
This thesis explores the current state of small businesses in Lower Manhattan in a post 9/11 climate. Though little is known about the affects of disaster on small businesses (defined in this study as an independent, for-profit organization of 20 employees or less in the retail or service industries and at the street level), it has been proven that small firms suffer greater losses and suffer longer than large firms, and recent reports on the economic state of Lower Manhattan have been disproportionately skewed to represent only large firms. Lower Manhattan has experienced a recent population surge, and small businesses are a vital piece of the local economy and community identity. Using data drawn from a physical survey of the study area as well as interviews with community members, small business owners, and policymakers from agencies such as the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation and Downtown Alliance, I have drafted recommendations for the preservation and attraction of small businesses in Lower Manhattan.