

# Morris Park and Van Nest Commercial District Needs Assessment Preliminary Findings

*Emilio's* OF MORRIS PARK  
718-822-6756 www.emiliosofmorrispark.com



**NYC**  
Small Business  
Services

careers  
businesses  
**neighborhoods**



# Agenda



Avenue NYC Program Overview

Neighborhood Context

Retail Mix & Vacancy

Storefront & Streetscape Conditions

Merchant & Consumer Survey Highlights

COVID19 Impact

Strengths / Challenges / Opportunities

# Avenue NYC Program Context



careers  
businesses  
neighborhoods



Avenue NYC Commercial Revitalization Grants fund community-based development organizations (CBDOs) to carry out programs targeting commercial districts in low- and moderate-income communities.

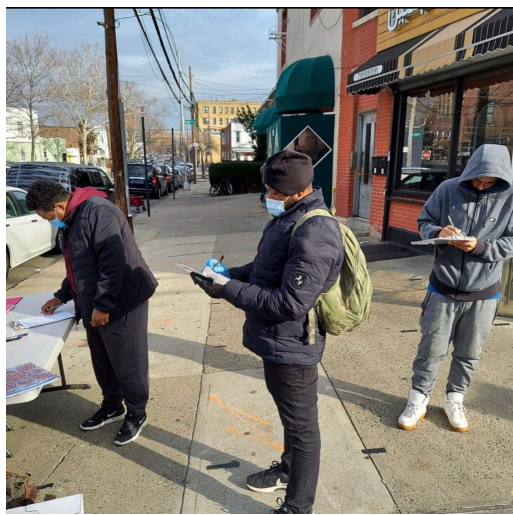
## Year 1- CDNA Report

**Community Capacity Inventory**

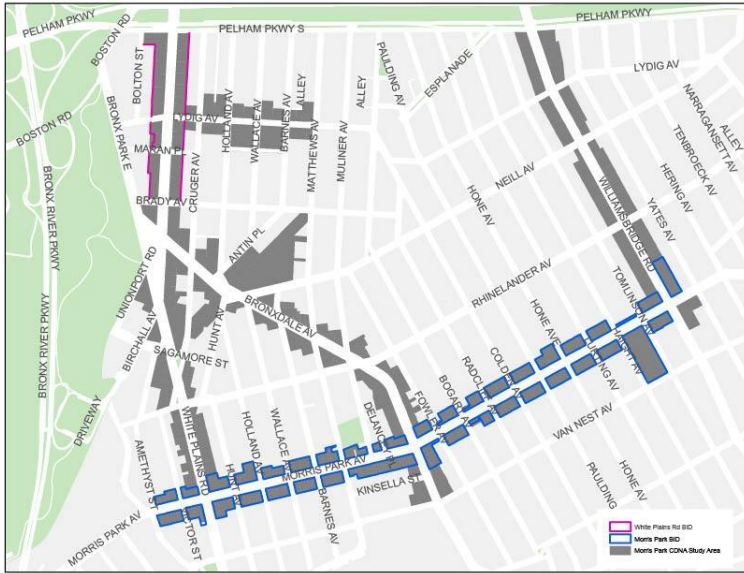
**Business Inventory**

**Merchant & Consumer Surveys** from individual merchants, consumers and property owners in English, Spanish, and Arabic

**Data Analysis**



# Neighborhood Context

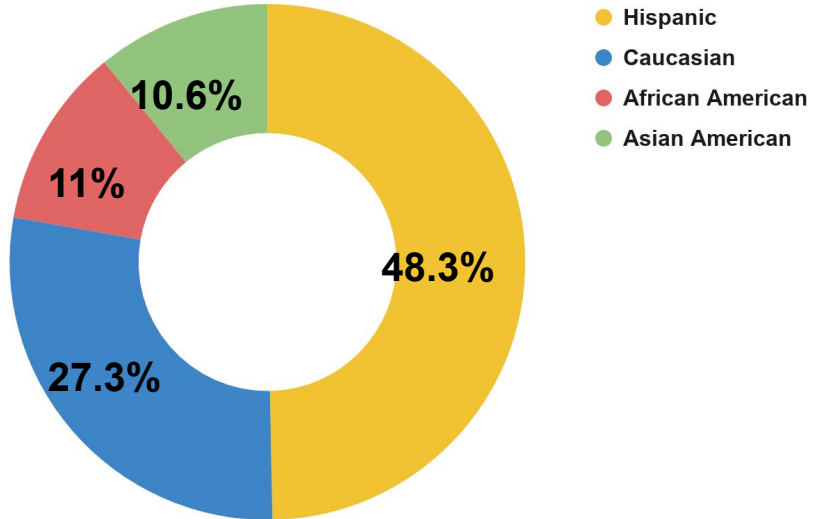


Morris Park CDNA Study Area  
Bronx

**4 Different Corridors**  
**50+ Blocks**

Population: 45,457

Foreign Born Population: 32.1%





## Key Takeaways

The study area includes a mix of low- to high- density corridors with **multi- generational** businesses that have **deep engagement roots** in the community

---

Each commercial corridor has a **unique identity** and serves a particular niche within the local economy

---

Both merchants and consumers believe **community programming** and **public space activation** would attract more people to the commercial corridors



# Business Inventory

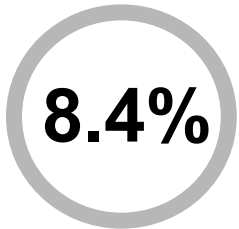
---



# Retail Mix



**Total Businesses  
Surveyed**



**Overall Vacancy  
Rate**

# Top 5 Categories of Businesses by Corridor

## Morris Park Avenue **208**

Professional Services  
Beauty/Nail Salons & Barber Shops  
Limited Service Restaurants  
Full Service Restaurants  
Bodegas, Delis, & Convenience

## White Plains Road **110**

Clothing & Shoe Stores  
Cell Phone & Electronics Stores  
Limited & Full Service Restaurants  
Beauty/ Nail Salons & Barber Shops  
Pharmacies, Optical & Health Stores

## Williamsbridge Road **100**

Professional Services  
Doctors, Dentists, & Medical Services  
Limited & Full Service Restaurants  
Beauty/Nail Salons & Barber Shops  
Bodegas, Delis, & Convenience

## Lydig Ave **74**

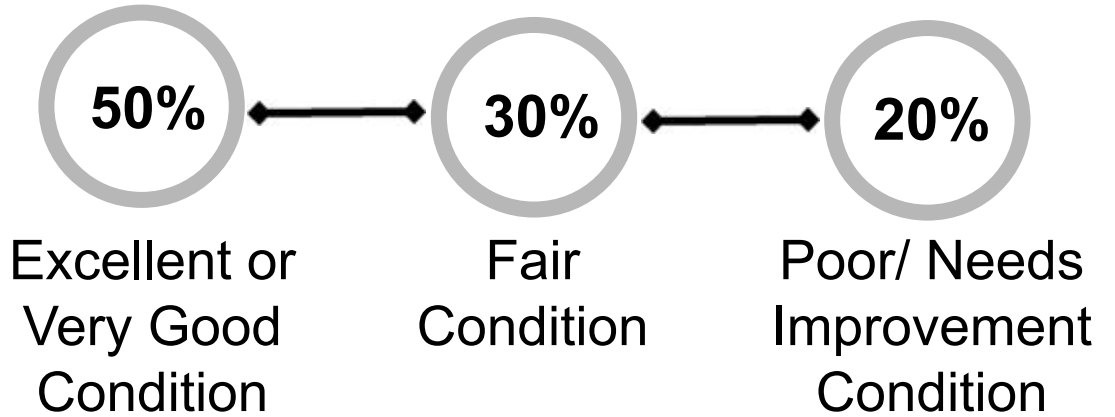
Full & Limited Service Restaurants  
Beauty/ Nail Salons & Barbershops  
Doctors, Dentists & Medical Services  
Bodegas, Delis, & Convenience  
Supermarkets & Groceries



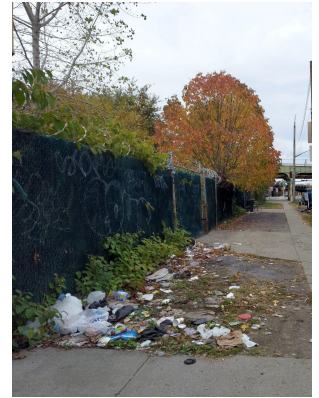
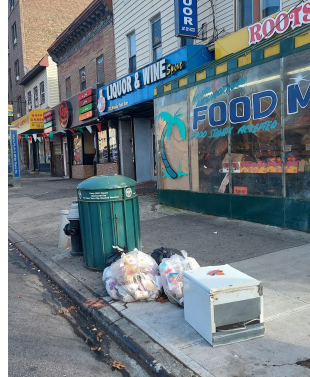


# Storefront Observations

---



# Streetscape Observations





# Merchant Survey Takeaways

---

281

Total Merchants  
Surveyed

75%

Merchants Have Been in  
Business for 5+ Years



- Top three challenges include lack of **parking/ transit**, government **regulations** and **crime and safety**
- More **parking**, increased **safety** and supplemental **sanitation** would attract more visitors and shoppers to the district

# Impact of COVID-19 on our Small Businesses

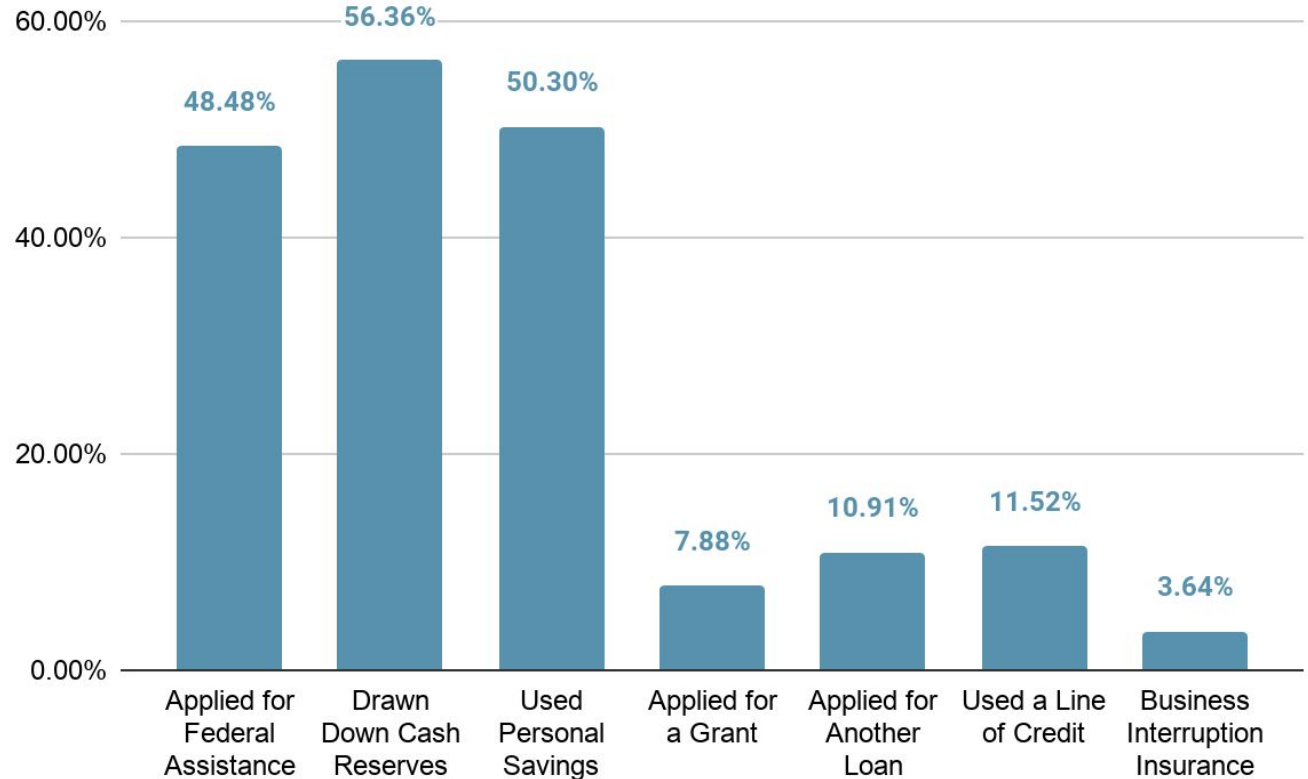
---

**75%**

**Decrease in Sales**

**18%**

**Struggled to meet rent in full**



# Consumer Survey Highlights

---

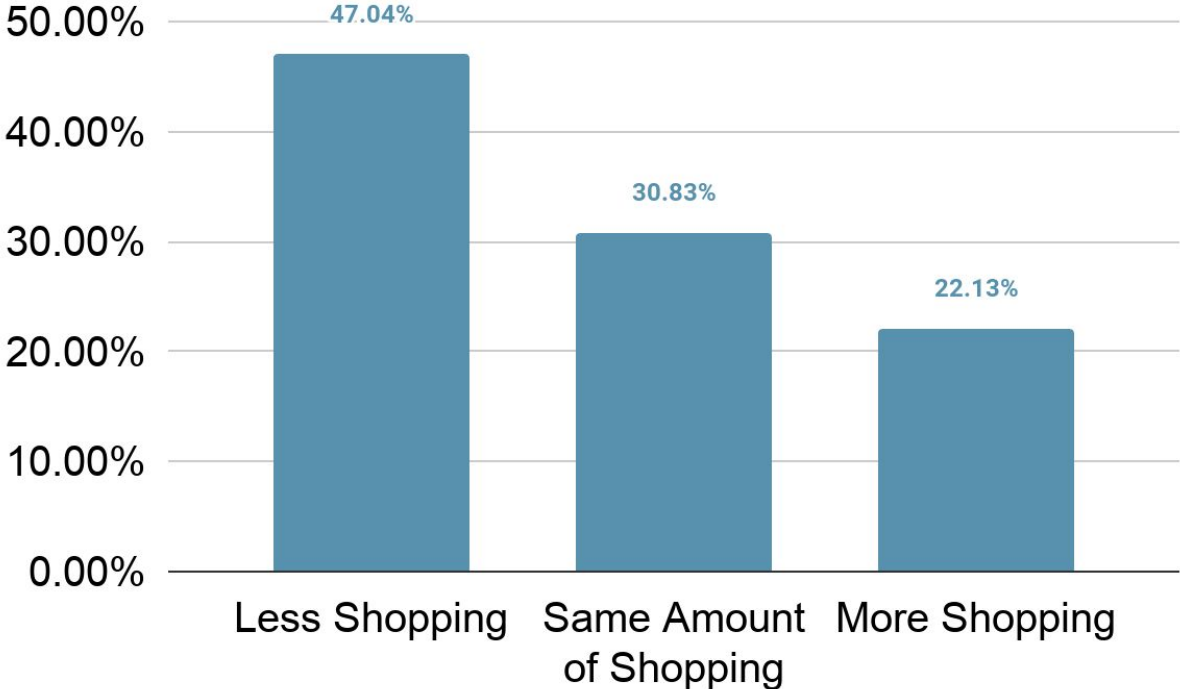
**561**

**Total Consumers  
Surveyed**

**87%**

**Consumers Surveyed  
Live in the Area**

## COVID-19 Impact on Shopping Activity



# Consumer Survey Highlights

---

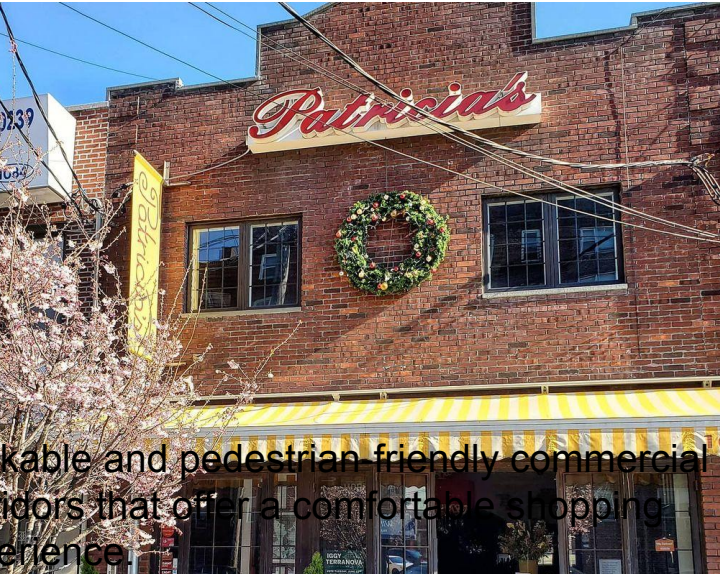
“This neighborhood makes me feel at home”

“I like how safe it is & how everyone respects each other”

“Small businesses make it more personal”

“The people make this neighborhood unique”





## Strengths ▼

1

Resilient small businesses with long-standing roots in the community, driven by the close-knit and engaged residential population that supports the local economy of the neighborhood

2

Diverse ethnic community with growing numbers of culturally relevant businesses and professional services

3

Walkable and pedestrian-friendly commercial corridors that offer a comfortable shopping experience.



## Challenges ▼

1

Limited access to public transportation makes it hard for non-local visitors to reach certain parts of the area

2

Lack of accessible, central public spaces make it challenging to have a reliable anchor location for socializing, celebrating events and building community

3

Insufficient street lighting under the elevated train on White Plains Road and lack of nightly activity along industrial corridors lead to perceptions of safety concerns







# Opportunities ▼

1

Develop shopping guides and wayfinding materials to direct more visitors from the nearby Bronx Zoo and New York Botanical Garden to the neighborhood's commercial corridors

2

Widely activate district playgrounds, parks and green spaces further for community and cultural events.

3

Develop marketing campaigns and interventions that highlight the neighborhood's unique restaurants in an accessible way, highlighting the unique features of the ethnic mix

4

Explore technological interventions, such as LinkNYC kiosks, to disseminate community updates and relevant information in an accessible way, while providing free Wi-Fi



Thank you!



**Selam Yemeru**

**[pm.morrisparkbid@gmail.com](mailto:pm.morrisparkbid@gmail.com)**

**[646-799-1980]**

**Community feedback welcome!**

# Future Developments in the District

## East Bronx E-Scooter Pilot Zone



## Bronx Metro North Expansion

