



# Commercial Corridor Challenge 1.0

## Program Results

Commercial  
Corridor  
Challenge

# What is the Commercial Corridor Challenge?

A partnership of **LISC NYC**, **Citi Community Development** and the **NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS)** to supplement SBS's Neighborhood 360 program which strengthens and revitalizes the streets, small businesses, and community-based organizations that anchor New York City neighborhoods.

Launched in March 2017, the Corridor Challenge helped existing small businesses in rapidly changing neighborhoods remain competitive. The program tapped into the strengths of local partners and was deeply rooted in a neighborhood-based approach.



careers  
businesses  
neighborhoods



## Community Partners

- SBS Neighborhood 360 Grantees
- High-capacity organizations
- Working in historically underinvested communities receiving or likely to receive targeted investment and undergoing rapid change





# Corridor Challenge Sites

Fulton Street (East New York, Brooklyn)

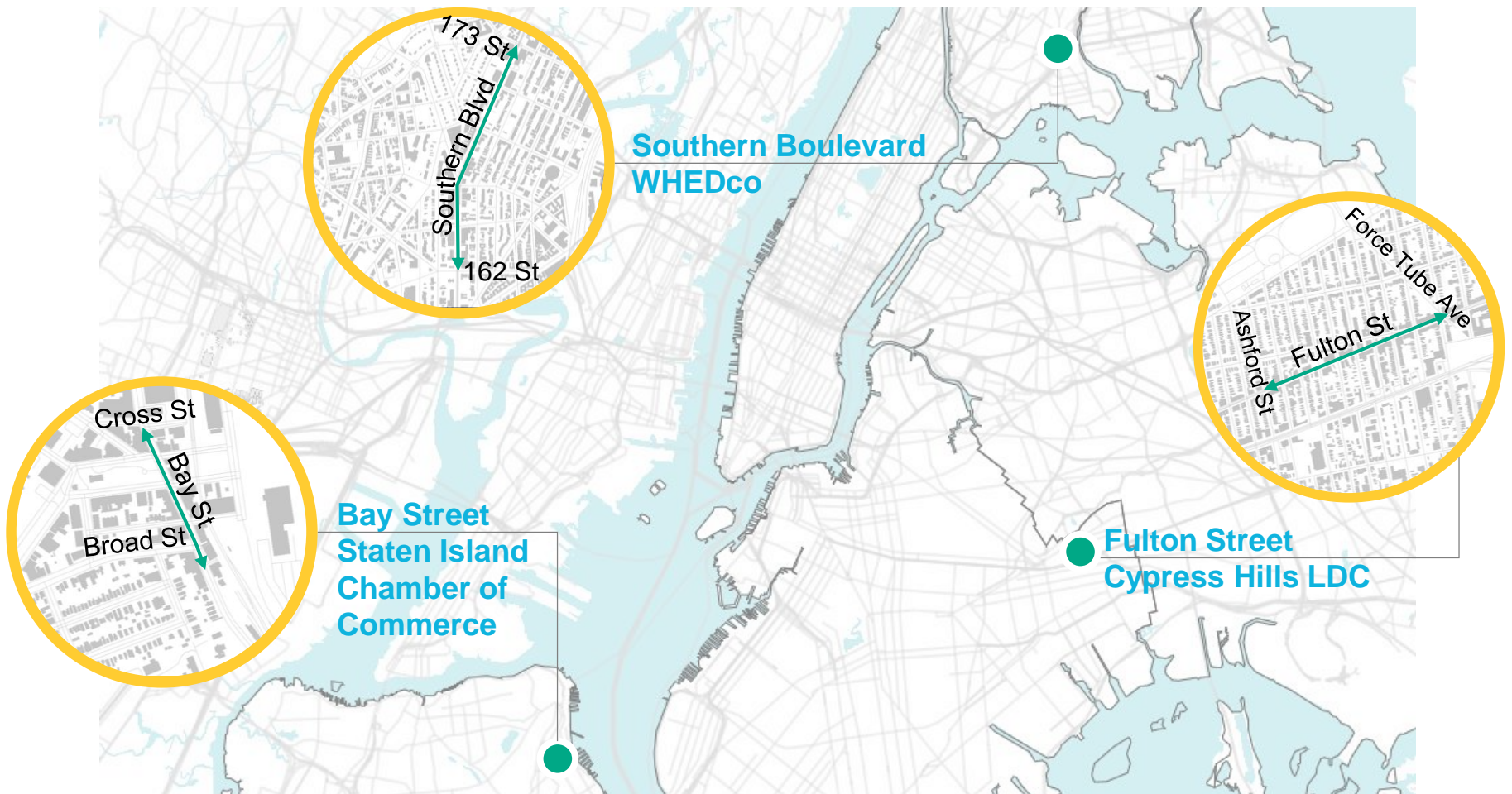
Southern Blvd (Crotona Park East, The Bronx)

Bay Street (Stapleton, Staten Island)

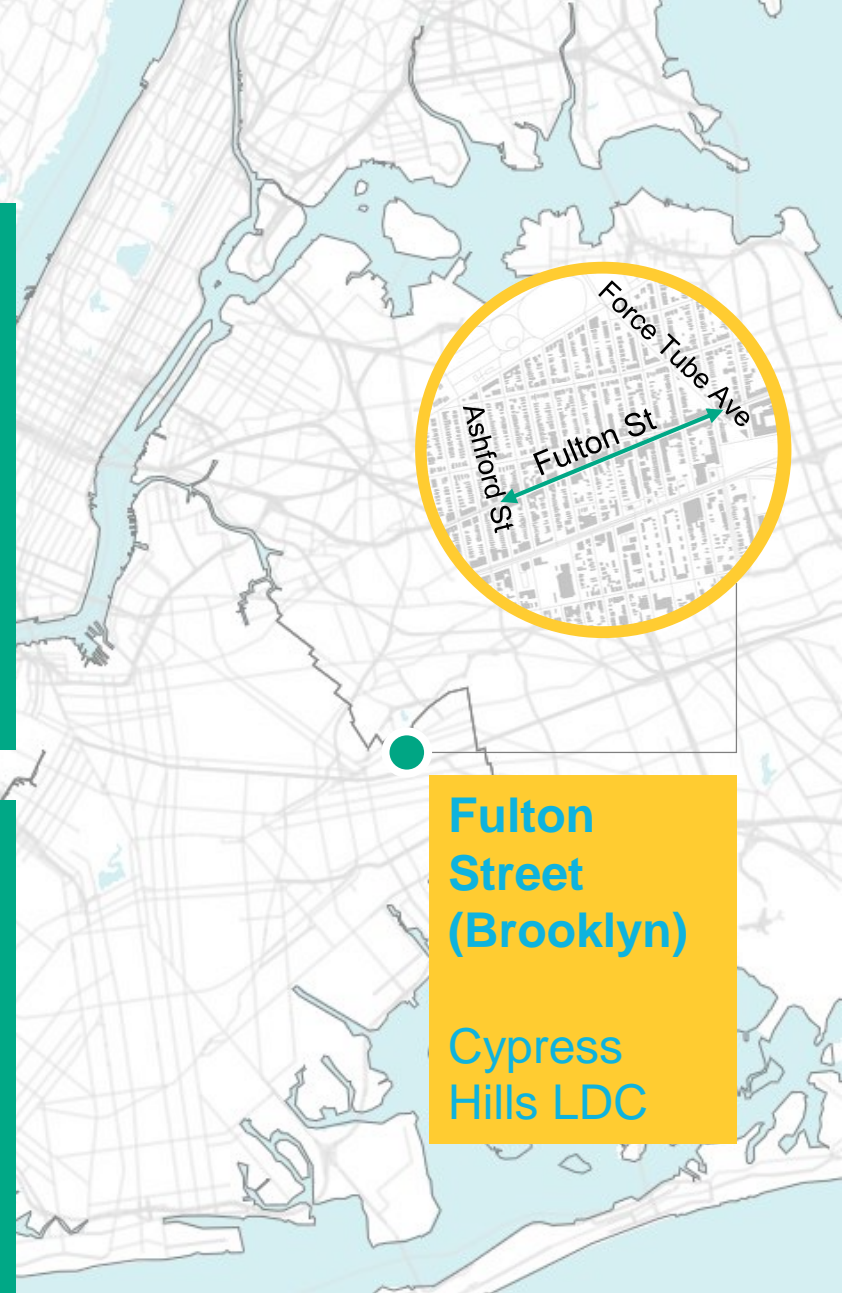
LISC  
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Corridor  
Challenge

# Target neighborhoods and local partners



# Existing Conditions



# Fulton Street (Brooklyn)

## Assets

- Pedestrian-friendly and walkable environment
- Merchant association in formation
- Local partner CHLDC has business relationships along the corridor
- Corridor has a high density of stores and is bustling with activity
- New stores are opening

## Challenges

- Elevated train creates dark and loud environment
- Presence of crime hot spots
- Insufficient lighting
- Lack of storefront transparency in many businesses
- Poor sanitation and littering
- Crackdown by City on enforcement of sign & awning regulations

# Fulton Street (Brooklyn)

## Interventions

- **Community workshop for merchants** on CPTED principles (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design)
  - Taught businesses how to deter crime and improve perceptions of safety through smart physical design
- **Storefront improvements**
  - Signage
  - Awnings
  - New clear window
  - Reorganization of interior to further visibility from the street
- **Soap and water strategies**
  - Power washing



## Storefront Improvements

J&F Mini Market (2980 Fulton Street) received a **new awning and signage** to increase visibility. In addition, **new storefront windows** were installed to increase transparency and the perception of safety.



Before

“ The same day we finished the installation of the windows, I immediately saw an increase in foot traffic coming to the store. I was in shock to hear people asking me if the store was under new management. ”  
- Juan Diaz, owner of J&F Mini Market



After

## Storefront Improvements

Serving the community for more than 13 years, Mirian Beauty Center (3168 Fulton St) increased its visibility by installing a **new sign and awning**.



Before



After

## Storefront Improvements

Martin Barbershop (3154 Fulton St), located near the Norwood Avenue subway station, installed a new sign and awning.



Before



After

## Key results on Fulton Street

- Cypress Hills LDC staff **built significant economic development capacity** in:
  - Helping merchants to navigate NYC procedures for satisfying fines and obtaining awning and signage permits;
  - Making physical improvements to storefronts; and
  - Implementing best storefront design practices to improve safety perceptions
- **Catalyzed interest among merchants** to make further improvements:
  - Nine local merchants have expressed interest in replicating Corridor Challenge improvements to their stores
- **Publicity helped CHLDC further build merchant relationships:**
  - 3 local business owners attended a meeting of CHLDC's Merchants Association, Cypress Hills Business Partners, for the first time after hearing about Corridor Challenge projects in the news

# Existing Conditions

Bay Street  
(Staten  
Island)

Staten  
Island  
Chamber of  
Commerce



# Bay Street (Staten Island)

## Assets

- Pedestrian-friendly and walkable environment
- Many attractive historic buildings
- Presence of public spaces and artistic murals
- Growing residential population in search of things to do
- Presence of restaurants that are attracting people
- Access via public transit (bus and rail)
- Proximity to major new development at SI Ferry Terminal

## Challenges

- No sense of arrival at gateways
- Untapped restaurant niche
- Weak pedestrian environment
  - Street and sidewalk disrepair (litter and overgrown weeds)
  - Poorly maintained building façades
  - Poorly maintained connections to train and new customer base at nearby housing
- Nighttime safety concerns such as insufficient lighting and lack of storefront transparency

# Bay Street (Staten Island)

## Interventions

- **Soap and water strategies for streetscape improvements** along corridor & key paths to stores from transportation nodes
  - Weeding
  - Planters
  - Tree pit planting
- **Lighting to signal a sense of place**
  - GOBO light at gateway
- **Targeted storefront improvements**
  - Lighting, signage, and painting with emphasis on eating establishments

## Soap & Water Strategies

Weeding and power washing were completed along pathways to the Stapleton rail station and on Bay Street. New planters and A-frame signs were placed in front of businesses to beautify and unify the corridor.



Before



After





## Storefront Improvements

To attract customers to the new restaurant Taverna on the Bay, a new **sign**, **awning** and **exterior lighting** were installed. Legacy Textiles also re-designed a new storefront to allow for greater transparency. **Planters** were placed outside the businesses to enhance the sidewalk.



Before



After

## Storefront Improvements

Signage was installed at Vinum, a new wine bar and restaurant, and Edgewater Hall's façade was repainted to bring vibrancy to this historic building.



Before



After

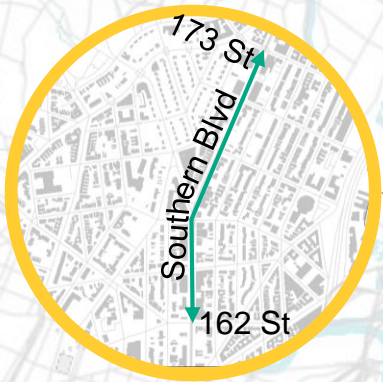
## Lighting

Installed lighting illuminate both the restaurant and sidewalk at Taverna on the Bay. A custom 'gobo' light installation now projects an image of the Downtown Staten Island logo as a gateway sign to the corridor.



## Key results on Bay Street

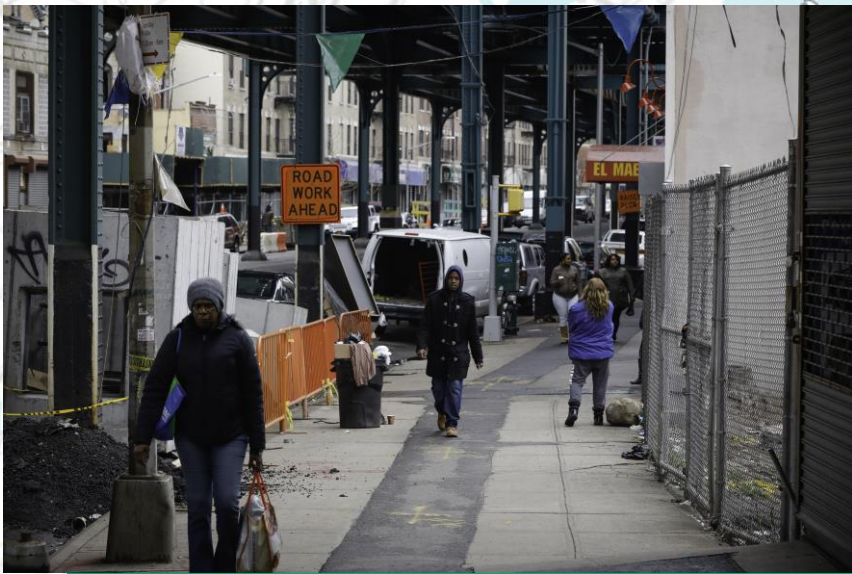
- The SI Chamber built relationships with numerous businesses, property owners, and residents with whom it had never had contact before.
- SI Chamber staff built significant capacity in:
  - Navigating NYC procedures for obtaining permits;
  - Making physical improvements to storefronts; and
  - Enhancing streetscapes through low-cost, high-impact interventions
- Corridor Challenge interventions leveraged other improvements:
  - The Chamber was able to leverage complementary interventions through Neighborhood 360, including tree pit guards and flowers and holiday lights, to concentrate multiple interventions in the target area.



## Southern Boulevard (Bronx)

WHEDco

# Existing Conditions



# Southern Boulevard (Bronx)

## Assets

- Accessible: Three elevated train stations, several buses, close to highways, walkable
- Rich history, diversity, sense of community
- Active cultural institutions attracting audiences
- New development, increasing population, \$168 million in annual unmet retail demand
- Good relationships with community members, property owners, CBOs, businesses/Southern Boulevard Merchants Association, schools

## Challenges

- Poor pedestrian environment
  - Disruptive construction
  - Inactive storefronts and graffiti on roll-down gates
- Low perception of safety
  - Insufficient lighting
  - Lack of storefront transparency
- No clear district identity
- Entrepreneurs with limited access to markets

# Southern Boulevard (Bronx)

## Interventions

- **Wayfinding/ district signage**
  - Pole banners
  - Construction fencing wrap-around banners
- **Pop-up vendor market**
- **Storefront improvements**
  - New Awning
  - Window decals
  - Interior reorganization
  - Graffiti removal
  - Façade painting

## Vendor Pop-Up Market

WHEDco hosted an expanded **vendor pop-up market** in June 2017 to satisfy retail needs in the area, give exposure to local businesses, and test a model for activating unused spaces.



38 applications were received from interested vendors, and 8 were selected to participate. Seven of the participating entrepreneurs said they would definitely want to be invited back.



## Wayfinding

To mitigate access and visibility issues caused by construction on Southern Boulevard, **new pole banners** and **tree guard wraps** designed by a local group, YUCA Arts, were installed. Materials were designed through a participatory process to reflect community culture.



Before

After



## Storefront Improvements

To allow for the roll down gate to be Storefronts on Southern Boulevard were vandalized with graffiti and required cleaning. Many businesses took on **power washing efforts** and worked closely with local artists to **cover roll down gates with beautiful murals**.

Before



After



## Storefront Improvements

At Southern Boulevard Electric, **window decals** were installed to conceal inventory storage to allow the business to **lift its roll down gate** and advertise services during business hours. Decals were designed to be transparent enough to allow interior light to also illuminate the sidewalk.



Before



After

## Storefront Improvements

To create a welcoming and active window for WHEDco's ground floor office space, a **window decal** was installed with the WHEDco logo and the **interior** was re-organized to be more outward-facing.



Before

After

## Key results on Southern Boulevard

- Through the Corridor Challenge, **WHEDco built trust with merchants** it had not worked extensively with before.
  - Making some interventions, such as façade painting, free of cost to participating businesses helped to build this trust.
- After cultivating new and deeper relationships with the participating merchants, **WHEDco is seeing a larger number of merchants approaching them for additional technical assistance.**
- The program has also **sparked interest in additional improvements** from other merchants in the future.
  - For example, the owner of Luke's Pizza has expressed an interest in enhancing his awning and installing a second mural inside his restaurant to match the exterior work.



# Program Outcomes and Successes

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## Building technical capacity and community relationships

“

A local resident expressed great appreciation for the work we're doing [on Bay St] and has offered assistance in future efforts. He's volunteering at Downtown Staten Island Weekend Walk!

”

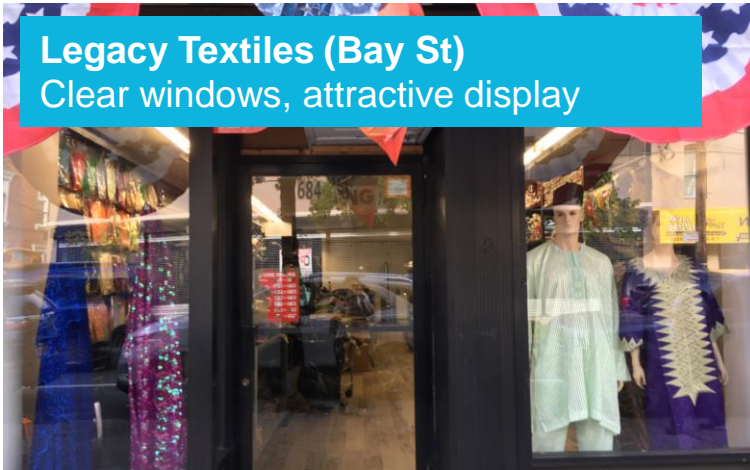


Several business and property owners on Bay Street are now assisting with merchant organizing and BID exploration efforts.



CBOs and business owners have gained considerable understanding on how to navigate City processes and implement improvements.

## Catalyzing Investments

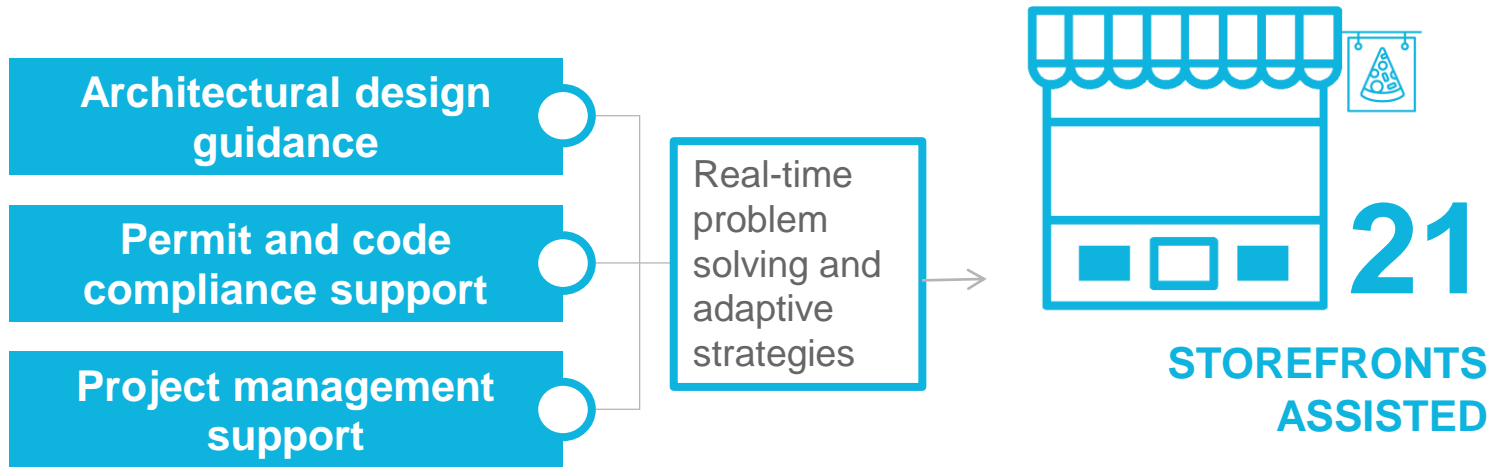


Other businesses are replicating CCC storefront improvements and investing private dollars to beautify and enhance the corridors.



# Attaining Early Wins

## FLEXIBLE RESOURCES



Project period: 24 months

## Attaining Early Wins

Media and press coverage led by PR consultants and program storytelling helped build credibility of participating partners and celebrated program successes



### THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

U.S. Edition | September 28, 2018 | Today's Paper | Video

U.S. | NEW YORK

#### New York Helps Give Some of Its Iconic Bodegas a Makeover

A new pilot program is helping stores adjust to rapidly evolving neighborhoods by subsidizing new exteriors

FOX NEWS NY (Aug 13, 2018)

NY1 (Aug 13, 2018)



## Fulton Street, Brooklyn

Improved perceptions of corridor and encouraged frequency of visits

67%

of survey respondents said their shopping corridor somewhat or greatly improved

64%

of survey respondents said the improvement they saw encouraged them to visit more often



9

**BUSINESSES HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST TO IMPROVE STOREFRONTS WITH SELF-INVESTMENT**

## Bay Street, Staten Island

Improved perceptions of attractiveness and safety



43%

of respondents on Bay Street reported feeling **very safe at night** (compared with 18% pre-intervention).  
Ratings also improved for daytime safety.

80%

of survey respondents on Bay Street said streetscape was **somewhat or very attractive** (compared with 59% pre-intervention)

Intercept surveys conducted on Bay Street, before and after improvements were made, garnered a total of 220 responses. Surveys were conducted in English and Spanish.

## Southern Boulevard, The Bronx

Bolstered foot traffic & resident perception and additional resources leveraged

**21%** increase in foot traffic from before the completion of interventions\*

**73%** of survey respondents said their shopping corridor somewhat or greatly improved

Responses also showed a significant increase in perceived safety day & night, along with a greater likelihood to recommend shopping in the area.



WHEDco (Bronx) is receiving further funding from **Council Member Salamanca** to increase sanitation efforts on Southern Boulevard.



WHEDco also received additional funding from the **Department of Design and Construction and contractors** to expand graffiti removal efforts, neighborhood cleanup, and to paint over more roll down gates.

\*Pedestrian count data collected with motion sensors provided by Motionloft. Sensor was installed on the corner of 1302 Southern Boulevard before and after improvements were made.

\*\*Intercept surveys conducted on Southern Boulevard, before and after improvements were made, garnered a total of 243 responses. Surveys were conducted in English and Spanish.

# Table of Interventions

	Type of Intervention	Business/ Location Impacted
<b>Fulton Street (Brooklyn)</b> CBO: Cypress Hills LDC	<b>Storefront Improvements</b> (Signage, awning, window/ glass work, interior organization)	Mirian Beauty Center (3168 Fulton St.) Martin Barbershop (3154 Fulton St.) Genesis Jewelry (2940 Fulton St.) Cleveland Fresh & Organic (2959 Fulton St.) J&F Mini Market (2980 Fulton St.)
	<b>Power Washing</b>	At main intersections of Cleveland Norwood subway station
	<b>CPTED Training</b> with LISC Safety staff member	12 local merchants attended, as well as program staff from CHLDC and WHEDco
<b>Bay Street (Staten Island)</b> CBO: S.I. Chamber of Commerce	<b>Storefront Improvements</b> (Painting, signage, awning, and lighting)	Edgewater Hall & Chez Vous Catering (691 & 695 Bay St.) 631 Bay St. Legacy Africana Market (671 and 684 Bay St.) Oznico (103 Water St.) Taverna on the Bay (661-663 Bay St.) Vinum Wine Bar (704 Bay St.)
	<b>Streetscape Improvements</b> (Power washing, weeding, painting, planters, mulching, signage, gobo light)	Concentrated between 661 and 704 Bay Street. (from Thompson to Dock St) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weeding on Water and Canal Street (between Front and Bay St)</li> <li>- 17 planters</li> <li>- 10 A-frame signs</li> <li>- 1 gobo light projection on façade of 691 Bay St</li> </ul>
<b>Southern Boulevard (Bronx)</b> CBO: WHEDco	<b>Storefront Improvements</b> (Graffiti removal, painting, window decal, interior organization)	Crosstown Furniture/El Maestro Boxing Gym (1300-1302 Southern Blvd.) Neiser Mattress (1304-1306 Southern Blvd.) Southern Electric (1345 Southern Blvd.) Luke's Pizza (1228 Southern Blvd.) Metro PCS (1250 Southern Blvd) Le Point Value (1289 Louis Nine Blvd.) Lin & Chen's (1287 Louis Nine Blvd.) WHEDco Office (1301 Louis Nine Blvd.)
	<b>Wayfinding</b> (pole banners, tree wrap-around banner and painting)	WHEDco contracted with a local graphic designer to design wayfinding materials for Southern Boulevard.
	<b>Pop-up market</b>	Pop-up market as part of large street fair outside of 1301 Louis Nine Blvd