Can the Local Economy be integrated into Hospital Malls? 
Connecting local businesses to business opportunities

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Research Aims:
Creating mall-type commercial spaces in hospitals is a new trend, however they can generate more competition for existing local businesses on surrounding streets. But what if local businesses could rent mall spaces? In an effort to measure local entrepreneurial interest in gaining a foothold in the new MUHC Glen Campus, we worked with local economic development groups to identify successful locally-owned businesses in the neighbourhoods surrounding the MUHC Glen Campus who might be good candidates for the new commercial space on the hospital site. Via our research, we:
- Identified potential niche markets for the commercial spaces;
- Used existing research, and best available data, to formulate a business pitch for local owners to inform them about the site;
- Completed informal interviews with business owners to gauge interest in expanding or moving to the incoming commercial space on the hospital site;
- Created a set of 11 attractive business profiles interested in having to a location in the MUHC-Glen Campus commercial space.

Context:
A key question for the CURA and its partners is how to optimize the community benefits resulting from the arrival of the MUHC hospital? The campus will include a minimum of 3000 square meters of commercial space, some of which are reserved for a pharmacy. MUHC surveys underscore staff interest in ensuring health food choices in the commercial mall, a concern echoed by the broader community. As regards the hospital mall, CIQ members are seeking to minimize competition from mall businesses on those found on local commercial streets, and optimize business opportunities for local businesses in the mall. This work has been inspired in part by experiences elsewhere in achieving Community Benefits.

Key Results
- 64% of local business owners interviewed recognized the business opportunity and were interested;
- Few business owners were aware that there would be commercial space on the MUHC campus
- Businesses were more interested in opening a second space than relocating
- There are precedents for ensuring that there are only healthy food options in hospital commercial spaces, such as Sick Kids hospital in Toronto not renewing Burger King’s lease
- The report includes a short list of 11 local businesses in the surrounding neighbourhoods, in niche markets, that are interested in bidding for a spot in the hospital mall.