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Creating Pedestrian-Friendly Neighborhoods Around Transit:

Issues and Opportunities for Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn

Prepared by:

Project for Public Spaces

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OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared for the Bedford-Stuyvesant community, in Brooklyn, NY, as part of a major research project conducted by Project for Public Spaces, funded by the Federal Transit Administration. The goal of this research was to develop a series of practical and replicable tools to be utilized by transit agencies, as well as other state and local transportation agencies, and MPOs, to more effectively engage transit riders in the transit station, system, and network planning process – especially regarding the walking environment to and around transit stops/stations. While the tools developed through this research will help with outreach to all communities, the focus is on low-income, minority communities – historically the most dependent on transit and most difficult for transit and transportation agencies to reach.

Working with Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris from the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA), and James Rojas of the Latino Urban Forum (LUF) in Los Angeles, PPS developed a series of tools by conducting research in two pilot neighborhoods: Pico Union in Los Angeles, California and Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn, New York. Both cities have a multitude of low-income, transit-dependent neighborhoods with large immigrant populations, whose situations reflect growing trends in transit ridership across the United States. They are broadly representative of the populations which the Public Transportation Participation Pilot Program (PTP), the FTA program that funded PPS' research, was designed to reach.

In the course of developing and piloting the planning tools, we collected a wealth of information about the neighborhood by collecting input from hundreds of people through surveys, workshops, and other activities “on the street.” This report outlines findings from our research in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood conducted during a ten-month period from November 2008 to August 2009. We hope these research findings will be helpful in creating a neighborhood action plan and making real, high impact improvements in the neighborhood – this goal was repeatedly mentioned by Bedford-Stuyvesant residents during our various workshops and outreach efforts.

METHODOLOGY

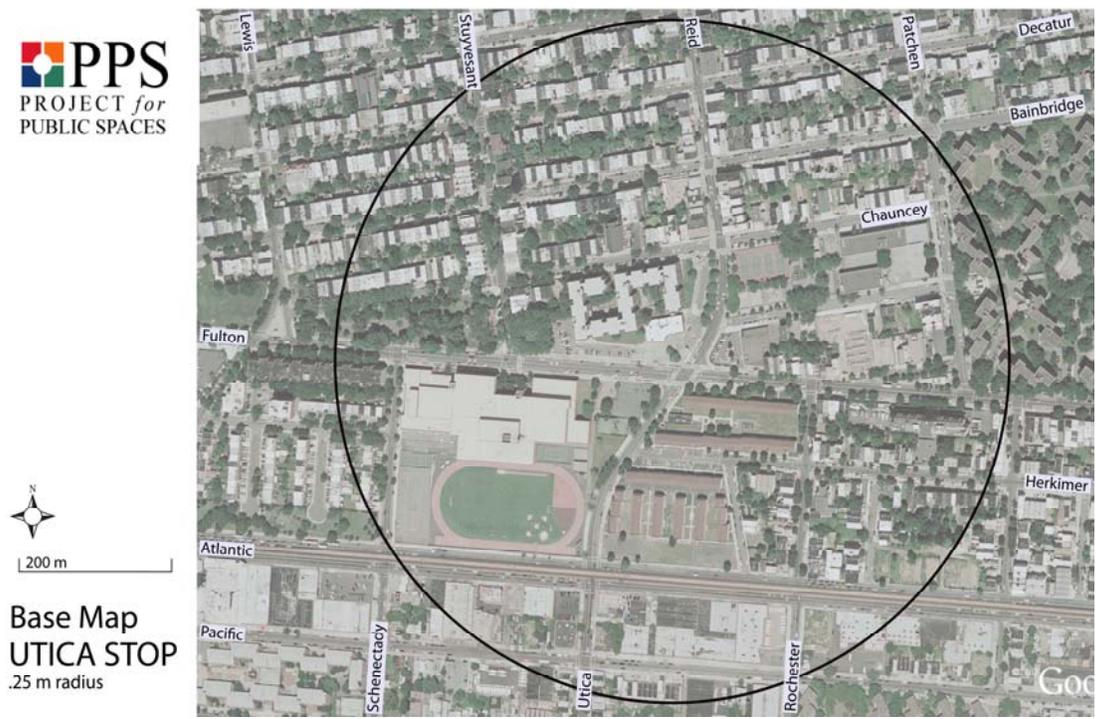
These findings are products of fieldwork research, workshops, and meetings with community stakeholders. Fieldwork research included surveys regarding the quality of bus stops and stations in the neighborhood as well as the streets and sidewalks transit riders use to access them. Surveys were administered at neighborhood bus stops, as well as at community events, such as a ribbon-cutting celebration for a local fire station. Our research also included direct observations of neighborhood settings and mapping of the neighborhood's land uses, zoning, businesses, institutions, and transit routes and facilities.

Feedback was also received from residents during workshops conducted at various settings such as a Walk-It Audit exercise, which invited groups of residents to note

problems along a short walk in the neighborhood, a workshop at the community garden of a local church, and a route-mapping exercise conducted at bus stops which involved inviting transit riders to mark important destinations on a map and note issues with the pedestrian environment they experienced during their journeys. We also received input from residents during community stakeholder meetings. Finally, we received information from local elected officials and professionals from transit agencies who we brought together as a Technical Advisory Committee.

The information gathered by each tool has been synthesized in the Findings and Opportunities sections of this report. Detailed passages regarding the purpose and objective, process, and results of each tool can be found in the appendices.

Figure 1A: Map of Bedford-Stuyvesant Study Area



FINDINGS

The multiple research tools developed and tested by the research team addressed a significant amount of issues facing transit riders in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn. Due to the diversity of tools that were tested, information was gathered that is both quantitative and qualitative. The information that was collected covered a broad range of issues, the main themes of which are covered in the following sections. The items that are listed below, address concerns that were repeatedly raised by residents, businesses, professionals, local leaders, and people across a range of ethnicities and ages. More detailed information can be found in the quantitative and qualitative analysis of results of the tool that was tested, which is in the appendices.

STREETS AS PLACES

While side streets and residential brownstone blocks are attractive and highly walkable, main arteries in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood – Utica Avenue/Malcolm X Boulevard and Fulton Street, also the locations of most of the transit stops and stations in the study area – are less inviting for walking, despite the high volume of pedestrians using them. Issues of walkability in the community are currently being addressed by the Food and Fitness program funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, as part of a larger healthy lifestyle initiative which includes providing access to fresh food and to public spaces for exercise – both of which are important to overall health and physical and mental wellbeing of community members. Issues that discourage the use of streets as safe, social environments include:

- **Pedestrian and Vehicle Conflicts**

Pedestrians interviewed within the study included the elderly, children, people with physical and cognitive disabilities, and other individuals who are at high risk of being injured in a traffic accident. Respondents in research activities repeatedly expressed the concern that automobile traffic within the study area, especially on Fulton Street and Utica Avenue, travels at a speed that poses a significant risk to pedestrians and cyclists alike. Atlantic Avenue creates another major barrier to safe crossing due to the heavy volumes of fast moving traffic it carries.

- **Intersection of Fulton Street and Utica Avenue**

The intersection at Fulton Street and Utica Avenue is a major transit hub and is surrounded by high density housing, retail, parks, and community institutions, such as a high school, and a large church. The combination and type of destinations, combined with the traffic, which includes school and transit buses, trucks, and car services dropping passengers off, creates a frenzied atmosphere. The intersection is hard to cross and potentially unsafe, in part because of the free right turn lanes which allow cars to turn more quickly.

- **Sidewalk conditions**

In many places in the study area the sidewalks and other pedestrian infrastructure were found to be in poor condition. There were significant quantities of litter as well. On Malcolm X Blvd., where sidewalks had been widened, there was found to be more opportunity to use the additional space for displays, cafes, and amenities.

- Lack of Bicycle Facilities

While sidewalks existed on every street, there is a paucity of bicycle lanes in the community – especially bicycle lanes that connected to the main transit hub at Utica Avenue and Fulton Street. Bicyclists that want to access the larger transit system are in peril when riding on the streets to get to subway or bus stops.

- Level of Amenity of Bus Stops

There were several new bus shelters throughout the study area, and several older ones. While newer bus shelters were generally in good condition, they lacked sheltered seating and were too small for the number of people using them.

- Threats of Violence and Disorderly Conduct

One of the main concerns expressed by community members regarding the area along Malcolm X Boulevard, and the intersection at Utica Avenue and Fulton Street, is the threat posed by students when they are dismissed from the local high school. The researchers frequently documented that community members did not feel safe when the students were released due to the disturbances that the high school students were known to cause, despite the heavy police presence. The community members interviewed in this study appreciated the police effort to protect them, yet they also wanted to figure out other ways that would provide a more sustainable solution to the problem.

PUBLIC SPACE

Parks and open space are relatively abundant within the study area. The main transit related public space is located at the intersection of Utica Avenue and Fulton Street. The plaza provides access to two bus lines and the subway system and, as a result, is the largest transit hub in the study area and within the broader community. The plaza lacks amenities and activities that nearby merchants are interested in creating, such as outdoor dining. The plaza was also found to be in poor condition and the minimal furniture and landscaping located there is not that well maintained.

Other public spaces within the study area include several parks: Fulton Park a block to the west and Harmony Park a few blocks Southwest of the plaza. Fulton Park is generally well cared for and frequently visited by residents and passersby. However, most other open green space seems relatively underutilized during the week and some spaces (such as the tennis courts in disrepair near the corner of Utica and Fulton) are rarely used.

There is also a surprising amount of dedicated off street parking space within the area, in addition to seemingly vacant, abandoned lots and otherwise underutilized open space. The remainder of maintained park and green space can be categorized as community gardens, playgrounds, or basketball/tennis courts.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Early on in the research process it became apparent that there is a lot fragmentation, or “silos”, which are limiting the potential of the community. The silos exist among both city agencies and the MTA, as well as among different community organizations.

The New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority was only peripherally involved in this research process: they were aware of the research being undertaken and were favorably disposed to our efforts. The MTA manages all of the transit service in the community, and may own a significant amount of the public property. It is essential that they are involved in any improvement process.

Although several attempts were made by the researchers and local partners, the research team was not able to involve the property owners of the plaza at the intersection of Fulton and Utica in this research project. Initially it was very difficult to determine who managed the property and who owned it; its quasi-public nature confused the situation. Eventually it was determined that E & M Associates managed the property. The plaza is a key component of transit service and public space in the community, and E & M Associates participation should be solicited in the future as part of a comprehensive strategy to improve the plaza and public spaces in the community.

City agencies in the neighborhood are also not coordinating their activities. To make the kinds of changes identified in this report will require, in particular, that the departments of city planning, transportation, police, public housing, and parks work together more effectively. During many of the outreach activities, including surveying, workshops, and other interactions, community members repeatedly expressed the need for better communication with and among city agencies, and that they did not understand the process by which to influence agency decisions, especially those involving transit.

There are, however, a number of community-based organizations in Bedford-Stuyvesant that could potentially play an important role in improving public involvement in the transportation planning process. The most prominent of those groups that we partnered with included the Bridge Street Development Corporation (BSDC), Malcolm X Merchants Association (MXMA), Brooklyn Rescue Mission (BRM) and various religious institutions, among others. The groups do collaborate on certain issues, as seen in the recent Malcolm X Festival, but they are not working together in terms of improving public spaces and transit in the neighborhood. There is also no forum for all groups to communicate and align on common issues.

OPPORTUNITIES

The stakeholders that participated in this research project -- including businesses, residents, governmental and non governmental institutions – did not just identify problems but also came up with many potential improvements to their neighborhood. Several community groups that participated, including the BSDC, MXMA, BRM, and other community groups, are already engaged in serious efforts to improve Bedford-Stuyvesant. Their efforts are not primarily targeted at transit service or the key public spaces studies here, but they were open and receptive to programs and tools designed to address transportation issues raised in this study.

The opportunities listed below are derived from the research tools that were tested. More detailed findings can be found in the appendices that include detailed findings of each tool.

POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS

- **Upgrade Bus Stops + Subway Stops**

The key suggestions, and line of questioning in the research tools, centered around infrastructural improvements to transit facilities in the community. The most frequent opportunities that residents mentioned included, but are not limited to:

- Add more bus shelters or covered waiting areas to existing stops
- Add more seating to bus stops and sidewalks in general
- Add more trash cans
- Plant more trees

- **Improve Street Crossings**

Features to street crossings throughout Bedford-Stuyvesant – especially at key intersections – are needed to make streets easier and safer to cross. The corner of Utica and Fulton should be redesigned to eliminate the free right turn lanes. Examples of other desired improvements include increased signs, new striping or brick pavers, and improved lighting.

- **Improve Pedestrian Environment**

The sidewalk atmosphere in Bedford-Stuyvesant left much to be desired by community members and businesses. Suggestions for improving it included, but were not limited to:

- Improve sidewalk cleanliness (steam clean sidewalks especially at bus stops)
- Provide sidewalk amenities (especially trash cans, benches)
- Utilize the empty sidewalk “neckdowns” on Malcolm X for amenities, landscaping, cafes, etc.
- Fix broken phones and cracked sidewalks
- Fill tree pits

- Mitigate blank walls through planting and murals
- Increase outdoor seating and opportunities for outdoor eating
- Program outdoor venues with more events
- Support positive local businesses which animate the sidewalk and encourage businesses to have more outdoor displays to enliven the streets

- Improve Bicycle Facilities

Make biking to transit more practical by installing bike lanes and bike racks and increasing parking near transit facilities. There is enough area in the public spaces near the transit facilities to accommodate such infrastructure.

- Make the Plaza at Fulton and Utica a real hub of community activity.

The plaza at Fulton Street and Utica Avenue is a major public space in the community, yet it lacks amenities and activities which could make the space a real asset in the community; today, many say that it is a space they avoid. There were many suggestions for how to improve this space:

- Provide more outdoor seating and create sidewalk cafes
- More landscaping and plantings in order to provide more shade and color
- Provide a place for kids to play
- Add public art and a fountain, including community based art or art done by local students
- Larger bus waiting areas with surrounding seating
- Relocate the farmers markets to the plaza and add more food carts.
- Program more community events in the plaza
- Fix concrete: it is hard for older people to walk through the plaza
- Improve security with more lighting and police presence
- Improve snow shoveling in winter

- Plan Activities for Youth

Many community members in the area were fearful and disapproving of the behavior of students who were often disruptive as they left the local high school in the afternoon. One solution would be to create activities for those students that would direct their energy and time to a positive use. This would be good for the students, but could also provide an opportunity to activate the public space and make it more enjoyable.

Activities for the youth can be planned in collaboration with the managers of public spaces, either at the plaza, or at other parks in the community. Other local stakeholders, such as the MXMA, BSDC, BRM, and other area religious institutions, can work together to develop and fund these programs. An example of such a program is the arts program mentioned above in potential improvements to the plaza at Fulton and Utica.

Many community members suggested that a community center is needed in the neighborhood. The community center could be used to plan activities for the youth, but could also be used by people of differing age groups.

- Improved Dining Options

Opportunities for dining were a central theme in many discussions about how to improve the public space and the greater community. The most frequent demand was for a greater diversity of neighborhood restaurants. The types of restaurants wanted by the community ranged from healthy foods, fine dining, to more vending food carts. An increase in the number of food carts was thought by the community to be a way of improving the attractiveness and vibrancy of public spaces. Supporting the expansion of the existing farmers market was also considered a way to improve the public space, community cohesiveness, and provide healthy food choices for a community with significant health problems.

- Beautification of Streets

As noted in other sections, the sidewalks and other public spaces in Bedford-Stuyvesant are often poorly maintained and unattractive. Short-term and long-term ideas to improve these spaces included planting flowers and trees, adding public art, adding more trash cans, and developing a community based programs to clean up graffiti. The “neckdown” spaces on Malcolm X demonstrate particular opportunities to be adopted and beautified by a different businesses or community group.

- Improving Security in Public Space

Security in the public space of Bedford-Stuyvesant is one of the community’s most pressing concerns. Solutions to this issue suggested by participants include increasing lighting, installing security cameras, and increasing the police presence.

- Convert Sporting Fields to Better Uses

The tennis courts at the park at the corner Malcolm X and Chauncey are rarely used. They consume valuable public space that may be converted to a more appropriate community use. Some of the uses that were suggested include tables for board games, which could be used by people of all ages and shady areas for people to relax.

- Program Public Spaces

Program public spaces so that there are activities while parents are at work, activities after school, and, most importantly, activities that youth will be interested in.

PARTICIPATION AND OUTREACH

In order for the public to become more involved in the transit planning process there must be tools and processes that facilitate vertical and horizontal linkages, between

individuals and organizations, within the community. In Bedford-Stuyvesant, there is already a framework of social collaboration, which includes community boards, religious groups, business associations, long-time residents, and school groups. This existing group of disparate organizations must have the capacity and tools to collaborate on important transit and transportation projects.

- Coordinate Neighborhood Groups

It is important to bring together community institutions, such as churches, schools, BIDs, Neighborhood Council, Neighborhood Watch groups, etc., and get them involved in the welfare and improvement of the neighborhood. Existing neighborhood groups, such as the BSDC, MXMA, Community Board, BRM, and Brownstoners, may provide a solid foundation for a network of community organizations.

- Increase Local Government Involvement

A system that enables clear communication between government agencies, as well as between government and residents, should be put in place. Better communication can help mitigate crime, pollution, and poverty, along with other problems, and can help to resolve the neighborhood's infrastructural challenges.

- Nurture Inclusivity

Reach out to all members of the community, especially immigrants and youth so that they have a voice in any new initiatives. Projects need to be sensitive to various needs of different community groups. Changes need to be made in how participants are identified so that the most vulnerable members of the community are included and have a voice. Methods of achieving this goal should include, but not be limited to:

- Translating outreach materials into relevant languages, which in Brooklyn would include Chinese, Spanish, etc.
- Incorporating appropriate cultural sensitivity into planning and implementation processes, such as recognizing religious or cultural holidays, and not planning events that conflict with them

- Involve Small Businesses

Small businesses can become major players in the process of creating better bus stop environments and streets. They should be provided with assistance and funding to revitalize their storefronts and make streets like Malcolm X more pedestrian friendly. These measures in turn will benefit their businesses, creating more wealth in the community. The MXMA is an invaluable asset in this regard.

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

- Create an Action Plan

We hope this report can be used as the basis for creating a community action plan with short and long term goals. This action plan should incorporate benchmarks for implementing changes.

- Implement both Short and Long Term Improvements

Long-term improvements for the community's transit and environmental needs will ensure the project's sustainability, particularly around health issues. But short term solutions that can cause quick improvements and spikes in community moral should also be included. Implementing small, inexpensive changes will create trust within the community that the project will yield results and that the agencies will deliver.

Example short terms solutions can include:

- Arts programs and other festivals
- Plantings
- Cleaning and maintenance programs
- Re-stripping crosswalks

Long term solutions would include:

- Improved transit infrastructure, such as bus shelters, lighting, and seating
- A redesigned plaza that includes community amenities such as cafés and other eateries, more planting, outdoor seating, etc.
- Redesign and traffic calming of the Utica and Fulton intersection

- Better Coordinate with City Agencies

In New York City there are a myriad of agencies that control land development, which can make working towards such improvements a daunting task for seasoned developers, let alone an underserved community. However, it is clear that the MTA, NYC DOT, and Department of Planning, and other construction and social services departments should be involved in the public engagement process. The local community board or city council office should facilitate this dialogue.

The New York City Department of Transportation is currently in the process of issuing street design standards that address many of the issues raised by community members, such as safety, bicycle access, lighting, and beautification. There are also other citywide programs included within PlaNYC, which address tree planting and some other concerns raised by the community.

Efforts must be made that the new approach of NYC DOT does not only benefit affluent areas, or high-profile areas, but all areas of the city, including underserved communities.

More detailed findings and recommendations can be found in the report appendices.

APPENDIX 1: MAPPING AND DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION

Brooklyn’s Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood has historically been an African American neighborhood, but is becoming increasingly mixed. It also has high concentrations of low-income residents, and the number of NYC Housing Authority managed residences in our study area is indicative of the frequency of residents living close to or under the poverty line. The census data from 2000 for the zip code surrounding the Utica Avenue transit hub, 11233, reports a racial makeup with 88% black, 4% white and the remainder identifying as “other;” 12% identify as Latino or Hispanic. The median age is 29 and the median household income is only \$22,754. The percentage of residents below the poverty level was 37.4%, as compared to the National poverty rate of the same year of 11.3%.

NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARY (Map 1B)

The study area consisted of a quarter mile radius around the intersection of Utica Avenue and Fulton Street. The intersection includes a bustling transit hub where two crowded bus lines, the B25 and the B46, and the A and C subway station. The plaza is heavily traveled by commuters who live and work in the area as well and transit riders who are transferring between bus and train and vice versa. The quarter mile radius proved to be relatively sufficient perhaps due to the high population density of Brooklyn as compared to other cities. The research team frequently studied and recorded data in areas slightly over the boundary as it made sense to do so in certain cases.

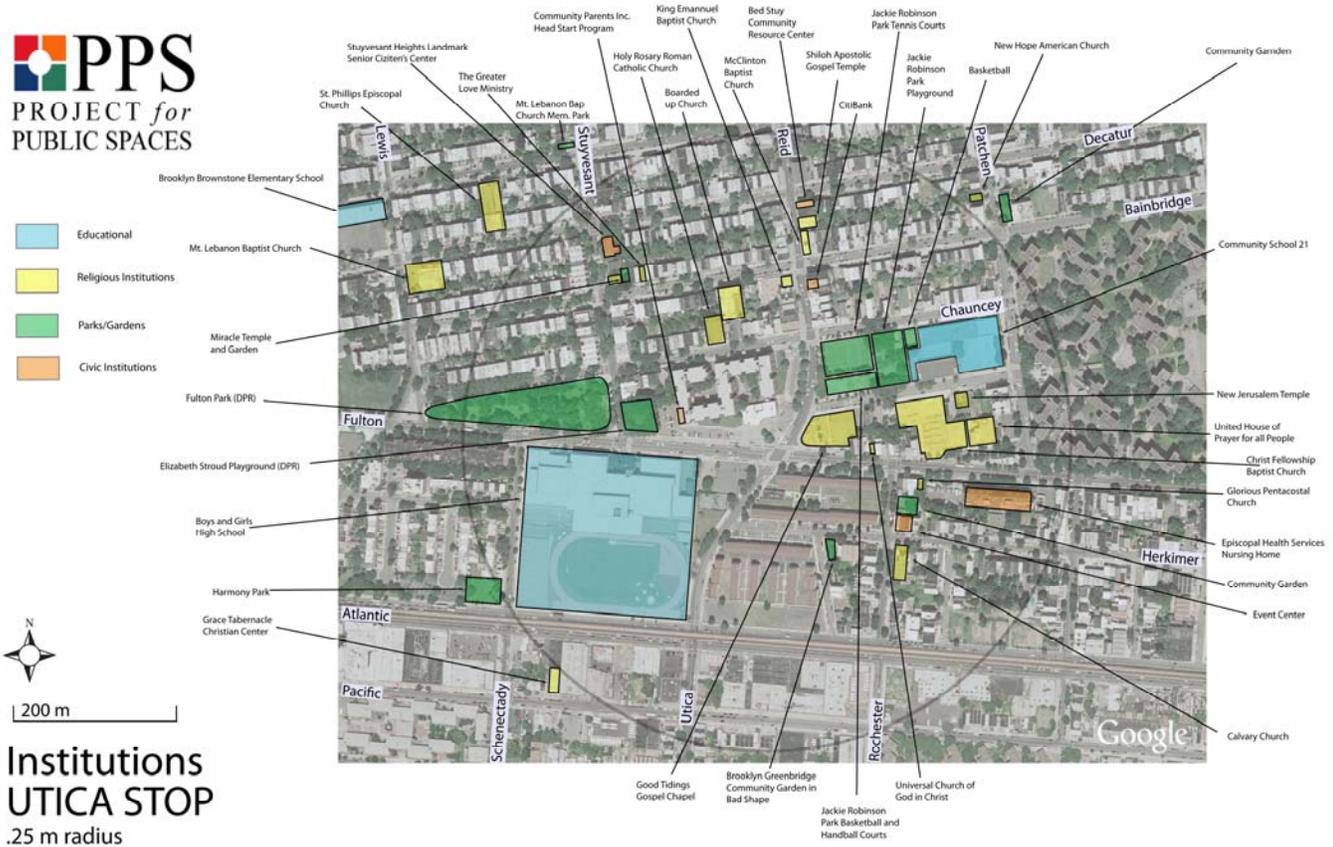
Map 1B: Quarter mile radius around Utica Avenue and Fulton Street



INSTITUTIONS (Map 2B)

There are three schools in the area, as well and an abundance of churches. Parks and playgrounds/athletic facilities make up a significant amount of space. All institutions seem to be almost entirely concentrated north of Atlantic Avenue which is a main artery for cars and serves as a route for the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR).

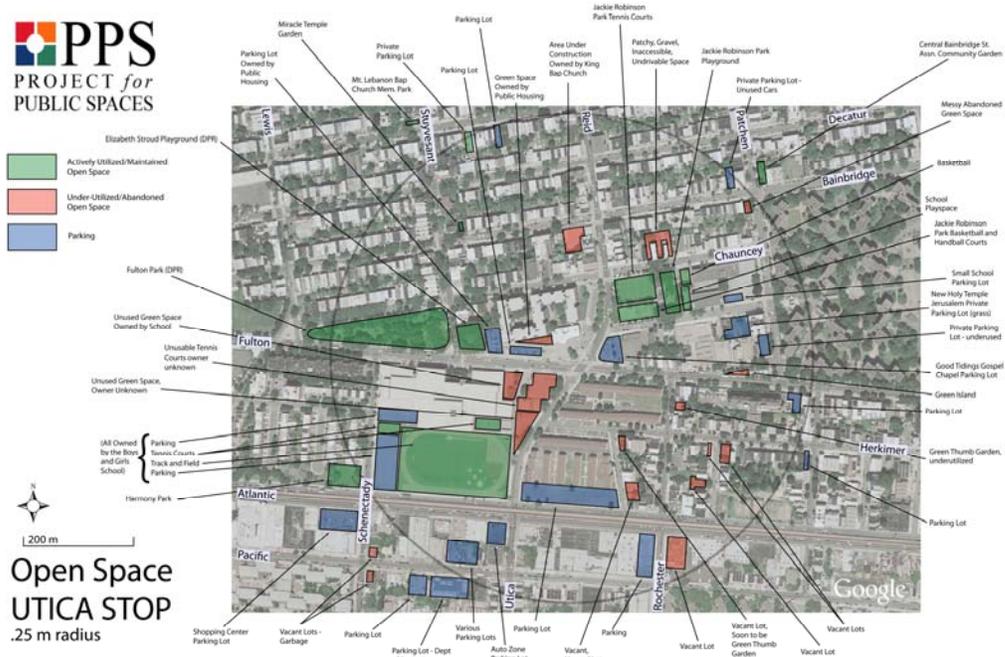
Map 2B: Institutions around the Utica Avenue and Fulton Street plaza and transit hub



PARKS AND OPEN SPACE (Map 3B)

Parks and open space are abundant within a quarter mile radius around the plaza. There is Fulton Park a block to the west and Harmony Park a few blocks Southwest, but the remainder of maintained park and green space can mostly be categorized as community gardens, playgrounds, or basketball/tennis courts. There is also a surprising amount of dedicated off street parking space within the area, in addition to vacant, abandoned looking lots and otherwise underutilized open space. Fulton Park is generally well cared for and frequently trafficked by visitors. However, most other open green space seems relatively underutilized during the week. The plaza is the only major public space that is not labeled on this map.

Map 3B: Parks and open space around the Utica Avenue and Fulton Street plaza and transit hub



LAND USE AND ZONING (Map 4B)

In order to construct this map, the resource www.oasisnyc.net was used. The website is an interactive zoning and land use resource for New York City. The Land Use Map shows the clear separation of commercial and residential uses.

Map 4B: Land Use and Zoning

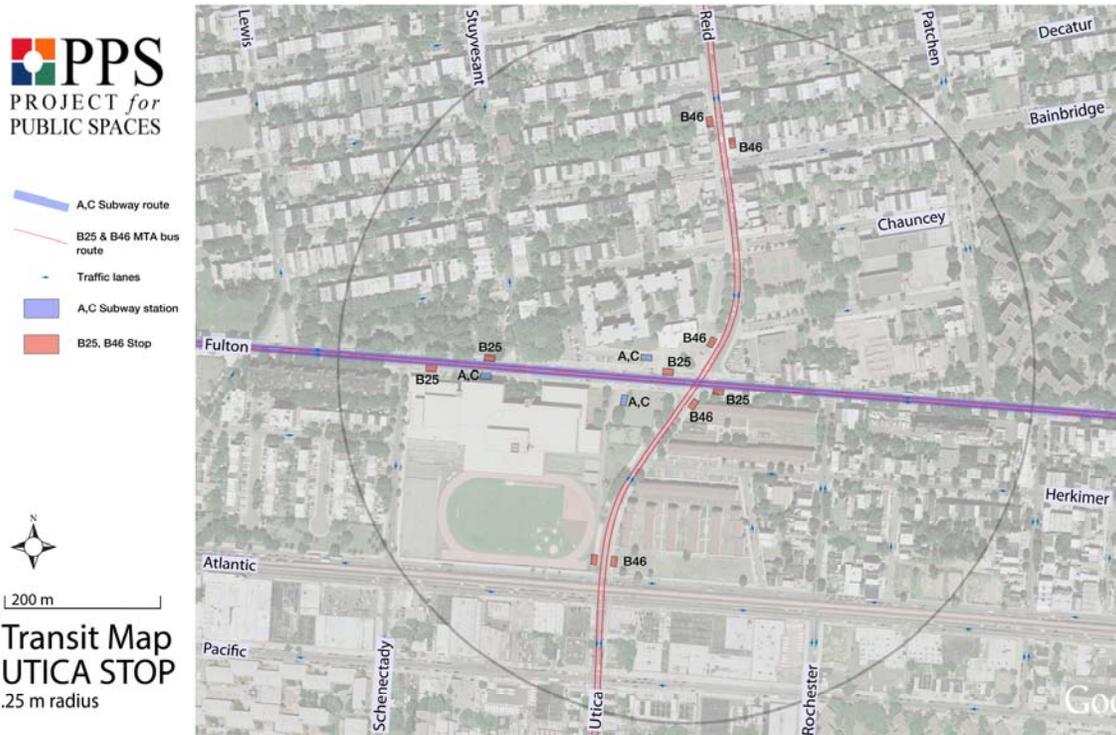


TRANSIT (Map 5B)

The intersection and plaza at Utica Avenue and Fulton Street is a major transit hub for the neighborhood and outlying areas. The A and C subway line stops at the Utica Avenue subway stop, and there are six bus stops along Utica Avenue/Malcolm X Boulevard, which are serviced by the B46 line, and four bus stops along Fulton Street, which are serviced by the B25 line. The plaza itself contains one subway entrance/exit point, and two bus stops, one facing Fulton Street, and one facing Utica Avenue. The plaza is used heavily as a transfer point for subway to bus riders and vice versa, as well as riders transferring to from the B46 line to the B25 line and vice versa.

The statistics show that the Utica Avenue subway station carried 4.46 million passengers in 2008, making it the 101st busiest station out of 422 in the City. In respect to bus service, the B46 line carried 17.3 million riders in 2008, giving it the second highest ridership out of all NYC's bus lines.

Map 5B: Public transit in Bedford-Stuyvesant within quarter mile radius of Utica Avenue and Fulton Street



TRAFFIC AND PARKING

Parking in the study area consists mostly of street parking and surface parking lots for institutional uses, such as schools and churches. Traffic in the area poses a threat due to the volume and speed of traveling cars. The intersection at Fulton Street and Utica Avenue is especially hazardous for pedestrians, which include school children, people with disabilities, families, and the elderly. Traffic is further complicated at the plaza because many people abruptly stop, where there is not designated space for it, to drop off passengers that will then board transit.

COMMERCIAL AND RAIL (Map 6B)

The plaza at the intersection of Utica Avenue and Fulton Street, along with Malcolm X Boulevard and Atlantic Avenue, are the locations within the study area that are most heavily saturated with retail and commercial uses. Other areas within the quarter mile radius, including Utica Avenue and the remainder of Fulton Street, largely consist of residential and community uses. The community uses include a high school, places of worship, apartment houses, and parks.

PPS mapped a total of 81 commercial and retail uses within the study area.

Many of the businesses in the study area are relatively small. The largest uses are along Atlantic Avenue, which contains the largest lot sizes of any area in the study area. The businesses are diverse, as is the community, and there are small signs of modernization, including a sleek art gallery, and new restaurants and bars. The majority of the businesses can fall within a few categories, food, i.e. grocery stores and restaurants; auto-service; home goods, i.e. furniture and decorations; personal products, i.e. clothing and beauty products; and various shopping centers.

The physical makeup of the commercial and retail uses is very dense. Such uses can be easily walked to, or reached by mass transit.

Finally, the area is home to many street vendors that either continuously stroll up and down the busiest streets, or stay in the plaza, where foot traffic is the highest. The street vendors sell food products ranging from fruit, to cooked food, or simple refreshments of ices.

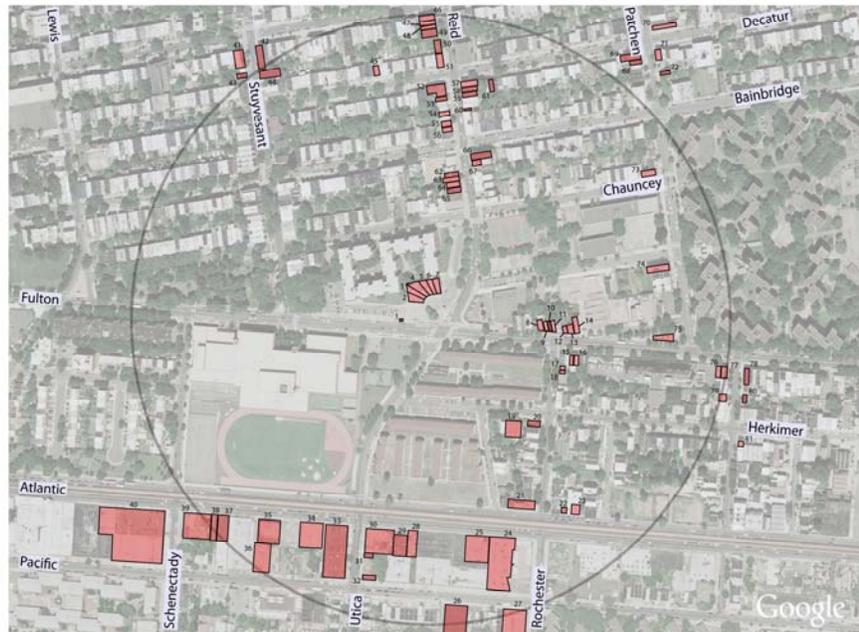
Map 6B: Commercial and retail composition in Bedford-Stuyvesant within quarter mile radius of Utica Avenue and Fulton Street



- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. News Stand | 28. LBA Auto Repair |
| 2. Fulton Food Plaza Super Market | 29. Davinos Auto Body |
| 3. Joael Cleaners, Inc. | 30. Gasoline (closed) |
| 4. Ice Cream and Bakery | 31. WCK Electric (closed) |
| 5. Papa's Chicken Pizza and Subs | 32. Wong's Garden (closed) |
| 6. Bagel and Halal Deli | 33. Auto Zone |
| 7. Fulton Park Plaza Dental Care | 34. Samuel Linderberg, Inc. Supermkt Equipment Supply |
| 8. Rochester Payment Center | 35. Atlantic Motor Inn |
| 9. Jane L. Bradley, CPA | 36. Noqaa Steel |
| 10. Kris Cellular Phones | 37. City Fuel Oil (closed) |
| 11. M&J Masonic Jewelry and Fraternal Services | 38. JMB Transmissions (closed) |
| 12. Jackson Hewitt Tax Service | 39. Shell Gas Station |
| 13. Shelley's Barber/Stylist | 40. Strip Mall Shopping Center |
| 14. Vera Beauty Salon | 41. Stuyvesant Heights Brokerage Co. |
| 15. Al Pasha Supermarket | 42. Top M&M Cleaners |
| 16. Brooklyn Soul Take Out Rest. (closed) | 43. Realty Office |
| 17. Locks of Nu Natural Hair Spa and Gallery | 44. Stuyvesant Deli Grocery |
| 18. Everything Scratch Cafe | 45. Decatur Medical and Foot Care Center |
| 19. The Shop (closed) | 46. New Casablanca Cocktail Lounge |
| 20. Rochester Food and Deli | 47. Hardware and Home |
| 21. Getty Gas Station | 48. Count Your Beauty - Salon |
| 22. Saffery Construction Supplies | 49. Wolfberry Spa |
| 23. Osmond Auto Repair | 50. Ecodermis Skin Care |
| 24. Auto and Truck Painting | 51. Thompson Interior Design |
| 25. Iron Works | 52. Magic Soul Food, Inc. |
| 26. US Stairs Corp | 53. Nicest Barbers Around (closed) |
| 27. Mattress and Furniture Outlet | 54. Magic Eyes, Inc. |

200 m
 Retail Locations
 UTICA STOP
 .25 m radius

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 55. Kull Doosh Smoking Jackets for Jerry (art gallery) | 62. Youngtree River Chinese Food | 69. Stuart Wash and Dry Service | 76. Sam's 99 cent plus |
| 56. J&J Cleaners (closed) | 63. Twin Unions Hair Salon | 70. Decatur Deli Grocery | 77. Game Stars Deli Grocery (closed) |
| 57. Rodriguez Shop Smart Grocery | 64. Big Bite Day and Night Deli | 71. BK Catering ad Lounge Supply | 78. Leonard's Meat Market, Inc. |
| 58. Java Shipping | 65. Malcom X Blvd Pizzeria | 72. Mitchell's Kitchen | 79. Alza Variety Store |
| 59. New Sin Lee Chinese Food | 66. Bainbridge Friendly Deli/Grocery | 73. Akhi's Deli Grocery | 80. Mattress Outlet |
| 60. Beauty Shop | 67. Citibank | 74. K&S Patchers Deli Grocery | 81. Don Ross African Hair Braiding |
| 61. Jordan Plateau Realty Group | 68. Small Grocery | 75. Boarded Up Storefront (closed) | |



OBSERVATIONS BY AREA (Map 7B)

Based on observations from a self-guided walking tour of the study area, the neighborhood is characterized by four separate masses of distinct infrastructure, uses, and atmosphere. These areas are shaded different colors in Map 7B.

The area shaded yellow on the map, titled the Northeast Corridor, is characterized by low-intensity uses, such as a church and residential streets. The residential streets consist of low-rise apartment houses, and brownstones. One of the more interesting uses in the Northeast Corridor is a vacant lot that has been converted to a thriving community garden by a local group. Many of the buildings are well-kempt, but many are not. The commercial uses along Malcolm X Boulevard add vibrancy to the neighborhood, and there are usually groups of people interacting along the commercial corridor, as well as the residential streets. The church on the other hand, is not often used, and has a large fence around the property, making the large parcel unusable by the community for the majority of the day and week.

The area shaded green is dominated by the large high school building and its recreational uses. Once you cross to the east side of Utica Avenue on Fulton Street, the nature of the street changes to that of low-rise residential. Large groups of people can be found on the sidewalk waiting for the B25 bus line throughout the day.

The blue area, classified as Atlantic Avenue, is dominated by vehicular traffic and contains many industrial uses, such as auto-services. The road is a 6-lane thoroughfare with an elevated transit line, which creates an atmosphere undesirable by pedestrians.

The Brevoort Houses are the largest development that is located immediately outside the study area, and undoubtedly has a large impact on activity within the study area. The Brevoort Houses consist of 13, 7-story buildings with 894 apartments housing some 2,001 residents. The development on 17.26 acres was completed August 31, 1955. Bainbridge and Fulton Streets and Ralph and Patchen Avenues border the complex. When PPS visited the site, there were playgrounds full of trash, dilapidated basketball courts, and other visibly deteriorating infrastructure. However, there were also community activities, such as shops and a farmers market that demonstrated an active community.

Map 7B: Observations by area within quarter mile radius of Utica Avenue and Fulton Street



Plaza

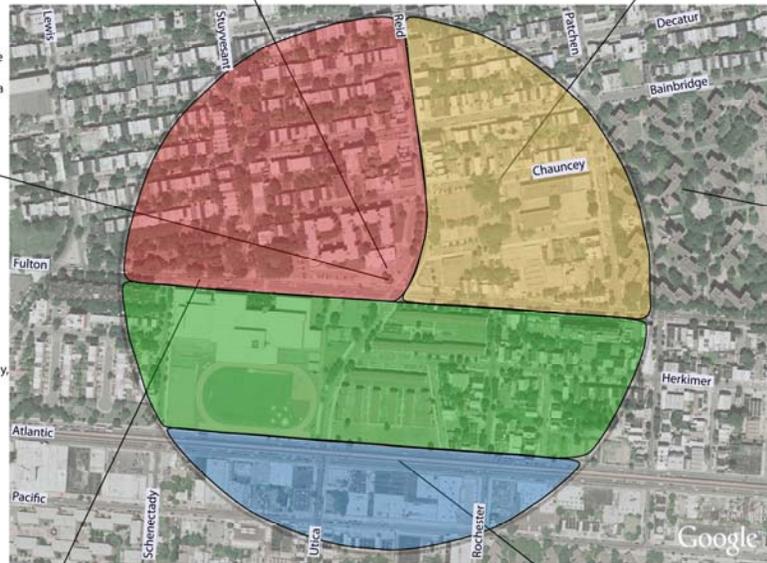
- South plaza wall awkwardly high to sit on
- People eating are mostly standing
- People waiting for bus are leaning against posts
- Only room for 3 people to sit at bus stop
- Uneven paving, awkward to walk across
- Upside down trash can in front of wheel chair ramp
- Empty space and blank wall on south side – unattractive
- Maintenance truck obstructing bus stop
- Police station booth is (empty) located across from plaza maybe difficult or unsafe to get to from plaza due to heavy traffic
- Handicapped ramp with no zebra crossing
- Barren wall on side of super market
- Coming out of subway large open space with no benches or markers
- News stand in between subway and bus stop
- People leaning on railing that wraps around steps
- Businesses around plaza seem under-patronized
- People in the plaza seem to be mostly passing through or waiting for a bus but not hanging out
- Parking lot full of cars
- Garbage dumpsters as barriers
- No seating in plaza
- Curbs leading into mid street with no crosswalk
- Lots of cars dropping off and picking up mid street
- Lots of food but virtually nowhere to sit
- Most foot traffic is coming from and going to the subway, very little stopping
- 5 stores all serve in and out service

Plaza

- School let out
- Police kicked us off steps
- Police truck parked in front of deli
- Police to make sure kids go from school to bus/train and don't stay in plaza

North East Quarter

- Community garden
- Lots of storefront churches



Brevort Houses

- Playground full of trash and leaves, unused
- Youth outside buildings but not using 'park' area
- Barren street, blank school wall
- Strip of mixed use, selling socks, hair salon, deli, playground and nice tennis courts unused, abandoned, farmers market
- Lots of churches
- Dilapidated basketball court
- Farmer's market
- 2 blank blocks with schools/churches
- 'Trash island triangle'



200 m

Observations by Area UTICA STOP .25 m radius

School Front and Park

- Well kept, gardening, policing, open public bathrooms, cafes, bookstore

Atlantic Avenue

- This area is dominated by vehicular traffic
- Lots of gas stations and auto repair shops
- 6 lane thoroughfare with raised railroad

SIDEWALK CONDITIONS (Map 8B)

We assessed the conditions on Malcolm X Boulevard regarding the ratio of animating elements to obstructions. We chose Malcolm X Boulevard due to the street's high foot traffic volume and symbolic importance to the community. Our results, shown in Map 8B, reveal that there is a mix of animating elements (in green), amenities (blue), and obstructions (red). The most animated section (the area with highest number of green elements) is the block that includes the plaza at the main intersection, where there are trees and other elements within the plaza. The plaza also contained the highest frequency of obstructions, along with the block of Malcolm X Boulevard and Decatur Street.

Map 8B: Malcolm X Boulevard sidewalk conditions within quarter mile radius of Utica Avenue and Fulton Street



Obstruction

-  Bulging pavement
-  Cracked sidewalk
-  Upleasant fence
-  Unattractive power lines/telephone pole
-  Empty tree well

Amenity

-  Trash can
-  Mail Box
-  Emergency call box
-  Pay phone
-  News stand
-  Bus Shelter

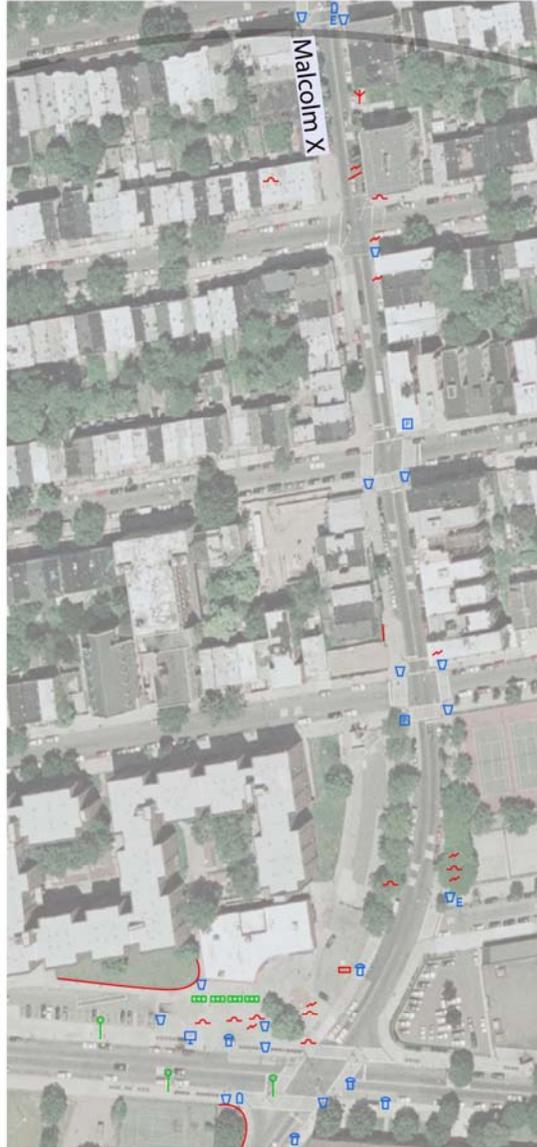
Animation

-  Tree
-  Decorative lamp post



100 m

**Sidewalk Map
UTICA STOP**



APPENDIX 2: SURVEYS

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

Project for Public Spaces (PPS) administered two different surveys over the course of three months in the Brooklyn, NY neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant. Two surveys were administered, one titled “Quality of Journey,” and the other titled “Quality of Bus Stop.” Each focused on a different aspect of transit riders’ experience in the study area. The surveys were designed to elicit specific information regarding:

- **Quality of Journey:** focused on the route that pedestrians took to and from the transit facility and what their destination was; what their experience was during that journey in relation to infrastructure, safety, and other features, and the frequency with which they made those trips.
- **Quality of Bus Stop:** focused on specific bus stop facilities, including aspects such as seating, lighting, and aesthetics. The survey also retrieved information regarding services near the bus stop, and what the transit riders’ impressions of safety, attractiveness, and other qualitative aspects were.

The overall goal of the surveys was to gather a range of quantitative and qualitative data that would provide a complete picture of the transit riders’ experience and opinions. In order to accomplish this, along with the questions described above, the surveys also included detailed questions concerning demographic information, such as age, gender, and area of residence.

Our target was to complete 50 of each survey in the community. In Bedford-Stuyvesant we completed 61 Quality of Bus Stop surveys, and 73 Quality of Journey surveys.

Aside from administering the survey, the surveying process also presented the researchers with an opportunity to engage stakeholders in meaningful discussions regarding the subject matter of the study. PPS made a conscious effort to use the surveying process as an opportunity to acquire contact information from stakeholders, assess their willingness to participate in workshops, and begin the development of partnerships that could advance the study and assist with implementation in later phases.

While surveying, the researchers tested two other research tools – Route and Destination Mapping, and the Place Imagination Exercise (PIE), which are detailed in separate appendices.

PROCESS

PPS surveyed transit riders in Bedford-Stuyvesant on four occasions between the months of May and July 2009. The primary area where PPS surveyed transit riders was the plaza at the intersection of Malcolm X Boulevard/Utica Avenue and Fulton St.

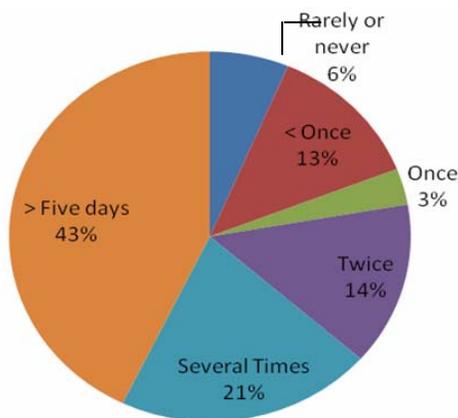
The site in Bedford-Stuyvesant was an ideal location for administering the surveys because it is the community transportation hub. The plaza contains a subway entrance and exit, along with two bus stops within the plaza, and two bus stops at the opposite corner of the plaza. The bus stops were served by the B25 and B46 lines. While the plaza was the main survey testing area, staff members did occasionally venture outside of the plaza to administer surveys at other bus stops, and there was an additional subway entrance/exit located outside of the plaza.

On each occasion PPS tested the Quality of Journey and Quality of Stop survey with one or more PPS staff member administering each survey. The surveys were administered during the middle of the day and during the middle of the week. The density of Bedford-Stuyvesant and Pico-Union provided enough targets for us to administer our surveys during the middle of the day, but when surveying in other communities it may be more effective to administer the surveys during rush hour or other high foot traffic times of the day.

The volunteers that assisted us were provided by a local organization titled Maruuf Strategies. We came into contact with the organization through a previous surveying event, which demonstrates how engaging community members can pay dividends on later occasions. PPS paid the three volunteers, who were all teenagers, \$20 for three hours of participation.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Figure 1C: Trip Frequency per Week

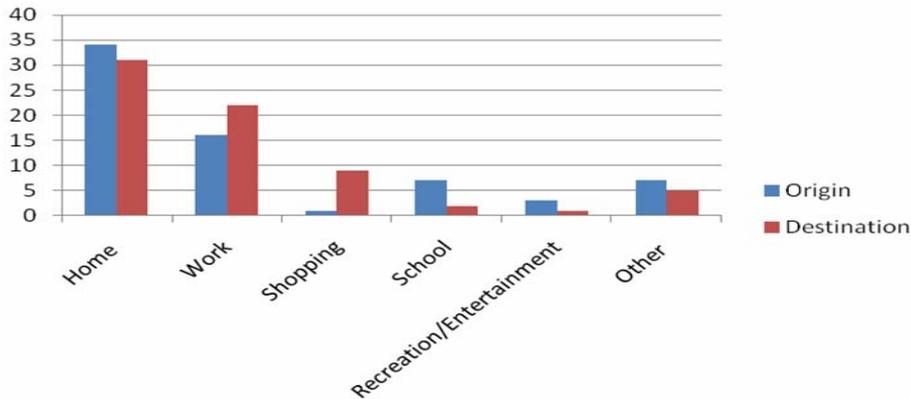


From the Quality of Bus Stop Survey

The majority of the transit riders and pedestrians we interviewed made their respective trips over several times per week. Over sixty percent of those waiting at a bus stop that we interviewed rode the bus more than three times per week, and over sixty percent of the pedestrians that were entering or exiting the subway stop that we interviewed made their journey more than three times per week, with over fifty percent making their journey at least five times per week. The fact that most of people we interviewed made their

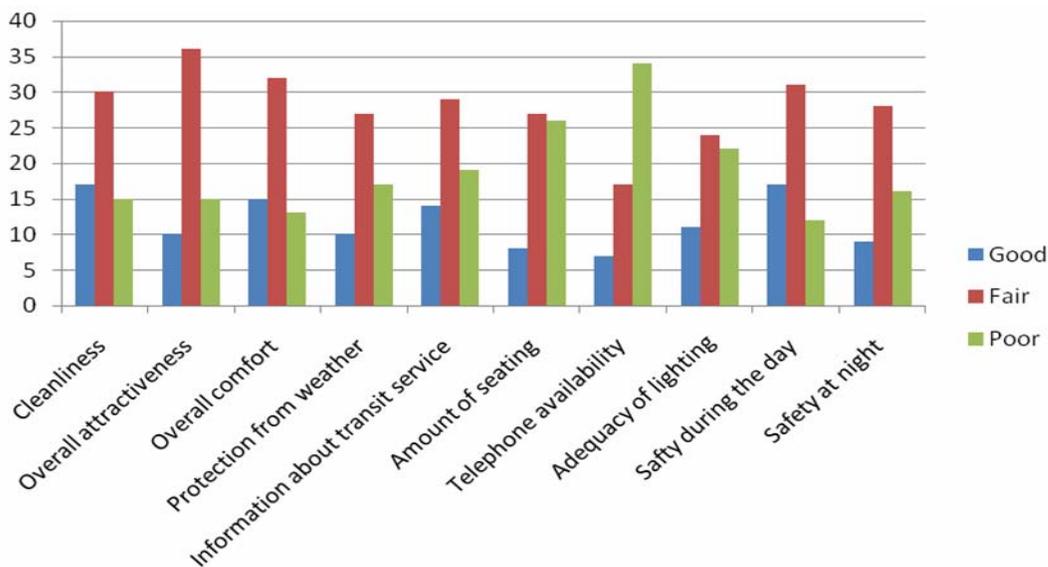
journey frequently, gives weight to our findings. Due to the frequency of their trips, the interview subjects can be expected to have a significant amount of knowledge and understanding of the overall service of the transit system, during the times they ride it. The frequency of their trips allowed them to give value-added responses to our other questions.

Figure 2C: Origin and Destination – Quality of Journey Survey



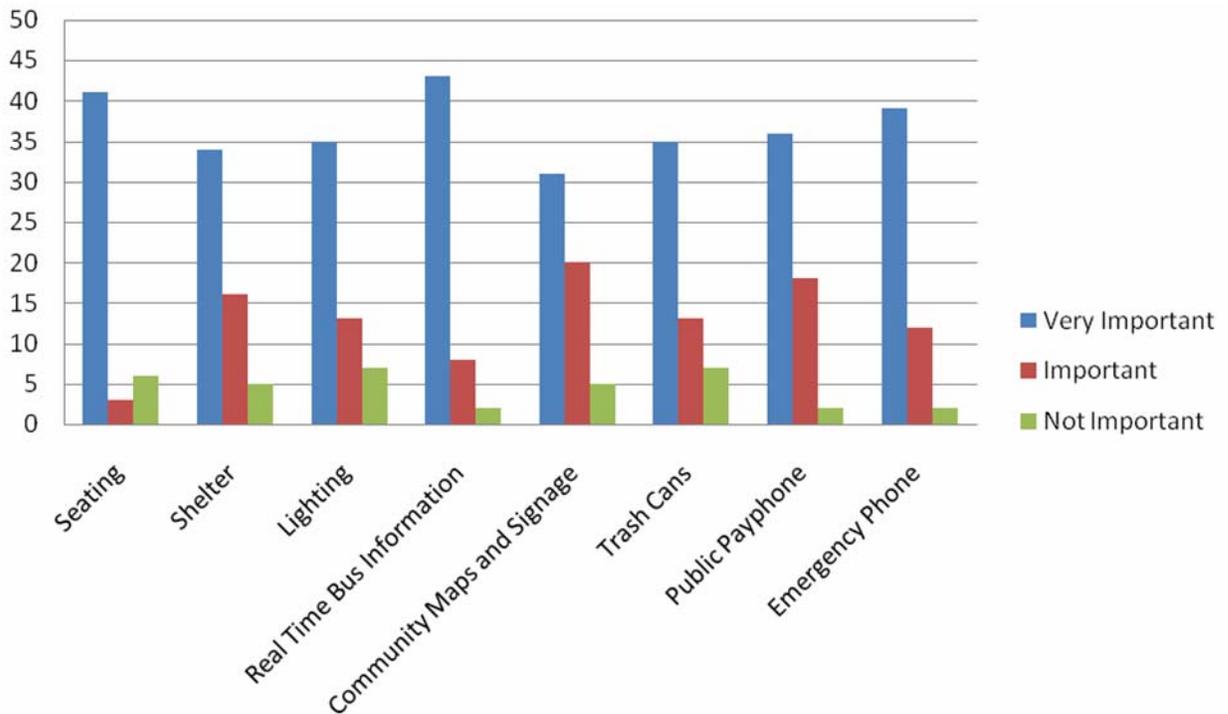
By far the most people that we interviewed were going from home or work. Our findings may have been different had we conducted interviews during rush hour, or on weekends, where more people may have been on their journey to school, shopping, or entertainment. The other category included subjects taking trips to the doctor’s office, airport, or to visit family, among other responses. However, the number of trips to work were somewhat surprising since we administered our surveys during non-rush hour times.

Figure 3C: Quality of Bus Stop



It was abundantly clear from our questions about the quality of the bus stop that transit riders were not entirely satisfied with the atmosphere, infrastructure, and other aspects of the bus stops and surrounding areas. Most categories received fair marks, with poor ranking second in every category except for “Safety during the day,” “Cleanliness,” and “Overall comfort,” which received a mark of Good. The only category in which Poor received a higher rank than fair was the availability of public telephones. This is a category that may not receive as high markings in more affluent communities, where access to cell phones is higher, but in less affluent communities many people still rely on public pay phones. The amount of seating and adequacy of lighting were two other categories that received high rankings for being Poor.

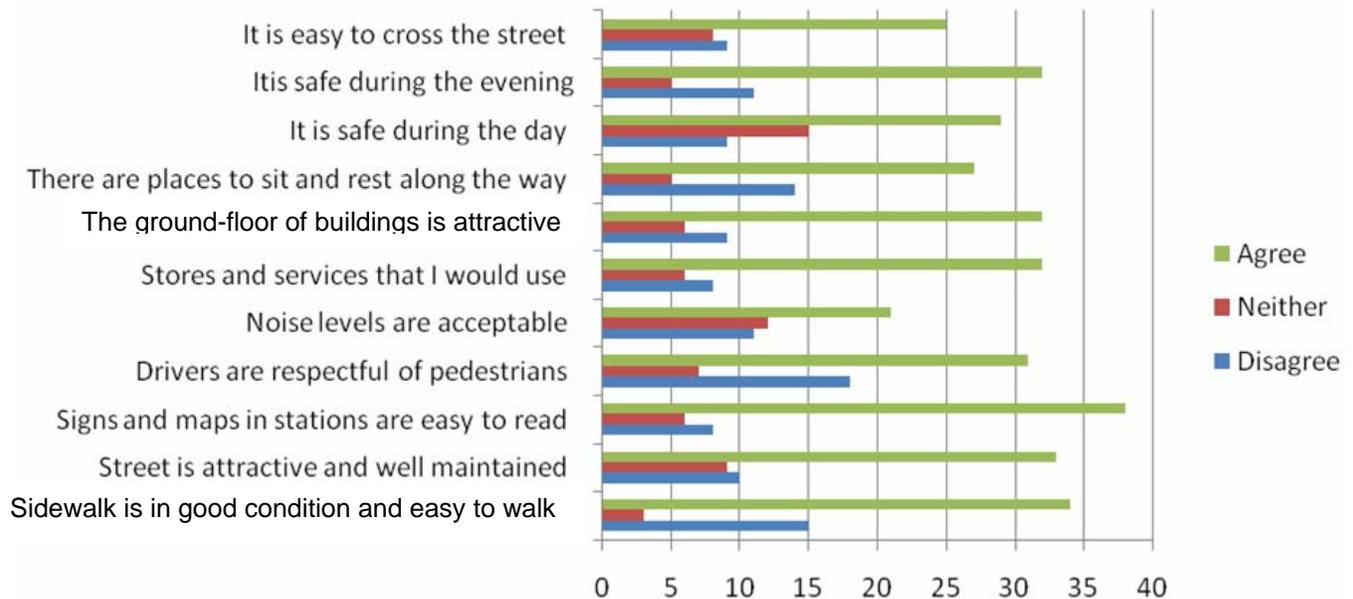
Figure 4C: Desired Amenities at Transit Stops – Quality of Bus Stop Survey



In terms of what transit riders would like to see more of, riders ranked the addition of almost every amenity we asked them about as being high. The item that was most desired was real time bus information. Not to say that real time bus information is generally more important than the other amenities, but it was one of the only items we inquired about that did not already exist in some form at some bus stops in the neighborhood. Other items, such as seating, lighting, trash cans, and bus maps exist, but not to the level of satisfaction of the transit riders we spoke with.

Again, the responses we received about each item may have been based on their usefulness during the time of day. For example, the level of seating may not be adequate for riders during busy times, but may be adequate from the perspective of riders who ride in less busy times. The same can be said about shelter and other amenities. Also, women may have a different perspective on emergency phones, lighting, and other safety features that men may not be as concerned with.

Figure 5C: Rating of Following Walking Factors – Quality of Journey Survey



One of the most data rich questions on the Quality of Journey survey was in regards to experience of a transit rider walking to or from the transit facility. As shown above, the question asked the pedestrian whether or not he agreed with various statements regarding the quality of their journey. The question that was answered in the affirmative most frequently was the question about signage and maps in stations. They responded in disagreement most frequently with the statement that “it is safe during the day.” Other questions that elicited disagreement frequently were in regards to noise levels, attractiveness of the street, and safety in crossing the street.

In addition, the survey identified people favorite and least favorite streets:

- **Favorite Streets**
 - Macon Street - safe and quiet
 - McDonough - safe and quiet
 - Stuyvesant between Madison and Fulton - of its appealing architecture
 - Bainbridge - destinations, such as a community church; it is also a beautiful street due to flowers and other plantings
 - Macon Street between Patchen and Malcolm X – well-maintained homes and infrastructure
 - Howard Avenue – nice store fronts and tree-lined streets

- **Least Favorite Streets**
 - Malcolm X Boulevard – bad reputation for crime and delinquent behavior
 - Knickerbocker – violence and lack of police presence, narrow sidewalks, unkempt by residents, litter and poor infrastructure such as sidewalks

APPENDIX 3: ROUTE AND DESTINATION MAPPING

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

The purpose of Route & Destination Mapping are to identify anchor destinations in the neighborhood, to study how people choose to move from one to the other, and how connected they are to transit. It is a tool that should encourage interactive participation and an insightful discussion of issues and opportunities, as well as a brainstorming session for improvements.

This tool is designed to bring community members together in a workshop environment and to help identify key neighborhood destinations, to shed light on their real use, as well as the role they play in community life. By mapping participants' preferred routes on the aerial reveals pedestrians' travel patterns and therefore the environmental qualities that might be influencing their route selection. Understanding how each destination in a community can be a better place – and how transit connects to that place – can help a community frame a revitalization strategy that builds on the partners that operate or control those destinations.

The activity gives facilitators and participants a more complete sense of the main local destinations, how they connect (or not) to each other and to transit. The map provides transit agencies, who are outsiders, with a preliminary understanding of where residents go on a regular basis and how they prefer to get there. Expected outcomes included:

- A list of destinations
- A working map with key issues, opportunities, and routes
- Feedback regarding the tool itself and its administration

PROCESS

At each situation, the research team used the Assessment Maps prepared earlier and enlarged them so they could be located on a easel, wall, or table, and had specific questions that were to be addressed during the mapping session.

During a facilitated workshop, attendees were briefed on the scope and purpose of the project and then given a PowerPoint presentation regarding the role of transportation in community life and ways in which transit riders can become involved in using transit facilities to achieve a range of community development and public space enhancement goals. After the PowerPoint presentation, the attendees were instructed to engage in the following two activities:

- **Destination Mapping** – which revolved around locating destinations, facilitators encouraging participants to identify important places, and stakeholders using key questions. They identified local institutions, businesses, transit stops, and common public spaces. Using colored dots, participants marked destinations on a large map. They then located personal destinations, such as home, school, work, etc. With different colored dots, facilitators then asked participants to

locate positive places, problematic places, and places with potential. Simultaneously, facilitators listed the destinations on flip charts and wrote down observations and opinions that corresponded to each of the dots.

- **Route Mapping** – which revolved around identifying routes between those previously established destinations. Using another set of questions as guides, participants traced the routes on the map and explained why they took one route instead of another and described the obstacles that they normally encountered. In this case involvement occurred on more of an individual level; often participants walked over to the map and traced their paths themselves. Simultaneously, facilitators jotted down the reasons participants gave for choosing or avoiding each route.

Throughout the discussion, a minute taker should take notes and document “the stories”; each destination’s best and worst attributes, as well as the reasons for pedestrians’ choice of routes. The notes from the workshop are then organized into Issues, Opportunities and Next Steps.

The outcome of the workshop was a large map on which the destination dots were placed and the travel routes drawn. This map can provide a preliminary understanding of where residents go on a regular basis, how they prefer to get there and why, and why more direct routes to destinations may be avoided.

RESULTS

The main Destination & Route Mapping exercise was done on March 10, 2009 during a Stakeholder meeting with the Malcolm X Merchants’ Association. In collaboration with the Bridge Street Development Corporation, PPS identified key stakeholders in the neighborhood and invited them to participate in the workshop. One of the stakeholders provided an adequate space within which a presentation could be given and where the meeting and discussion could take place.

Participants mapped 23 destinations in the neighborhood and identified several informal uses that they enjoyed. Many of the destinations were either on Malcolm X or Lewis Avenues, which are commercial corridors. Participants identified problematic areas, such as parking lots and poorly-kept garbage drop-offs that detracted from a street’s walkability and acted as a barrier. They also identified the Utica Avenue plaza as a major destination in need of improvement, and walking routes identified at the meeting showed that participants actually avoid walking to by and around the plaza, preferring more attractive neighborhood streets. The most recurring, central reasons cited for route choice were to avoid vehicular traffic noise and conflicts, to circumvent unsafe and lonely-feeling streets, and to take more comfortable, aesthetically pleasing routes instead.

The outcome of the workshops was a large map on which the destination dots were placed and the travel routes drawn. It provides both community residents and planners with a preliminary understanding of where residents go on a regular basis, how they

prefer to get there and why other routes, though more direct, are avoided. The findings included some of the following issues:

- Utica-Fulton Intersection: Despite being an important transit hub with significant capacity, transportation modes do not converge successfully at Utica Plaza. The subway and bus systems do not connect to each other or to the pedestrian realm effectively or safely. The roadway and the right of way give priority to motorized vehicles and make it dangerous and uncomfortable to cross the Fulton-Utica intersection. Right turns on Fulton (South onto Utica and North onto Malcolm X) put pedestrians and cyclists at a constant disadvantage and at risk. Participants emphasized the difficulty in walking from the SE corner of the intersection, diagonally towards Utica Plaza on the NW one (i.e. to go from the B25 bus stop, to the B46 bus stop).
- B46-Southbound Bus Stop: There is heavy bus ridership on the south-bound B46, but the focal access point to this line is the inadequate and overcrowded bus stop on Malcolm X and Utica.
- Utica Plaza: Even though participants identified Utica Plaza as a major neighborhood and transit destination, they described the routes they take to avoid it. Transit users in the NE (i.e. residents in Breevort Houses) prefer to walk west to Stuyvesant then South to the Subway stop by Fulton Park. They avoid Bainbridge between Patchen & Malcolm X because it is regarded as a “tough block”, due in part to poor lighting and lack of maintenance.
- Fulton & Troy Intersection: Traffic moves fast along the curving street and traffic signs are not successful in giving pedestrians a feeling of safety and comfort. Although the landscaped median is well maintained, it does not support smooth circulation nor does it help street users (cyclists, pedestrians, and motorized vehicles) better negotiate the crossing.
- Pedestrian-vehicular conflicts: Participants pointed to the lack of mid-block crossings, stop signs at intersections, and excessive traffic as the reasons for avoiding a particular route.
- Confusing signage: There is no signage indicating that Utica becomes Malcolm X north of Fulton. The name of the subway stop is also misleading, as none of the subway exits are actually on Utica. The uncomfortable and uninviting environment on Utica Ave makes it among the least popular streets for transit users and pedestrians. Travel south of Fulton is usually done in a vehicle – either people drive or they ride the bus.
- Utica Avenue Streetscape: The most significant barrier to walking on Utica Avenue is the poorly maintained streetscape. The entrance to Jackie Robinson Housing development is through a parking lot, which is unattractive and blocked off from the street. The fenced-off and broken tennis courts west of Utica Ave.

are an extraordinary obstacle for pedestrians to gain access to transit (i.e. the Subway entrance on the south side of Fulton Avenue and the B46 bus stops on Utica Ave.). Sidewalks on are in disrepair, hand rails are bent out of shape, and fences line the sidewalks along the tennis courts and the school.

APPENDIX 4: WALK-IT AUDIT

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

The purpose of the Walk-it is to get participants to assess and articulate their experience walking to a transit stop or station as well as the quality of the environment along the way. Walk-it was structured so that participants consider their experience generally, on multiple levels, and then record their first-hand experiences.

Many existing walking audits focus only on spatial-physical qualities and design elements: Walk-it is intended to challenge this somewhat restrictive format by encouraging participants to think experientially -- to make observations based on their experience and not solely on items to be checked off a list.

PROCESS

The routes used during the Walk-it exercise are pre-selected by the research team. They were based on survey results and the results of the Destination mapping tool. The participants of the Walk-it exercise are broken up into smaller groups, and each smaller group is given a digital camera. Researchers then lead participants through walking tours, instructing them on how to fill out the form, what to look at, and how to evaluate the route and the key sites along the route. Each participant is given a map that shows the street sections to be covered, as well as some questions regarding the experience of the walk that the group had to respond to. A group volunteer is charged with the task of writing down the group's ideas and observations on the map, and another participant takes pictures. Then, back at the venue, each group reviews their notes and reports back to the rest.

WORKSHOP #1

The first Walk-it was piloted by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the Bedford-Stuyvesant pilot site on Feb. 13, 2009. On this occasion, participants were divided into three groups. Along with a facilitator, each of them walked and evaluated a separate route. A total of 11 members of the TAC completed the exercise, which was followed by an open discussion for evaluating and further developing the tool.

Participants were professionals in the field of transportation planning and not members of the community or familiar with the neighborhood. In this version of the Walk-it Audit, the routes had predetermined stops at key public spaces that the research team had chosen. Having these stops proved to be somewhat antithetical to the open experience of a route because it made the walk too prearranged and rigid. The research team realized that community members should be able to identify what key places for them it made sense to focus on. In terms of the format and layout, participants suggested a bigger, but simpler map with more space for notes.

WORKSHOP #2

The following month, on March 10, 2009 it was tested for a second time with the Malcolm X Merchants Association (MXMA), a group of stakeholders that was contacted through one of the TAC members. A total of ten participants met at a venue provided by one of the merchants, where they were given a PowerPoint presentation. Facilitators then divided them into two groups, each of which evaluated a route on Malcolm X Blvd, in between Fulton and Bainbridge Streets. The two groups walked the same route, in opposite directions and reconvened at the venue. Participants discussed observational notes and pictures and consolidated individual maps into a large aerial.

The Walk-it was revised and re-tested in the same neighborhood, with the MXMA. Unlike the TAC members, merchants were not transportation specialists. They did, however, have a deep understanding of local routes, a personal history in the neighborhood, and a working relationship with the community. During the walk-it exercise, the merchants came to consensus regarding their main problems with Malcolm X Blvd. and the vision that they had for its future. They identified the plaza at Utica Avenue as the biggest Placemaking opportunity and as a catalyst for the future development of Malcolm X as a great street. The map was made bigger and clearer and the table for notes/comments was removed. Also, the questions for discussion in the Afterthoughts section were revised and made more specific: short-term/low-cost ideas for improvement, strategic partnerships within the community, etc.

Issues Identified

- Parking lot on the west side of Malcolm X, in between Fulton and Chauncey is gated and has underutilized space. It is also a smelly, dirty site for dumping garbage (often with rats; it is an obstacle that people have to go around).
- There are many open areas in the neighborhood that could serve a public good, but are closed off. Ownership is unclear and maintenance responsibility is avoided. Among these areas, the tennis courts west of Utica, south of Fulton have broken pavement that make them unusable and fences that make them inaccessible. Do they belong to the school? The other tennis courts east of Malcolm X, in Jackie Robinson Park, are closed off to the public and available only to people taking \$30 classes.
- Walking is not given priority over other modes, there is no civic culture around walking. There are not enough marked walkways or crosswalks; there is no respect for pedestrians. Qualities of good pedestrian environments are entirely absent in some blocks. There is no crosswalk on Malcolm X and Marion, where Malcolm X curves, making it dangerous for pedestrians that are left with no alternative than to jaywalk.
- Traffic on Fulton and Malcolm X is too fast.
- Wayfinding is not easy in the neighborhood, especially on Malcolm X Blvd. There is a missed opportunity with poor/lack of signage that could guide transit riders up Malcolm X to new retail and destinations. Transit riders have no idea of what is in the immediate vicinity.
- There is very little seating on Malcolm X Blvd., where many new shops are opening.

Opportunities

- Greener blocks in the neighborhood, especially on Malcolm X to promote strolling.
- Good Tidings Church could provide better lighting and take down their gate to create a comfortable waiting area for buses and an open space that echoes the plaza on the opposite corner.
- Light-up the neighborhood and use lighting as a catalyst to bring people up from the transit hub into Malcolm X Blvd.
- Connect the Plaza to Malcolm X not just through design, but through programming; give people a reason to travel along Malcolm X Blvd.
- Create a destination around the B46 bus stop: a place for people to eat, rest, socialize, play –all while they wait for the bus. Also a dynamic, happening place –an anchor for the neighborhood, and a gateway to Malcolm X.
- Use transit stops and signage to advertise local assets and neighborhood destinations.
- Bump-outs on corners: put something on them (adopt a bump-out program), opportunity to add character, fun, personality to Malcolm X Blvd.
- Add seating on Malcolm X.
- Find and celebrate neighborhood icons through art and signage, while also encouraging them to become more involved in community activities. i.e. *Butch* from Malcolm X Pizza, who is a local institution and a DJ.
- Find a new image for the plaza that may include a new name (suggested: Harmony Plaza), more color and unity through signage (banners, flags, poles), etc. Merchants and neighboring institutions can get together to sponsor it.
- Install an info kiosk in the plaza with information (bulletin board) about activities and programs. The kiosk can also become a defining anchor for the Plaza and the neighborhood, raising awareness of the plaza as a destination.
- Better seating/ that accommodates different users and different uses: playing chess, eating, chatting.
- Nursery/Childcare with play area for local transit users by the plaza; create an integral family destination around transit at the plaza.

Potential Partnerships

- Jackie Robinson Foundation: JR Day, event with partners and activities that bounce off the park
- Partners & Stakeholders: DOT, Parks & Rec, City Agencies, Congress Woman, Housing Authorities, Bridge Street Dev. Corp, MXMA, Jackie Robinson Foundation, Farmers' Market, PS262, PS21, Boys & Girls HS
- EMPOWERMENT: Find grants for doing improvements

WORKSHOP #3

On August 6, 2009 the Walk-it was piloted for the third time in Bedford-Stuyvesant. The site was an amazing community garden that was built and managed by the Brooklyn Rescue Mission, a local church organization that provides assistance to underserved members of the community.

Participants were organized by the research team and local partners. The organizers provided refreshment and paid participants a stipend of \$20. Twenty-seven participants attended the focus group, with most of them part of Global Kids, Inc., an organization focused on inspiring urban youth to become engaged community leaders. This

approach recognizes that community members' participation and input should be valued and compensated properly.

At the workshop, participants were given a short presentation explaining the activity and describing the route that they were about to walk. The PIE exercise, discussed later, was also posted on the wall facing the focus group. It was not fully tested in this environment, but was used more as a tool to prompt discussion about public space and transportation in the community, and to open participants up to looking at their streets critically.

Tasks were divided among each of the groups so that every team member was actively participating and playing a part within the greater whole. The results of the Walk-it Audit identified the following topic areas and specific issues.

Neighborhood Destinations

- Park at Malcolm X and Chauncey
- Stores on Malcolm X
- Fulton Park
- Fulton Plaza
- Church on Malcolm X
- Utica Ave. Subway Station
- Fulton Park
- Streets in general (lots of kids playing, people working on cars)

Needed Uses

- More community centers
- Greater diversity of restaurants
- Food vendors on Fulton in between Stuyvesant and Malcolm X
- Healthy food stores and a permanent farmers market

Concerns about Violence

- Affects family life, mothers not wanting their kids to hang out outside after dark
- Participants were very aware of the heavy police presence in the neighborhood. Many didn't like it but at the same time recognized that having police in the neighborhood was necessary considering existing tensions.
- Security cameras may help ease concerns

Physical Improvements that Would Improve Public Space

- Flowers, beautifying the streets
- Seating
- More shade
- How public spaces that people want to use create an eyes-on-the-street effect
- How to get people to care about their neighborhood
- Sports fields, basketball courts, physical spaces that would enable positive programming
- Curb extensions on corners of Malcolm X – space that could be used for Placemaking, adopted by local merchants, both physical and partnership recommendation

- Boarded up stores and roll down gates create an unwelcoming environment BUT if you don't use them you are going to get robbed – Brooklynite Gallery succeeds with its gate

Programming

- Program public spaces, parks so that there are activities while parents are at work, activities after school, most importantly, activities that youth will be interested in
- Lack of youth programs and activities, having programs that appeal to youth would encourage them to use the space more constructively

Existing Public Spaces that Could Use Improvement

- Lots of places, they just need to be more inviting
- Park at Malcolm X and Chauncey – waste of space, why are there tennis courts if no one is playing?
- Fulton Plaza – more chairs and benches, people waiting for the bus – connecting bus stop with the plaza, stuff for kids to do, combining amenities along with things to do, more green, no “sticky” elements, improved retail
- Jackie Robinson Park – make the bb court bigger, put seats around it, make the park bigger
- Fulton Park – it is nice but not a lot their for youth to do
- Neighborhood Streets – get lots of use, how can they be further developed? Should this activity be redirected to improved parks?

Bus Stops

- Marion St., it's all the back sides of buildings – the responsibility of these business to not turn their back on Marion, murals

General Neighborhood Cohesion

- Quiet streets
- Pedestrian friendly

General Aesthetic of Streets and Businesses Street repair

- Improve dilapidated storefronts
- Improve lighting
- Cleaning up graffiti
- People cleaning up after their pets
- More trash cans

Empty Lots/Vacant Storefronts

- How to use them constructively
- BRM as an example of what they can become
- Who owns the lots? As an important starting point
- “Missing teeth”
- “Poison lots”
- Increase retail occupancy

Increasing/Vacant Storefronts

- A community center, youth center

APPENDIX 5: PLACE IMAGINATION EXERCISE (PIE)

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

The Place Imagination Exercise (PIE) is a simple, do-it-yourself photo montage board that showcases images of best practices for a public space in a creative, stimulating manner. It uses photographs that inspire participants to generate ideas for improving public spaces in their neighborhood. The tool was piloted in a variety of settings, both alone and in conjunction with other tools.

The PIE creates an opportunity for “people on the street” to give their point of view on what the opportunities and challenges are within their public space, streets, and transit service. The informal/fun nature and practicality of the PIE makes it readily available to everybody, and is easy to reproduce, adapt, and replicate.

PROCESS

The PIE was tested as a complement and aid to the surveying and Walk-it tools in Bedford-Stuyvesant. It was administered by trained surveyors at the plaza at Malcolm X Boulevard and Fulton St, one of the main surveying sites. The surveyors asked passersby to respond to questions regarding how they would like to improve the plaza, with the images in the PIE as potential ideas/points of reference. Specific questions related to how the plaza could be made more comfortable and attractive, and how it could serve and attract a diverse group of people – seniors to children – from all walks of life in the community.

The selection of the images for the PIE was done strategically, and the montages were set up so that the pictures could be varied depending on the site and the audience. Most of the images came from PPS’s online database [<http://www.pps.org/imagedb/>] of best practices around the world. However, images were added that reflected the local character of the neighborhood at hand and that reflected the local community.

The PIE chart itself was taped to a bus stop shelter that was adjacent to the surveying station. Participants engaged in conversation next to the PIE chart, and their input was written on a large notepad.

Aside from using the PIE in a public setting, it was administered as part of two workshops in Bedford-Stuyvesant that PPS conducted. The most significant and concentrated use of the PIE was during the second workshop, where it was the opening activity of the workshop, and was intended to spark discussion and frame the remainder of the event by providing ideas and talking points for participants and PPS staff to reference. The PIE was described after a brief introduction and answers/comments were written on a large notepad by a facilitator. The questions posed to the audience asked about favorite and least favorite streets, favorite and least favorite public spaces, and the reasons behind those responses. The workshop was outdoors and the PIE panels were simply taped to the nearest surface. The main component of the workshop was the Walk-It Audit, but the PIE was used to open the workshop and as a point of reference to generate ideas.

RESULTS

The results of the PIE at the Utica Plaza included many amenities that could be provided:

- Fountain
- A Place for kids to play
- Improve shops – supermarket is not offering enough variety
- More food carts in the plaza; they provide better choices than storefronts
- More shade in the form of trees, umbrellas, or tables
- Board games, such as chess; this would get “old timers” out into the plaza
- Fix concrete; it is hard for elderly women and/or people in heels to walk through the plaza
- Seating area with trees and a fountain
- More places to sit for people waiting to take bus, cabs, or cars
- Larger police presence
- Place to relax with a fountain, tables, seating, umbrellas, and other creature comforts
- Public art, preferably sculpture
- Public art from students that attend nearby high school, or other community based art
- Benches and chairs that accompany an activity, such as chess, bocce ball, or other games
- Food court that has a lot of food vendors – this would make the place more pleasant and provide economic development opportunities
- Better security; more lights, police presence
- Improved snow shoveling
- Better shops