



Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation

**SOUTHERN BOULEVARD  
SAFETY & COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE  
1/1/2008 – 12/31/2008  
Interim Report  
BLUE MOON FUND**





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## ABOUT WHEDCo

The Women’s Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDCo) works with families in The Bronx who struggle with the multiple challenges presented by urban poverty and who, like all of us, aspire to a healthy and financially stable future. Unemployment, lack of education and minimal English speaking skills create insurmountable barriers for families’ trying to secure basic necessities. Combined with increased health risks from poor nutrition and a lack of recreational activity, the road to economic stability for the typical South Bronx family often feels like a slippery slope. Yet WHEDCo believes that given the right support at the right moment, all families can flourish.

WHEDCo replicates the attributes found in prosperous communities—environmentally sustainable, healthy homes; highly skilled professional childcare and youth development; physicians, learning experts and therapists; opportunities to develop small businesses—and offers them to low-income families. Through our innovative, inter-connected and high-quality solutions, WHEDCo is making the Bronx a more beautiful, equitable, and economically vibrant place to live and raise a family. We deliver high-quality results to over 8,000 individuals annually. We recently completed a second South Bronx housing development, Intervale Green, for 128 formerly homeless and low-income families. This project meets the high aesthetic standard set by our award-winning flagship Urban Horizons building, and utilizes the latest in environmentally-friendly, energy-conserving technologies.

## PROJECT AND GOALS

With the BLUE MOON FUND’s support, WHEDCo is applying its experience to community safety and commercial revitalization on Southern Boulevard in the Crotona East/Morrisania community, where Intervale Green, our most recent ‘green’ development, is located.

### WHEDCo’s Year One Goals

- Hold kick-off meeting with Children’s Aid Society, Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter, Community Board 3, and at least one other community-based organization active in Crotona East.
- Participate in or conduct three resident focus groups, combining low- and moderate-income residents from the area.
- Scan and develop a database of local parent-teacher associations, block associations, merchant associations and other formal and informal neighborhood groups.
- Develop a comprehensive business census database, along with identification of vacant storefronts and lots.
- Launch quarterly planning sessions between CBO staff and officers at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Precinct.
- Draft a community safety plan, including implementation steps and fundraising plan.

From our Year 1 collaboration, we projected that new initiatives would be developed for implementation in Year 2 for example, the creation of community organizing programming with teens/youth in the existing programs of our community safety partner, Children’s Aid Society. (please see draft community safety plan for more). This interim report provides an account of the progress, challenges, and outcomes of the objectives outlined in our proposal.

**SOUTHERN BOULEVARD SAFETY/COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE**  
**Year One: 1/1/2008 – 1/1/2009**

During this first phase of planning, WHEDCo has focused its approach on building relationships with key community stakeholders, demographic analysis, land use surveying and commercial/business surveying to help define and advance the neighborhood safety and revitalization agenda. WHEDCo hired a new Community Development Project Manager who has been performing activities to assess, plan and improve safety and commercial activity in the Southern Boulevard project area, between East 174<sup>th</sup> Street and Simpson Street. This commercial strip runs below the elevated train and encompasses three station stops.

Our goals in Crotona East/Morrisania remain the same in Year Two. The need for comprehensive planning around safety and commercial revitalization continues to exist, especially given the impact of the faltering economy on struggling urban neighborhoods.

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**I. Building A Neighborhood Anchor: Intervale Green & Louis Nine House**

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In February 2009, WHEDCo will open the doors of Intervale Green and Louis Nine House (formerly Urban Horizons II & Foyer), the largest Energy Star certified housing development in the country, giving new life to the formerly vacant urban renewal site. The new development is located approximately two miles east of WHEDCo's flagship building, Urban Horizons, and includes over 6,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial space, 174 low-income apartments, over a half acre of vegetation, landscaped courtyards, green roofs, small parks, and myriad green building features. Apartment sizes range from one- to three-bedrooms for families in Intervale Green, to studios for youth aging out of foster care in Louis Nine House.



2005: Vacant Urban Renewal Site on Louis Nine Blvd. nr Southern Blvd.



2008: Intervale Green Development on the Urban Renewal Site

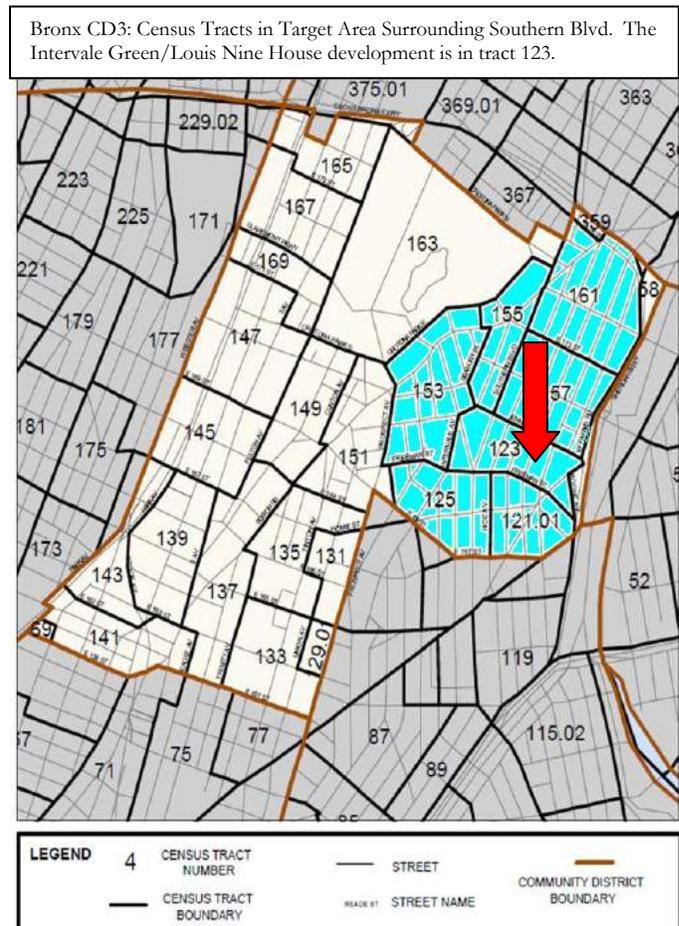
Intervale Green and Louis Nine House bring beautiful, healthy and affordable homes to low-income residents in the community: monthly rents range from \$782 to \$1,089. Working to bridge the digital divide, each apartment in Intervale Green will be equipped with a computer and high-speed Internet

access. A computer resource room in Louis Nine House will help 46 young people gain valuable computer skills, a key element in their transition from foster care to self-sufficiency. All residents will have access to social services provided by WHEDCo and/or by our development partner the Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter. Intervale Green is an integral step in transforming the Crotona East neighborhood near our target Southern Boulevard commercial corridor

## II. Understanding the Neighborhood's Needs

Recognizing the importance of the neighborhood's makeup in identifying community safety and revitalization needs, we analyzed U.S. Census data and EASI demographic projections for the census tracts<sup>1</sup> surrounding the Southern Boulevard target area and in the entire Community District<sup>2</sup>.

1. The population around the target area rose by more than 35% and is expected to grow by an additional 16% through 2008. New housing developments like Intervale Green will add thousands more to the area's estimated 25,327 residents.
2. Hispanics dominate the target area's population (63%). The vast majority (75%) are bilingual English/Spanish speakers.
3. Almost four out of 10 residents live below the poverty line, and 60% in Community District 3 receive income support.
4. In contrast, 63% of *homeowners* in Charlotte Gardens and Salters Square in census tract 153 earn *more than* \$35,000 per year, which points to wealth disparities in the target area.
5. Area residents are not well-prepared to compete in the workforce. Five out of 10 adults do not have a high school diploma, and with an unemployment rate that is twice that of NYC's, joblessness is a serious problem.
6. The felony rate (per 1,000 residents) is high, 42% compared to 29% for the entire Bronx.
7. The target area is very youthful: about four of every 10 residents are under 19 years old. Conversely, the neighborhood struggles to attract and retain adults over 35 years old.



<sup>1</sup> The seven census tracts surveyed (shaded in blue on the map) are: 121.01, 123, 125, 153, 155, 157, and 161.

<sup>2</sup> Intervale Green and the target Southern Boulevard commercial area are located in Bronx Community District 3.

These findings have informed WHEDCo's community outreach and program decisions, including our launch of [www.MovingDay.org](http://www.MovingDay.org), an interactive website that enables individual donors to buy furniture for Intervale Green's new low-income and formerly homeless residents. Over \$15,000 has been donated since November 2008.

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### III. Collaborating with the Community

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With the BLUE MOON FUND's support, WHEDCo has deepened its understanding and assessment of diverse issues impacting community safety and revitalization through a combination of meetings, focus groups, surveys and events. (See attached lists of contacts and local associations identified).

#### **Community Safety**

Late 2007, even before the project's official start, WHEDCo began to forge key community partnerships through a kick-off meeting with community-based organizations, including Children's Aid Society (CAS), Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter (NCS) and the BLUE MOON FUND, represented by the Vice President for Urban Programs, Ms. Mary Rowe. A walking tour of Southern Boulevard, a review of the area's history, and a discussion of lingering crime and blight hinted at the area's challenges: prostitution, carjacking, and theft on a retail strip dotted with vacant lots and empty storefronts.

In Summer 2008, we joined the NYC Police Department's 42<sup>nd</sup> Precinct at its National Night Out community event in Crotona Park where we forged invaluable relationships with Crime Prevention officers who patrol the Southern Boulevard neighborhood. We held our first crime assessment and planning session with the NYPD's 42<sup>nd</sup> Precinct in August 2008. It revealed that the Freeman Street train station, just a half block from our new Intervale Green development, is the 'hot spot' for crime on Southern Boulevard, and that there is a major need in the community for youth programs. We participated in a subsequent session with the NYPD's Community Council in October 2008, forging key contacts with the Bronx District Attorney's Office, a local Assembly Member's office and area residents while broadening our knowledge of crime trends in the area.

NYPD's National Night Out community event in Crotona Park, 2008



In Fall 2008, we led a more in-depth small focus group with five members of CAS's management team to discuss how community safety and commercial revitalization issues impact the families in the area and their own employees. CAS has several storefronts on the Southern Boulevard corridor between East 172<sup>nd</sup> Street and Freeman Street. WHEDCo learned that prostitution continues to occur after dark, especially with an increasing number of younger girls and males who pretend to wait for the bus while their 'handlers' hover nearby. CAS staff expressed concern about the impact of these activities on the youth and families they serve, on staff, and on the surrounding neighborhood. Drug activity is suspected in an abandoned building near Jennings Street, one block away. The NYPD has been made aware of these activities and WHEDCo is incorporating these concerns into our draft community safety plan.

Youth under 25 comprise almost 40% of the survey area's population. Recently, a 17-year old youth in CAS's program was stabbed and killed in a fight two blocks from Southern Boulevard. In January, we attended a focus group with young people from the Morrisania community, led by NYC Councilmember Helen D. Foster, to gain knowledge of their experiences with the police and crime.

We are also in the nascent stages of collaboration with the NYPD on incorporating safety features into Intervale Green's design, for example, adding mirrors that enable tenants to see around corners.

### **Commercial Revitalization**

To identify the area's retail needs and opportunities for development, WHEDCo has conducted numerous surveys and meetings with brokers, area merchants, businesses, executives of national chains, small business assistance organizations, local and city-wide economic development corporations, chambers of commerce, local elected officials and government throughout our first year of activities. Besides informing plans for the development of the Southern Boulevard commercial corridor, this outreach has greatly influenced WHEDCo's identification of prospective lessees for our four commercial spaces at Intervale Green. They include: a childcare center, a retail shoe/clothing store, a gourmet deli serving hot and cold foods, and office space to expand WHEDCo's microenterprise training program to the community.

In Summer 2008, we led approximately 20 young residents in a tour of Intervale Green as well as a presentation/focus group discussion of environmental issues impacting the South Bronx, from dirty, cracked sidewalks to carbon-emitting buildings. The youth made innovative suggestions about 'greening' the Southern Boulevard commercial corridor to make it more healthy and more enjoyable for pedestrians, including working with merchants to reduce the use of plastic bags and planting more street trees. WHEDCo plans to involve them in maintaining the green roofs of Intervale Green and in other community greening activities.

In early 2009, we led another focus group with 15 high school students from the Morrisania area about employment in their community. There is a high number of 'mom and pop' entities in the Southern Boulevard target area: they hire less than four people each. Given students' lack of formal training, unfamiliarity with appropriate job search techniques, unwillingness to commute beyond their neighborhoods, and inflexible schedules, they would have difficulty gaining employment in the community. WHEDCo is incorporating this into its revitalization and safety approaches.

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## **IV. Surveying the Built Environment**

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Despite the area's population growth since 1990, a physical survey reveals that the neighborhood's infrastructure has not kept pace. WHEDCo leveraged volunteer help from the Deutsche Bank Americas Foundation to complete a block-by-block land use survey. Although it is the geographic center of the neighborhood, the Southern Boulevard corridor between East 174<sup>th</sup> Street and Simpson Street does not reflect the vibrant *commercial* center the community needs.

Although retail activity is strongest around the three MTA train stations at East 174<sup>th</sup> Street, Freeman Street, and Simpson Street, the entire corridor has struggling pockets of commercial activity, awkwardly juxtaposed with other uses. Fifty-six percent (56%) of the activity on Southern Boulevard is commercial in nature, but vacant lots (15%), parking (12%) and institutional and industrial uses (a combined 12%) inhibit retail continuity.

Abandoned low-rise building with graffiti and unsightly elevated tracks. Southern Blvd. between Jennings St. and E. 172nd St., Aug. 2008



Poor streetscape, weedy sidewalks, vacant lot, and imposing train tracks. Southern Blvd. between Jennings St. and E. 172nd St., Aug. 2008



Of the 172 unique storefront and/or building uses surveyed, the southern half of the corridor between Simpson Street and Freeman Street has more existing spaces dedicated to commercial and mixed use (67%). North of Freeman Street, the percentage of commercial and mixed use structures plummets to 40%, while institutional use and vacant land double.

There are 19 vacant lots along Southern Boulevard’s short one-mile stretch. While these lots have a blighting influence on the neighborhood, they also present an opportunity for thoughtful redevelopment that defines and solidifies the corridor’s identity as an active main street that meets residents’ housing and retail needs. There are five groups of contiguous lots along Southern Boulevard that may be conducive to land assembly and acquisition. This could attract both mixed-use housing developers and new businesses to the community.

Land Use on Southern Boulevard: E. 174th Street to Simpson St./Westchester Ave.	Percentage (%)
Commercial Only	37%
Residential Only	2%
Institution Only	7%
Mixed Use	19%
Open Space	1%
Transportation/Utility	2%
Parking	12%
Industrial/Manufacturing	5%
Uses Unknown/Vacant/Under Construction	15%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

Lack of Continuity: Commercial Uses next to incongruous Industrial Use. Note the barbed wire, security gate, graffiti and lone pedestrian. Southern Blvd. between E. 167th St. and Home St., Aug. 2008



To identify opportunities for site development, we conducted research on the ownership of each vacant lot. We found that four entities own four of the contiguous vacant lots on Southern Boulevard, as shown on the Vacant Lots Inventory table further below and on the attached Map.

There is significant development potential near Intervale Green. Two vacant triangular lots (Lots #50 & #53) that front on Southern Boulevard but also face our building on Louis Nine Boulevard were sold in July 2008. The owner of Lot #4 on Southern Boulevard near Freeman Street appears to be an absentee landowner who lives in Japan. There is an existing building (a church) on Lot #35 adjacent to Intervale Green, but it is shown on the map and table as “vacant” because it has been permitted for demolition. One block away near Home Street, NYC’s Department of Housing Preservation and Development still owns two of the corridor’s vacant lots (Lot #39, Lot #1).

**SOUTHERN BOULEVARD INITIATIVE: VACANT LOTS IN TARGET AREA (SIMPSON STREET TO E. 174TH STREET)**

Sno	Upper Cross Street	Address	Block	Lot	Area (sq ft)	Owner
1	E 172	1480 SOUTHERN BOULEVARD	2981	5	7492	PLAZA DEL CASTILLO DEVELOPMENT CORP. 1515 SOUTHERN BLVD STE 2B (718)-589-1600
2	Freeman	1207 SOUTHERN BOULEVARD	2975	39	5319	HOUSING PRESERVATION & DEVELOPMENT, 151 East Tremont Avenue, (718) 716-0210
3	Freeman	1218-1220 SOUTHERN BOULEVARD	2979	7	2872	CORONA, LUIS, 360 ELM DRIVE, ROSLYN, NY, 11576
4	Freeman	1222 SOUTHERN BOULEVARD	2979	8	3150	CORONA, LUIS, 360 ELM DRIVE, ROSLYN, NY, 11576
5	Freeman	1224 SOUTHERN BOULEVARD	2979	10	3150	CORONA, LUIS, 360 ELM DRIVE, ROSLYN, NY, 11576
6	Jennings	1283 LOUIS NINE BOULEVARD	2976	41	2614	Owner: MR SUNG CHI DOH/YOUNG H. DOH, 6133 185th St., Flushing, NY 11365-2118, 718-445-2518. Also: Standard Development Corp.? 75-09 PARSONS BLVD, FLUSHING, NY 11366
7	Jennings	1288 SOUTHERN BOULEVARD	2980	4	4860	JOSEPH DJEMAL
8	Jennings	1289 LOUIS NINE BOULEVARD	2976	35	12400	Permitted for DEMOLITION. Possible VACANT LOT SOON. Owner: JARCHRIECH REALTY INC., Jackeline Akiva, Sole Officer, 415 Lafayette St., NY, NY, 614-475-3331
9	Jennings	1320 LOUIS NINE BOULEVARD/ 1301 1311 Southern Boulevard	2976	50	4171	5PG LLC, 1 Linden Pl., #302, Great Neck, NY 11021-2640
10	Jennings	1326 LOUIS NINE BOULEVARD	2976	53	2398	5PG LLC, 1 Linden Pl., #302, Great Neck, NY 11021-2640
11	E 172	1462 SOUTHERN BOULEVARD	2981	2	2075	COJAM REALTY INC., 544 47TH RD (P.O.BOX 8485), LONG ISLAND CITY, NY, (718)-752-0660
12	E 172	1464 SOUTHERN BOULEVARD	2981	3	1875	ELYAS GROUP INC., 16 FLORENCE STREET, GREAT NECK, NY, 11023, (516) 466-1121, SOHAIL ELYASZADEH
13	E 172	1476 SOUTHERN BOULEVARD	2981	6	1883	PLAZA DEL CASTILLO DEVELOPMENT CORP. 1515 SOUTHERN BLVD STE 2B (718)-589-1600
14	E 172	1478 SOUTHERN BOULEVARD	2981	8	1884	PLAZA DEL CASTILLO DEVELOPMENT CORP. 1515 SOUTHERN BLVD STE 2B (718)-589-1600
15	E 172	1482 SOUTHERN BOULEVARD	2981	9	5000	PLAZA DEL CASTILLO DEVELOPMENT CORP. 1515 SOUTHERN BLVD STE 2B (718)-589-1600
16	E 172	1503 SOUTHERN BOULEVARD	2977	109	3750	Southern Blvd. Limited Ptr, 100 KING WEST, GARDEN CITY, NY, 11530 or 100 RING ROAD WEST
17	E 172	1505 SOUTHERN BOULEVARD	2977	108	3750	Southern Blvd. Limited Ptr, 100 KING WEST, GARDEN CITY, NY, 11530 or 100 RING ROAD WEST
18	E 174	1698 BOSTON ROAD	2978	191	4256	Vacant Lot: Friedland- Comm1 Real Estate: 718-231-5700. stevenlorenzo@friedlandrealty.com
19	Freeman	959 HOME STREET	2979	1	3111	HOUSING PRESERVATION & DEVELOPMENT, 151 East Tremont Avenue, (718) 716-0210 TRIK REALTY CORP: Corner of Southern Blvd. and Home St., LOUIS SCHACHTER
20	Home	944 HOME STREET	2728	22	2693	331 MADISON AVE., ROOM 501, NEW YORK, NY, 10017

WHEDCo has already contacted the owners around Intervale Green to find out what their plans are for the sites, and to engage them in our community revitalization plans. Our next steps include contacting the owners of the remaining vacant lots on the Southern Boulevard corridor.

WHEDCo conducted a Community Fitness Survey with residents in Morrisania/Crotona East and two other communities, which showed the lack of recreational spaces, the poor condition of sidewalks, and the high number of vacant lots that cause a sense of danger and dissuade walking. We are incorporating these findings into plans to address health and fitness issues, including working with city, developer and community actors to improve the area’s physical landscape and participating in a Food Retail Action Team to bring supermarkets and fresh, healthy foods to residents.

## V. Connecting with Merchants

Our research found that there is a need for clothing and food options within close proximity, and that the stores on and near the Southern Boulevard corridor could meet that need.

### Commercial Spaces at Intervale Green

To help promote economic development in the Southern Boulevard neighborhood, Intervale Green will add four (4) new ‘green’ ground floor commercial spaces to the area’s inventory. We surveyed numerous local brokers, economic development corporations, small business assistance groups, and retailers to ascertain rent levels in the area and to determine appropriate pricing and uses for Intervale Green’s storefronts. Pricing estimates varied widely for finished and raw spaces and we set our initial price at a reasonable \$25.00/square foot/year. Our surveying and marketing efforts were

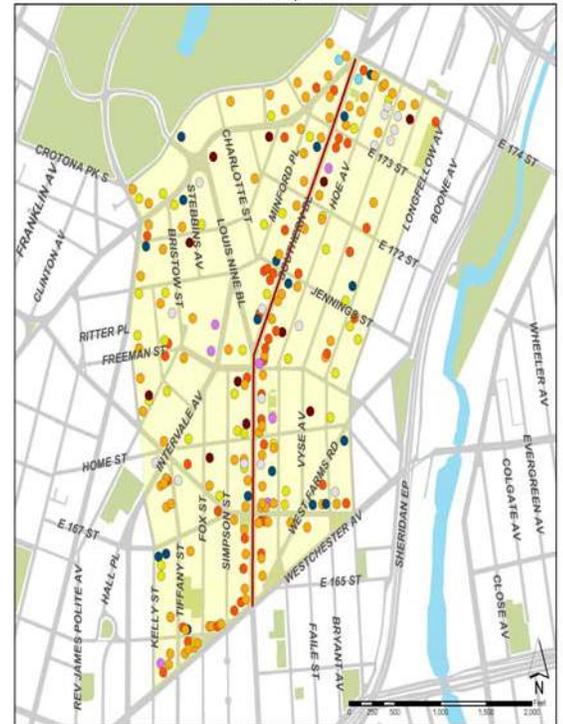
successful: we have identified four prospective lessees to bring new vibrancy to the community by meeting area residents' and workers' childcare, food, retail and job training needs.

### **GIS Analysis of Business Activity (Four-block Buffer around Southern Boulevard)**

WHEDCo worked with the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (BOEDC) to acquire GIS data on all economic activity within four blocks of our Southern Boulevard target area (see GIS map on this page). We found 431 entities from diverse sectors, but which mostly fall into two vague categories: Miscellaneous Services and Miscellaneous Retail (see attached table). A closer look at the data reveals something significant: the top 15 categories of businesses account for almost 50% (207) of area activity. This suggests that there is much duplication of services offered.

Unexpectedly, Religious Organizations top the list (10%) with Grocer-related businesses (6%) and Restaurants (5%) lagging behind. Clothing is not on the list, which suggests that retail options are indeed insufficient. Given the proximity to Hunts Point, home to one of the world's largest food distribution centers, it is surprising that there are few food-related activities. This is a missed opportunity in a sector that can bring pedestrian traffic, vibrancy, and a sense of safety. From our GIS research, we generated a Business Census Database (attached) with valuable contact information for all merchants in the four-block radius around Southern Boulevard.

**Southern Blvd Businesses  
Bronx, NY**



Business Type (# of Establishments)	
● Construction-Contractors (19)	● Misc Retail (94)
● Government (3)	● Misc Services (227)
● Manufacturers (15)	● Nonclassified Establishments (24)
● Membership Organizations (46)	● Wholesale Trade (27)

— Southern Blvd (btw E 174th St & Westchester Ave)  
 □ 4 Block Buffer

Source: Reference USA DE  
 Ben Maroul 8/19/08

### **Field Survey of Business Activity (Southern Boulevard)**

We performed a field survey of businesses on Southern Boulevard between East 174<sup>th</sup> Street and Simpson Street. We identified 141 unique businesses/storefronts, only 80% of which were occupied. There are 28 empty storefronts on the one mile strip. Retail stores, mostly small *bodega* and discount stores, comprise 25% of the activity on the corridor. Services account for 30% and include a breadth of activities, from Check-Cashing to Auto Supply and Non-Profits. Six percent (6%) are restaurants that reflect ethnic markets from Chinese to Latino.

Our block-by-block survey also showed a predominance of institutions, such as the Institute for Applied Human Dynamics near East 174<sup>th</sup> Street, the NYS Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disability at East 172<sup>nd</sup> Street, and Children's Aid Society offices along the top half of the corridor above Freeman Street.

We generated a Commercial Space Inventory and a Vacant Lots Inventory (both attached) to inform our community planning efforts and to advise interested developers of available sites. We mapped the Vacant Lots data (attached) to spatially identify and prioritize blocks with greatest need.

We are collaborating with Community Board 3 to conduct a Business Needs Survey on Southern Boulevard. We are also coordinating with CUNY's Hunter College for assistance from Urban Planning graduate students to conduct Community Surveys of residents' retail and safety needs.

We have shared the findings of our land use, business, vacant lots, and other surveys with key stakeholders in the neighborhood, including the South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (SoBRO), Bronx-Lebanon Hospital Center, CB3, CAS, Phipps CDC, and others, to help shape their services to area businesses and residents.

### **Technical Assistance to Improve Commercial Activity**

WHEDCo has also provided technical assistance directly to entrepreneurs and merchants to spur revitalization in the Southern Boulevard target area. We consulted with the Rebel Diaz Arts Collective, a Bronx-based Latino Hip-Hop group, about establishing a Hip-Hop Community Center that provides youth with audio-visual recording, music, conflict resolution, and community organizing skills. Rebel Diaz refined its proposal materials, received funding, and is outfitting a digital recording studio that will be the base of their youth-centered activities in the South Bronx.

Rebel Diaz Arts Collective: Non-profit activists and Hip-Hop performers with skill-building youth entity.



We helped Roberta's Day Care, a microenterprise owned and operated by one of WHEDCo's Home-based Childcare Network providers, to identify technical assistance resources to grow her business. She has begun the process to acquire funding.

WHEDCo referred the owner of Chila's Department Store, one of few area retail stores, to the Lehman Small Business Development Center to apply for a \$50,000 SBA-backed loan to purchase goods and to relocate. Through our media contacts, Miss Villatoro and WHEDCo were both featured in a New York Daily News local business story on 12/21/2008. We hope it will generate valuable publicity and foot traffic to Chila's and to the Southern Boulevard corridor.

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## **VI. Developing a Preliminary Community Safety Plan**

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Based on our Year One activities, WHEDCo has developed a draft preliminary community safety plan, to be discussed and revised with key partners, such as NCS, the NYPD, CB3, and residents.

- 1) Conduct a series of Community Visioning meetings around Commercial Revitalization and Community Safety
  - o Identify meeting space, develop agenda, and vet with key partners
  - o Perform outreach to Southern Boulevard stakeholders, government, CBOs, merchants, elected officials, and residents, about meeting purpose and goals
  - o Develop materials for participants to map area crime, assets, areas of improvement, and other community issues, and to discuss SafeScape planning
  - o Facilitate meetings and determine follow-up steps for neighborhood revitalization based on meeting outcomes.

- 2) Develop or enhance existing youth programs in collaboration with area organizations such as CAS, Phipps, Rebel Diaz, and others.
  - Leverage the interest of university and/or professional volunteers to research the potential for a youth-focused initiative (entrepreneurial, cultural, environmental)
  - Explore possible organizational collaborations to create a youth-centered Hip-Hop, music, or cultural initiative focused on conflict-resolution and skills building
  - Collaborate with NYPD, MTA, CB3, merchants, residents, youth and other stakeholders to develop and implement youth activities
  - Engage youth in developing community greening activities to improve sense of safety, beauty and sustainability on Southern Boulevard
  - Identify possible funding sources and collaborations for youth activities.
  
- 3) Provide technical assistance for safety and revitalization on the Southern Boulevard corridor
  - Conduct Needs Assessment of Southern Boulevard merchants
  - Conduct needs Assessment of Southern Boulevard area residents
  - Create database of area crimes, generate GIS Map for trends in ‘hot spots’, and research juvenile crime rates for planning with the NYPD and other stakeholders.
  - Perform outreach to owners of Vacant Lots and Vacant Storefronts for site development, business attraction, and participation in community planning
  - Work with city, business and economic development agencies to address site development, business attraction and retention, streetscape, and other challenges identified in the built environment.
  
- 4) Tap into diverse funding sources (environmental, urban, poverty alleviation, business assistance, employment, economic development) to implement planning activities.
  - Submit Letter of Interest to Deutsche Bank Americas Foundation for revitalization funds to increase retail options, job creation, and street life on corridor.
  - Explore feasibility of NYS Main Street matching grants to help area merchants fund building/ façade renovations, streetscape enhancements and cultural/business anchors.
  - Continue to pursue other sources that leverage the BLUE MOON FUND’s generous support for neighborhood safety and revitalization.

Intervale Green: Ground-floor storefronts for much-needed retail activity and new inviting street trees.



## Conclusion

WHEDCo has made considerable progress during Year One of this new Southern Boulevard Safety and Commercial Revitalization initiative. We focused our start-up efforts on understanding the neighborhood’s physical, economic and civic environment, connecting with area CBOs and groups, and

establishing fruitful working relationships. We have built a solid foundation for future program planning by identifying strategic partnerships that complement our goals, eliminate duplication of effort, and fill a gaping void in the revitalization of this community.

WHEDCo believes that living in a beautiful environment with high design standards can profoundly impact a family's mental and physical well-being. By layering a comprehensive array of economic development and social services onto its housing initiatives, WHEDCo increases families' ability to achieve economic self-sufficiency and escape poverty. For over 10 years, WHEDCo has replicated the attributes of prosperous communities in the South Bronx. With the support of the BLUE MOON FUND, we have taken decisive steps to achieving that goal for families in Crotona East/Morrisania.