

June 2009

Dear Friends and Neighbors

This summer, the Jamaica Center BID celebrates its 30th Anniversary!

For thirty years, one of New York City's first business improvement districts - Jamaica Center BID - has served this dynamic and vibrant community by providing much needed services to over three hundred businesses in Jamaica, Queens.

Founded in July 1979 to bolster a community hurt by urban disinvestment, the BID's mission has been to revitalize the district and create an harmonious greater Jamaica by providing much needed supplemental sanitation services, physical improvements, promotion and marketing, and to act as an advocate on behalf of the district.

The BID's sanitation team keeps the sidewalks clean and in good condition 365-days a year. The organization's small, but dedicated, office staff work diligently to market the district - hosting year-round events, implementing borough and city-wide advertising campaigns, publishing a map & guide, greeters distributing information at the BID information kiosk, and via beautification efforts, including banner and holiday lights programming. BID staff also provide much needed support services to its merchants, hosting small business events, providing information, and assisting with business-related issues.

Formed by the community, for the community, the BID (formerly referred to as a Special Assessment District) was born from the hard work and dedication of its members. Property owners, merchants, and community advocates lobbied for the creation of an organization where they could make a direct impact implementing measurable, sustained improvements in the district. Through collaboration with city and state government, this vision was realized and the BID was formed.

Today, Jamaica is thriving and the future is bright. A recent rezoning and major private and public investment has reenergized Jamaica Center. With burgeoning arts and cultural centers, a major transportation hub, a concentration of government offices, an abundance of educational institutions, and a thriving retail corridor - Jamaica Center is truly a full-service downtown. Embodying the rich and vibrant diversity of New York City, Jamaica Center is a dynamic, bustling business district, attracting hundreds of thousands of residents, workers, students, and visitors every day.

Conditions have improved immensely since the BID's inception, but its mission to improve the district's quality of life remains as relevant today as ever. For over 350 years, Jamaica Avenue has been the Borough's commercial lifeline. The BID will continue its efforts to ensure the district's commercial success for another 350 years.

The great strides made in Jamaica Center are a direct result of many individuals and organizations. The BID thanks the Jamaica Center business community, elected officials, community advocates, Mayor Michael Bloomberg, the City of New York, in particular, the Department of Small Business Services and, most importantly, the BID's committed Board of Directors.



Brigit Pinnell
Executive Director



Michael Hirschhorn
President

Streetscape

SANITATION

The BID's sanitation contractor, Academic Stone, continues to provide the same exemplary service to the district that it has for the last 15 years. Most of the crew's six team members have been keeping Jamaica Avenue clean for many years, including two who have worked here for 15 years. This year, the sanitation team logged 17,000 hours keeping the BID's 30 block fronts looking their best.

Through the sanitation crew's diligence, the sidewalks are kept impressively clean despite being one of the most heavily trafficked corridors in the city. Sidewalk debris generated from the 85,000 visitors along Jamaica Avenue is swept up and bagged. The team services the district's 74 trash receptacles, removing garbage bags and relining the bins, often multiple times a day. The trash is then carted to a nearby waste facility. This year, 820 tons of garbage filling over 36,000 large garbage bags were removed from Jamaica Avenue and Union Hall St.

BY THE NUMBERS	
Block faces cleaned:	30
Daily visitors to Jamaica Ave:	85,000
Sanitation workers:	6
Sanitation hours logged:	325/wk
Posters & stickers removed:	420/wk
Tons of garbage removed:	16/wk
Trash bags filled:	700/wk
Pavers repaired:	2,600sf/yr

MAINTENANCE

Other enhancement services the sanitation team provides is the maintenance of the district's unique sidewalk pavers, annual power washing/gum removal, removal of graffiti, stickers and posters, and snow shoveling at intersections and bus stops during inclement weather. This year, the crew removed nearly 22,000 stickers and posters, and conducted extensive sidewalk repairs - replacing 2,600sf of paver blocks.

CONDITION REPORTING & MONITORING

The BID staff and the sanitation crew continuously monitor district conditions. Infrastructure or streetscape elements that pose a safety risk, are unsightly, or in need of repair are addressed immediately - either directly remedied by the BID or reported to the appropriate city agency or property owner. This systemic tracking enables the BID to track improvements along Jamaica Avenue and Union Hall Street, and ensure a prompt response. Since October, BID staff responded to and either directly remedied or had remedied over 30 streetscape and quality of life incidents.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

One of the BID's long-term goals has been the replacement of the district's outdated and dilapidated modular street light poles. The BID successfully rallied support and secured financing to replace the poles, working closely with the Department of Transportation (DOT) in the process. The project is moving forward with the commitment of DOT's Queens Borough Commissioner Maura McCarthy and her staff. The district's two BIDs impacted by the project and Community Board 12 have expressed strong support for the project. The BID will continue to work with DOT, its stakeholders, and elected officials to ensure this project is approved and installed.

Marketing & Promotion

LOGO/IDENTITY

With a logo decades old and the organization's 30th anniversary approaching, the BID undertook a redesign of its red and black logo. Tracy Turner of Tracy Turner Design created the new logo in time for the BID's many spring marketing campaigns. The logo has received overwhelmingly positive reviews from the community and, with an updated website, has helped create a cohesive and powerful identity for the district.

EVENTS

Year round, the BID keeps the district hopping with a number of special events. During the summer, shoppers and merchants enjoy forty days of Sidewalk Sales Days. During ten long weekends during the spring, summer, and fall, merchants bring the savings outdoors. Sidewalk Sales Days is a beloved tradition that supports local businesses and enlivens the district.

Every summer, the BID hosts free walking tours that enable visitors to experience Jamaica as never before. Rife with architectural landmarks spanning 350-years, visitors will gain new insight to Queens' rich past while experiencing Jamaica's vibrant energy of today. Stops along the tour include access to the breathtaking and meticulously restored former Loew's Valencia Theater - a 4,000 seat 'Wonder Palace' built in the 1920s, and a visit to Prospect Cemetery, a hidden and serene 350-year old cemetery right in the heart of Jamaica Center. The tour concludes with a private tour, refreshments, and jazz recital at the newly restored Chapel of the Sisters.

During the Christmas season, the BID hosted Santa Land - a month of Santa visits to Jamaica Avenue. Beginning the day after Thanksgiving until a few days before Christmas, families flocked to the Multiplex Theater lobby at Jamaica Ave. and Parsons Blvd. to have their photo taken with Santa, while children and adults made sure to tell Santa their Christmas wish list.

ADVERTISING

For the BID's Back to School advertising, the BID marketed the district on three different radio stations, and partnered with WBS for special giveaways.

For its Christmas marketing, the BID redirected its advertising efforts from predominately radio to mixed media. The BID's holiday shopping advertising included a direct mail to 60,000 homes in Queens, published ads in multiple newspapers borough and citywide, and posted notices through the district.

For Mother's Day, the BID kicked off a very successful bus advertising campaign. For over a month, 100 king-sized exterior bus posters and 200 interior bus ads were seen throughout the borough, generating many calls and inquiries to the BID office. The BID also advertised in the annual Key to Queens publication.

BY THE NUMBERS

Special events:	65
Map & Guides distributed:	10,000
Shopping bags distributed:	30,000
Street banners:	52
Banners changed:	4/yr
Direct mailings sent:	60,000
Holiday light displays:	40

MAP & GUIDE

This year, the BID nearly doubled its shopping guide with new content. In addition to its list of stores and location map, the new guides contain a subway map, information on the BID walking tours, as well as a new *Sights to See* section that includes photos, locations, and descriptions of some of the district's most striking architectural and historical landmarks. The map & guides are distributed throughout the borough and by the BID's greeters.

TOUR BUS DISCOUNT PROGRAM

Jamaica Center has long been a destination for tour buses bringing visitors looking for great deals on apparel, footwear, electronics, jewelry, housewares, and more.

To keep these tour buses coming to our district, the BID has initiated new marketing efforts. The first is the creation of a *Tour Bus Welcome Pack*. The Pack offers a discount card that entitles each cardholder to discounts of 10-20% in over a dozen local stores, a BID shopping bag, and a map & guide. The BID also provides parking assistance for the buses and, thanks to McDonald's, free lunch for bus drivers.

AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

For years, the BID has welcomed shoppers to Jamaica Avenue on Saturdays. BID greeters distribute the organization's shopping bags, provide directions, report conditions and, most importantly, help create an inviting atmosphere for visitors. With a planned expansion of the program to begin at the beginning of fiscal year 2010, the BID will have an even stronger presence on Jamaica Avenue with a new welcome kiosk.

BANNER & HOLIDAY LIGHTING PROGRAMS

The BID's seasonal banner program creates a unified look for the district. The 52 banners that line the district are switched out four times a year, enhancing the look of the street and creating a strong identity for the district.

Every year during the holidays, the BID installs decorative lights along Jamaica Avenue & Union Hall Street. This last winter, the BID updated its holiday lighting program, adding new elegant streamer lights, three giant snowflakes at major intersections, and two lit "Welcome to Jamaica Center" signs. The displays lit up the district at night and created a festive holiday shopping atmosphere.

Communications & Community Outreach

NEWSLETTER & WEBSITE

As part of an effort to expand outreach efforts, the BID began publishing a quarterly newsletter in January 2009. The newsletter, written and designed in-house by BID staff, is a low-cost and effective tool for communicating pertinent information to the community. To date, the BID has published two issues and mailed them to 600 recipients.

As part of the logo redesign, the BID's website was revamped and expanded. A new section called "Do Business" provides local business owners and entrepreneurs information and resources to help them do business in Jamaica.

This year, the BID began tracking traffic to its website. Since October 1, there have been 213,000 hits to the BID website and nearly 20,000 sessions. The average daily traffic to the site is 872 hits and over 80 sessions. This average is steadily increasing with increased hits and sessions each month.

BY THE NUMBERS

Website hits since Oct:	213,000
Avg. daily website hits:	872
Newsletters mailed since Jan:	1,200

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The BID is a strong supporter of many local community organizations. For youth development, the BID supported the Midori Foundation for special music programs for children, was a strong supporter of Jamaica Kids (a non-profit day care center located in the Social Security Building), and donated to the King Manor Museum's educational and cultural programs. The BID continues to support the 103rd Community Council's National Night Out and Children's Holiday Party, and contributed to local soup kitchens during the holiday season.

Business Development

BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

Retail is Jamaica Avenue's core business. The BID works one-on-one with its merchants to provide business assistance. Whether it's helping retailers find small business loans, soliciting input on group marketing initiatives, or assisting with city services or agency issues, the BID is there to help. Connecting businesses with business assistance programs and services, the BID has a library of resources available to district merchants seeking help with their business - from retail consultants, to lenders, to networking and training events.

The BID also hosts events that bring the experts to the district. On March 25, the BID hosted a free Merchant Breakfast Symposium, where local merchants met small business lenders and learned about Capital Access tips to obtaining a loan. The BID thanks McDonald's for donating food for the event.

RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

The BID works to inform the retail community about opportunities in the district by maintaining and making available a vacancy list, collecting and providing demographic and statistical data of the community, and by contributing on retail marketing materials for the district.

Updated regularly, the vacancy list is a clearinghouse for available retail and office space in the district. Working with its partners to promote the district, the BID and Greater Jamaica Development Corporation have begun exploring immediate and long-

range retail attraction strategies. The two organizations are actively surveying shoppers and visitors to ascertain how best to direct resources and meet the needs of the community. The BID also contributed in Greater Jamaica's Retail Marketing Brochure that was distributed at the International Council of Shopping Center's (ICSC) Annual Conference in Las Vegas and the Dealmaking Conference in New York.

Looking Forward

NEXT YEAR AND BEYOND

The core needs of the community have not changed since the BID was founded thirty years ago - that of the need for a clean, safe, enjoyable district with an active, thriving commercial corridor. Although how best to achieve these goals has changed as the district evolves, the BID continues to meet new challenges and seize opportunities to foster growth in the community.

In FY2010, the BID will continue to provide the same level of sanitation services, marketing, and promotion, while expanding its business development efforts. These efforts include enhanced business assistance services with greater resources delivered to the BID business community and a short- and long-term retail development strategy in place.

With sustained effort, the BID will build upon the achievements made thus far, working closely with its community partners, to ensure Jamaica Center remains the borough and the city's commercial lifeline.

Financials

Statement of Financial Position

Assets:	2008	2007
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 224,465	\$ 228,246
Certificates of deposit	\$ 28,375	\$ 26,981
User rights receivable	\$ 4,227	\$ 2,123
Prepaid expenses	\$ 61,305	\$ 34,220
Property and equipment, net	-	\$ 2,190
Total assets	\$ 318,372	\$ 293,760
Liabilities and Net Assets:		
Liabilities	\$ 18,390	\$ 11,425
Net assets	\$ 299,982	\$ 282,335
Total	\$ 318,372	\$ 293,760

Statements of Activities

Support and Revenues:		
Assessment revenue	\$ 737,500	\$ 737,500
Net user rights revenue	\$ 13,278	\$ 12,594
Interest income	\$ 3,762	\$ 2,703
Contributions	\$ 750	\$ -
Total support and revenues	\$ 755,290	\$ 752,797
Expenses:		
Sanitation/Maintenance	\$ 354,333	\$ 373,146
Marketing/Development	\$ 142,778	\$ 164,058
Social services	\$ 14,175	\$ 10,800
Management and general	\$ 226,357	\$ 207,304
Total expenses	\$ 737,643	\$ 755,308
Increase/Decrease in net assets	\$ 17,647	\$ (2,511)

Summary of Financial Statements dated November 10, 2008, prepared by Skody, Scot & Co., CPAs PC.

A copy of the complete audited financial statements is available upon request.

Staff & Board

STAFF

Brigit Pinnell
Executive Director

Nasima Rahman
Executive Assistant

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Commissioner Robert Walsh
Bea de La Torre
Executive Director, BID Program Mgt

Office of Queens Borough
President Helen Marshall
Melva Miller
Director of Economic Dvmt

Office of Comptroller
William C. Thompson
Walter Roundtree
Community Relations

MISSION

The Jamaica Center Improvement Association (known as the Jamaica Center Business Improvement District, or "BID") was created in 1979 by state legislation, and is a not-for-profit tax-exempt organization funded by special assessments paid by the property owners. The district encompasses Jamaica Avenue from the west side of 169th St. to the east side of Sutphin Blvd. and Union Hall St. from Jamaica to Archer Avenues. We are joined by the Sutphin Blvd. BID on the west end and by the 165th St. Mall Association at the intersection of Jamaica Avenue and 165th St. to create a harmonious greater Jamaica area with mutual goals and objectives - to provide supplemental services to the district; sanitation services, litter and graffiti removal, maintenance of sidewalk brick pavers; pruning and watering of trees; promotion and marketing through a variety of initiatives; and act as an advocate on behalf of this urban downtown in the heart of Queens.

2008-2009 Annual Report
Jamaica Center BID

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