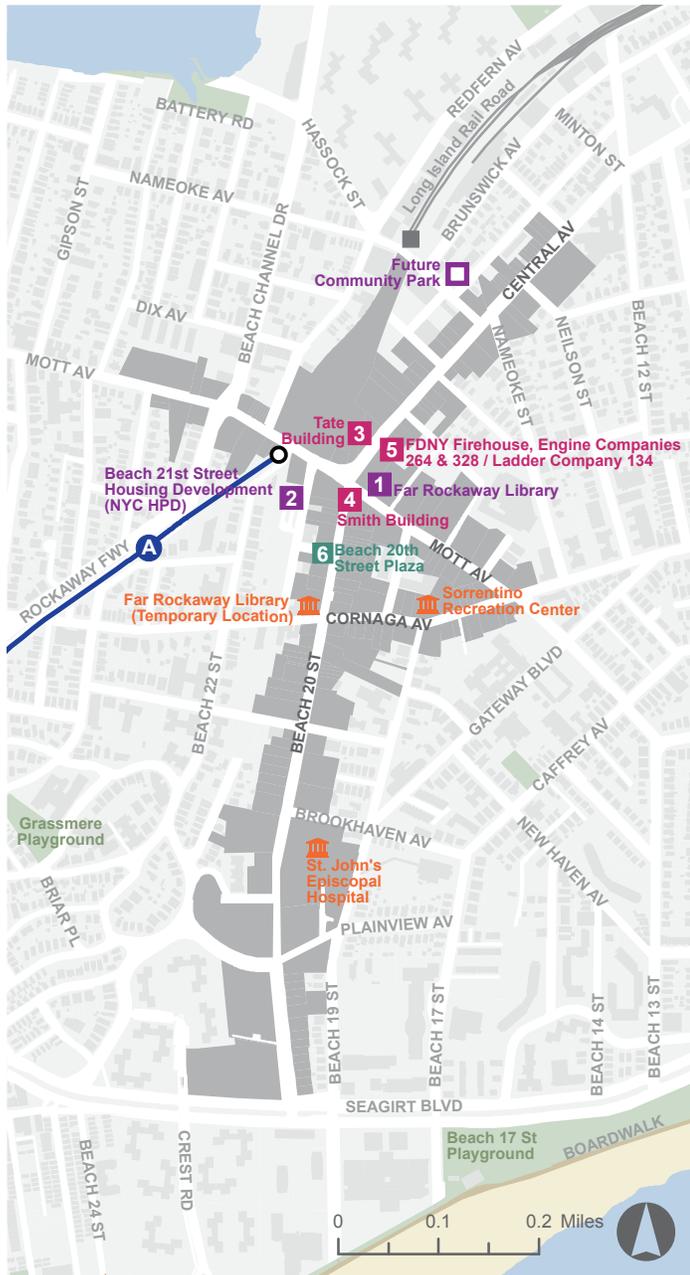
Neighborhood Demographics

A majority of Far Rockaway's nearly 54,000 residents identify as African American (41%), while slightly more than a quarter are Hispanic or Latino (31%). Far Rockaway is home to a diverse community of residents with more than 32% of its residents foreign-born. Currently, the median household income of Far Rockaway stands at \$46,230 — 20 percent lower than New York City's (\$55,191), an estimated 20 percent of residents living below the poverty line.

Future Opportunities

In late 2017, Far Rockaway was rezoned to allow for new commercial space, community facility space, and residential development. It is slated to bring thousands of units of affordable housing, as well as new retail and open space. Investments as part of the Downtown Far Rockaway Roadmap for Action will bring an estimate of \$288 million in capital investments, allowing for major infrastructure upgrades, such as new sewers, roadbeds, and sidewalks; the redevelopment of the Far Rockaway branch of the Queens Library; and service improvements to LIRR and MTA train services. The time is ripe for new and creative businesses and cultural venues to take root in the area and reposition Far Rockaway as a prime commercial destination for the region.

Downtown Far Rockaway



Points of Interest

- Assessed Commercial Corridors
- Current & Planned Developments
- Open Spaces
- Public Facilities
- Historic Sites & Landmarks

Notable Places



Merchant Groups, Cultural, and Nonprofit Organizations

- Jewish Community Council of the Rockaway Peninsula (JCCRP)
- Joseph P. Addabbo Family Health Center
- Rockaway Development & Revitalization Corporation (RDRC)
- Rockaway East Merchants Association (REMA4US)
- Rockaway Initiative for Sustainability and Equity (RISE)
- Rockaway Youth Task Force (RYTF)
- Urban Upbound

Neighborhood Events

- Annual Caribbean Carnival in the Rockaways
- Annual Feast of St. John the Baptist
- Annual Summer Merchant Fair and Fashion Show
- Downtown Far Rockaway Annual Lights of Hope Tree Lighting Ceremony
- Summertime at The Plaza Concert and Event Series

KEY FINDINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

Strengths

- ▶ Transportation hub that includes the Mott Avenue A train; Long Island Railroad - Far Rockaway Branch; 7 bus lines, informal car shares, access to dockless bike shares connecting Downtown Far Rockaway to Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, and Nassau County.
- ▶ Home to a large long-standing business community, with 42% of businesses surveyed reporting to have been in the community for 11 years or more.
- ▶ Diverse merchant community serving as an entry point for immigrant entrepreneurs — business owners reflect Vietnamese, Korean, Central and South American, Dominican, Chinese, Russian, Caribbean, Middle Eastern, and Jewish heritages, among others.
- ▶ Deep sense of solidarity, trust, and mutual support among long-standing business owners and customers.
- ▶ Rich in well-preserved architectural façades that include churches, office buildings and palatial spaces which were once popular movie theaters.
- ▶ Employment hub that is home to more than 1,000 direct jobs via St. John's Episcopal Hospital, which is also the heart of a concentration of small businesses in the healthcare industry.
- ▶ Civic center which fosters local engagement via the Queens Public Library, NYC Fire and Police Departments, United States Post Office, Community Board 14, and offices of local and state elected officials and many other active community organizations and institutions.

Challenges

- ▶ Lack of active and inviting public open spaces in the downtown core.
- ▶ Many merchants are on month-to-month leases, with 44% of those surveyed reporting to have two years or less remaining on their commercial leases.
- ▶ Perceived low quality of goods and services, lack of retail diversity, sit-down restaurants, and family entertainment, leading consumers to shop at malls in Nassau County and other parts of Queens and Brooklyn.
- ▶ Petty theft and perception of safety issues cost businesses thousands of dollars each year — some merchants have responded by changing hours of operation, raising prices to cover losses, or relocating outside the community.
- ▶ Absence of shopping options for healthy food, fresh produce, farmers markets, and groceries—the only farmers market on the peninsula is held on Saturdays during the growing season and is located mid-peninsula.
- ▶ Insufficient awareness among small businesses on how to navigate government regulations on tickets, fines and violations directly related to their business operations.
- ▶ Informal car shares park illegally on Mott Avenue blocking stores and disrupting the pedestrian experience.
- ▶ Planned infrastructure improvements over next five years — including sewer replacement, street flood mitigation, street bed repair, and paving — will create considerable challenges for storefront businesses that are struggling to remain open.





Downtown Far Rockaway Lights of Hope Tree Lighting Ceremony



Golden Krust Downtown Far Rockaway



Downtown Far Rockaway Community Engagement Meeting



Annual REMA4US Merchant Fair & Fashion Show - MRM Jazz Trio

Opportunities

- ▶ Preserve and enhance the neighborhood’s outstanding architecture and character.
- ▶ Improve pedestrian and visitor wayfinding, bicycle infrastructure, and streetscape amenities to emphasize proximity of Rockaways’ beaches to the downtown commercial core, promoting the area as a destination for after-beach shopping and entertainment.
- ▶ Support the continued development and capacity building of local merchant associations and place management organizations, to help strengthen connections between City agencies, businesses, and local nonprofits.
- ▶ Create programs to engage local youth to learn entrepreneurship skills and become proactive stewards of the neighborhood.
- ▶ Work with city agencies, elected officials and key stakeholders to rationalize curbside use for commercial loading zones in the downtown commercial core.
- ▶ Foster an improved connection between local residents and the Rockaway Workforce Career Center to provide jobseekers with easy access to free services and training opportunities.
- ▶ Explore the formation of a Business Improvement District in order to provide sustained resources and capacity to maintain and program public space within the downtown commercial core.
- ▶ Designate a primary point of contact to provide access to information, support, and resources to guide residents and business owners during periods of extensive construction and infrastructure improvements.
- ▶ Partner with the MTA to promote Downtown Far Rockaway as a destination — connecting visitors from the Long Island Railroad via improved bus or shuttle access to local beaches.
- ▶ Create seasonal, annual, and periodic events to attract families to shop and enjoy the area, such as farmers markets, youth sports and activities, and music and arts festivals.
- ▶ Leverage existing and future public spaces to host community events and other activities in partnership with local businesses and community-based organizations.

What’s Next?

To address these key findings and opportunities, a Neighborhood 360° Grant will be made available by SBS to nonprofit organizations. For more information, visit: nyc.gov/neighborhood360

BUSINESS LANDSCAPE

Business Inventory

342

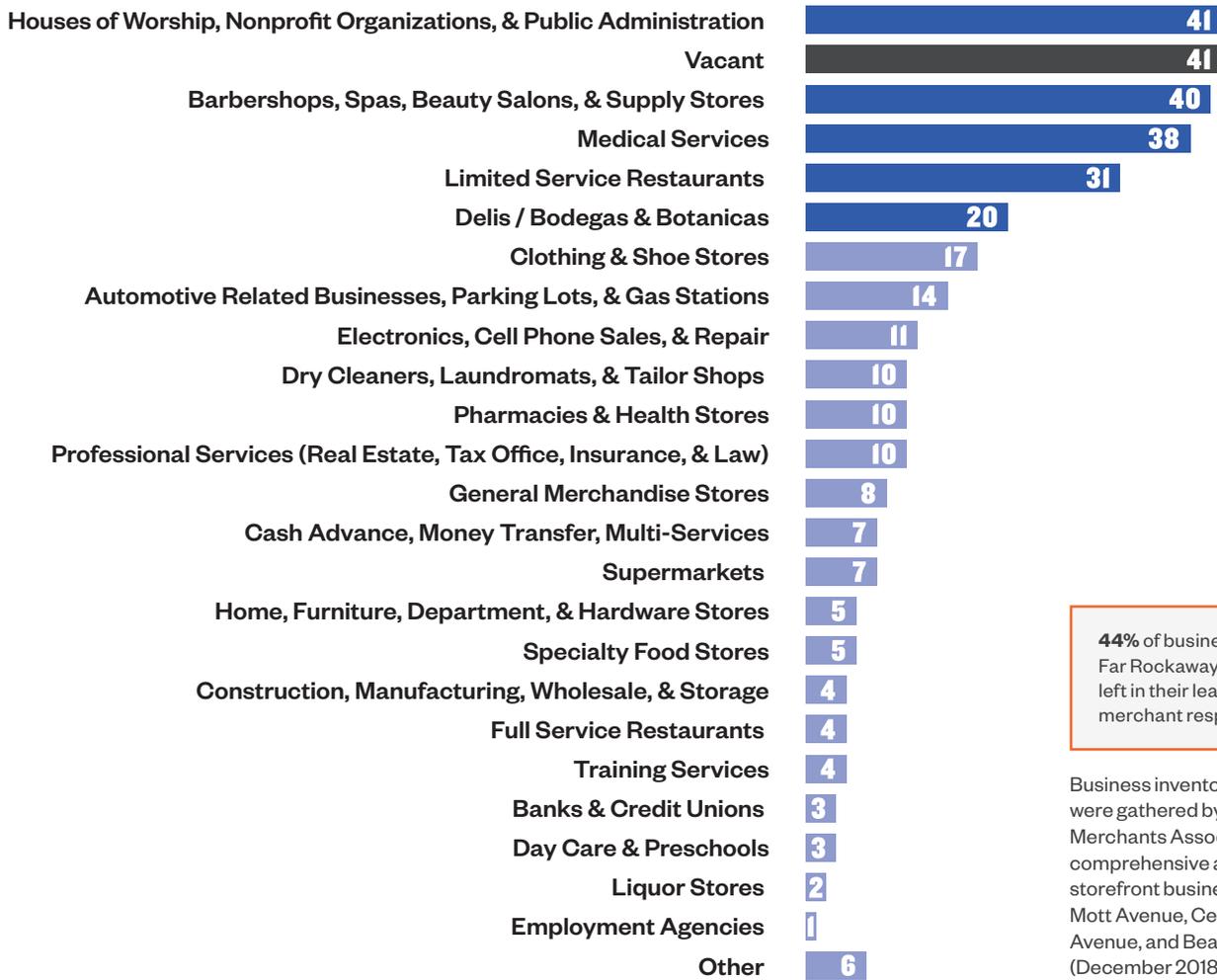
Total Number of Storefronts

12%

Storefront Vacancy*

*Note: In 2018, New York City's 75 Business Improvement Districts reported an average ground floor vacancy rate of 8.9% and median ground floor vacancy rate of 7.3% (SBS BIDs Trends Report, 2018)

Storefront & Retail Mix



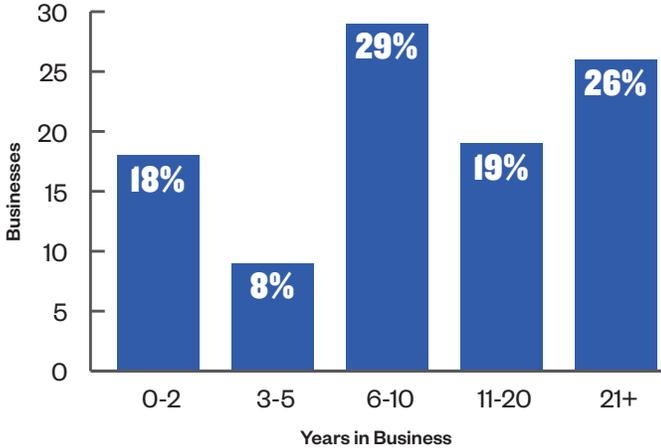
44% of businesses in Downtown Far Rockaway only have 2 years left in their lease – based on 41 merchant responses.

Business inventory and retail mix data were gathered by Rockaway East Merchants Association through a comprehensive area inventory of storefront businesses located along Mott Avenue, Central Avenue, Cornaga Avenue, and Beach 20th Street. (December 2018 to January 2019).



What We've Heard from Downtown Far Rockaway Merchants

How many years have you been in business here?

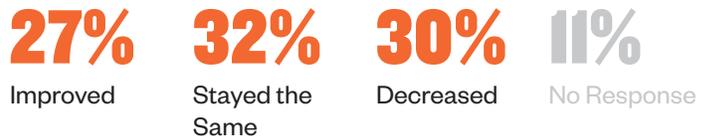


*Note: The mean is the average of all responses, the median is the middle number when all responses are arranged in ascending order, and the mode is the most common response.

Do you own or rent your property?



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



How many employees do you have?



What are the three biggest challenges for your business?

- ▶ Lack of parking / transit
- ▶ Crime / safety
- ▶ Commercial rent / lease

What kinds of resources would help you grow your business?

Resource	% Merchant Responses
▶ Marketing support	19%
▶ Access to financing	17%
▶ Space improvements	11%
▶ Lease support	10%
▶ New equipment	10%
▶ Legal support	9%
▶ No response	8%
▶ Other	7%
▶ Regulatory compliance assistance	5%
▶ Training for staff	4%

Source: Based on 146 merchant surveys conducted by REMA4US in Winter 2018.

BUSINESS LANDSCAPE

What We've Heard From Downtown Far Rockaway Merchants and Shoppers

How is this commercial district different from others?

"This district provides a variety of people of different backgrounds and cultures to learn & understand one another."

"The people in this area are like my family."

"Customers and business owners are nice. Most of us have been here a long time, so we understand each other."

"Good transportation — subway, bus, and the LIRR."

What changes would you like to see to improve the commercial activity in the area?

"More activities, nightlife, and more storefronts on the beachside."

"Activities to keep the youth occupied."

"With all the revitalization happening downtown, we need to ensure the business corridor looks the same (better!) throughout the community."

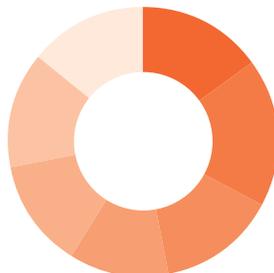
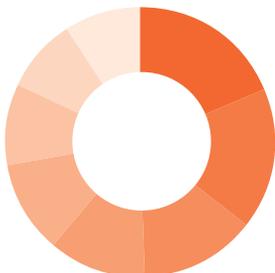
"A safer place would attract more people/customers."

"We need holiday decorations!"

What changes need to occur in Downtown Far Rockaway to attract more visitors / shoppers?

% Merchant Response

% Consumer Response

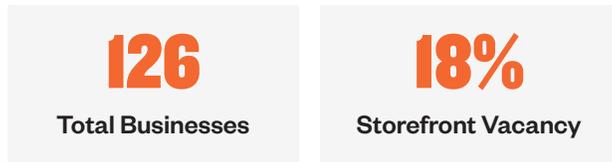


	% Merchant Response	% Consumer Response
Safety	18%	15%
Parking	17%	18%
Landscaping / Beautification	14%	14%
Sanitation	12%	12%
Storefront Improvements	11%	13%
Community Events	10%	14%
Merchant Collaboration	9%	NA
Street Lighting	9%	14%

Source: Based on 146 merchant surveys conducted by REMA4US and 436 consumer surveys conducted by the Joseph P. Addabbo Family Health Center. Winter 2018.

What We've Heard from Mott Avenue Merchants

Business Inventory



Do you own or rent your property?



Most Common Businesses

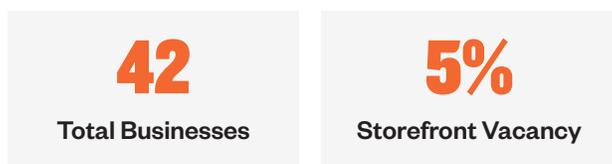


What kinds of resources would help you grow your business?

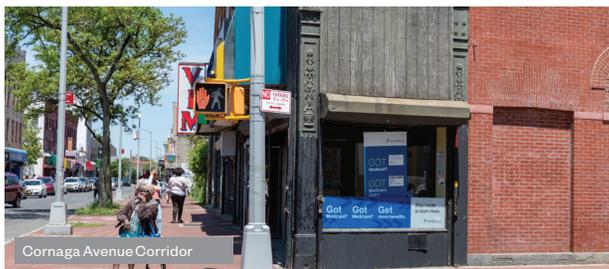


What We've Heard from Cornaga Avenue Merchants

Business Inventory



Do you own or rent your property?



Most Common Businesses



What kinds of resources would help you grow your business?

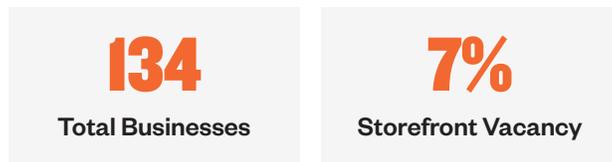


Mott Avenue renter versus owner data is based on responses from 66 merchants; Cornaga Avenue data is based on four merchant responses.

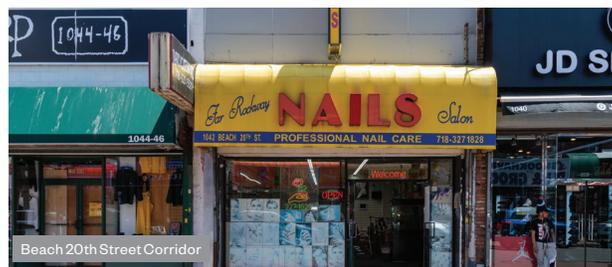
BUSINESS LANDSCAPE

What We've Heard from Beach 20th Street Merchants

Business Inventory



Do you own or rent your property?



Most Common Businesses

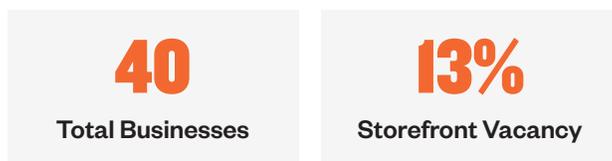


What kinds of resources would help you grow your business?



What We've Heard from Central Avenue Merchants

Business Inventory



Do you own or rent your property?



Most Common Businesses



What kinds of resources would help you grow your business?



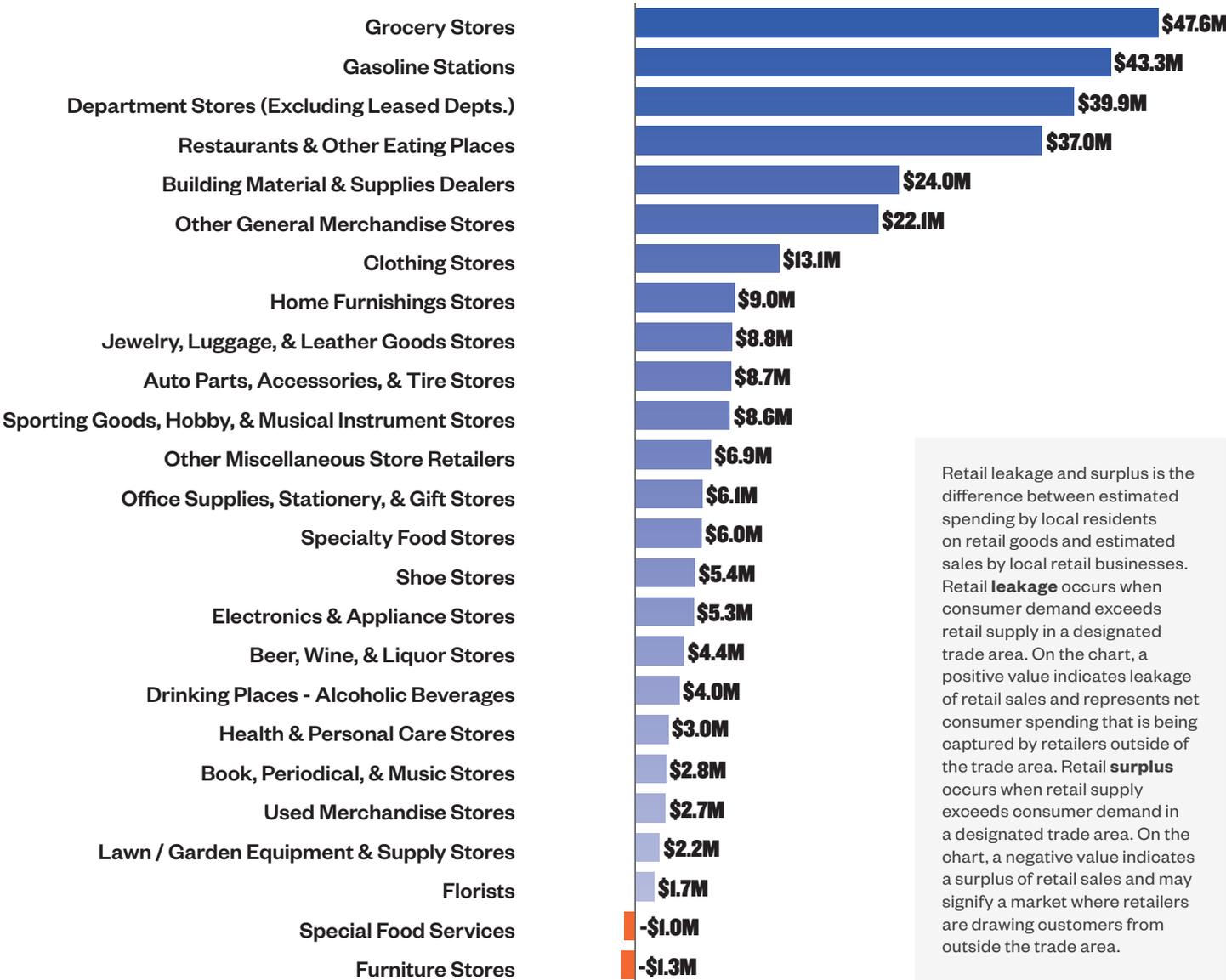
Beach 20th Street renter versus owner data is based on responses from 56 merchant; Central Avenue data is based on eight merchant responses.

Downtown Far Rockaway Retail Opportunity

<p>Residents spend</p> <p>\$636M</p> <p>each year in goods and services</p>	<p>Local businesses make</p> <p>\$247M</p> <p>each year in retail sales</p>	<p>Every year,</p> <p>\$361M</p> <p>is spent outside the neighborhood</p>
--	--	--

Retail Leakage & Surplus

← Surplus \$0 Leakage →



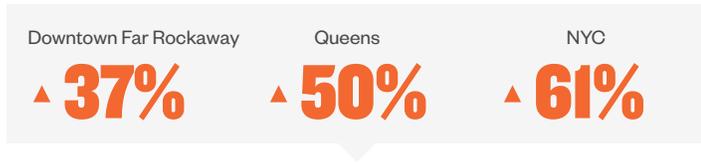
Retail leakage and surplus is the difference between estimated spending by local residents on retail goods and estimated sales by local retail businesses. Retail **leakage** occurs when consumer demand exceeds retail supply in a designated trade area. On the chart, a positive value indicates leakage of retail sales and represents net consumer spending that is being captured by retailers outside of the trade area. Retail **surplus** occurs when retail supply exceeds consumer demand in a designated trade area. On the chart, a negative value indicates a surplus of retail sales and may signify a market where retailers are drawing customers from outside the trade area.

Source: ESRI and Infogroup, February 2019.

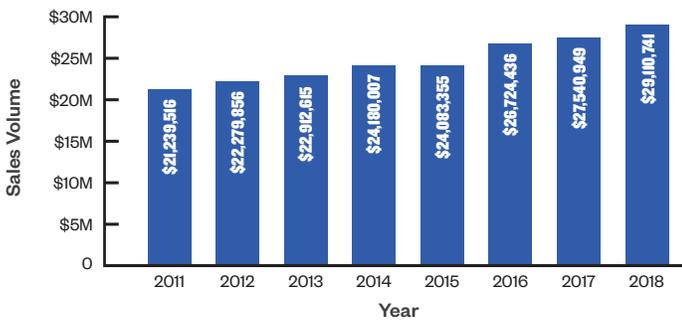
BUSINESS OUTLOOK

Business Trends

Change in Total Business Sales, 2011-2018



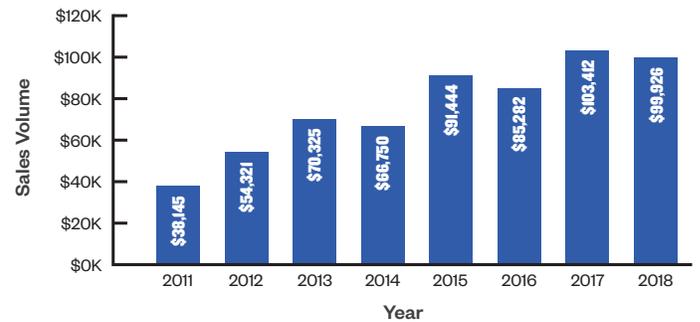
Downtown Far Rockaway Total Business Sales



Change in Median Sales by Business, 2011-2018



Downtown Far Rockaway Median Sales by Business



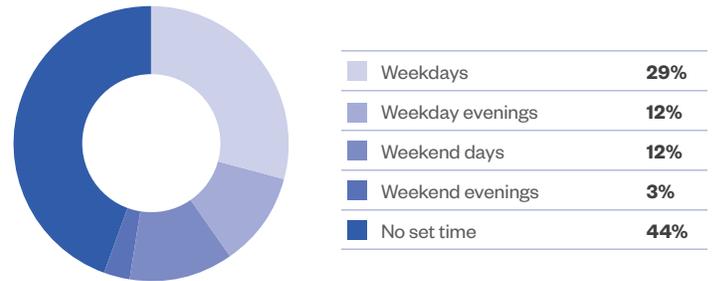
Source: Division of Tax Policy, NYC Department of Finance

What We've Heard from Shoppers

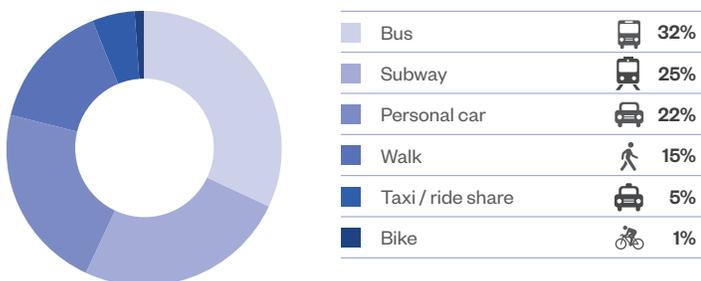
What additional types of businesses would you like to see in Downtown Far Rockaway?

- ▶ Department stores 
- ▶ Arts, entertainment & recreational spaces 
- ▶ Quality clothing & shoe stores 
- ▶ Supermarkets & healthy food options 
- ▶ Full-service restaurants 
- ▶ Fitness & health 

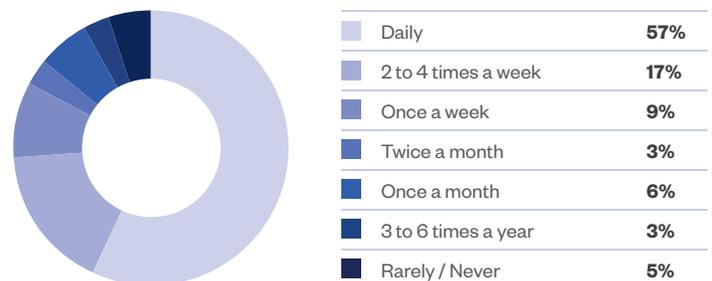
When do you usually shop in Downtown Far Rockaway?



How do you usually get to Downtown Far Rockaway?

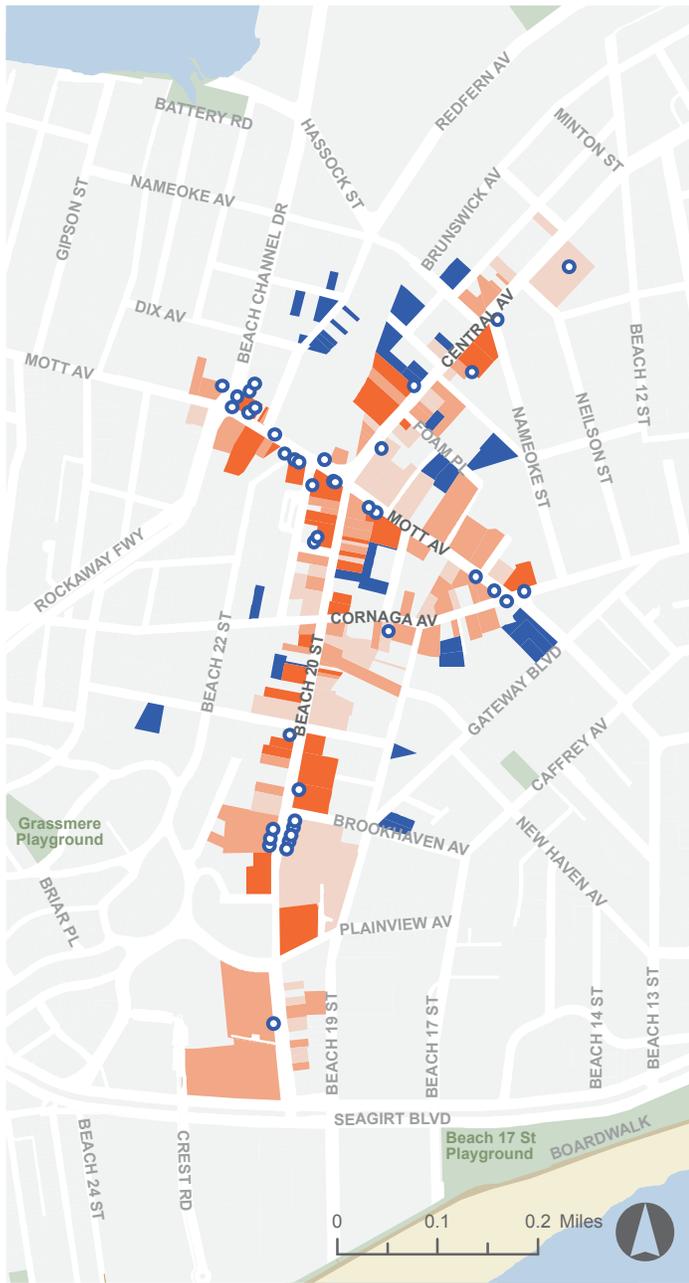


How often do you shop in Downtown Far Rockaway?



Source: Based on 436 consumer surveys conducted by the Joseph P. Addabbo Family Health Center in Winter 2018.

Storefront Conditions



 Poor Condition (33%)	 Vacant Lots
 Average Condition (50%)	 Vacant Storefronts
 Good Condition (17%)	 Parks & Open Spaces

An analysis of 342 storefronts along Mott Avenue, Central Avenue, Cornaga Avenue and Beach 20th Street revealed that 33% of storefronts are in poor condition, 50% are in average condition, and 17% are in good condition.

Streetscape Observations

- ▶ Lack of accessibility and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) throughout the neighborhood, with uneven sidewalks and lack of ramp access at intersections.
- ▶ Corridors lack amenities such as street furniture, artwork and active public spaces.
- ▶ Litter and trash are highly visible around the Mott Avenue A train station and along major intersections around the commercial district despite the presence of litter baskets and supplemental sanitation efforts.
- ▶ Lack of maintenance of existing commercial corridors, open spaces and tree pits contribute to the negative perception of retail quality of the district.
- ▶ Need for pavement markings and street repairs. This is visible throughout the commercial district — sidewalk cracks and absence of traffic signage negatively impact the pedestrian experience and safety.
- ▶ Abundance of vacant lots attracts debris and litter throughout the commercial corridors. Despite efforts to maintain clean sidewalks in front of storefronts, merchants often receive sanitation fines.



PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Public Space Study: Beach 20th Street Plaza

In 2015, the NYC Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) and NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) completed a \$1.65M capital project to connect commuters from Beach 22nd and Beach 21st streets to Beach 20th Street, one of four major corridors within the district. The pedestrian plaza area is approximately 9,400 SF and features new lighting, benches, landscaping, a drinking fountain, and moveable outdoor furniture. The Rockaway Development & Revitalization Corporation (RDRC) is DOT's plaza partner and receives maintenance support as part of the OneNYC Plaza Equity Program. The plaza provides space for seasonal events and activities such as concerts, merchant fairs, food courts, games, and exercise that the Downtown Far Rockaway community strongly demands.



What best applies to you?

% Park User Responses

▶ Live in neighborhood	68%
▶ Work in neighborhood	20%
▶ Visiting	2%
▶ Other	10%

How often do you visit this space?

% Park User Responses

▶ Daily	72%
▶ Weekly	16%
▶ Monthly	2%
▶ Rarely	10%

How do you typically use this space?

Commuting / Passing Through	47%
Eating	23%
Shopping	15%
Socializing / Meeting Friends	13%
Playing Games / Sports	2%

How did you get here?

Walk	43%
Bus	34%
Train / Subway	16%
Other	5%
Private Car	2%

How much time do you typically spend here?

▶ Walking through	36%
▶ Less than 15 minutes	10%
▶ Less than 30 minutes	24%
▶ Less than 1 hour	6%
▶ 1-2 hours	16%
▶ 2 or more hours	8%

When visiting Beach 20th Street Plaza, do you shop at nearby businesses?

73%	27%
Yes	No

Source: Based on 50 public space surveys conducted by RYTF in Spring 2019.

Public Space Study: Beach 20th Street Plaza



RDRC Youth Volunteer To Spruce Up Beach 20th Street

On the scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high), please rate your level of satisfaction with:

▶ Cleanliness	2
▶ Lighting	4
▶ Attractiveness	2
▶ Accessibility	4
▶ Overall safety	3
▶ Physical conditions / amenities	2
▶ Programs / events	2

What changes or improvements would you like to see in this space?

▶ Cleanliness and upkeep	35%
▶ Street furniture	24%
▶ Safety	22%
▶ Activities, programs, and events	19%

What are the top three things you like best about the space?

- ▶ Accessibility
- ▶ Location
- ▶ Seating options



Downtown Far Rockaway Annual Lights of Hope Tree Lighting Ceremony

DATA APPENDIX

Study Area Boundaries

<p>■ Assessed Commercial Corridors</p>	<p>— Downtown Far Rockaway Context Area</p>	<p>... Trade Area</p>
<p>Primary data on Downtown Far Rockaway storefront businesses presented on pg. 6-8 was gathered along Mott Avenue, Central Avenue, Cornaga Avenue, and Beach 20th Street.</p>	<p>Demographic and employment data on pg. 16-17 correspond to the Downtown Far Rockaway neighborhood context area.</p>	<p>Retail leakage, surplus, and retail opportunity data on pg. 11 correspond to the 0.75 mile trade area.</p>



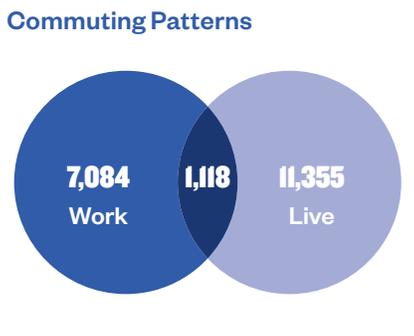
Area Demographics

Total Population	
42,406	Downtown Far Rockaway
2,310,011	Queens
8,461,961	New York City

Population Density (per square mile)	
32,152	Downtown Far Rockaway
21,150	Queens
27,986	New York City

Average Household Size	
3.36	Downtown Far Rockaway
2.93	Queens
2.65	New York City

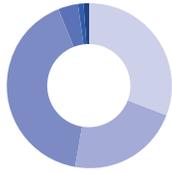
Car Ownership	
62%	Downtown Far Rockaway
63%	Queens
45%	New York City



7,084	Work in Downtown Far Rockaway, live elsewhere
1,118	Live & Work in Downtown Far Rockaway
11,355	Live in Downtown Far Rockaway, work elsewhere

Area Demographics

Race / Background



	Downtown Far Rockaway	QN	NYC
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	31%	28%	29%
White alone	22%	26%	32%
Black or African American alone	41%	17%	22%
Asian alone	4%	25%	14%
Two or more races	1%	2%	2%
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



	Downtown Far Rockaway	QN	NYC
12th Grade or Less, No Diploma	31%	19%	19%
High School Graduate	25%	27%	24%
Some College, No Degree	16%	15%	14%
Associate's Degree	7%	8%	7%
Bachelor's Degree	12%	20%	21%
Graduate or Professional Degree	9%	11%	15%

Population Age



	Downtown Far Rockaway	QN	NYC
Under 5 Years	11%	6%	6%
5-14 Years	16%	11%	11%
15-24 Years	15%	12%	13%
25-44 Years	25%	31%	32%
45-64 Years	22%	26%	25%
65+ Years	11%	14%	13%

Median Age

32	Downtown Far Rockaway
37.9	Queens
35.9	New York City

Foreign-Born Population

32%	Downtown Far Rockaway
48%	Queens
37%	New York City

Income

Median Household Income

\$46,230	Downtown Far Rockaway
\$59,758	Queens
\$55,191	New York City

Pop. Below Poverty Line

20%	Downtown Far Rockaway
15%	Queens
20%	New York City

Employment

Population in Labor Force

60%	Downtown Far Rockaway
64%	Queens
64%	New York City

Unemployment*

8.1%	Downtown Far Rockaway
7.8%	Queens
8.6%	New York City

Note: Unemployment figures are based on data from 2012-2016. As of December 2018, the unemployment rate is 3.4% for Queens and 3.9% for New York City (NYS DOL); updated neighborhood-level data for Downtown Far Rockaway is not available.

Local Jobs and Employment

Local Residents' Employment



Educational Services, Health Care, Social Assistance	33%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	13%
Other Services	9%
Retail Trade	9%
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	9%
Accommodation, Food Services, Arts, & Entertainment	7%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	7%
Construction	6%
Public Administration	4%
Manufacturing	3%

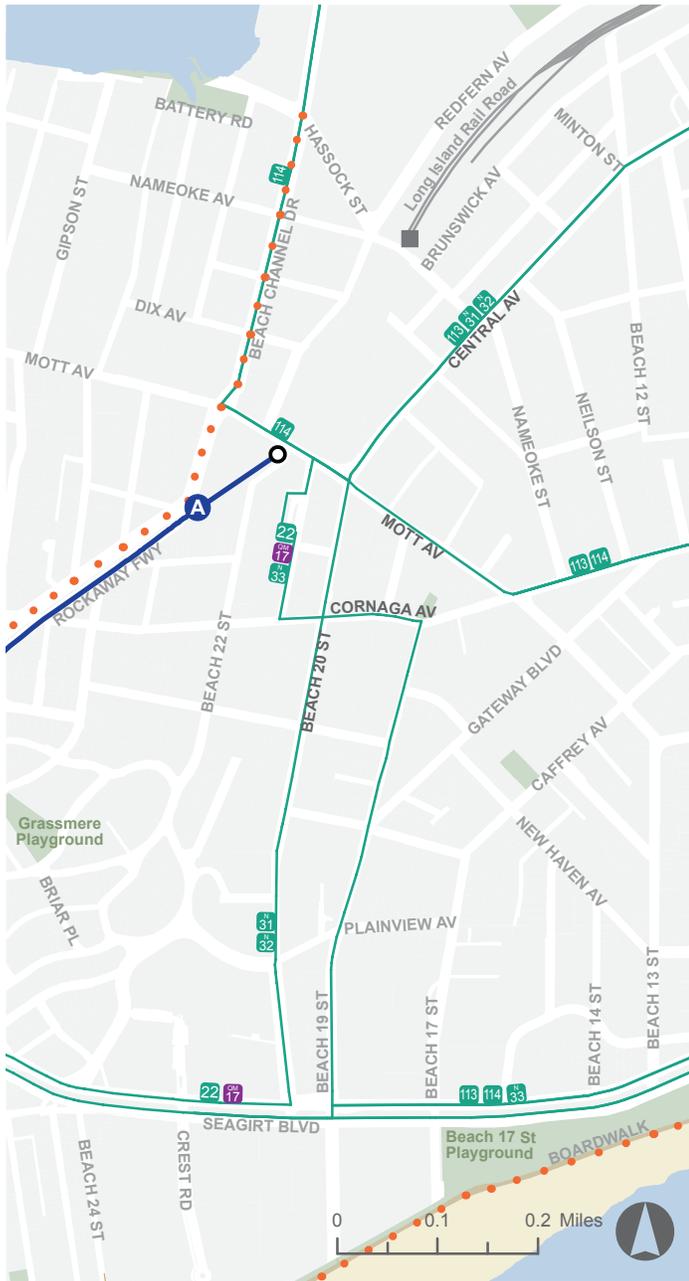
Jobs Located in Downtown Far Rockaway



Educational Services, Health Care, Social Assistance	57%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	1%
Other Services	13%
Retail Trade	5%
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	0%
Accommodation, Food Services, Arts, & Entertainment	4%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	6%
Construction	2%
Public Administration	12%
Manufacturing	0%

DATA APPENDIX

Downtown Far Rockaway Transportation



▲ Downtown Far Rockaway Transportation

— Bus Routes
 — NYC Subway
 ••• Bicycle Lanes
 — Long Island Rail Road

Vehicular Traffic (2015)

22,187	Seagirt Boulevard from Rockaway Parkway to Beach 9th Street
11,001	Central Avenue from Doughty Boulevard to Mott Avenue
10,567	Beach Channel Drive from Beach 75th Street to Mott Avenue
10,126	Mott Avenue from Bay 24th Street to Beach 13th Street
5,898	Beach 20th Street from Seagirt Boulevard to Mott Avenue

Average Weekday Subway Ridership (2017)

1,472,005	A Far Rockaway-Mott Avenue Station
582,975	A Beach 25th Street Station
298,395	A Beach 36th Street Station

MTA Annual Bus Ridership (2017)

92,231	Q117
1.2M	Q113
2.0M	Q114
2.1M	Q22

Bus Routes

4	MTA Bus Routes
3	Nassau Inter-County Express Bus Routes N31, N32, N33

Sources: MTA 2017; NYC DOT September, 2017; NYS DOT, 2015 Annual Average Daily Traffic data.

Recent SBS Investments in the Neighborhood

- ▶ *Façade Improvement*, Storefront Improvement Program grant of \$30,000 awarded to the Rockaway Development & Revitalization Corporation, 2017.
- ▶ *Storefront Improvements*, NYC Department of Small Business Services awarded more than \$140,000 in storefront improvement grants (privately funded by NYCEDC and the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City) to 18 storefronts in Downtown Far Rockaway, 2017.
- ▶ *Capacity Building*, Avenue NYC capacity building grant of \$25,000 awarded to the Rockaway Development & Revitalization Corporation, 2016.
- ▶ *Business Attraction - Mott Avenue and Beach 20th Street*, Avenue NYC business attraction grant of \$30,000 awarded to the Rockaway Development & Revitalization Corporation, 2015.
- ▶ *Business Attraction*, Avenue NYC grant of \$50,000 awarded to the Rockaway Development & Revitalization Corporation, 2014.
- ▶ *Business Vacancy Database*, Avenue NYC business attraction grant of \$40,000 awarded to the Rockaway Development & Revitalization Corporation, 2014.

Existing Plans & Studies

Downtown Far Rockaway Roadmap for Action

- ▶ In November 2015, Council Member Donovan Richards convened community stakeholders as the Downtown Far Rockaway Working Group, in partnership with the Mayor's Office and multiple City agencies. The Downtown Far Rockaway Roadmap for Action was developed as a comprehensive response to address some of the strategies outlined by the working group. In 2017, Downtown Far Rockaway was rezoned to bolster a vibrant mixed-use income center in the downtown area. Investments as part of the Downtown Far Rockaway Roadmap for Action will bring an estimate of \$288 million in capital investments, allowing for major infrastructure upgrades. Projects will be designed to address community needs pertaining to affordable housing, open space, community resources, and economic and workforce development. To learn more: nycedc.com/project/downtown-far-rockaway

Far Rockaway Library

- ▶ At 18,000 square feet, the new building will be twice the size of the original library at 1637 Central Avenue and is scheduled to be completed by mid-2021. Programming will include after-school study hours, story reading, and various community events. The renovated branch will feature a Teen Room and a Cyber Center, along with library offices, separate adult and children reading areas, a meeting room, and a Small Business Center. The entire structure will be ADA compliant. There will also be a rear yard with plantings accessible to the public.

Sources

ESRI and Infogroup, Inc. 2019 ESRI Retail MarketPlace Profile.

Metropolitan Transportation Authority. 2017. Average Weekday Subway Ridership and Annual Bus Ridership.

NYS Department of Labor. December 2018. Unemployment Rate Rankings by County.

NYS Department of Transportation. 2016 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.

NYC Department of Small Business Services. Fiscal Year 2018. Business Improvement District Trends Report.

NYC Department of Transportation. September 2017. Bi-Annual Pedestrian Counts.

U.S. Census Bureau. 2015. OnTheMap Application. Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program.

U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2016 American Community Survey 4-Year Estimates, using NYC Population FactFinder. Downtown Far Rockaway Census Tracts: 1032.01, 1032.02, 1008.02, 1010.01, 998.01

Photo Credits: NYC Economic Development Corporation; NYC SBS: Jose Trucios; Rockaway East Merchants Association; Rockaway Development & Revitalization Corporation.

Beach 21st Street Plaza

- ▶ Accessible public plaza — with public art, seating and planted areas to manage storm water — flanked by retail and commercial space. To be completed by early 2020.

Vision 2020: New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan

- ▶ Introduced in March 2011, this comprehensive waterfront plan features: a three-year action agenda comprising 130 funded projects, including the development of more than 50 acres of new waterfront parks, 14 new waterfront esplanades, and the introduction of a new commuter ferry service (the NYC Ferry), providing a framework for the City's 520 miles (840 km) of shoreline for the next decade and beyond.

HPD Housing Developments

- ▶ The New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), Housing Development Corporation (HDC), and Council Member Donovan Richards plan to deliver more than 800 units of affordable housing, 100,000 square feet of retail space, and 30,000 square feet of community space across three projects located in the neighborhood's core as part of the Neighborhood Rezoning.



ABOUT SBS

The NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS) helps unlock economic potential and create economic security for all New Yorkers by connecting New Yorkers to good jobs, creating stronger businesses, and building thriving 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 Downtown Far Rockaway Commercial District Needs Assessment:

Queens Borough President Melinda Katz
NYC Council Member Donovan Richards
Queens Community Board 14
Downtown Far Rockaway Merchants
Downtown Far Rockaway Shoppers and Residents