Fostering Business Cohesion: The Greater Brooklyn Business Community

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The Planning Workshop in the Master of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) program at Portland State University provides students with professional planning experience. In teams, students develop consulting contracts with clients for planning services that address regional interests and their own personal and professional interests. The Workshop provides experience in planning for constructive social and environmental change, while considering the planner’s ethical responsibility to serve the public interest. The Fostering Business Cohesion: The Greater Brooklyn Business Community study is from the Planning Workshop class of 2003.
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For additional copies of this report, please contact the Greater Brooklyn Business Association at 503-774-2832.
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The Greater Brooklyn Business Community
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*Fostering Business Cohesion: The Greater Brooklyn Business Community*
Executive Summary

Since 1996, the Greater Brooklyn Business Association (GBBA) of Portland, Oregon has worked with the community and other organizations to assist in the production of several planning documents related to the revitalization of the business environment in the Brooklyn area. Previous studies have focused primarily on transportation related planning concerns surrounding Southeast Powell Boulevard and main street community development issues associated with Southeast Milwaukie Avenue.

This study builds on previous planning efforts to provide the GBBA with:

- a profile of existing businesses;
- documentation of business concerns and planning needs;
- a document that can be used for future involvement and lobbying efforts; and
- recommendations to increase business participation and cohesion.

Information for this study was gathered through a combination of primary and secondary sources, including survey results, site visits, interviews, and the Oregon Employment Department (OED) database. Using the OED database, this study identifies and analyzes the top five industry groups within the district. The industry groups most frequently found in the district are construction-related, creative services, automotive-related, food related and health and social services.

A sample survey of businesses yielded valuable information regarding issues affecting business operations and planning concerns in the district. A copy of the survey and its results are included in this document as Appendix A. In addition to the survey, interviews of a sampling of businesses within the GBBA area were conducted in order to gather more specific qualitative information.
Based on the analysis of industry groups, historic participation levels in the district, the location of participatory businesses, and relevant planning literature, this study identified the following opportunities for the GBBA:

**Opportunity 1: Identify and Address Needs within District Sub-areas.**
Based on this study’s geospatial analysis of business locations and the level of business participation within the district, the GBBA can increase stakeholder participation by addressing specific concerns within potential sub-areas, identified within the GBBA boundaries. This study identifies four business sub-areas as examples of where the GBBA may focus initial activities.

These sub-areas are identified as:
- SE Milwaukie Avenue Sub-area
- SE 21st Avenue Sub-area
- SE Powell Boulevard Sub-area
- South Central Sub-area

**Opportunity 2: Foster Business Committees.**
Multiple interview respondents identified that the GBBA could better attract their participation if they were to form smaller industry specific committees. This is similar to committees designated to represent sub-areas but would be industry specific.

**Opportunity 3: Facilitate Industrial Ecology Practices.**
An opportunity for shared resources within and between industry groups can be explored by the GBBA. In particular, industrial ecology practices between construction interests and the creative services group may be feasible. Industrial ecology is the practice of using by-products from one industrial process as the input resources for another.
Executive Summary

Opportunity 4: Expand and Combine Marketing Efforts
Mutually beneficial marketing efforts may be possible between businesses that complement one another, such as galleries, studios, antique stores, restaurants, and other food-related businesses. Expanded marketing efforts could include street fairs, satellite shops for creative businesses in industrial areas, and other possible outlets to improve business exposure. Additionally, several businesses surveyed identified that a Brooklyn Business Directory would help them fulfill their desire to purchase goods locally and support neighboring businesses.
Introduction

The Greater Brooklyn Business Association (GBBA) was formed to advocate for business interests within and surrounding the Brooklyn Neighborhood in southeast Portland. The boundaries of the GBBA include an area approximately 1.5 square miles (866 acres) in size. The GBBA is bordered to the west by the Willamette River, to east by Southeast 39th Avenue, to the south by Southeast Steele Street, and to the north by Southeast Brooklyn and Southeast Powell Boulevards (see Map of District Boundary).

The boundaries of the GBBA extend well beyond those of the “Brooklyn Neighborhood.” According to the Brooklyn Neighborhood Plan, the Brooklyn neighborhood extends only as far east as Southeast 26th Avenue and as far south as Southeast Holgate Boulevard, however, the GBBA boundaries extend further south to Steele Street and as far east as Southeast 39th Avenue. Because the boundaries of the GBBA extend much farther than the boundaries of the traditional Brooklyn neighborhood, many businesses surveyed in conjunction with this study were surprised to find that they were represented by the Greater Brooklyn Business Association.

The businesses within the GBBA boundaries are diverse in size and industry, ranging from large heavy industrial and office uses (Union Pacific Railyards and Fred Meyer Headquarters) to small neighborhood retail and office space. State highways such as Powell Boulevard (State Highway 26) and Southeast McLoughlin Boulevard (State Highway 99) also dissect the district; fragmenting land uses within it. Further exacerbating this problem is the Union Pacific (UP) railyard, which runs northwest to southeast through the district; physically separating land uses to the east and west. These physical barriers detract not only from business to business interaction but also appear to be an obstacle for business involvement in the GBBA, as the majority of dues-paying members are located west of the UP railyards.

There are approximately 8,800 residents who live within the Brooklyn neighborhood, primarily residing in single-family residential housing constructed before World War II. As the focus of this study is to provide an assessment of business needs within the GBBA, limited discussion regarding Brooklyn residents is provided. However, where relevant to the operation and success of businesses in the district, this study will address issues pertaining to the Brooklyn residents.
Greater Brooklyn Business Association (GBBA) Boundary

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Introduction

Problem Statement

Although all businesses within the GBBA boundaries are by default members of the association, the physical and functional divisions between businesses in the district have been evident in the level of active participation in the GBBA. Less than 10-percent of GBBA members are involved in the organization (either by paying dues or attending regular GBBA meetings). Therefore, current planning and operational needs directed by the GBBA are based only on a limited portion of business interests in the district. To date, the GBBA has not performed a comprehensive needs assessment of the businesses in the district.

This study will bring a broader knowledge base to the GBBA and assist with future outreach to areas and businesses in the district that have not yet been a focus for the association. Previously, the GBBA worked with REACH Community Development in 1998 on the production of the Milwaukie Action Plan (MAP). The MAP included a survey of business interests along Milwaukie Avenue. However, this study was limited to Milwaukie Avenue and did not include the majority of the GBBA district. Similarly, a Powell Boulevard Vision study completed in 1997 focused on improvements along Powell Boulevard but did not address the needs and issues of other areas in the district.
Project Goals

The project team established a set of goals to guide and focus the research and development of the project:

**Goal 1: Provide a profile of existing businesses for the GBBA.**
To date, no comprehensive efforts have been made to characterize the business sectors in the district and their location (clustering). This study seeks to provide the GBBA with:

- Maps and a geospatial analysis of business locations
- Summary of predominant industry groups

**Goal 2: Solicit information from existing businesses to understand business concerns and planning needs.**
This study includes a business survey to provide a better understanding and analysis of business needs, interactions, and community concerns in the district. The project team also conducted field interviews with business owners to provide additional qualitative information for this study.

**Goal 3: Provide a document that can be used for future involvement and lobbying efforts.**
This document seeks to aide the GBBA’s lobbying and outreach efforts by providing qualitative and quantitative information solicited from existing businesses and relevant planning literature.

**Goal 4: Provide recommendations for the GBBA to increase business participation and cohesion.**
This document seeks to synthesize research efforts into opportunities that can be taken by the GBBA to enhance outreach efforts.
Introduction

Methodology
To better understand the business environment within the GBBA boundary, this study required gathering and analyzing both primary and secondary data.

Primary Data
This information was gathered through surveys, site visits, interviews, and a literature review. The survey was written and distributed by both e-mail and by hand. The project team conducted numerous site visits at various times of the day and week in order to assess issues such as traffic, parking and other visible characteristics of the community. The team also performed interviews with business owners and managers at their places of business. This enabled the team to view some of the interactions of businesses with the neighborhood.

Secondary Data
Secondary data sources for this project included Metro’s Regional Land Information System (RLIS), specifically zoning and tax lot information. Also incorporated was 2000 US Census Bureau Data, particularly information obtained from the American Fact Finder database. The Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District of Oregon (TriMet) furnished business and employment data. Because this data is proprietary information provided to TriMet by the Oregon Employment Department (OED), sensitive information such as business names and contact information were not utilized.

Literature on local economic development and planning analysis was reviewed and incorporated into project findings and recommendations. In addition, local publications were reviewed in order to gain knowledge on recent planning issues concerning the greater Brooklyn area. A list of these sources can be found in the Reference section of this document.

Surveys
The survey was used to build a data set leading to analysis of common needs and opportunities in the business community. The intent of the survey was to draw a sample of current Brooklyn area businesses to determine what they consider to be the advantages and disadvantages of owning a business in Brooklyn. The survey also sought information pertaining to business suppliers, customers, the nature of their business, and what services a business association should offer its members.

Due to a low initial response rate through e-mail distribution, team members obtained most survey responses from door-to-door distribution. The information collected provides valuable perspectives from Brooklyn business owners and has been incorporated into various sections of this study. In addition, the survey process provided information about the area business climate and interest in community participation to the team.
**Introductions**

In order to obtain detailed responses from survey respondents and other qualitative information, the project team interviewed approximately fifteen businesses in the district. Informal interviews were conducted when possible as the project team conducted field surveys. Information gathered from interviews is anecdotal and can be found throughout the study. Similarly, information gathered from field observations by team members is also incorporated into this study in various sections.

**SubAreas**

The analysis of employment data and progression of fieldwork revealed concentrations of businesses were located throughout the district. These areas of business concentration were more likely near the intersection of major arterials and some were in the vicinity of large employers. Additional analysis of land use and business types was conducted using geographic information systems (GIS) and fieldwork performed by project team members.

Additional secondary data was used to examine issues specific to certain areas. For example, land use and zoning information along Southeast Milwaukie Avenue was analyzed in order to explore non-conforming property use concerns identified through the interview process.
History and Context of the Greater Brooklyn Area

History of the Greater Brooklyn Area

The Brooklyn neighborhood, among Portland’s oldest, developed on the west bank of the Willamette River because of the topographical advantages. The Oregon Central Railroad (OCR) purchased right-of-way from early settler Giddeon Tibbets in 1868 and began construction soon after. Besides rail lines, OCR also built its car shops within the area. The Morrison and Steel Bridges were built in 1887 and 1888 to connect the east and west banks of the Willamette.

The original Brooklyn neighborhood was one-third larger than it is now, stretching past Powell Boulevard to Division Street on the north. Holgate Street was the southern boundary for the neighborhood as well as the City. The railroad tracks, which had been acquired by Southern Pacific, diagonally bisected the neighborhood, entering at one of the neighborhood’s largest employers, the Inman-Poulsen Lumber Mill (near the current site of the Ross Island Bridge), and exiting at the Southern Pacific rail yards and shops.

The access to jobs supplied by the railroad and sawmill helped bring a new, largely immigrant, working class population to the Brooklyn neighborhood. Many of these immigrants were German, Scandinavian, Italian, and Polish, and traveled to their jobs by using the electric streetcar that connected Brooklyn to the rest of the City along present day Southeast Milwaukie Avenue. The East Side Railroad Company constructed an electric streetcar line along present day Milwaukie Avenue in 1892, which enabled many to travel to their jobs on the west side. The Pacific Railway Light and Power Company opened “a large car shop complex at 17th Avenue and Center Street” where a TriMet bus garage now exists. (Brooklyn Neighborhood Plan (BNP), 1991)

Periods of economic downturn through the years have forced the closing of mills and factories and contributed to a decrease in immigrant population. However, relics of the cultural heritage of the district, especially of the German settlers, still exist. Rhein and Rhone streets are located in the district and a popular German deli (Edelweiss) is also located in the district at Southeast 13th Avenue and Powell Boulevard.

The Ross Island Bridge was built in 1926 to serve the entire region as an access point for Highway 26 (Powell Boulevard). The placement of the bridge and the intensification of Powell Boulevard “devastated the core of the neighborhood and affected the physical and the socio-economic composition of the neighborhood.” (BNP, 1991) At this time the northern boundary of the neighborhood moved from Division to Powell.
Between 1933 and 1937 Highway 99E, which would become known as McLoughlin Boulevard, was extended and improved, creating a barrier between Brooklyn and the Willamette River.

During World War II there was a brief resurgence in industrial and commercial activities in Brooklyn. After the war, employment and population began to fall again. The Inman-Poulson sawmill was closed in 1954 because it could not keep up with industry advances. The rail yards were also affected as diesel locomotives began to replace the steam driven trains.

Residential access to employment in other parts of the city was also adversely affected when the streetcar stopped running around 1950. The automobile, by this time, was already extremely popular and was allowing people more residential location choices beyond Brooklyn.

During the 1950s and 60s, residents began leaving the Brooklyn neighborhood and businesses reliant on a local consumer base were forced to close their doors. Brooklyn Action Corps (BAC) was formed in 1962 to counter these changes in the neighborhood. The formation of BAC was a critical step in bringing a united representation to Brooklyn. However, Brooklyn maintained a somewhat seedy reputation throughout the 1970s and 80s, earned primarily by the Aladdin Theater, which ran X-rated movies.

This trend, however, began to shift after Paul Schuback purchased the Aladdin Theater and the adjacent violin shop in the late 1980s. The neighborhood, particularly near the intersection of Southeast Milwaukie Avenue and Powell Boulevard, has stabilized considerably since this time. More recently, a small but stable artist community has established itself in the district, helping to create a distinct identity in the district (Stout, 2001).
History of the Greater Brooklyn Business Association

The current Greater Brooklyn Business Association (GBBA) was formed in 1996 to represent the views and interests of its members, and to serve as a collective voice to the city and other local public agencies. All businesses located within the defined GBBA boundaries are considered members and annual dues are considered voluntary. Traditionally less than 10-percent of the nearly 600 GBBA members pay dues. The GBBA holds one annual all-association meeting typically in April. In addition, the GBBA Board of Directors meets once a month.

Since its formation, the GBBA has sponsored and participated in numerous studies and outreach projects in the district. These include:

- **“Envisioning Changes / Improving Places,” 1997:** This study included design options for critical nodes along Powell Boulevard, including its intersection with Milwaukie Avenue and Southeast 39th Avenue and Powell Park (28th and Powell). Fred Meyer was critical in the funding of this study.

- **The Milwaukie Action Plan (MAP), 1998:** The GBBA participated in this REACH Community Development project by providing financial support and participating in community workshops. The MAP sought business owner involvement in a plan for streetscape and business improvements on Milwaukie Avenue.

- **On-going Business Seminars:** In conjunction with US Bank, the GBBA has sponsored worker training and other business seminars for members.

- **The Brooklyn Artwalk:** The GBBA has promoted and supported a “Brooklyn Artwalk” in which independent artists in the district showcase their art work within their studios located along Milwaukie Avenue, south of Powell.

- **Milwaukie/Powell Boulevard Shared Parking Agreement, 2002:** The GBBA coordinated an agreement between businesses along Milwaukie Avenue near Powell which led to parking for evening theater patrons in a nearby bank parking lot that is otherwise empty after five o’clock.

- **Neighborhood Kiosk:** The GBBA is currently working with the City of Portland and the local neighborhood association to construct a neighborhood informational kiosk near the intersection of Milwaukie Avenue and Rhine Street.

This study is provided to build upon these past planning efforts in the district.
Survey Summary

In order to solicit broad feedback from businesses in the district, the team administered a business survey that sought the following information:

- Patterns of interaction between businesses in Brooklyn and also within the region.
- Qualitative feedback regarding the advantages and disadvantages of doing business in the district.
- The extent to which the GBBA and its services are known in the district.
- What businesses critical to your operations would you most like to see in Brooklyn?

Responses related to the above items can be seen in Appendix A. Fifty-one businesses provided survey responses and many of the questions permitted multiple responses.

Thirty percent (30%) of respondents identified that proximity to downtown Portland was an advantage to their business operations. This was closely followed by twenty-seven percent (27%) of respondents who indicated that accessibility to customers was an advantage. Major streets were seen as an advantage to sixteen percent (16%) of the respondents, closely followed by affordable property and lease rates (15%). Proximity to the railroad was mentioned by only one percent (1%) of the respondents. Insufficient parking (36%) was cited as the leading disadvantage to doing business in Brooklyn. Other leading disadvantages cited were: traffic (21%) and crime (20%).

The project team sought to better understand the extent to which businesses rely on local suppliers for goods and services. To accomplish this, the survey asked businesses to indicate where their suppliers were located. In response, forty-one percent (41%) indicated their suppliers were in the Portland area, while twenty-one percent (21%) responded their suppliers were located in the Northwest (Oregon, Washington, Idaho, N. California) and twenty percent (20%) indicated their suppliers were nationwide. Only fourteen percent (14%) of businesses surveyed indicated their suppliers were located in Brooklyn.

Because the Brooklyn area has a wide diversity of businesses and has historically been home to industrial and manufacturing firms, the team was interested in how much commerce was occurring between businesses located within the GBBA boundaries. While the team had suspected that raw materials might garner a majority of responses, (37%) indicated that they purchased office supplies and services from businesses in the Brooklyn area. Eighteen percent (18%) of businesses responded that they purchased retail goods while seventeen percent (17%) indicated they purchased raw materials in Brooklyn.

Because Brooklyn has historically been an industrial and manufacturing area occupied by firms that produce a great deal of by-products, the team included purchase of
"recycled or reused goods" as a choice on the survey to learn if these by-products were included in the production stream of other businesses. Only three percent (3%) of the respondents reported they purchased recycled or reused goods in Brooklyn.

Thirty-nine percent (39%) of respondents indicated they had customers located in the Portland area. Twenty-three percent (23%) responded they had customers in the Northwest and twenty-two percent (22%) indicated having customers in Brooklyn. It was noted that among businesses surveyed, a greater percentage had customers in the Brooklyn area (22%) than those relying on suppliers (14%) in the area. Businesses surveyed indicated that twenty-eight percent (28%) of their customers located in Brooklyn were retail firms, seventeen percent (17%) were services, and fifteen percent (15%) were construction firms and other types of businesses.

A portion of the survey was designed to determine the level of familiarity with GBBA services and the types of services the GBBA should offer.

Only twenty-two percent (22%) of the businesses surveyed responded they were familiar with services offered by the GBBA while thirty-nine percent (39%) indicated that they were somewhat familiar with services offered. An equal number of respondents (39%) were not familiar with the services offered by the GBBA.
When asked what services a business association should offer its members, respondents indicated equally (21%) that the association should offer assistance with city planning issues and business resources. Lobbying and representation of business interests (20%) and networking (18%) were the third and fourth most frequently cited services. Business district identity (13%) and business education (7%) were identified by fewer businesses as services that a business association should offer. It should be noted the GBBA currently provides many of the services noted as desirable for a business association to offer.
Characterization of Industry Groups

Data from the Oregon Employment Department (OED) identified almost 600 businesses within the GBBA boundaries. These businesses were further sorted by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) numbers to identify any significant groupings within each industrial classification. Businesses within an industry group may be associated with any part of a vertical industrial chain, from raw materials to manufacturing, wholesale, retail, and services.

Initially, data was sorted using a two-digit SIC code which indicated that the largest grouping of business types in the GBBA area is Wholesale Trade businesses (SIC code: 50), followed by Health Services (80) and Business Services (73). This method, however, failed to account for more specific industry groupings that interact directly with each other.

In order to more accurately reflect trade associations within industry groups, similar businesses from several SIC categories were grouped based on more specific information provided by four-digit SIC codes. For example, although SIC code 1711 represents "Plumbing/Heating/Air Conditioning" and has a different root SIC code (17) than SIC code 1521 (Single-Family Housing Construction), it is clear they are both part construction related businesses. After reviewing the data provided by the OED, new business groupings indicated that the following business groups have the most frequent occurrence rate in the GBBA.

- Construction-related Businesses (14%)
- Creative Service Businesses (12%)
- Automotive-related Businesses (8%)
- Food-related Businesses (11%)
- Health and Social Services (11%)

The following sections further address these industry groups.
Characterization of Industry Groups

Construction-related Businesses

Construction-related businesses represent the largest concentration of business groups in the GBBA area with 82 firms identified. In this regard, the GBBA area is similar to the Central Eastside Industrial District, to the north, which is also predominated by building and construction businesses. (Bilton, 2000) This business grouping includes firms that provide large and small general construction services, along with more specialized services such as plumbing and heating and air conditioning. In addition to providers of services, the greater Brooklyn area is home to a large number of wholesale and retail businesses that supply construction firms and the general public with tools and materials. Finally, there are a few retail construction-related businesses such as floor covering stores which provide goods to those that prefer to do their own home improvements.

Thus, construction-related businesses were found as part of several larger SIC categories. These included:

- Construction (SIC 15 & 17)
- Retail (SIC 32)
- Wholesale (SIC 50)
- Manufacturing (SIC 57)

Several of the construction-related firms also indicated they use suppliers of office services and materials in the Brooklyn area. Therefore, in an indirect way, business service related firms are also integral parts of this larger business grouping. This business grouping is an essential contributor to industry in a larger regional context and within the GBBA district. The regional significance of construction-related supplies and manufacturing in the Brooklyn area is tied to its convenient access to transportation corridors (both rail and river freight).
Characterization of Industry Groups

The geographical dispersion of construction-related business in the area is fairly uniform with a slight concentration along Southeast 21st and along the rail yard. Particular business types stand out in the construction-related business group. These include single-family housing construction firms; plumbing, heating and air conditioning contractors; paper and paper hanging companies; brick, stone and related materials wholesale; and lumber, plywood, and millwork wholesale.

Interviews were conducted with four construction-related firms of varying sizes and focus in order to elicit a closer view of particular experiences and concerns within the Brooklyn area.

- Firms interviewed included:
  - a roofing business
  - two heating and air contractors
  - a marble products manufacturing firm

In addition to interviews, the project team received surveys from several firms in the construction-related business group. Responses from these surveys are addressed in the appendices of this report.

All of the firms interviewed have been in the Brooklyn area for over ten years. Two of the businesses have been in the neighborhood for over 25 years and one of the businesses has been in the same location for over 60 years. One business interviewed was closing due to the rising costs of doing business and increasingly difficult regulatory restrictions.

Only one of the businesses indicated they deliberately chose the Brooklyn area as their place of business over other areas in the city. For instance, one business indicated that they located in the Brooklyn area because of a merger with a business that owned property in the current business location. Three firms cited central proximity as a general reason for locating in Brooklyn. All firms in this business group stressed the importance of having easy freeway access because their clients and job sites are located throughout the region. Two of the firms indicated a majority of their suppliers are in the Brooklyn area or Central Eastside Industrial District. Two of the firms indicated that although some of the suppliers are outside the region, their firm's proximity to freight shipping facilities is convenient. As will be discussed in subsequent sections of this document, the Union Pacific railyards are a significant player in regional commerce and specific efforts are being made by the City to preserve their function.

All of the firms indicated that they have not been active in the GBBA, however, two of the firms indicated they are involved with industry specific trade organizations. When asked what they might gain from a local business association, such as the GBBA, most indicated that they could most use assistance with issues pertaining to City of Portland.
Characterization of Industry Groups

Construction-Related Businesses within the GBBA Boundary

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Characterization of Industry Groups

regulations and taxes. One firm also indicated that it would be helpful if the business association could assist with localized issues such as disposing of abandoned cars or other nuisance issues. General concerns about the surrounding neighborhoods included the difficulty of access and egress for company trucks on Southeast Powell Boulevard and the availability and convenience of parking.

Summary
The construction-related businesses in the Brooklyn area are incredibly diverse and represent both large (50+ employees) and small firms (less than 5 employees). Larger firms indicated that the GBBA is more apt to be of assistance in public policy issues and matters of inter-business cooperation. For instance, one large firm recently upgraded its facilities by moving into a new building suited for future growth. It now finds itself with surplus office space. Because the site is within a General Industrial (IG1) zoning district that precludes office uses greater than 25,000 square feet, it has not been allowed to rent out its excess office space. In the meantime, nearly 7,000 square feet of brand new office space sits empty. Thus, City zoning and other restrictions are of grave concern to businesses in the district.
Creative Service Businesses

The creative service business group may not have as many employees as other business sectors in the district, but is an important beacon of economic growth. The cultural and economic significance of the “creative class” has been a key area of focus for Mayor Vera Katz, who in an April 4th, 2003 State of the City speech to the City Club invoked the words of Richard Florida from his book The Rise of the Creative Class, (2002). In her speech, Katz stated that “His (Florida’s) research shows that the presence of creative people in a city leads to innovation that produces urban economic development.”

Florida, a professor of regional economic development at Columbia University, studied an emerging class of workers in the United States that are helping to drive creative businesses such as software programming and development, information technologies and graphic design. He sees this creative class of workers as being the main force behind the “New Economy,” often defined as “the capture, manipulation, transmission and consumption of information in digital form...in our economy.” (Business Week) For a city such as Portland to flourish in this new economic structure it must be attractive to those creative workers. These workers in turn will attract the companies and businesses that support the New Economy. According to Florida, a city needs to be creative itself to attract creative people. But what makes a creative city? (Florida, 2002)

Florida uses a combination of indices (the Diversity Index, the High-Tech Index, the Bohemian Index) to rank Metropolitan Statistical Areas in terms of creativity, with Portland sixteenth in MSAs of over one million people. Florida indicates creative people are drawn to cities that are diverse and welcoming to many lifestyles, have solid educational systems and support a vibrant and strong arts and culture community (Florida, 2002).

 Portions of Portland’s neighborhoods, such as the Pearl District and areas along Alberta Street, typify Portland’s arts and cultural community. Both areas host open gallery and studio nights and have built reputations as creative hot spots for the city. Each of these areas has faced problems of previous decline, similar to the Brooklyn Neighborhood. The Pearl District was the original site of settlement for Portland and grew to be the City’s primary warehouse district due to its access to the railroad. As railroad transit became less economically feasible the district emptied of businesses and the large warehouses became ideal studio spaces for many artists. It was the early artists who set the tone for the district, which over the last ten to twenty years, through public and private support, has become a thriving neighborhood with many small and large galleries, boutiques and restaurants. (Pearl District Development Plan, 2001).
Characterization of Industry Groups

As many artists were priced out of this district, they began to move to neighborhoods such as Alberta and Brooklyn to set up their studios. Many artists now call the Greater Brooklyn neighborhood home. Madeline Janovec has lived in the area for many years and currently has a studio on the southeast corner of Southeast Milwaukie Avenue and Southeast Holgate Boulevard. Janovec credits Brooklyn's strong sense of community and interaction between residents as one reason why the area is attracting so many artists and other creative services. (Janovec, 2003)

The Brooklyn Art Walk started six years ago and has "grown and grown" since then says Janovec. The Art Walk is a yearly event in which the neighborhood's artists open their studios or galleries to the public. Over four hundred people attended last year's Art Walk, twice as many that turned out for Portland Open Studios, a similar event that operates on a city-wide scale. While the Portland Open Studios draws a constituency of mostly professionals, Brooklyn artists cater to a more family-oriented, relaxed crowd.

The Art Walk has also led some Brooklyn artists to come together to host a monthly "First Friday" open studio/gallery night similar to the Pearl District's First Thursday. While the First Friday event has not garnered much notice or involvement from the city as a whole, the organizers feel that, with enough support, it could become an important event for the neighborhood. However, with little current involvement (only four to five artists participate) and little financial support, the organizers are having difficulty generating notice of their activities. Janovec feels that if more "destination" businesses, such as coffee shops, restaurants or pubs, move into the area, occupying empty buildings or lots along some of the major streets, it will encourage residents from other portions of the city to spend more time in Brooklyn.
Creative Service-Related Businesses within the GBBA Boundary
Brooklyn is also the home of creative service businesses that are larger than just the small independent artists, including advertising and public relations firms. These firms include software development companies, home renovation businesses, wine-makers, beer brewers and an art glass manufacturer. Many of these businesses are tucked away from the larger streets and their existence may not be entirely obvious along major thoroughfares.

One such business is Bullseye Glass, which is located on 21st Avenue near the Fred Meyer regional headquarters and has been in the Brooklyn neighborhood since 1974. The glass manufacturer produces 1400 sheets of glass (measuring roughly 2 feet by 3 feet) a day using 250 color formulas that can be combined to make 6000 different colors or patterns. Bullseye specializes in fused glass and distributes it both nationally and internationally. While very few of their customers are located in Oregon, they use suppliers and service businesses in the district such as machine and maintenance shops. Bullseye has also purchased recycled glass from its neighbor, Sunflower Recycling, and at one point was purchasing 3000 pounds of glass each day. (BNP, 1991).

Eric Durrin, the public relations representative for Bullseye, indicated in a personal interview (May 9, 2003) that the business has chosen to stay and expand within Brooklyn mainly due to its central
location, which offers accessibility to and from suppliers (in Portland and nation-wide). Bullseye Glass will soon be expanding into a building next door to its office – moving its showroom and demonstration workshop out of the Pearl District and into Brooklyn. This addition will add to Brooklyn’s creative enclave.

**Summary**
The emerging artistic character of the area is important to Brooklyn’s future. Supporting the growth of this industry can help strengthen the area as a whole. Along with creative services there are a host of complimentary businesses (suppliers, galleries, boutiques, restaurants, cafes, etc) that could be attracted to Brooklyn. Additionally, a reputation as a creative spot in the city can help the neighborhood draw a more diverse range of businesses as well as a larger residential population that could, in turn, help support more neighborhood orientated retail businesses.
Automotive-related Businesses

There are 44 businesses in the GBBA that are characterized as “Automotive” in the OED database. These businesses vary from machine parts manufacturers to specialty car dealers. In general, automotive businesses are not major employers in the district. The average automotive business has only 4.5 employees. The SIC codes that encompass the district’s automotive businesses include:

- Wholesale Trade (SIC 50 & 51)
- Auto Repair and Parking (SIC 23)

Businesses in the district include specialty car repair and sales shops, such as Memory Lane Motors, located at 2608 Southeast Holgate. Memory Lane has been in the Brooklyn area for 25 years and specializes in the purchasing and reselling of classic cars. This business helps support other car repair shops in and around the district, including Autotek Body and Paint and Steele’s mechanics at Southeast 52nd and Steele (Memory Lane Motors, 2003).

A similar symbiotic relationship is found between other auto-related businesses in the area. The owner of Autotek Body and Paint identified that he makes a concerted effort to buy supplies from other local businesses in the district. These supplies range from office paper (Merchants Paper) to industrial paint from Industrial Finishes. (Gherman, 2003)
Ed Thiemann of Heckmann and Thiemann Motors noted that the district has historically been a good location for auto repair and auto-related businesses due to its location along major state highways. Thiemann, however, continued to state that locating on these roads may be less important these days due to current City policies that encourage transit and pedestrian amenities, and state (ODOT) policies that restrict access from state facilities (Southeast Powell Boulevard). As such, Thiemann identified that his current location is not as advantageous as it once was and that he would consider moving his business if he did not own the property.

Surprisingly, all of the auto-related businesses interviewed indicated they draw customers not just from the Portland metropolitan area, but from the greater Willamette Valley and Washington State. Memory Lane motors purchases cars from all over the greater Northwest region and has sold cars internationally. Similarly, Heckmann and Thiemann Motors draws customers from as far as Seattle, because they have developed a reputation for being experts in servicing Volkswagen, Porsche, and Audi brands. The service at Heckmann and Thiemann has won praise even from Willamette Week, who voted the shop the “Best Place to Repair a Car” in Portland (Willamette Week; 2002).

Autotek Body and Paint (4701 Southeast 24th Street) is tucked away in the industrial district west of Southeast 26th Avenue and east of the Union Pacific railyards. Similar to Memory Lane and Heckmann and Thiemann, Autotek draws clients from the greater Portland region. Additionally, Autotek has strong local business connections as Autotek does body and paint work for the Rasmussen Mercedes dealership and other dealerships across town. Autotek also relies on referrals from insurance companies who have listed Autotek as an authorized local repair shop. This referral system is important to Autotek, because they lack the high visibility of other repair businesses that are located on Powell Boulevard and other major roads in the district.
Characterization of Industry Groups

Automotive-Related Businesses within the GBBA Boundary

Source: Oregon Employment Department
Summary
A critical note from businesses interviewed is all of the businesses rely heavily on client referrals and word of mouth for publicity. One of the business owners interviewed suggested the informal “word-of-mouth” advertising could be supplemented with a local business directory, similar to yellow pages, that could assist local residents and businesses in identifying specific business types in the Brooklyn area. A business directory would be especially beneficial to businesses in the industrial areas and in other lesser traveled areas that otherwise receive little exposure.


Characterization of Industry Groups

Food-related Businesses

Over 60 food-related businesses exist in the greater Brooklyn Area. This category includes a wide variety of businesses that range from wholesale food suppliers to neighborhood coffeehouses and convenience food stores. These businesses exist in Brooklyn for very specific reasons, which include:

Dependence on the auto traffic on Southeast Powell Boulevard
Dependence on the large daytime working population in Brooklyn, and,
A need to be in close proximity to downtown Portland.

In all, food-related businesses break down as follows:

- 29 restaurants
- 17 convenience food stores
- 12 wholesale suppliers
- 3 food manufacturing businesses
- 2 meat and seafood retail stores
- 1 micro-brewery
- 1 micro-winery
- 1 retail bakery
- 1 coffee retailer

The majority of restaurants in Brooklyn are located on busy arterial streets such as Southeast Powell Boulevard and Southeast 39th Avenue. Most restaurants are either taverns or medium to low-priced establishments that depend heavily on auto traffic and drive-up patronage.

There are also a large number of convenience food stores that are found both on busy roads and in close proximity to large employers, particularly Fred Meyer, Portland General Electric, and TriMet, which combined employ approximately 2000 people.
Food-Related Businesses within the GBBA Boundary
Characterization of Industry Groups

Nearly twenty percent of the food-related businesses in the greater Brooklyn area are wholesale suppliers. These businesses are also dependent on major transportation arterials that run through Brooklyn for freight movement and customer visibility. Additionally, survey results indicate affordable lease rates in Brooklyn are another reason wholesale businesses requiring large space chose to locate in this area (see Summary Survey results).

An almost universal concern among every food-related business interviewed or surveyed was the lack of parking. On-street parking is limited along major arterials where many businesses exist for the traffic exposure. For businesses without their own parking lots, this is a significant issue.

Finally, more than one survey respondent indicated that the lack of a major grocery store west of the railroad creates an inconvenience.

Summary

The wide-range of food-related businesses in the greater Brooklyn area is reflective of the physical characteristics of the area. High traffic counts on major arterials such as Southeast Powell Boulevard and Southeast 39th Avenue attract fast-food restaurants and convenience food stores. Large employers draw many commuters to the area and increase demand for convenience stores and low-priced restaurants within the neighborhoods and near the industrial areas.

Demand for these types of establishments is likely reinforced by the fact that over one-half of Brooklyn residents are renters, and reflect an average household income in the area below the Portland regional average.
Health and Social Services

Health and social service-related businesses also comprise one of the top five business sectors found in the GBBA. These businesses are compiled from numbers 80 and 83 in the standard industrial classification (SIC) categories. There are 64 businesses in the GBBA district that fall within the Health and Social Services category.

The health and social services category is a broad ranging business sector. Within the GBBA district the following businesses are listed as health and social service-related:

- Physician, dentist, and osteopathic, and other health practitioners (35)
- Individual and Family Help Centers (7)
- Child Day Care Services (5)
- Specialty Outpatient Programs (3)
- Job Training and Related Services (3)
- Residential Care Providers (3)
- Hospital Equipment and Sales (3)
- Nursing Care Providers (2)
- Dental Laboratories (2)
- Psychiatric Hospital (1)

Unlike the automotive-related business sector, the health and social services field employs a significant number of people in the district. See the table below regarding the top employers in this business sector.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th># of Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carl V. Morrison Center</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holgate Center (Friendship Health Center / Old Fellows Home)</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Vincent DePaul Society</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reedwood Extended Care Center</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parry Center</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Characterization of Industry Groups

In addition, East Moreland General Hospital, which employs approximately 233 people, is in the vicinity of the GBBA district.

Although the hospital is technically outside of the GBBA boundaries (Steele Road represents the southern limits of the district), the hospital has a gravitational pull on other health practitioner offices that are located within the GBBA and in close proximity to the hospital. This is most likely due to the fact that many of these practices rely on referrals from East Moreland Hospital. Therefore, a distinct concentration of health practitioners is located near the intersection of Steele Road and Southeast 26th Avenue. It is also worth noting that most of the practitioners surrounding the hospital are osteopaths and not MDs (medical doctors). This trend is related to the fact that Eastmoreland General is an osteopathic hospital.

The largest health and social-service employer actually located within the district is the Carl V. Morrison Center, which is located on Powell Boulevard. The Morrison Center provides mental health services to children throughout Multnomah County. The Brooklyn Center location is one of 18 Morrison Center locations in the Portland area.

The second largest health and social service employer is Holgate Center, located at 3320 Southeast Holgate Boulevard. The Holgate Center is a campus style development that consists of multiple facilities designed to serve the varying needs of aging community residents.

These facilities include limited assistance apartments, a full-assistance nursing home, and Keniworth Park Plaza, an assisted living complex for lower-income senior residents.

Another large social service employer in the GBBA district is the St. Vincent DePaul Council of Portland Oregon, which is located at 3601 Southeast 27th Avenue. St. Vincent de Paul is a non-profit Catholic charity that collects and recycles reusable items by giving or selling them to low income people through its thrift stores and Home and Garden Depot. The Home and Garden Depot is located in the GBBA district at 3600 Southeast 28th Avenue, just south of Powell Boulevard.

The last major health and social service employer in the district is the Parry Center, which is located at 3415 Southeast Powell Boulevard. The Parry Center provides assistance to mentally disabled or impaired children and is a public school with the Portland School District No. 1.
Health & Social Service-Related Businesses within the GBBA Boundary

Fostering Business Cohesion: The Greater Brooklyn Business Community
Characterization of Industry Groups

Summary
The health and social services field provides a significant number of jobs in the GBBA district. Employers in this field, however, are in many cases public or quasi-public entities whose interests may not be “business” related or consistent with the general interests of the GBBA. Additionally, as many of these entities provide services to developmentally challenged children and adults, they may not wish to maintain a high profile for client anonymity. Later stages of this study will suggest opportunities for industry-group specific committees for the GBBA. Because of these issues and that many of the health and social service centers are not-for-profit entities, increased participation in the GBBA, may be unlikely in this industry group. However, as they employ a substantial number of people, other business groups such as food-related or automotive businesses may benefit from increased knowledge of their presence.
Opportunities for Improved Representation and Business Cohesion

Based upon the project team’s analysis of the area’s physical constraints, historical context, past planning efforts, geospatial characteristics, predominant business groups, and responses gained through surveys and interviews, several opportunities for increasing Brooklyn’s business community cohesion have been identified. Additionally, these opportunities have the potential to increase overall awareness of the GBBA and bolster participation in the association.

Opportunity One: Recognize District Sub-areas

As has been noted in this document, the Union Pacific Railyards form a major dividing line within the GBBA district. This dividing line partially obstructs vehicular and pedestrian traffic from east to west and also appears to form a major obstacle for GBBA involvement and outreach (see the district map with participatory businesses on the next page).

Despite the obstacles that it presents for local connectivity, the Union Pacific railyards are a major asset within the regional economy. The economic importance of the railyard switching station will only increase in the future. This point is evident in the findings of a recent metro-area I-5 Corridor Strategic Plan facilitated by the departments of transportation from Washington (WSDOT) and Oregon (ODOT). This strategic plan identified that maintaining and improving freight rail efficiencies will be a key component to maintaining the economic vitality of the I-5 corridor.

As such, any consolidation or redevelopment of the UP railyards is highly unlikely to occur in the near term future as the region looks to maintain a diversity of freight options. Therefore, the GBBA must work within the context that the railyards will be in place for years to come and attempt to expand business participation within the district areas east of the UP railyards.

Based on our analysis of business concentrations and the level of business participation within the district, the GBBA can increase stakeholder participation by addressing specific concerns within sub-areas found in the GBBA boundaries.

Geo-spatial analysis of businesses in the GBBA district reveals that businesses in the district are predominantly located within four distinctive sub-areas. Each of these sub-areas has distinct needs that relate specifically to their surrounding conditions.
The map on the following page identifies the geographic extent of the sub-areas proposed for consideration. These sub-areas are as follows:

- Southeast Milwaukie Avenue Sub-area
- Southeast 21st Avenue Sub-area
- Southeast Powell Boulevard Sub-area
- South Central Sub-area

The following sections of this study discuss the issues that the project team has identified for further GBBA analysis in each of the proposed sub-areas.
Opportunities for Improved Representation and Business Cohesion

Potential Sub-Areas within the GBBA Boundary
Southeast Milwaukie Avenue
Synopsis of Sub-area Concerns
In 2000, REACH Community Development concluded a three-year revitalization project known as the Milwaukie Action Plan (MAP) designed to strengthen the community's identity and develop community goals among businesses and residents located along Southeast Milwaukie Avenue. The Milwaukie Action plan proposed pedestrian and storefront improvements on Southeast Milwaukie Avenue to improve the streetscape for pedestrians and store owners.

In addition to the MAP plan goals, the following areas of concern were identified by the workshop team for this sub-area:

- Commercial properties once dependent on auto traffic remain in the area are underutilized and some remain vacant.
- There are often inconsistencies between zoning and actual land use along Milwaukie Avenue.
- Lack of essential retail for adjacent neighborhoods.

Southeast 21st Avenue Sub-area
Synopsis of Sub-area Concerns
While the sub-area offers many conveniences to businesses because it is located adjacent to Powell Boulevard, it faces a large constraint in that there is little space within the area for businesses to expand. One construction-related business, Waco Scaffolding, indicated they may have to move in two years when their lease is up because there is no vacant land at their location for them to expand their outdoor area. Given the constraints placed on the area because of the division and boundary caused by the rail lines, this may become an issue for other businesses as they continue to grow.

Other issues of concern identified by businesses in this district include:

- Petty crime and loitering
- Fragmentation of land uses and hold-out single family residential housing in industrial areas.

Southeast Powell Boulevard Sub-area
Synopsis of Sub-area Concerns
Several of the businesses in this sub-area surveyed by the workshop project team indicated they are only somewhat familiar with the business association, if at all. Several respondents did not realize that they were within the geographic area represented by the GBBA. This was especially evident east of Southeast 26th Avenue. Additionally, interviews and survey responses identified the following concerns in the district:

- Crime and drug use associated with transients
- Lack of available parking (off-street and on-street)
- Pedestrian conflicts at Cleveland High School
- Negative image stemming from strip clubs and tattoo parlors
- Left-turn movements into businesses are difficult.
South Central Sub-Area

Synopsis of Sub-area Concerns

Planning issues solicited from interviews and surveys within this district included the following comments:

- Delivery trucks tend to park their trailers on the side streets of the district for long periods of time, making the area seem disorganized and cluttered.
- There is a general lack of accessible retail services, including "good restaurants."
- An off-ramp or alternative truck route from the Holgate viaduct could alleviate accidents and truck traffic through the Southeast 26th Avenue/Holgate Boulevard intersection.
Opportunity Two: Foster Business Committees

The formation of sub-committees can be an effective tool to focus business efforts on projects and on-going interests/issues that may have a localized application either geographically or by industry group. Informal committees are often effective at accomplishing solutions to common problems that may be of a magnitude that is unapproachable by individual businesses.

Such ad hoc committees have been proven effective in the district on projects such as the Milwaukie Action Plan (MAP). As could be seen from the production of the MAP, groups tend to rally around interests that are relevant to their needs either personally or professionally. Outreach and facilitation of small committees to address issues of even smaller scope will encourage ongoing participation of a wider spectrum of stakeholders.

Encouraging and recruiting participation in business committees will also enhance GBBA knowledge of the area and the stakeholders that it serves, while responding to issues of concern with greater agility.

Support for the formation of business committees was iterated during the business-owner interview process for this study. At least one business owner indicated they would be more likely to participate in the GBBA through smaller action oriented groups. This business owner suggested that smaller groups could be more flexible with meeting times other than the GBBA’s typical board meeting time at 4:30 p.m.

In establishing business committees, it is important to ensure that the committee will have a “champion.” This champion is a business or individual who will garner support and maintain involvement levels to achieve the desired ends.
Opportunity Three: Foster Industrial Ecology Practices

Industrial ecology is an emerging field that includes the reduction of industrial waste by-products by enabling their reuse by other industries. There may be opportunities for some business groups in the greater Brooklyn area to reuse materials discarded by other industries. Utilizing the identification of predominant business groups, the GBBA has better opportunities for coordinating by-product connections. This idea can expand upon past GBBA successes in resource coordination such as the shared parking agreement between US Bank and local businesses along Milwaukie Avenue.

A possible example of this could involve coordinating an inter-industry relationship between construction-related and creative service-related firms, which would make construction by-products available as inputs to artists. There are also opportunities to explore this same principle within the automotive-related business group using scrap reduction and reuse techniques. Because the automotive-related business group is diverse within itself, there may be opportunities for coordinating reuse between manufacturers, automotive repair services and wholesale and retail firms.

In recent years, sustainability and industrial ecology have influence practices in the automotive industry in the Portland area. For example, the Automotive Ecological Business Program was formed in 1999 and as of late 2000, nearly 25 local automotive service and repair shops had been certified as operating with sustainable business practices. A possible resource for exploring further industrial ecology practices among automotive businesses is “A Sustainability Vision for the Automotive Services Industry” which was prepared for Oregon DEQ by The Castle Group in 2001.

Overall, the construction and automotive industries have a large impact on the environment and are significant contributors to landfills. The opportunity exists for the GBBA to open the discussion about environmental best practices and also increase participation in the business association. One possibility is to coordinate industrial ecology seminars aimed at these two industries, or facilitate a focus group on the issues concerning industry by-products.
Opportunity Four: Expand and Combine Marketing Efforts

Business cooperation can be used to maximize marketing opportunities. “Positive attitudes toward business collaboration” is an important factor leading to the successful establishment of group marketing efforts. Additionally, collaborative marketing will most likely flourish when organized between small groups with specific objectives. (Blakely, 2000) Coordination of group marketing efforts is an opportunity for the GBBA to increase association participation and encourage collaboration between businesses.

This is already being done to some extent through “First Friday,” a monthly open studio event hosted collectively by individual artists and studios and which the GBBA has supported through funding. This effort currently focuses on artists along Milwaukie Avenue but could easily be expanded by encouraging ongoing inter-industry partnerships with food-related businesses such as Hip Chicks Do Wine. Combined efforts could expand the “First Friday” concept or groups can collaborate for other events. Collaborative groups could also seek out joint opportunities with adjacent destination neighborhoods and businesses such as the Sellwood Antique District.

The Brooklyn district is increasingly developing a reputation for being an artistic enclave in the City. The creative services in the district provide significant opportunity to combine the arts with other businesses in the district that may have a symbiotic relationship. Thus, it may be possible to plan synergistic classes or events that would utilize multiple businesses and can capitalize on art, antiques and niche food producers such as Hip Chicks Do Wine, Hair of the Dog Brewery and Joseph’s Dessert Company.

Another tool that can encourage marketing cooperation between firms is a business directory. Multiple respondents expressed an interest in participating in a business directory that would give them greater exposure and allow them to find needed services within the district.
Summary of Opportunities

Based on the analysis of Brooklyn businesses completed in this study, the workshop team identified four opportunities the GBBA may pursue to expand business participation and foster business cohesion in the district. These opportunities include:

**Opportunity One: Recognize District Sub-areas**
The GBBA may increase business participation by defining issues of concern for businesses within sub-areas of the district. By localizing issues to a level on which individual businesses can relate, the GBBA may find greater support and involvement from businesses in these sub-areas.

**Opportunity Two: Foster Business Committees**
The workshop team identified an opportunity for the district to help establish sub-committees focused on issues within a localized geographic area or industry sector. Similar to the idea of sub-areas, this concept is grounded in the premise that business participation will increase if businesses have common issues of concern to rally around.

**Opportunity Three: Explore Industrial Ecology Practices**
The district may seek to recruit and foster businesses that have inputs and by-products that are compatible. For instance, in the past Bullseye Glass has purchased a considerable amount of recycled glass from Sunflower Recycling, a nearby business. Similar symbiotic relationships can be explored. For example, opportunities may exist in the district for businesses to reprocess by-products from construction firms.

**Opportunity Four: Expand and Combine Marketing Efforts**
The GBBA can continue playing a critical role in promoting events and seminars, and also expand other marketing efforts for businesses in the district. These efforts could build upon current activities such as the “First Friday” event or involve industry classes such as do-it-yourself construction, art studio days, wine and beer tasting, car shows, and other types of events.
References


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Lewis, Laurie. Personal Interview, May 15, 2003

Lyon, Laurel. Personal Interview, April 1, 2003

Memory Lane Motors; Personal Interview with Elan, store manager; May 2nd, 2003

Miesen, Jerry. Personal Interview, May 8, 2003

Pelser, Greg. Personal Interview, May 13, 2003


Schneider, Kathy. Personal Interview, May 7, 2003


Thiemann, Ed. Personal Interview at Heckmann and Thiemann Motors; May 7, 2003

Vetter, Tom. Personal Interview, May 12, 2003

Weislogel, David. Personal Interview, April 25, 2003

Appendix A

Greater Brooklyn Business Association - Business Needs Questionnaire & Results

What are the advantages of doing business in Brooklyn? (Choose all that apply)

15% Affordable property/lease rates
3 The large number of people that work in Brooklyn
30 Proximity to downtown Portland
   1 Proximity to railroad
8 Proximity to suppliers
27 Accessible to customers
16 Business exposure provided by major streets (SE Powell Blvd, SE 39th Ave, etc.)
0 Other

N=107

What are the disadvantages of doing business in Brooklyn? (Choose all that apply)

7% High cost of property/lease rates
36 Insufficient parking
21 Traffic
20 Crime
6 Non-conforming property uses
5 Division of the Brooklyn area caused by the railroad or major streets
5 Other

N=84
Appendix A

Where are your business suppliers and service providers located? (Choose all that apply)

14% Brooklyn  
41 Portland-Area  
21 Northwest (i.e. Oregon, Washington, Idaho, N California)  
20 Nation-wide  
4 International  

N=103

If your business buys goods and services in Brooklyn, what types of goods and services?  
(Choose all that apply)

17% Raw materials  
3 Recycled or reused goods  
18 Retail goods  
37 Office supplies and services (e.g. printing services, computer support, etc.)  
3 Freight service  
11 Financial or legal services  
11 Other  

N=65
Appendix A

If multiple responses to question #4, on which type of local business are you most dependent? (Choose one).

41% Not applicable
8 Services
11 Construction
0 Manufacturing
11 Retail
19 Wholesale
5 Finance, Insurance, or Real Estate
5 Other

N=37

Where are your customers/clients located? (Choose all that apply)

22% Brooklyn
39 Portland-Area
23 Northwest (i.e. Oregon, Washington, Idaho, N California)
12 Nation-wide
4 International

N=109
If other businesses in Brooklyn buy your goods and services, which of the following best describes their business? (Choose all that apply).

17% Services
15 Construction
11 Manufacturing
28 Retail
6 Wholesale
9 Finance, Insurance, or Real Estate
15 Other

N=47
Appendix A

If new businesses were to locate in Brooklyn, what type of business would benefit your business the most? (Please be specific)

Restaurant (4)
Any (3)
Grocery store (3)
Retail operations that sell office supplies (3)
Construction (2)
Truck repair (2)
Add agency
Artists
Coffee shop
Commercial office buildings
Designers
Fabrication shops
Food distributors
High tech
Machine shops
Mixed use residential
Printing
Printing broker
Produce
Services for people with disabilities
Tire and wheel centers
Wholesale
Writers

N=34
The Greater Brooklyn Business Association is your business association. Are you familiar with the services it offers?

22% Yes
39 Somewhat
39 No

N=49

In your opinion, what services should a business association offer its members? (Choose all that apply)

18% Networking
20 Lobbying/representation of business interests
7 Business education
13 Business district identity
21 Assistance with city planning issues
21 Business resources
1 Other

N=120

Please choose the one category that best describes your business.

22% Services
16 Construction
14 Manufacturing
21 Retail
14 Wholesale
3 Finance, Insurance, or Real Estate
10 Other

N=58
Appendix B

Survey respondents
ABC Office Techs
Alaskan Copper & Brass Co.
Aloha Produce
American Eagle Wheel Corp.
Anderson & Associates
Armchair Bookstore
Beadle Design
Brooklyn Gardens, LLC
Brooklyn Pharmacy Inc.
Cascade Mold & Die
Columbia Door Sales Co., Inc.
Columbia Empire Meat Co.
Convergent Technologies
DTS
E & M Bindery Inc.
Edelweiss Sausage & Deli
Electro-Chem Metal Finishing, Inc.
Global Events Group
Groundwater Solutions
Hammer and Hand, Inc.
Hip Chicks do Wine
House of Marble
Hunter-Davisson, Inc.
Inclusion Inc.
Insights Teen Parent Program
Janovec Studio/Gallery
Mega Pacific
Mojo Coffee
Neville's Custom Woodworking
NW Neurology Clinic P.C.
Old Friends Antiques/TrueBrew Espresso
Pacific Seafood Co., Inc.
Polar Cryogenics, Inc.
Portland Die & Stamping
Powell Boulevard Vet Clinic
Quick Stop Market
Rain Master Roofing
Rose City Veterinary Hospital
Melanie Smythe D.O., P.C.
Service Master of Portland
Scottish Country Shop
St. Vincent DePaul
Starlight Press
Sunset Fuel Co.
Torgersen Designs, Inc.
United Stationers Wholesale
Waco Scaffold
Western Waterproofing Co., Inc.
Workplace Resources, Inc.
Appendix C

Detailed Analysis of Recommended Sub-Areas

SE Milwaukie Avenue Sub-area
The Southeast Milwaukie sub-area is just over 26-acres in size and is bordered to the north by SE Powell Boulevard, to the south by SE Holgate Boulevard, to the east by SE 14th Avenue, and to the west by SE 11th Avenue (see map).

Southeast Milwaukie Avenue is the heart and soul of the Brooklyn business community. It is an area rich in local history and at one point was a bustling retail community prior to major improvements to SE McLoughlin Boulevard in the 1930s, which diverted traffic from the area.

In 2000 REACH Community Development concluded a three-year revitalization project known as the Milwaukie Action Plan (MAP) designed to strengthen the community’s identity and develop community goals among businesses and residents located along SE Milwaukie Avenue.
Southeast Milwaukie Boulevard Sub-Area: Businesses (n=63)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health and Social Services</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Services</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative Services</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OED

Businesses

Within the boundaries defining this sub-area is the historic Aladdin Theatre, a flagship establishment of the Brooklyn Business District and neighborhood. The area is also occupied by identifiable businesses such as US Bank, Brooklyn Pharmacy, Old Friends Antiques and Collectables, TrueBrew Espresso, Brooklyn Gardens, Sala Restaurant, Columbia Empire Meat Co., Groundwater Solutions, Armchair Bookstore, and Global Events Group. In all, 63 businesses reside within the boundaries of this sub-area.

Retail commercial businesses that cater to the dense residential neighborhoods surrounding Milwaukie Avenue seem disproportionately few. The businesses that congregate near the major intersection of Milwaukie Avenue and Powell Boulevard are mostly dependent on auto traffic on Powell Boulevard and generally do not provide local neighborhood retail services.
Industry Groupings

All of the large industry groupings found in the greater Brooklyn area (Construction, Food Services, Creative Services, Health and Social Services, and Automotive) are present in the SE Milwaukie Avenue sub-area. Although the construction industry has a strong presence in the area, these businesses are not highly recognizable. Businesses are typically small independent contractors that operate out of personal residences. Food service establishments are comprised mostly of a few local restaurants and convenience stores. Others are mostly wholesale businesses that do not cater to walk-in customers. Absent from the area is a grocery store, identified as a need among survey respondents (see Survey Summary section of this report).

Creative service businesses located in this area are mostly comprised of professional art studios, commonly found within personal residences, including those fronting Milwaukie Avenue. And finally automotive establishments make up a small percentage of businesses located in the sub-area. Such businesses include classic car restoration, general repair, and auto part stores. These businesses are highly dependent on traffic exposure, once abundant prior to the construction of SE McLoughlin Boulevard.

Southwest Milwaukie Avenue Sub-Area Zoning
Appendix C

Land Use and Zoning
It is common to find residential property used as commercial space along Milwaukie Avenue. Residential basement businesses, for example, are common. Also present are commercial uses (i.e. quasi industrial, wholesale and service businesses) that do not cater to the retail commercial needs of surrounding neighborhoods and residents. See Appendix D for further information about inconsistent land use and zoning.
SE 21st Avenue Sub-area

The Southeast 21st Avenue Sub-area is approximately 24.9 acres and is bound on the north by SE Tibbetts Street, on the south by the Union Pacific Rail yards, and by 22nd Avenue to the east and 19th Avenue to the west.

The area is based on a typical grid pattern that was bisected and shaped by the railroad and is split unevenly by SE Powell Boulevard. The larger section of the area, south of Powell Boulevard, is where many of the business are located.

Southeast 21st Avenue Sub-Area: Businesses (n=73)

- Health and Social Services: 3%
- Food Services: 12%
- Creative Services: 7%
- Construction: 15%
- Automotive: 14%
- Other: 49%

Source: OED

Businesses

The north side of the section contains mostly a few small businesses along Powell and single family and multi-family residences north of Powell to SE Tibbetts Street. However, the other side of Powell is very different. While only a few small businesses line Powell such as Plaid Pantry, Pizza Hut and Convergint Technologies, the further south one moves towards the rail lines, the larger the businesses and buildings become. Many of these businesses appear very similar - their buildings are a simplistic form of architecture of reinforced cement or cinder block with parking lots and loading docks that face the street. There is little signage or decoration that distinguishes one building or business from the next such as along 20th Avenue, referred to as “Printer Row” by one survey respondent.
Another identifiable trademark of the district is high, chain-linked fences with barbed wire surrounding side lots or outside working areas. Crime and loitering were reported by many area businesses to be one of the biggest concerns. One employee explained the high fences as saying, “things have a habit of walking away.” Similar concerns were voiced by businesses on 20th Avenue near the rail lines; transient populations had been using the pedestrian bridge as shelter and were thought to be the cause of much of the crime. The construction of a larger building for Lorentz Bruun Construction began recently at an adjacent empty lot and many of the homeless people have moved away from the bridge. Reports from the construction crew are that the crime has lessened somewhat since this occurred.

Industry Groupings

The businesses in this sub-area are representative of the industry groups that populate the entire GBBA area. The most predominant group in this sub-area are construction and automotive. The business breakdown is as follows:

- 11 construction-related businesses,
- 10 automotive-related businesses,
- 5 creative services,
- 9 food-related businesses,
- 2 health and social service businesses, and
- 36 businesses outside of the Top 5 GBBA groupings.

These other businesses include commercial printers, machine shops and distribution companies. Many of the surveyed businesses have been within the sub-area for over ten years and continue to enjoy the easy access for suppliers and employees. However, most were unfamiliar with the GBBA. Some did not even recognize that they were within an established neighborhood and did not identify with the “the Brooklyn Neighborhood”.

Fostering Business Cohesion: The Greater Brooklyn Business Community
Land Use and Zoning

Unlike the SE Milwaukee Avenue sub-area, no conflicts between land uses and zoning were recognized in the SE 21st Avenue sub-area. However, at least one interview respondent identified that the IG1 zoning of his business placed excessive restrictions on the allowable office space within his industrial building. Therefore, non-conforming uses are not a particular concern, but at least one business in this district identified that zoning was an obstacle for his business.

Southeast 21st Avenue Sub-Area Land Use

Source: BLSE, Oregon Employment Department
Appendix C

SE Powell Boulevard Retail Sub-area
The SE Powell Boulevard Retail sub-area is identified as the area adjacent to SE Powell Boulevard between SE 39th and SE 26th Avenue with an approximate boundary of SE Rhine Avenue to the north and SE Lafayette Avenue to the south. The area is slightly over fifty square acres. Southeast Powell Boulevard creates a significant internal division of the area and most north and southbound traffic crossings of SE Powell are at SE 39th Avenue.

In 1997 this area was highlighted in the S.E. Powell Boulevard: Envisioning Changes - Improving Places study. SE Powell Boulevard is also State Highway 26, which means this sub-area is faced with the regulations of two jurisdictions, the City of Portland and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). The Envisioning Changes Study noted above was a joint effort by the GBBA, the Brooklyn Action Corps, Reach Community Development Corporation and the Fred Meyer Corporation, whose headquarters are located one block to the south of Powell. The study was published in part to lobby both ODOT and the City to make improvements to Powell that would improve accessibility for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users and enhance the physical and aesthetic environment. Unfortunately, funding issues at both the State and City level have prevented many of the changes suggested by the study from occurring. A repaving effort by ODOT to begin in late summer of 2003 will upgrade some of the crossings to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards but will not address most of the pedestrian design elements envisioned in the Powell Boulevard study.

Businesses
Many of land uses in this area is are strip retail businesses that rely on the high level of exposure and automobile access provided by SE Powell Blvd. Even a small independent coffee shop in a strip mall area along Powell has adapted to the automobile domination and serves coffee through a small window used as an improvised drive-through.

The heavy traffic also presents many obstacles to businesses. Because SE Powell is a heavily traveled state highway, on-street parking is not permitted. Pedestrian movement across the five lane high-speed thoroughfare is not permitted and generally unsafe except for intersection crossings. Some of firms in this area indicated parking and left turns onto Powell are difficult. One business that employs large trucks to deliver wholesale goods described difficulty achieving access and egress onto Powell because of a lack of maneuvering room. Cleveland High School is located to the northeast of Powell Park across Powell Boulevard. At lunchtime, students cross Powell to gain access to the park or businesses on the south side of the street. Because the crosswalks are not strategically placed, illegal crossings cause traffic problems and present safety issues.
In addition to traffic issues, businesses in this area also expressed concern about the "sleazy" image of Powell Boulevard. This image is possibly due to the location of a few adult only businesses and a tattoo parlor along Powell Boulevard. Another business owner commented that some of the social service agencies located along Powell serve recovering addicts who loiter in the area, sometimes camping overnight. Crime and drug use were also mentioned as a side effect of the proximity of these services.

Land Use and Zoning
There are no industrial land uses in this sub-area as most businesses are retail commercial in nature. Additionally, no zoning conflicts were identified by businesses in the district as an area of concern.
Southeast Powell Boulevard Sub-Area Land Use

Fostering Business Cohesion: The Greater Brooklyn Business Community
Industry Groupings
Of the predominant business groups identified in the overall GBBA area, food-related businesses and health and social services have the highest concentration in the SE Powell Blvd. Retail sub-area. There are 19 food-related businesses, 18 health and social service businesses, 6 automotive-related businesses, 4 construction-related businesses and 3 creative services in the area. As mentioned previously, much the concentration of food related businesses are automobile oriented “fast food” chains. There are also several “Plaid Pantry” type grocery stores, many of which are open 24-hours a day. Both of these types of businesses are likely located in the area because SE Powell is a heavy traffic thoroughfare. Mixed among the quick, automobile-oriented establishments, however, are also longstanding Portland restaurants, DeNicola's and The Original Taco House, along with Pacific Seafood, a wholesale and retail business that has served the Pacific Northwest region for well over fifty years.

The second largest concentration of businesses along Powell Boulevard is Health and Social Services. Automotive-related businesses include a used car lot, a repair shop, and a couple of parts and supply stores. Construction-related businesses include Sunset Fuel and Engineering which has been at its current location since 1961 and which has a regional client base. This sub-area is not a hub for creative service-related businesses, but does include the only dance studio in the Brooklyn area, which is also located on SE Powell Boulevard.

Southeast Powell Sub-Area: Businesses (n=77)

Source: OED
Appendix C

South Central Sub-area

The South-Central Sub-area is approximately 71.4 acres and is generally bordered to the north by SE Holgate Boulevard, to the west by SE 24th Avenue, to the south by SE Steele Road, and to the east by SE 30th Avenue.

The western half of this sub-area is comprised primarily of a large industrial district that extends east from the Union Pacific Railyards. Businesses in the southeastern portion of the sub-area are predominantly small health clinics loosely affiliated with and aggregated around the Eastmoreland Hospital. Very few retail commercial uses exist in the south-central district. There are a few retail establishments located near the intersection of SE 27th Avenue and Holgate and along SE 27th Avenue, but businesses in this area are predominantly light manufacturing and health-related.

Like other areas in the GBBA, the streets within the South Central District are interrupted by the Union Pacific Railyards, which force east-west traffic onto the SE Holgate Boulevard viaduct. Therefore, limited pass-through traffic occurs within the industrial area of the South-Central Sub-area.

Roads in the industrial portion of the sub-area suffer from the stress of heavy truck traffic and infrequent maintenance. Some roads have been worn down to the gravel subgrade and others are pockmarked with potholes. However, as these roads are primarily used for sporadic truck traffic and not commuter traffic, the City has little incentive to allocate money for upgrades to these facilities.

Businesses

As noted, businesses in the south-central sub-area are primarily contained within the large (35.7-acre) industrial district and within multiple health clinics located near Eastmoreland Hospital (SE 27th Avenue and SE Steele Road). Three of the top five business sectors in the GBBA are also common in the south-central sub-area. These sectors include construction, automotive, and health-service related businesses.
Twelve independent health clinics are located within the south-central sub-area and are primarily focused around the Eastmoreland Hospital. These businesses have a strong geographic relationship to the hospital, as these clinics often rely on referrals from physicians located at the hospital.

Additionally, 11 firms within the south-central sub-area are categorized as “construction-related” businesses. These businesses range from building equipment manufacturers to woodworkers and general contractors. These firms are primarily located in the large industrial area west of SE 27th Avenue.

Multiple “automotive-related” businesses also exist in the south-central sub-area. These businesses include auto-repair shops (Jack Auckers Service and Autotek, Inc.) auto parts suppliers (Maydon Industries and Altrom America) and Memory Lane Motors, a specialty car dealer.

Industry Groupings
As noted, three of the top five business types in the GBBA are found in the south central sub-area. The preceding chart identifies the other types of businesses located in this sub-area.

Land Use and Zoning
The only notable discrepancy between existing land uses and the zoning designation in the area is on the west side of SE 27th Avenue, just north of SE Steele Road. This area is distinguished with multiple single-family residential buildings, but the City has zoned this area for multi-family residential use.
Appendix D

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 5, 2003
TO: The Greater Brooklyn Business Association Board
FROM: Katherine Prew, MURP
RE: Inconsistent Land Use and Zoning Patterns

As there was not an appropriate place within our final document to address the issue of inconsistent land use and zoning patterns, I would like to take this opportunity to relate our findings on the issue and the possible outlook for addressing this concern.

Madeline Janovec, one of our interviewees who works on Southeast Milwaukie Avenue, most strongly championed the inclusion of this topic into our final product. Ms. Janovec was kind enough to provide her insights, which proved to be very useful. After she brought this matter to our attention, I spoke to both Laurel Lyons of REACH Community Development Corporation and Susan Harnett from the Portland Planning Bureau, both of whom provided supporting information on the topic.

Urban planning is not an exact science and it is a field that continues to evolve as theories are developed into practices—whether they are successful or not is not fully predictable. In the early 1980s, when Portland’s Comprehensive Plan was implemented, it resulted in the zoning being changed for some lots from residential to commercial (or vice versa) with seemingly little regard given to the structures that were on the lots. This happened not only along Southeast Milwaukie Avenue but many “main streets” within Portland including Southeast Belmont and Southeast Division Avenues. The zoning for these lots was changed in an attempt to curtail sprawling strip development, which was an important issue for the City at that time.

That these previous re-zoning efforts did not meet with success has been made clear to the City. Within the next year the Portland Planning Bureau will implement a program aimed at surveying and assessing these main streets and any
inconsistencies in zoning and land use. It would be impractical to simply rezone the lots back to their original zoning, as
to do so would completely ignore the problem they were originally trying to solve.

I would recommend that the Greater Brooklyn Business Association, together with residents and business owners from
along Southeast Milwaukie Avenue, gather and begin shaping a collective vision of solutions to rectify the inconsistencies
between zoning and land use along their main street. While this may seem like a small action for such a large issue, a
solid, collaborative vision for development along Southeast Milwaukie will be the best way to influence the Bureau of
Planning, if and when they address these issues.