Chapter 8: Urban Design and Visual Resources

A. INTRODUCTION

This section considers the potential of the Proposed Actions to affect the urban design and visual resources of the Project Area and study area. The Proposed Development—branded as the Innovation QNS project—requires discretionary actions including a rezoning of the Project Area to create a new Special Mixed Use District, the declaration of the Development Site as a Large Scale General Development (LSGD), and special permits to modify floor area, height, setback, minimum distance between buildings, rear yard, sign regulations, and loading berth and parking regulations and to modify use regulations to permit multiple stores and retail uses greater than 10,000 sf. The Proposed Actions would result in the redevelopment of portions of five city blocks with a series of mixed-use buildings and publicly accessible open space. The Applicant-controlled lots would contain the Proposed Development: these lots are referred to as the "Development Site." The lots outside of the Development Site but within the area to be rezoned (the Project Area) are referred to as the "Additional Affected Area."

As defined in the 2020 *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, urban design is the totality of components that may affect a pedestrian's experience of public space. These components include streets, buildings, visual resources, open spaces, natural resources, and wind. An urban design assessment under CEQR must consider whether and how a project may change the experience of a pedestrian in a project area.

The Proposed Development would make noticeable alterations to the Development Site and the streetscape of the surrounding area by introducing new tall mixed-use buildings, as compared to the No Action condition. Therefore, the following detailed urban design and visual resources analysis has been prepared in consideration of the characteristics identified above for the No Action and With Action conditions in 2032, when the development facilitated by the Proposed Actions is expected to be completed.

PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

A detailed analysis determined that the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse impact related to urban design and visual resources.

URBAN DESIGN

With the Proposed Actions, the urban design of the Development Site and Additional Affected Area would be transformed. The land uses of the Development Site would be predominantly mixed-use with residential, office, commercial, and cultural/community facility uses. The new land uses within the Additional Affected Area would be residential with ground-floor retail. Today the area is primarily characterized by warehouse, auto-related, and commercial uses on the Development Site in existing and No Action conditions. The mix of land uses in the Proposed Development and the Additional Affected Area would be compatible with one another and with

the surrounding area, and in the Applicant's opinion this mix of uses would create a cohesive neighborhood, The proposed arts and cultural venues, including the multi-purpose arts and culture center, re-envisioned multiplex movie theater, galleries, and artists' workshops, would complement the existing Kaufman Arts District. The proposed eating and drinking establishments, grocery store and world market, and other local retail, service and community facility uses would support both the new residential population and the existing business and residential communities. These new uses are anticipated to bring more pedestrian activity to the Project Area, and to enhance the pedestrian experience by replacing low-scale buildings of utilitarian design, windowless streetwalls, and surface parking lots with active ground-floor uses and approximately 2.17 acres of new publicly accessible open spaces. According to required zoning regulations, street trees would be planted along the sidewalks throughout the Project Area, with a 5-foot sidewalk widening along 35th Avenue, improving the pedestrian environment. With the Proposed Actions, land uses, lot coverage, natural features, and street patterns in the surrounding study area would not change. It is the Applicant's intent to build upon the neighborhood's existing arts, culture, and media uses by forming a creative hub with a mix of office, open space and cultural uses, and the Proposed Development is anticipated to serve as an anchor for the synergistic expansion of the neighborhood's existing business and residential communities. The Proposed Actions would also extend the mixed-use corridors of Steinway Street and 34th Avenue, replacing light-industrial uses in the Project Area with residential, commercial, and cultural/community facility uses that are consistent with the existing uses along Steinway Street and 34th Avenue to the north and west.

The proposed publicly accessible open spaces would link the blocks in the Project Area. The proposed open space on Block C would augment the existing Playground Thirty Five XXXV by surrounding it with a large, civic-oriented public open space. Based on a conceptual design, this open space could include a dog run and a walkway area along the playground's existing fence. This plaza is also planned to include passive amenities such as large planters, public seating, a through-block pedestrian promenade, a water feature, a pavilion, a multipurpose lawn, and interactive public art. The amenities proposed to be provided at the other proposed open spaces, pursuant to the Public Access Area (PAA) drawing packages, include a plaza, courtyards, and landscaped pedestrian pathways; additional amenities could include playscapes for children, open markets, kiosks, public art installations, sculptures, and enhanced streetscapes. The street pattern within the Project Area would not be altered.

With the Proposed Actions, the built FAR of the Development Site and the Additional Affected Area would increase. The Projected Development Sites in the Development Site currently have built FARs ranging from 0.43 to 1.14; in the With Action scenario, these sites would have built FARs ranging from 5.47 to 10.58. (As proposed, the blended FAR of the Development Site would be 7.1). The Projected Development Sites in the Additional Affected Area currently have built FARs ranging from 0.39-1.06; in the With Action scenario, these sites would have built FARs ranging from 6.60 to 11.73. As in existing conditions and the No Action condition, lot coverage within the Project Area would remain high.

The Proposed Development was designed around a series of guiding principles intended to respond to the surrounding neighborhood context. These include: varied height profiles from east to west; location of the largest towers along Steinway Street, to anchor the Steinway Street commercial corridor, and along the major thoroughfare of Northern Boulevard; lower-scale buildings along 35th Avenue, opposite low-density residential buildings; base heights between 65 feet and 85 feet; increased sidewalk widths along the south side of 35th Avenue; and new open spaces that would be publicly accessible and activated to support the surrounding ground floor uses and enhance the pedestrian experience.

The buildings that would be developed in the Project Area in the With Action condition would be substantially taller than the surrounding built context. The tallest building in the study area is the 10-story, approximately 120-foot-tall residential building on the north side of Northern Boulevard at 36th Street; therefore, the tallest building in the Proposed Development (at 295 feet / 27 stories) would be approximately 175 feet taller than the tallest existing building in the study area. Most buildings within the study area are between 35 and 60 feet in height; thus, the buildings in the Proposed Development would be approximately 235–260 feet taller than most buildings in the study area. However, the massing and scale of the Proposed Development reflects the guiding design principles described above, and the Proposed Development has been designed by the Applicant to serve as a transition between the low- and mid-rise areas to the north and west of the Project Area, the heavily trafficked, commercial-centered Northern Boulevard corridor, and the higher-density mixed-use Long Island City area to the south. The tallest proposed buildings would be oriented, as planned, toward the Steinway Street corridor and the wide Northern Boulevard corridor, which forms a transitional space between the Sunnyside Yard rail yard to the southeast of the Project Area and the residential neighborhoods to the north and west and includes views to high rise buildings in Long Island City in the distance. The proposed 110-foot-tall and 155-foot-tall (7- and 10-story) streetwalls at the northwestern corner of the Project Area would be compatible in height to the taller buildings immediately west of the Project Area along 35th Avenue, including the approximately 80-foot-tall (5-story) Frank Sinatra School of the Arts, the approximately 75-foot-tall (3-story) Kaufman Astoria Studios, and the 73-foot-tall (4-story) Public School 166. The study area is also in an area designated as a Transit Zone in the Zoning Resolution and is well-served by mass transit, which would support dense development. Overall, the Applicant believes that the proposed density is an appropriate scale to support a new community without overwhelming the surrounding areas.

As described in Chapter 5, "Open Space," the Proposed Actions would result in a decrease to the study area's active open space ratio, but the new publicly accessible open spaces to be constructed in the Project Area also would result in increases to the study area's total open space ratio and in particular the passive open space ratio.[1] The Proposed Development would include approximately 2.17 acres of publicly accessible open space as well as two private open spaces for residents (one at the southern end of Block A and one in the mid-block area on Block B) totaling 0.47 acres, and expanded pedestrian circulation space near the building entrances.

As described in Chapter 6, "Shadows," development resulting from the Proposed Actions would cast new shadows on Playground Thirty Five XXXV throughout the day in all seasons, at times covering large areas of the playground at times or eliminating much or all of the remaining sunlight in the park; however, the proposed publicly accessible open space adjacent to Playground Thirty Five XXXV is intended to set back the buildings on Projected Development Site C and create a more open area surrounding the playground, and would complement this resource.

In conclusion, the Proposed Actions would not have a significant adverse effect on urban design in the Project Area or the study area. While the urban design of the Development Site and the Additional Affected Areas would be transformed in the future with the Proposed Actions with

[1] As detailed in Chapter 5, "Open Space," active open space is intended for vigorous activities, such as jogging, field sports, and children's active play. Such facilities might include basketball and handball courts, jogging paths, ball fields, and playground equipment. Passive open space encourages such activities as strolling, reading, sunbathing, and people watching. Passive open spaces are characterized by picnic areas, walking paths, seating area, or gardens. Certain areas, such as lawns or public esplanades, can serve as both active and passive open spaces.

dense, tall development, the mix of proposed land uses would be compatible with one another and with the surrounding area.

Based on the *CEQR Technical Manual*, context is not the only benchmark for measuring urban design impacts, as the determination of the significance of an urban design impact requires consideration of the built environment's arrangement, appearance, functionality, and whether the change would negatively affect a pedestrian's experience of the area. While the size and height of the Proposed Development would constitute a substantial change to the Development Site and study area, the Proposed Development would also positively contribute to the pedestrian's experience of the area.

VIEW CORRIDORS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

The Project Area does not contain any visual resources, views along the north-south streets within the Project Area are limited by mature street trees, and views south along these streets end at the buildings along Northern Boulevard. These factors would be expected to limit the visibility of the Proposed Development along north-south streets.

In the future with the Proposed Actions, views toward the Project Area from the area's view corridors would change. The new development in the Project Area would be most visible along Northern Boulevard, 35th Avenue, and 39th Street as it crosses over Sunnyside Yard. The tallest buildings of the Proposed Development would be prominent in these views; however, this change would not adversely affect these view corridors. The tallest buildings of the Proposed Development would be prominent in these views; however, this change would not adversely affect these view corridors. High rise buildings in Long Island City, including the curved Queens Plaza Park building, also would be visible to the southwest along the Northern Boulevard view corridor, beyond the tall buildings of the Proposed Development. Along 39th Street as it passes over Sunnyside Yard, the tall buildings of the Proposed Development would be prominent in the foreground—along with the massive Standard Motor Products building on Northern Boulevard—and the towers in Long Island City and the Manhattan skyline would be visible in the distance.

The Proposed Development would not block views to the Most Precious Blood Roman Catholic Church, and it would not affect the public's enjoyment or use of the resource. The Proposed Development would be visible along 35th Avenue, and thus could change the context of views to the Paramount Studios Complex buildings along this corridor; however, the Proposed Actions would not obstruct any views to the buildings, and the changed context of views along 35th Avenue would not be expected to diminish the pedestrian's experience of this visual resource. The Proposed Development also would not obstruct any important visual resources or block any view corridors.

In conclusion, the Proposed Actions would not have a significant adverse effect on view corridors or visual resources in the Project Area or the study area.

B. METHODOLOGY

In accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual*, this analysis considers the effects of the Proposed Actions on the experience of a pedestrian in the study area. The assessment focuses on those project elements that have the potential to alter the built environment, or urban design, of the Project Area and the surrounding area, which is collectively formed by the following components: streets, buildings, visual resources, open spaces, natural resources, and wind. An urban design assessment under CEQR must consider whether and how a project may change the

experience of a pedestrian in a project area. The assessment focuses on the components of a proposed project that may have the potential to alter the arrangement, appearance, and functionality of the built and natural environment in the context of the project. The analysis of urban design relies on observations, drawings, maps, renderings, and photographs and photographic montages taken from a pedestrian's eye level.

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the study area for urban design is the area where a project may influence land use patterns and the built environment and is generally consistent with that used for the land use analysis. For visual resources, the view corridors within the study area from which such resources are publicly viewable should be identified. Consistent with *CEQR Technical Manual* methodology, the study area for the urban design analysis has been defined as the area within a ¼-mile of the Project Area. The study area is generally bounded by the midblock between 34th Avenue and Broadway to the north, 32nd Street to the west, Sunnyside Yard to the south, and 48th Street to the east (see **Figures 8-1 and 8-2**).

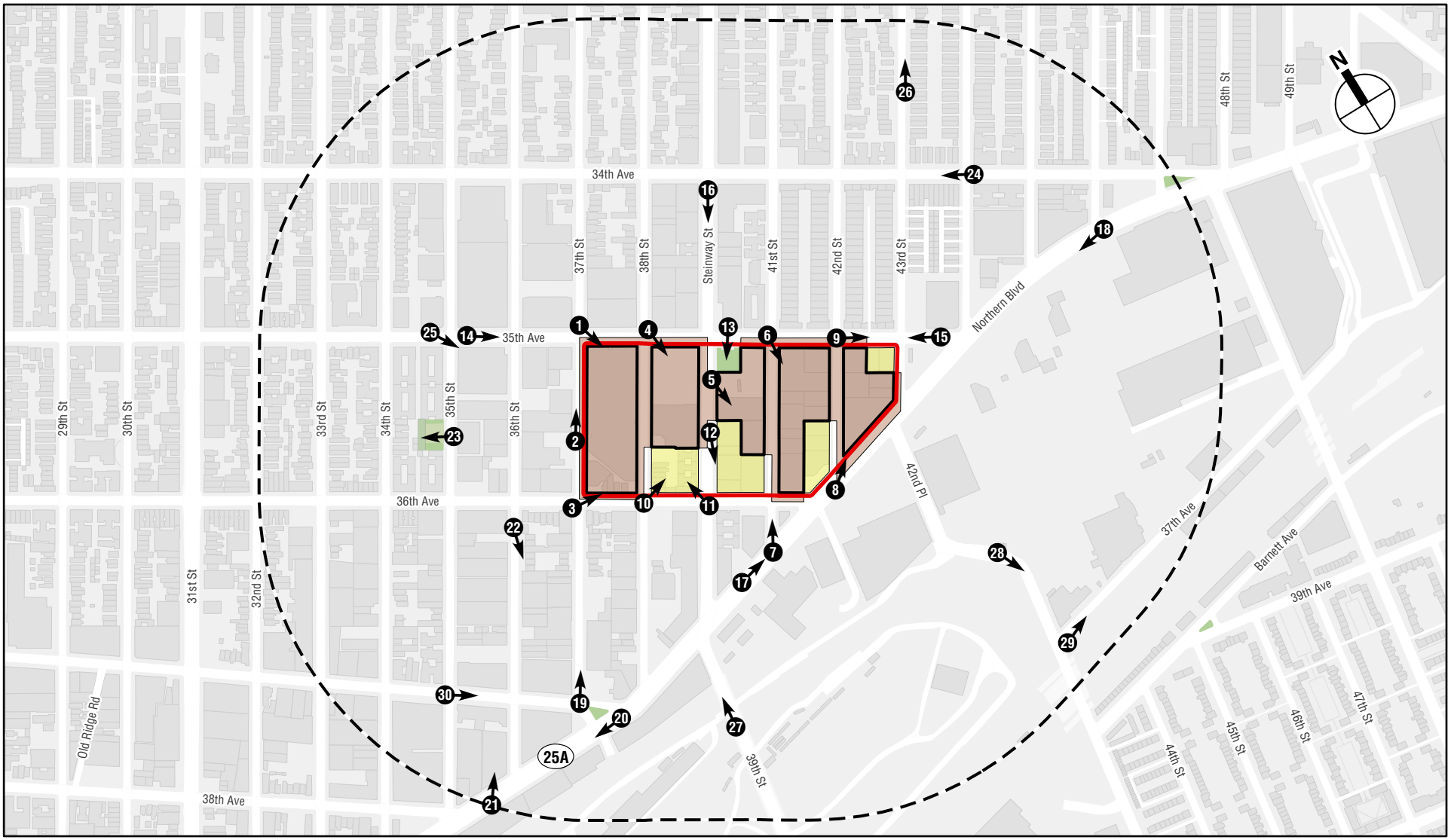
Based on the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a preliminary assessment of urban design and visual resources is appropriate when there is the potential for a pedestrian to observe, from the street level, a physical alteration beyond that allowed by existing zoning. Examples include projects that permit the modification of yard, height, and setback requirements, and projects that result in an increase in built floor area beyond what would be allowed "as-of-right" or in the No Action condition. The Proposed Actions include a rezoning of the Project Area that would permit a higher density of development, and special permits to modify height, setback, minimum distance between buildings, sign regulations, and loading berth and parking regulations. These actions would result in physical alterations within the Project Area that are observable by pedestrians and not allowed by existing zoning. Therefore, the Proposed Actions meet the threshold for a preliminary assessment of potential impacts to urban design and visual resources.

The *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines state that if the preliminary assessment shows that changes to the pedestrian environment are sufficiently significant to require greater explanation and further study, then a detailed analysis is appropriate. Examples include projects that would potentially obstruct view corridors, compete with icons in the skyline, or make substantial alterations to the streetscape of a neighborhood by noticeably changing the scale of buildings. Detailed analyses also are generally appropriate for general large-scale developments, or projects that would result in substantial changes to the built environment. Conditions that merit consideration for further analysis of visual resources include when the project partially or totally blocks a view corridor or a natural or built visual resource and that resource is rare in the area or considered a defining feature of the neighborhood; or when the project changes urban design features so that the context of a natural or built visual resource is altered.

The Proposed Actions would facilitate the development of new, tall mixed-use buildings within the Development Site and the Additional Affected Area, with the addition of new ground floor retail, publicly accessible and private open space and landscaping changes. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would result in noticeable changes to the Development Site, the Additional Affected Area, and the streetscape of the surrounding area as compared to the No Action condition. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would meet the threshold for a detailed assessment of urban design and visual resources. This analysis is provided below.

The *CEQR Technical Manual* recommends an analysis of pedestrian wind conditions for projects that would result in the construction of large buildings at locations that experience high wind conditions. The Proposed Actions would not result in the construction of a building at a location

12.1.21



Project Area

Study Area (1/4-mile perimeter)

Development Site Boundary

Large Scale General Development (LSGD) Area

Additional Affected Area

Photograph View Direction and Reference Number

0 400 FEET

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COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1

Urban Design and Visual Resources
Project Location Map
Figure 8-1

12.1.21



Data source: NYC Orthoimagery via Nearmap, 2021

Project Area

Study Area (1/4-mile perimeter)

Development Site Boundary

Large Scale General Development (LSGD) Area

Additional Affected Area

A *Illustrative Rendering View Direction and Reference Number*

0 400 FEET

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Urban Design and Visual Resources
Aerial
Figure 8-2

that experiences high wind conditions. Therefore, a pedestrian wind conditions analysis is not warranted.

C. EXISTING CONDITIONS

URBAN DESIGN

PROJECT AREA

The Project Area comprises the five blocks bounded by 35th Avenue to the north, 43rd Street/Northern Boulevard to the east, Northern Boulevard to the southeast, 36th Avenue to the south, and 37th Street to the west, in the Astoria neighborhood of Queens in Community District 1. The Project Area consists of the Development Site (the parcels controlled by the Applicant); the Additional Affected Area, which is the area that is proposed to be rezoned but is not controlled by the Applicant; and Playground Thirty Five XXXV, an open space on the northwest corner of Block 669 (Lot 16) that is not included within the Development Site or the Additional Affected Area. The parcels that are included in the Development Site are identified as Projected Development Sites A, B, C, D, and E. The Additional Affected Area parcels are identified as Projected Development Sites F, G, H, I, J, and K, as well as additional lots within Block 668. See **Figures 8-1 and 8-2** for a map and aerial image of the Project Area. **Figures 8-3 through 8-5** illustrate the built FAR, lot coverage, and building heights within the Project Area.

Development Site

Projected Development Site A (Block 641, Lots 1, 4, 9, 51, 52, and 56) is the full block bounded by 37th and 38th Streets and 35th and 36th Avenues. Projected Development Site A is primarily occupied by the Regal Cinemas building, a two-story concrete block structure (see Views 1 and 2, **Figure 8-6a**). The building has windowless streetwalls extending approximately 250 feet along 37th Street, along the southern side of 35th Avenue between 37th and 38th Streets, and approximately 200 feet along 38th Street. The primary entrance to the building is at the midblock on 38th Street. A parking garage is located at the south end of the building, with egress at the midblock on 37th Street and an entrance at the south end of the block along 38th Street, and a small paved surface parking area enclosed by a chain link metal fence is located the southeast corner of the block. There are curb cuts on 37th Street and 38th Street for the parking garage entrance and exit, and a curb cut on 36th Avenue for the paved surface parking area. At the south end of the block, along 36th Avenue, are two two-story houses on Lot 52; these are clad in white siding, and the western house is set back from the street behind a paved area and has a stoop entrance. The building on Lot 56 is a two-story building in industrial use; the ground-floor façade is covered by a painted mural. At the southwest corner of the block, Lot 1 includes a two-story residential building—with a stuccoed façade and stoop on 36th Avenue—and a one-story building currently in use as a restaurant. The restaurant has a large patio area for outdoor dining facing 36th Avenue and 37th Street and bordered by trees in planters; there is a curb cut on 36th Avenue leading to the patio area (see View 3, **Figure 8-6b**). There are a few street trees along each side of Projected Development Site A. There is a CitiBike station on the northwest corner of the block, on 35th Avenue near 37th Street. The existing built FAR of Projected Development Site A is approximately 0.96. The lot coverage on Projected Development Site A is very high; most lots are at 100 percent coverage, including the largest lots; the remaining, smaller lots along 36th Avenue are at 75 percent coverage, with one lot at 50 percent coverage. Building heights on Projected Development Site A are all under 35 feet.

3.7.22



Data source: NYC Dept. of City Planning

Project Area

Projected Development Site

1 Tax Block Boundary

1 Tax Lot Boundary

Building Heights in the Project Area

≤ 20 feet

≤ 35 feet

≤ 60 feet

0 200 FEET

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Urban Design and Visual Resources
Building Heights in the Project Area
Figure 8-3

3.7.22



Data source: NYC Dept. of City Planning

Project Area

Projected Development Site

Tax Block Boundary

Tax Lot Boundary

Built FAR in the Project Area

- *≤ 0.5*
- *≤ 1*
- *≤ 1.5*
- *≤ 2*
- *≤ 2.8*

0 200 FEET

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Urban Design and Visual Resources
Built FAR in the Project Area
Figure 8-4

3.7.22



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Urban Design and Visual Resources
Lot Coverage in the Project Area
Figure 8-5



Movie theater occupying the northern portion of Projected Development Site A **1**



View north on 37th Street showing the parking garage and the west wall of the movie theater **2**

Photographs of Projected Development Site A
Figure 8-6a



Buildings along 36th Avenue on Projected Development Site A **3**



Parking lot and retail building on Projected Development Site B **4**

Photographs of Projected Development Sites A and B
Figure 8-6b

Projected Development Site B (Block 668, Lot 5) is located on the northern portion of the block bounded by 38th Street, Steinway Street, 35th Avenue, and 36th Avenue. The site is occupied by a large one-story retail building (P.C. Richard & Son Appliance Store) with an accessory surface parking lot (see View 4, **Figure 8-6b**). The retail building is a masonry structure with windowless streetwalls, located to the south of the parking lot, which fronts onto 35th Avenue. The parking lot has tall lampposts and is surrounded by a guard rail; there is an illuminated sign at the edge of the lot, on a tall pylon. Trees are planted intermittently at the edge of the parking lot, adjacent to the guard rail; there are also two low metal benches adjacent to the parking lot on Steinway Street. There are curb cuts on 38th Street, Steinway Street, and 35th Avenue, leading to the parking lot and the loading dock for the retail building; however, the entrance to the parking lot from 35th Avenue has been closed off by narrow metal bollards, painted yellow. There are a few street trees along each side of Projected Development Site A. The existing built FAR of Projected Development Site B is approximately 0.43. The lot coverage on Projected Development Site B is at approximately 50 percent, due to the accessory surface parking lot fronting onto 35th Avenue. The height of the building on Projected Development Site B is under 35 feet.

Projected Development Site C (Block 669, Lots 13, 16, and 36) occupies the majority of the northern portion of the block bounded by Steinway Street, 41st Street, 35th Avenue, and 36th Avenue. The northern portion of Projected Development Site C contains a paved lot in use as an auto dealership (see View 5, **Figure 8-6c**). The lot extends approximately 200 feet along 41st Street, approximately 100 feet along 35th Avenue, and approximately 100 feet along Steinway Street. It is enclosed by a chain link metal fence capped with barbed wire, with sliding chain-link metal gates on 41st Street and Steinway Street. Curb cuts on 41st Street and Steinway Street serve the entrances to the lot. There are a few trees within the paved lot, but no street trees along 41st Street or 35th Avenue on this block. To the south of the auto dealership lot is a one-story through-lot masonry building with frontage on Steinway Street and 41st Street, which contains a pool hall/restaurant. The building has two garage bays and curb cuts on 41st Street, and the pool hall has large awnings above its windows on Steinway Street and extending over the sidewalk at its entrance on Steinway Street. To the south of the pool hall/restaurant building is a two-story concrete block warehouse building fronting on 41st Street. The warehouse has three garage bays on 41st Street, each of which is served by a curb cut. The existing built FAR of Projected Development Site C is 0.56. The lot coverage on the northern portion of Projected Development Site C is less than 25 percent, due to the nature of the auto dealership lot, which is largely used for storing cars for sale by the dealership. The lot coverage on the southern portion of Projected Development Site C is 100 percent. Building heights on Projected Development Site C are under 35 feet.

Projected Development Site D (Block 670, Lots 4, 8, 20, 27, 30, and 47) occupies the majority of the block bounded by 41st and 42nd Streets and 35th and 36th Avenues. Projected Development Site D contains nine warehouse buildings, including a two-story brick warehouse fronting on 41st Street (Lot 8), and a one-story brick warehouse to the south on 41st Street (see Views 6 and 7, **Figures 8-6c and 8-6d**). This structure has patterned brick above its central bay, and at the top of the building; other warehouses within this site are brick and concrete block and have multiple garage door entrances served by curb cuts. Some of the windows of these warehouses have been filled with brick or enclosed with glass block. There are a few street trees on 42nd Street, 35th Avenue, and 36th Avenue, and no street trees along 41st Street on this block. The existing built FAR of Projected Development Site D is approximately 1.14. The lot coverage on Projected Development Site D is 100 percent. Building heights on Projected Development Site D are under 35 feet.



Auto dealership and low-rise commercial building on Projected Development Site C **5**



View south from 41st Street and 35th Avenue showing masonry warehouses on Projected Development Site D **6**

Photographs of Projected Development Sites C and D

Figure 8-6c



View north on 36th Avenue from Northern Boulevard, showing low-rise warehouses and auto repair shops on Projected Development Site D and nearby buildings south of the Project Area **7**



View north on Northern Boulevard showing Projected Development Site D **8**

Photographs of Projected Development Site D

Figure 8-6d

Projected Development Site E (Block 671, Lots 1, 8, 12, 20, and 23) occupies the majority of the easternmost Project Area block, which is bounded by 42nd and 43rd Streets, Northern Boulevard, and 35th Avenue (see Views 8 and 9, **Figures 8-6d and 8-6e**). At the northwest corner of the block (on Lot 12) is a one-story, stucco-clad masonry building, with a storefront entrance on 35th Avenue; this building is in use as an auto showroom and has a large vertical sign attached to its corner on 42nd Street. To the south of the auto showroom building on 42nd Street and on 43rd Street are one-story masonry buildings in use as auto repair facilities. These buildings have multiple garage bays, with curb cuts along the sidewalk; the garages bays have pull-down metal doors or have been retrofitted with windows. At the southwest corner of the block is a one-story building in use as an auto showroom; this building is clad in aluminum panels and faux stone siding, with long glazed storefronts extending along Northern Boulevard. There are two large advertising billboards above the building on open metal frame structures, at the southwest and southeast corners of the block. There are a few street trees on 35th Avenue and Northern Boulevard, and no street trees along 42nd Street and 43rd Street on this block. The existing built FAR of Projected Development Site E is approximately 1.00. The lot coverage on Projected Development Site E is 100 percent. Building heights on Projected Development Site E are under 20 feet.

In summary, the five Projected Development Sites are currently occupied by 1- and 2-story buildings containing a diverse range of land uses, including residential, industrial, warehouse, commercial (retail, restaurant, cinema), and auto-related (auto dealership lot, auto repair, auto showroom, parking garage, surface parking lots). The existing land uses are located adjacent to each other, but generally are not in mixed-use buildings. The existing built FAR of the Projected Development Sites ranges from 0.43 to 1.14, and building heights on all of the Projected Development Sites is under 35 feet. Street trees are more generally located near residential and commercial uses, and less so near industrial and auto-related uses within these blocks, and there are few other streetscape elements within the Development Site. There are a number of curb cuts within the Projected Development Sites; the related car movements to and from the Development Site, or vehicles parked on sidewalks, may interrupt pedestrian movement through the Development Site.

Additional Affected Area

The Additional Affected Area includes the remaining portions of Blocks 668, 669, 670, and 671 (see **Figure 8-1**), with the exception of Playground Thirty Five XXXV on Block 669.

The Additional Affected Area on Block 668 is located at the southern end of the block, with frontages along 38th and Steinway Streets and 36th Avenue. Lots 1 and 2, located immediately adjacent to Projected Development Site B along 38th Street, comprise Projected Development Site F and include a surface parking area surrounded by a chain link fence with a sliding gate, and a two-story brick rowhouse with a rounded bay front. The existing built FAR of Projected Development Site F is approximately 0.39. To the south of Projected Development Site F on 38th Street are four additional brick rowhouses, each of which has limestone trim and a bracketed ornate metal cornice and frieze (see View 10, **Figure 8-6e**). There are a few street trees surrounding the Additional Affected Area on Block 668. The lot coverage on Projected Development Site F is zero within the surface parking area (Lot 2), and approximately 75 percent on the rowhouse lot (Lot 1); the remainder of the Additional Affected Area on Block 668 fronting on 38th Street has lot coverages of 75 to 100 percent. The rowhouses along 38th Street are all less than 35 feet in height.



The southeast corner of 41st Street and 35th Avenue, Projected Development Site D **9**



View northeast to Additional Affected Area on Block 668, from 36th Avenue **10**

Photographs of Blocks 668 and 670
Figure 8-6e

The portion of the Additional Affected Area on Block 668 fronting on Steinway Street is more densely developed, with a row of four-story masonry apartment buildings lining the street. The buildings have ornamental brickwork and fire escape stairs attached to the upper stories (see View 11, **Figure 8-6f**). The southern edge of the block, along 36th Avenue, is occupied by three buildings with ground-floor commercial space; two of the buildings have residential use above. At the southwest corner of the block is a three-story building with a projecting awning and ground-floor restaurant space; a one-story brick building in use as a restaurant is at the midblock along 36th Avenue. The restaurant uses in these two buildings have outdoor seating along the sidewalk and extending into the roadway on 38th Street and the north side of 36th Avenue, enclosed by temporary structures. The southeast corner of the block is developed with a two-story vinyl siding-clad building containing a grocery store on the ground floor. This portion of the Block 668 Additional Affected Area fronting on Steinway Street has lot coverages of 75 to 100 percent and building heights up to approximately 60 feet.

The Additional Affected Area on Block 699 comprises Projected Development Site G (Lots 7 and 8) and Projected Development Site H (Lots 1, 3, and 41). Projected Development Site G is located directly adjacent to Projected Development Site C and includes one-story masonry structures fronting on Steinway Street that are in use as a storefront church and auto repair facilities (see View 12, **Figure 8-6f**). Projected Development Site H has frontage on Steinway Street, 36th Avenue, and 41st Street and includes one- and two-story, utilitarian brick structures in industrial use. The structures on Projected Development Sites G and H have garage entrances with pull-down metal gates, served by multiple curb cuts. There are no street trees surrounding the Additional Affected Area on Block 669. The built FAR of Projected Development Sites G and H is approximately 1.04. The lot coverage on Projected Development Sites G and H is 100 percent. Building heights on Projected Development Sites G and H are under 35 feet.

The Additional Affected Area on Block 670 comprises Projected Development Site I (Lots 33 and 36) and Projected Development Site J (Lot 39). Projected Development Sites I and J are located along 42nd Street and Northern Boulevard in the southeast portion of the block. Projected Development Site I includes two one-story warehouses with garage entrances with pull-down metal garage doors, served by curb cuts. Projected Development Site J includes a one-story utilitarian brick structure in auto repair use at the rear of the lot, with a large surface parking area along Northern Boulevard and a portion of 42nd Street. There are metal parking stackers at the west side of the parking area, and signage on a pylon at the west corner of this lot. The built FAR of Projected Development Site I is approximately 1.00, and the built FAR of Projected Development Site J is approximately 0.56. The lot coverage on Projected Development Site I is approximately 75 percent, and the lot coverage on Projected Development Site J is approximately 100 percent. Building heights on Projected Development Sites I and J are under 20 feet.

The Additional Affected Area on Block 671 comprises Projected Development Site K (Lots 16 and 18), at the northeast corner of the block. Projected Development Site K includes two one-story utilitarian brick structures in auto repair use. The built FAR of Projected Development Site K is approximately 1.06. The lot coverage on Projected Development Site K is 100 percent. Building heights on Projected Development Sites K are under 20 feet.

In total, the lots within the Project Area have very high lot coverage, with the exception of the large surface parking area on Block 668 and the lot in use as an auto dealership on Block 669. All existing buildings within the Project Area are under 35 feet in height, with the exception of the four-story masonry apartment buildings on Steinway Street.



View northwest to Additional Affected Area on Block 668, from 36th Avenue and Steinway Street **11**



One-story warehouses and commercial buildings along Steinway Street, including Projected Development Site C and the Additional Affected Area **12**

Photographs of Block 668 and 669
Figure 8-6f

In summary, the Additional Affected Area is currently occupied by 1- to 4-story buildings containing a diverse range of land uses, including residential, industrial, warehouse, commercial (retail, restaurant, grocery), community facility (church), and auto-related (auto repair, surface parking lots). The existing land uses are located adjacent to each other, but generally are not in mixed-use buildings. The existing built FAR of the Affected Area ranges from 0.39 to 1.06, and building heights range from under 20 feet to approximately 60 feet. Street trees are more generally located near residential and commercial uses, and less so near industrial and auto-related uses within these blocks, and there are few other streetscape elements within the Additional Affected Area. There are a number of curb cuts within the Additional Affected Area; the related car movements to and from the Additional Affected Area, or vehicles parked on sidewalks, may interrupt pedestrian movement through the Additional Affected Area.

Playground Thirty Five XXXV

Within the Project Area, but not included in either the Development Site or the Additional Affected Area, is Playground Thirty Five XXXV, a public open space (see View 13, **Figure 8-6g**). Located at the southeast corner of Steinway Street and 35th Avenue, at the northwest corner of Block 669, the 0.22-acre park, which was recently renovated, contains the following features: two play structures (at the northeast and southwest corners of the park); a swing set at the southeast corner of the park; a spray shower area with two picnic tables adjacent, at the northwest corner of the park; a total of 11 benches surrounding the play structures and spray shower; lighting; and planting beds, mostly at the perimeter of the park. It is surrounded by a low metal fence along the sidewalk, and a tall laser-cut metal fence along the lot line boundaries between the park and adjacent properties to the south and east. There is a glass and metal bus shelter adjacent to the park on 35th Avenue, and street trees adjacent to the park on Steinway Street.

STUDY AREA

Figures 8-7 through 8-9 illustrate the built FAR, lot coverage, and building heights within the study area.

The topography of the study area is relatively flat to the west and north of Northern Boulevard; to the south and east of Northern Boulevard, the topography of the study area slopes downward toward the rail yard. The highest point in the study area is at Steinway Street near Broadway, where elevations are at approximately 65 feet. The street pattern in the study area is generally a grid, creating long, rectangular blocks with their long sides oriented in a north-south direction. The area south of Northern Boulevard within the study area is primarily occupied by the Sunnyside Yard railroad yard and does not have a regular street grid. A few streets extend through this area from the south to Northern Boulevard, specifically 39th Street and 43rd Street, and provide connections to access neighborhoods and transportation corridors on either side of the railyard (Northern Boulevard to the north, Queens Boulevard to the south).

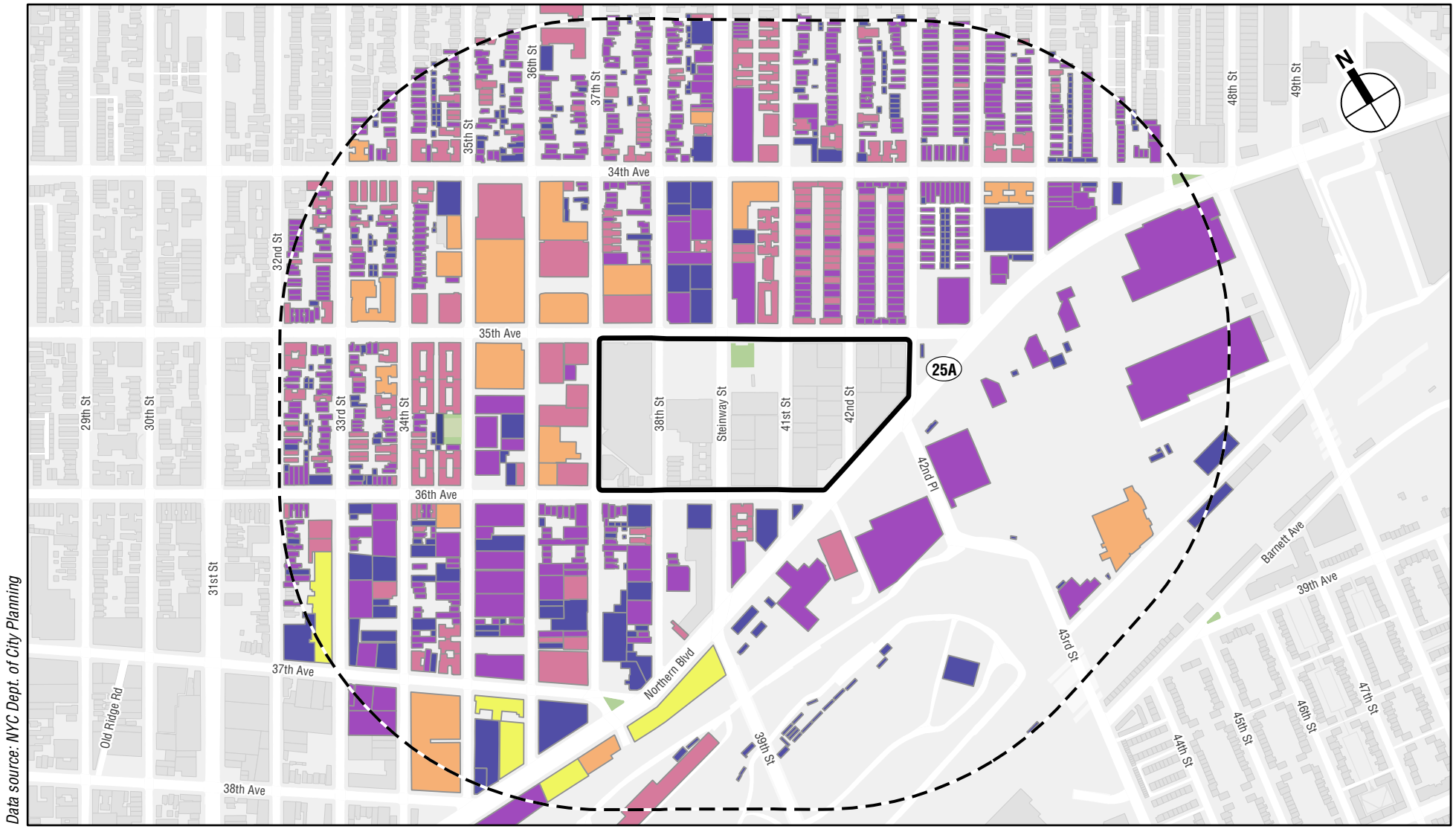
The 100-foot-wide, four-lane Northern Boulevard is the widest thoroughfare in the study area and is a major commercial corridor and arterial road in Queens. Northern Boulevard crosses diagonally through the southeast portion of the study area, forming a terminus for the east-west avenues and most of the north-south streets, and giving the blocks along the north side of Northern Boulevard irregular shapes. Northern Boulevard also functions as a dividing line between the large commercial and industrial lots on the boulevard's southern side and the generally smaller lots in mixed residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial use extending north from the boulevard. There are a few sidewalk trees along the boulevard and some low metal benches on



Playground Thirty Five XXXV at the southeast corner of Steinway Street and 35th Avenue, within the Project Area **13**

Photograph of Projected Development Site C
Figure 8-6g

3.7.22



Data source: NYC Dept. of City Planning

Project Area

Study Area (1/4-mile perimeter)

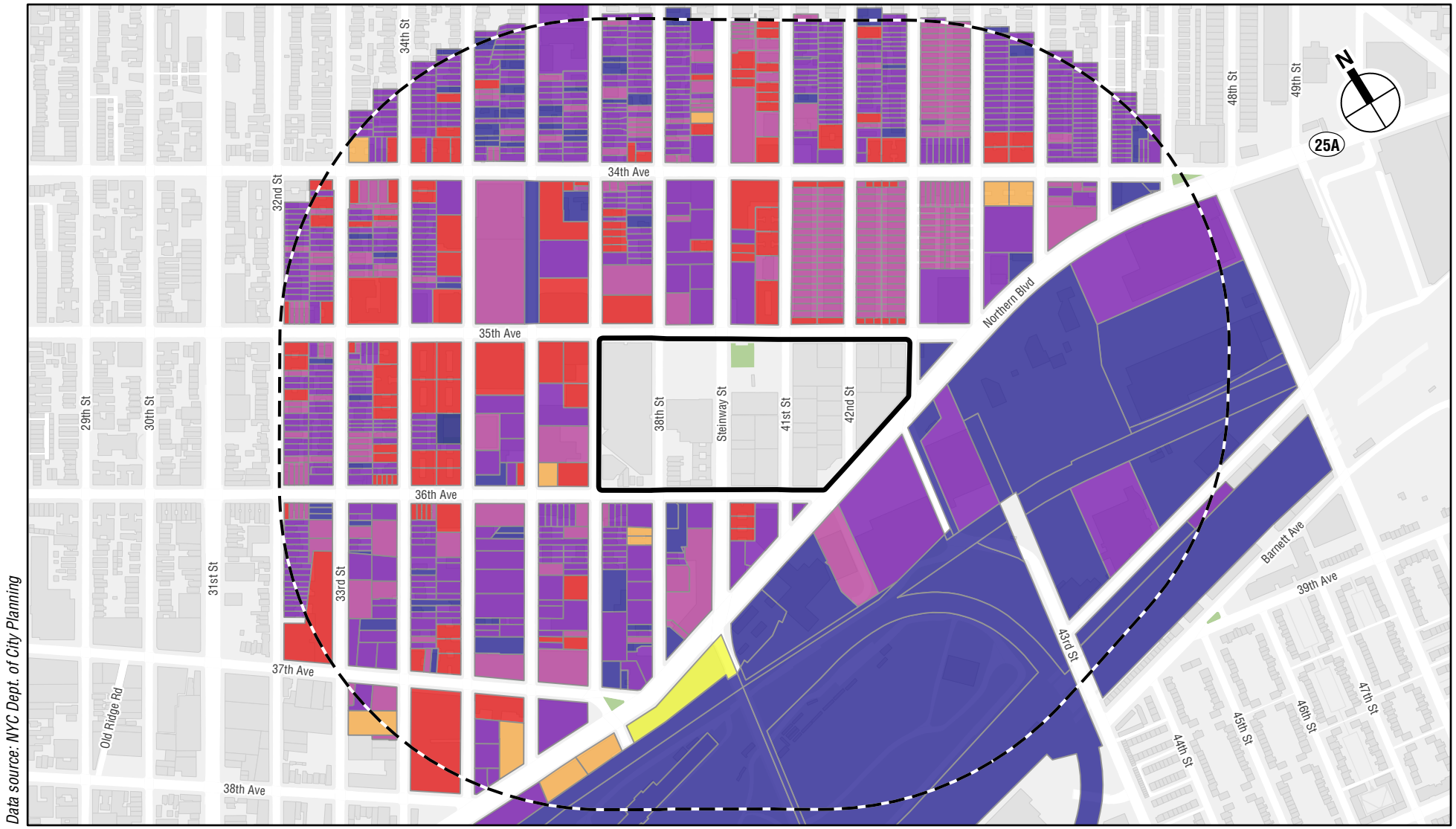
Building Heights in the Study Area

- *≤ 20 feet*
- *≤ 35 feet*
- *≤ 60 feet*
- *≤ 85 feet*
- *≤ 125 feet*

0 400 FEET

INNOVATION QNS
ASTORIA, QUEENS
COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1

Urban Design and Visual Resources
Building Heights in the Study Area
Figure 8-7



Data source: NYC Dept. of City Planning

Project Area

Study Area (1/4-mile perimeter)

Built FAR in the Study Area

- ≤ 0.5
- ≤ 1.5
- ≤ 2.5
- ≤ 4.5
- ≤ 6.5
- ≤ 8.3

0 400 FEET

INNOVATION QNS
ASTORIA, QUEENS
COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1

Urban Design and Visual Resources
Built FAR in the Study Area
Figure 8-8

3.7.22



Data source: NYC Dept. of City Planning

INNOVATION QNS
ASTORIA, QUEENS
COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1

Urban Design and Visual Resources
Lot Coverage in the Study Area
Figure 8-9

south side of boulevard, similar to those on Steinway Street near 35th Avenue. While the sidewalks along the boulevard are wide, observed pedestrian levels along the street were low.

Steinway Street is one of the larger north-south streets within the study area; it is an 80-foot-wide street carrying two-way traffic, with parking lanes on both sides. As described in more detail below, Steinway Street is a retail corridor with high levels of pedestrian activity. There are a few sidewalk trees along the street; few other streetscape elements were identified.

Extending east-west through the study area, the avenues (34th Avenue, 35th Avenue, 36th Avenue, and 37th Avenue) are generally 80 feet wide and carry two-way traffic with parking lanes on both sides. The north-south streets in the study area other than Steinway Street are generally 60-foot-wide streets carrying one-way traffic, with parking lanes on both sides. Between 34th and 35th Avenues, 36th Street is closed to public access and enclosed by a laser-cut metal fence at the north and south ends. There are a few street trees along the avenues, and some of the north-south streets; however, the north-south streets north of 35th Avenue and east of Steinway Street—which have fewer commercial uses and more residential uses on narrow lots—have more extensive street tree cover.

The study area is well served by mass transit and is located within a designated Transit Zone in the Zoning Resolution. Within the study area, NYCT bus routes extend along Steinway Street, Northern Boulevard, and 35th Avenue. The Q66 bus runs along 35th Avenue and Northern Boulevard, with stops at Northern Boulevard and 44th Street and at Steinway Street and 35th Avenue. The Q101 bus runs along Steinway Street with stops at 35th Avenue and Northern Boulevard. The Q104 bus runs along Broadway two blocks north of the Project Area, with stops at Steinway Street. The Q102 bus runs along 31st Street six blocks west of the Project Area, with stops at 35th Avenue and 36th Avenue. There are two subway stations served by M and R trains operating on the Queens Boulevard Line—the 36th Street station located below Northern Boulevard at 36th Street two blocks south of the Project Area, and the Steinway Street station located below Steinway Street at 34th Avenue, one block north of the Project Area. Just outside of the study area is a third station, the 36th Avenue station (located on an elevated structure above 31st Street at 36th Avenue), which is served by N and W trains operating on the Astoria Line. Subway station entrances are located at the intersections of Northern Boulevard and 35th and 36th Streets, for the 36th Street Station, and at the intersection of 34th Avenue and Steinway Street for the Steinway Street Station.

In addition to transit, there are several bike lanes located within the study area. There is a shared bike lane along 34th Avenue that connects to the protected bike lane with access points on Crescent Street, located just outside of the study area. The Crescent Street protected bike lane connects to a protected bike lane on Queens Plaza North, to the south of the study area. West of the study area, conventional bike lanes along 28th Street and 29th Street connect to the bike lanes on Crescent Street and 34th Avenue. There are also conventional bike lanes along 35th and 36th Streets north of 34th Avenue (which connect to shared bike lanes on 34th Avenue and 31st Avenue) and on 39th and Honeywell Streets south of Northern Boulevard (which connect to protected bike lanes on Skillman Avenue and Queens Boulevard, outside of the study area). There are also multiple CitiBike stations throughout the study area, including four stations along 34th Avenue (serving the shared bike lane on that avenue, with a total of 68 docks), three along 35th Avenue (with a total of 56 docks), one along 36th Avenue (with 26 docks), and two along Northern Boulevard (with a total of 40 docks).

The study area has very limited open space features that include, in addition to Playground Thirty Five XXXV described above, the A.R.R.O.W. Field House and Dwyer Square. A.R.R.OW. Field

House is located at 35-30 35th Street and contains a garden, benches, and a basketball court (as well as indoor amenities such as media labs and multipurpose rooms). Dwyer Square, located at the intersection of Northern Boulevard and 34th Avenue between 47th and 48th Streets, is a 0.25-acre traffic plaza containing trees, permeable pavers, and benches.

The north side of 35th Avenue, opposite the Development Site, is developed with two- to four-story mixed-use buildings with ground-floor commercial spaces (see Figure 2-1). West of Steinway Street, the buildings along 35th Avenue appear to be former industrial buildings, with simple masonry façades and large multi-light windows (see View 14, **Figure 8-10a**). The Museum of the Moving Image is located on the north side of 35th Avenue between 36th and 37th Streets, in a three-story masonry building with large multi-light windows across each floor. Further east, 35th Avenue includes residential buildings with 20- to 30-foot-wide storefronts on the ground floor. The ground-floor retail is largely located at the intersections of these blocks, and the buildings are generally 3-story apartment buildings. Near the junction with Northern Boulevard, the avenue is more industrial in character, developed with surface parking lots for vehicle storage and lower density automotive repair shops (see View 15, **Figure 8-10a**). The two blocks bounded by 35th Avenue, 34th Avenue, 41st Street, and 43rd Street are entirely composed of narrow 3-story residential buildings, with ground-floor retail use on the avenues. Lot coverage in this area is generally up to 100 percent for commercial uses, and generally up to 75 percent for residential uses.

North of 35th Avenue at the northern edge of the study area, Steinway Street transitions to a dense commercial corridor, with narrower storefronts and glazed shop entrances (see View 16, **Figure 8-10b**). At the junction of 34th Street and Steinway Street, 34-01 Steinway Street is a 5-story, approximately 80-foot-tall residential building with commercial uses on the ground floor. The new building occupies a larger footprint with 200-foot-long streetwalls along both 34th and Steinway Streets. Lot coverage in this area is generally up to 100 percent for large commercial uses, and up to 75 percent for residential uses.

36th Avenue within the study area is a lower-density mixed-use corridor, with restaurants and grocery stores along the sidewalk as well as gated parking lots, automotive repair shops, and a four-story apartment building. The western end of the street, within the study area, is more residential in character, with two-story masonry row houses on both sides of the street. The industrial and parking uses along this corridor have lower lot coverage (less than 25 percent), while the residential and commercial uses generally have higher lot coverage (between 50 and 100 percent).

East of 39th Street/Steinway Street, Northern Boulevard is developed with low-rise commercial buildings typically set back from the sidewalk behind surface parking lots (see Views 17 and 18, **Figures 8-10b to 8-10c**). In this portion of the study area, the blocks immediately north of Northern Boulevard are developed with low-rise buildings and parking lots (see View 19, **Figure 8-10c**). On the south side of the street, some parking lots are enclosed with chain-link fences. A four-story (60-foot-tall) storage building is located at 41-02 Northern Boulevard, southeast of the Project Area. West of 39th Street/Steinway Street, Northern Boulevard is a more densely developed area, with continuous streetwalls along the sidewalks, and ground-floor commercial storefronts that meet the sidewalk (see View 20, **Figure 8-10d**). The former Standard Motor Products building—a six-story (approximately 88-foot-tall) commercial building at 37-02 Northern Boulevard—has an approximately 490-foot-long frontage along the south side of Northern Boulevard (see View 21, **Figure 8-10d**). The building has large multi-light windows on each story, and a stucco cladding. Further west, a newly constructed residential and commercial building at 37-14 36th Street rises ten stories (an estimated 120 feet) with a nine-story streetwall along the northwest corner of



View east on 35th Avenue, west of the Project Area, showing the Kaufman Astoria Studios to the left and the Frank Sinatra School to the right **14**



Low-rise buildings along 35th Avenue in the eastern portion of the Project Area **15**



Steinway Street, view south from 34th Avenue **16**



Low-density development along Northern Boulevard, view east from Steinway Street **17**

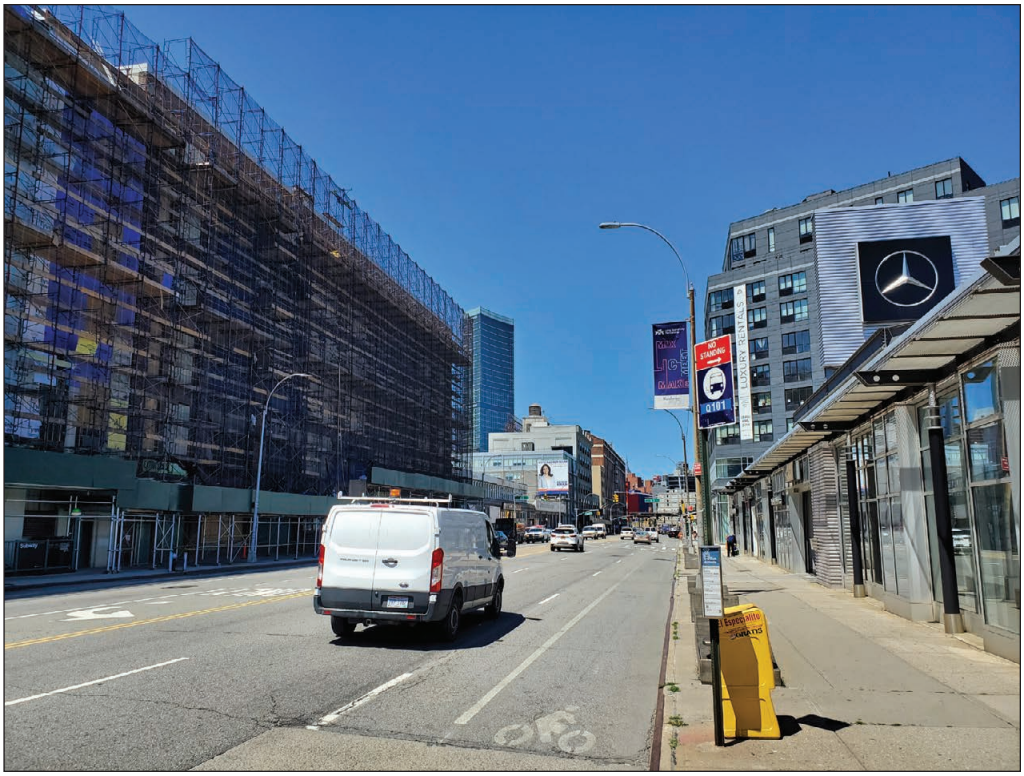


View west on Northern Boulevard near 46th Street, with low-rise commercial buildings in foreground and Long Island City towers in the distance **18**



View north on 37th Street from 37th Avenue **19**

Photographs of Study Area
Figure 8-10c



View west at Northern Boulevard and 37th Street **20**



A new residential building at the northwest corner of Northern Boulevard and 36th Street **21**

Photographs of Study Area
Figure 8-10d

Northern Boulevard and 36th Street, clad in coated panels and glass curtain walls. There are a mix of lot coverages along the Northern Boulevard corridor in the study area.

The portion of the study area north of 36th Avenue and west of Northern Boulevard is a mixed commercial and residential neighborhood, lined with commercial and storage buildings, apartments, and row houses. The side streets are developed with a mix of land uses, including warehouses, commercial storefronts, and some houses (see View 22, **Figure 8-10e**). As described above, the study area also includes the A.R.R.O.W. Field House at 35-30 35th Street (see View 23, **Figure 8-10e**). 34th Avenue is lined with three- to five-story mixed-use buildings with retail storefronts or restaurants on the ground floor and offices or residences above (see View 24 of **Figure 8-10f**). Towards the eastern portion of the study area, 34th Avenue becomes more residential in character, with six-story apartment buildings that occupy entire blockfronts. 35th Avenue is also a mixed-use corridor with ground-floor storefronts and restaurants, school buildings, and apartment buildings. West of the Project Area, buildings along 35th Avenue are typically 50 to 80 feet tall. The approximately 80-foot-tall Frank Sinatra School of the Arts occupies a modern glass curtain wall and brick building that extends the blockfront on the south side of 35th Avenue between 35th and 36th Streets (see View 25, **Figure 8-10f**). The approximately 75-foot-tall Kaufman Astoria Studios, a film and tv production studio, is an older stone and stucco-clad building that also extends the blockfront along 35th Avenue (see View 14, **Figure 8-10a**). Further west, Public School 166 is a large brick four-story, approximately 73-foot-tall building on the north side of the avenue.

North of 36th Avenue, the streets west of 35th Street are characterized by residences. These include a variety of two- and three-story brick rowhouses, varying in form, clad in brick and vinyl and generally set back from the street behind a brick or iron fence, a small paved yard, or a garden level and stoop (see View 26, **Figure 8-10g**). Development in the northeastern portion of the study area is characterized by uniform streetwalls of two- and three-story brick rowhouses. The buildings are typically attached and set back behind iron railings and small paved yards. Lot coverages within this area are a mix; most lots have coverage in the 26 to 50 percent range or the 51 to 75 percent range, and the rowhouse lots are narrow.

The southeastern portion of the study area is characterized by the elevated LIRR tracks, Sunnyside Yard, and large paved parcels adjacent to the railyard and railroad that are utilized for the storage of machinery and construction materials, temporary trailers, and parking (see Views 27 and 28, **Figures 8-10g and 8-10h**). The paved areas are surrounded by metal and brick fencing, with power lines along the fencing and a single sidewalk on one side of the street. The LIRR is an elevated corridor crossing the southern end of the study area. In the southeast corner of the study area, there are two large buildings on the north side of 37th Avenue beside land enclosed in chain-link fencing; the south side of the avenue contains a surface parking lot adjacent to the raised LIRR. Grace Fellowship Chapel occupies an approximately 75-foot-tall former industrial building at 46-01 37th Avenue (formerly the Knickerbocker Laundry building), as well as a low-rise brick-building to the west, 43-23 37th Avenue (see View 29, **Figure 8-10h**). The south front of the Knickerbocker Laundry building has stucco cladding and Art Deco-style details such as banded windows and curved corners; the rear portion of the building is clad in aluminum, with modern glass curtain walls on the west side. South of the Northern Boulevard corridor, lot coverages within this area are very low due to the presence of the railroad yard. The railroad yard also functions as a barrier between this portion of the study area and the portion north of Northern Boulevard.

The southern portion of the study area west of Northern Boulevard is generally characterized by one- to four-story brick warehouses. The buildings vary in size, from narrow buildings with single-



View south on 36th Street, from south of 36th Avenue **22**



The A.R.R.O.W. Community Garden on 35th Street, west of the Project Area **23**



View west of the mixed-use corridor of 34th Avenue, from 44th Street **24**



The Frank Sinatra School of the Arts on 35th Avenue **25**



View north on 43rd Street, from north of 34th Avenue, showing mix of residential building types **26**



View north on 39th Street, from bridge over Sunnyside Yard **27**



View south on 42nd Place, with LIRR viaduct in the distance **28**



Grace Fellowship Chapel on 37th Avenue in the southeastern portion of the study area **29**

bay garages to larger structures with approximately 100-foot-long streetwalls (see View 30, **Figure 8-10i**). The north-south streets in this portion of the study area also include 20- to 30-foot wide rowhouses. 37th Avenue is developed with larger brick buildings, including the five-story (115-foot-tall) Collective Paper Factory Hotel at 35-02 37th Avenue, and a two-story (34-foot-tall) parking garage at 35-15 37th Avenue. Lot coverages along 37th Avenue are generally higher, up to 100 percent.

In summary, the tallest buildings in the study area generally contain commercial uses and are located on Northern Boulevard, the widest and busiest street in the study area. The tallest building in the study area is the newly constructed, approximately 120-foot-tall (10-story) building at 37-14 36th Street, followed by the five-story (115-foot-tall) Collective Paper Factory Hotel at 35-02 37th Avenue and the five-story (110-foot-tall) office building at 36-46 33rd Street, at 37th Avenue. Other taller buildings in the study area include the former Knickerbocker Laundry building (approximately 75 feet tall), the approximately 80-foot-tall Frank Sinatra School of the Arts, the 87-foot-tall building at 36-02 Northern Boulevard, and the 88-foot-tall former Standard Motor Products building. Most buildings in the study area are between 35 and 60 feet in height; the shortest buildings in the study area are less than 35 feet in height. Built FARs in the study area are generally under 4.5.

VISUAL RESOURCES AND VIEW CORRIDORS

The *CEQR Technical Manual* defines a visual resource as the connection from the public realm to significant natural or built features, including views of the waterfront, public parks, landmark structures or districts, otherwise distinct buildings or groups of buildings, or natural resources.

PROJECT AREA

The Project Area does not contain any visual resources. Views along the north-south streets within the Project Area are limited by mature street trees; views south along these streets end at the buildings along Northern Boulevard. Views along the east-west avenues within the Project Area are more extensive, given the greater width of the avenues, but extend for long distances without notable focus. Northern Boulevard, as a wide view corridor, provides long views to the north, south and east. High rise buildings in Long Island City, including the curved Queens Plaza Park building, are visible to the southwest along Northern Boulevard within the Project Area; views to the northeast along Northern Boulevard extend for long distances, but without a notable focus.

Within the Additional Affected Area on Block 668, the rowhouses at 35-47 to 35-55 38th Street and the three-story mixed-use building at 35-57 38th Street have been identified as a potential historic district (see Chapter 7, "Historic and Cultural Resources"). However, these buildings are not a visually distinctive element in surrounding view corridors, and thus they are not identified as a visual resource for the purposes of this analysis.

STUDY AREA

Visual resources in the study area include the Paramount Studios Complex, a historic nine-building complex of low-scale, historic buildings located to the west of the Project Area, with frontages along 35th Avenue (see Chapter 7, "Historic and Cultural Resources), and the Most Precious Blood Roman Catholic Church at 32-40 37th Street north of 34th Avenue. The church features a stone-clad façade with intricate Art Deco-style limestone carved panels and entrance surround, and an octagonal tower; as it is set back on its site behind a raised platform, the church can only be viewed from nearby portions of 37th Street. As 35th Avenue is a wider thoroughfare,



View east on 37th Avenue, showing masonry buildings with large footprints in the southern portion of the study area, including 34-01 38th Avenue to the right, 35-15 37th Avenue to the left, and 37-02 Northern Boulevard in the distance **30**

the Paramount Studios Complex buildings, which includes the Kaufman Astoria Studios and Museum of the Moving Image buildings described above, can be seen from farther away along the avenue, as well as from nearby portions of adjacent north-south streets (see View 14 of **Figure 8-10a** and Views 33-35 of Figures 7-19 and 7-20). In views north on 36th Street near 35th Avenue, the studio's large-scale "Kaufman" signage above a metal skybridge connecting two of the Paramount Studios Complex buildings is notable.

As in the Project Area, long views are available along Northern Boulevard within the study area and include the Long Island City towers in the distance (see Views 18 and 20 of **Figures 8-10c and 8-10d**). Long views in all directions also are available along 39th Street as it passes over Sunnyside Yard (see View 27 of **Figure 8-10g**). From this perspective, the towers in Long Island City are visible to the west, and the Manhattan skyline can also be viewed in the distance. In the foreground, the massive Standard Motor Products building on Northern Boulevard is prominent. The Standard Motor Products building also can be seen in views east on 37th Avenue, south on 38th Street, and along Northern Boulevard (see View 30 of **Figure 8-10i**). In the southern portion of the study area, the LIRR is visible to the south, as a raised berm.

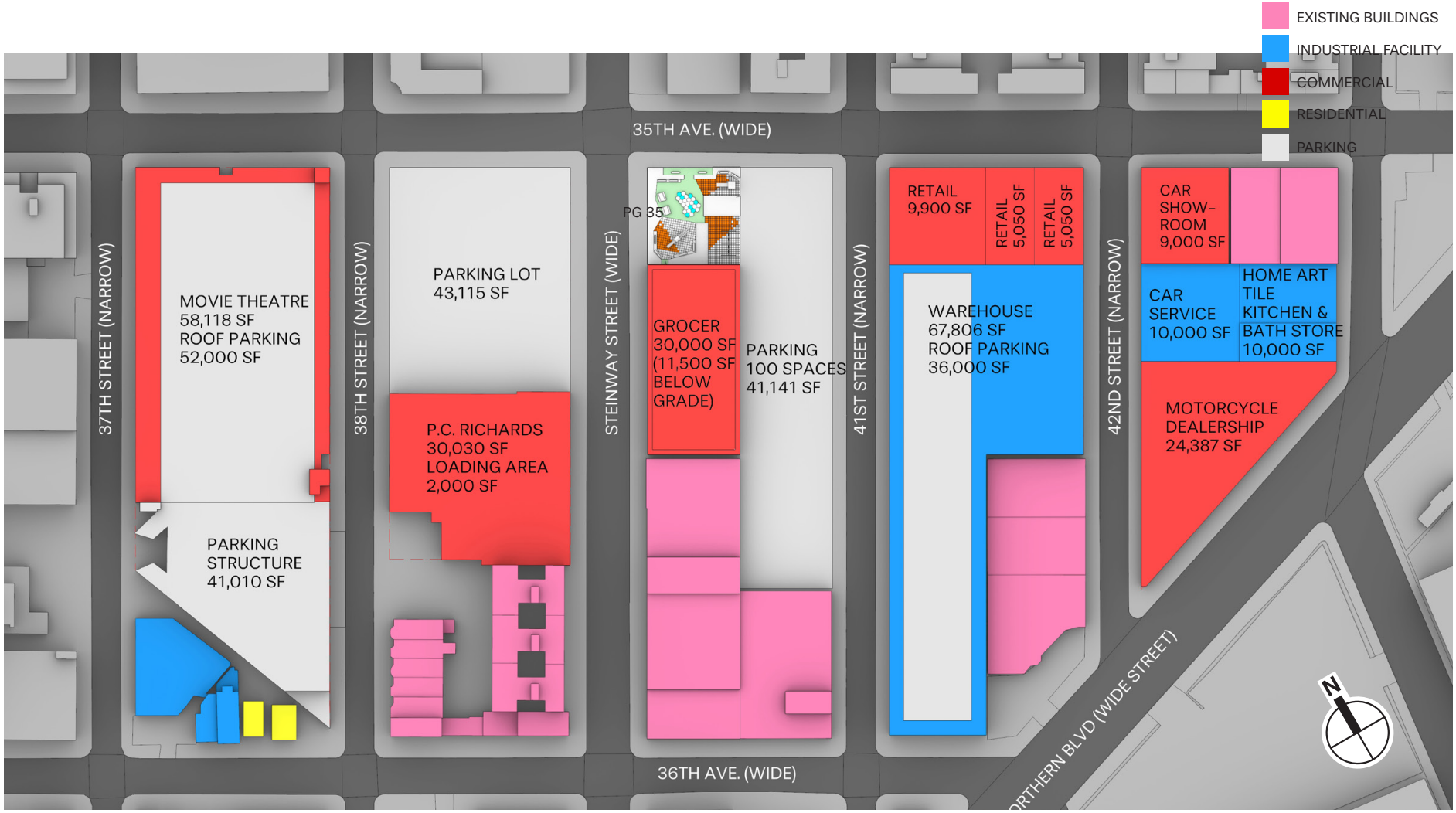
The area directly north of the Project Area, between 41st and 43rd Streets north of 35th Avenue, has been identified as a potential historic district (see Chapter 7, "Historic and Cultural Resources"). The buildings within this area include three- and four-story mixed-use buildings and apartment buildings, some with decorative brickwork. While they create a unified streetwall, the buildings are not a visually distinctive element in surrounding view corridors, and thus they are not identified as a visual resource for the purposes of this analysis.

D. FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

PROJECT AREA

In the No Action condition, the Project Area would not undergo a rezoning and no new land uses would be permitted within the Project Area. As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the Applicant believes that the Project Area is largely underutilized, and portions of the Applicant-controlled properties are feasible development sites under existing zoning since they contain vacant buildings and open parking areas for vehicular storage. The Applicant controls the properties in the Development Site with the purpose of transforming the area into a mixed-use district serving the nearby neighborhood and would redevelop the underutilized parcels on Block 669 (Projected Development Site C) and Block 670 (Projected Development Site D) to the maximum extent feasible under the existing zoning (see **Figures 8-11 and 8-12**).

On Projected Development Site C, the Applicant would develop a 1-story, approximately 30,000-gross-square-feet (gsf) grocery store fronting on Steinway Street, and a 100-space accessory surface parking lot at the rear, facing onto 41st Street. This would replace the existing auto dealership lot, two-story warehouse, and through-block, one-story building on this site. On Projected Development Site D, the Applicant would develop 20,000 sf of retail storefronts along 35th Avenue, and a 1-story, approximately 68,000 gsf warehouse on the remainder of the site. These new buildings would replace the existing one- and two-story warehouses on this site. They would not notably change the lot coverage, built FAR, or height of buildings within the Project Area; however, they would be expected to bring more pedestrian activity to the Project Area, and to enhance the pedestrian experience. Views from the streets and avenues within the Project Area also would not change notably in the No Action condition.

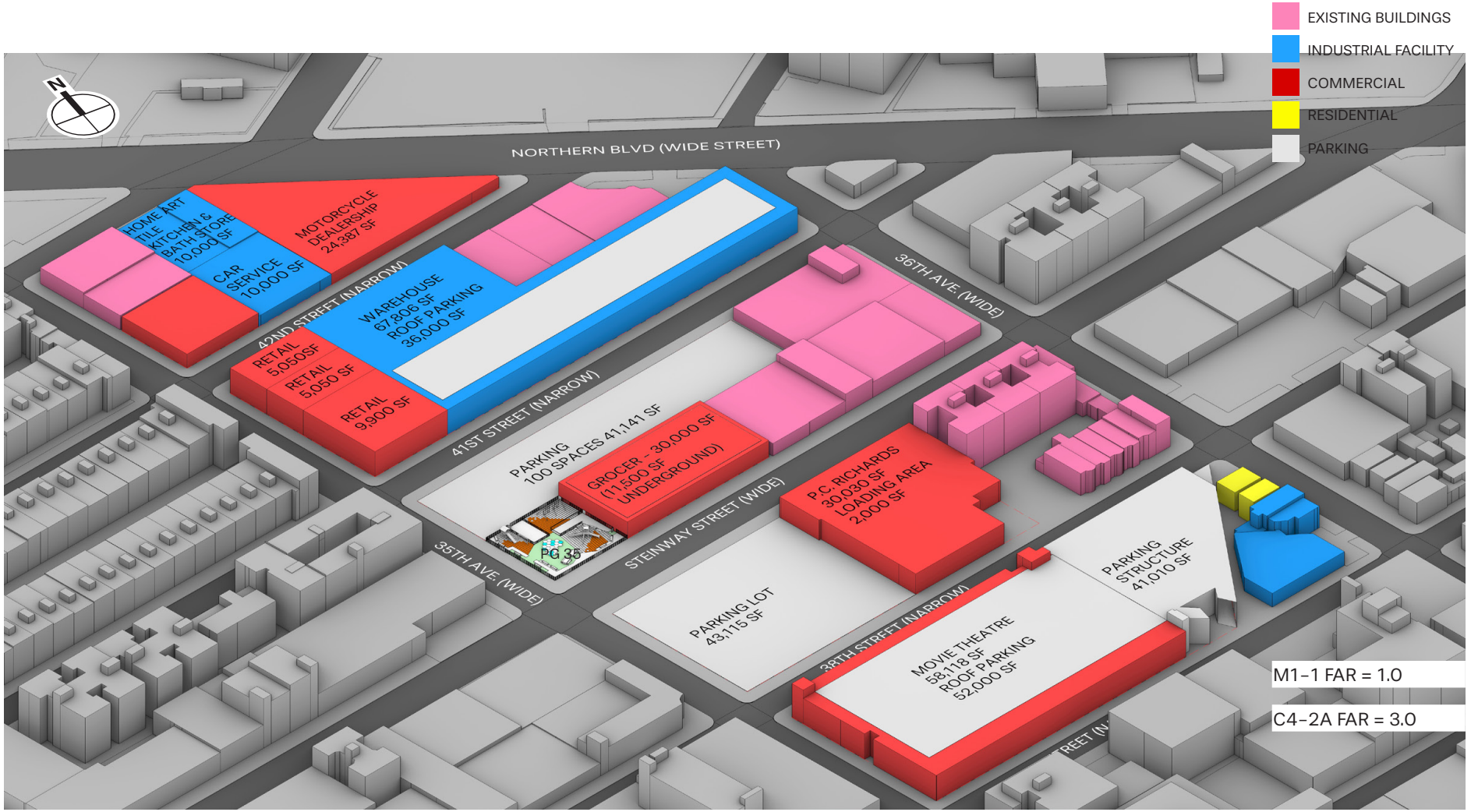


Source: ODA

NOTE: PRELIMINARY FIGURES PENDING DCP REVIEW OF RWCDS

INNOVATION QNS
ASTORIA, QUEENS
COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1

No Action Scenario Site Plan
Figure 8-11



Source: ODA

NOTE: PRELIMINARY FIGURES PENDING DCP REVIEW OF RWCDS

No Action Scenario Massing
Figure 8-12

No other development is anticipated to occur in the Project Area in the future without the Proposed Actions. The remainder of the Project Area is assumed to remain in its existing conditions.

STUDY AREA

Absent the Proposed Actions, there are seven planned projects that will occur in the study area. As described in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy," these projects will result in new residential, retail, office, hotel, and community facility space. The planned projects are located throughout the study area. The largest planned project in the study area is an approximately 337 DU mixed-use residential building with 61,400 gsf of retail space and 175 parking spaces planned at 44-01 Northern Boulevard. In addition, an approximately 80,000 gsf building with retail and grocery store space and 375 parking spaces will be built at Northern Boulevard and 47th Street. The Collective Paper Factory Hotel on 37th Avenue between 35th and 36th Streets is planning a vertical enlargement that will add 61 hotel rooms. Lastly, a master plan framework for a high-density mixed-use development at Sunnyside Yards was released in March 2020. There is no new manufacturing or warehouse development planned within the study area.

The proposed buildings are anticipated to be generally consistent with the existing scale of the study area. By bringing new uses and buildings to sites that are currently vacant or underdeveloped, the No Build projects would bring additional density to the surrounding area, create stronger streetwalls, and activate the pedestrian experience on surrounding streets. The planned developments would be consistent with existing land uses in the study area, are not expected to alter any street patterns, and are not expected to obstruct any existing view corridors or views to visual resources in the study area. The visual character of the study area would continue to evolve with the addition of these new buildings.

E. FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

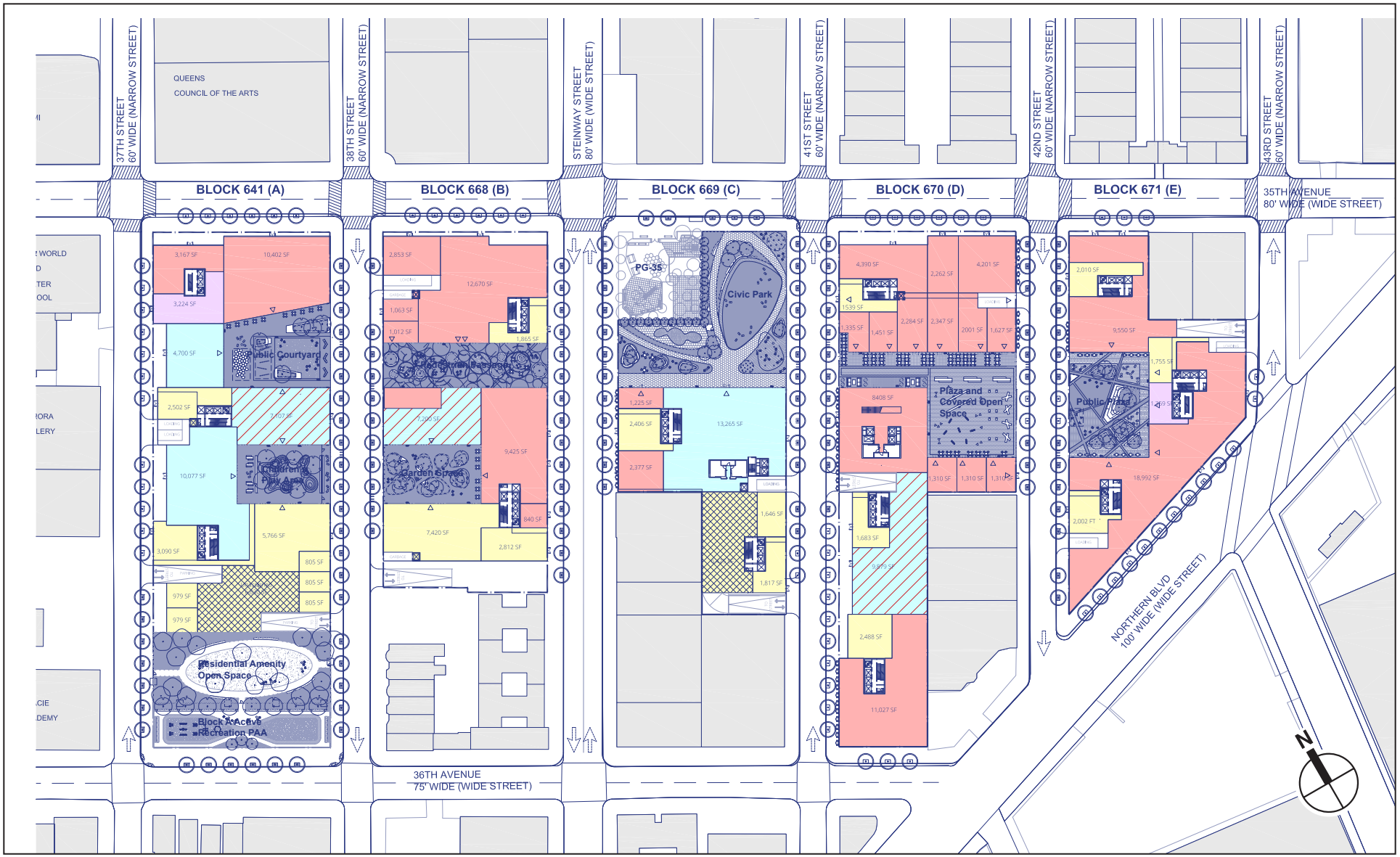
This section considers urban design and visual resources of the With Action condition in 2032 in comparison with the No Action condition. **Figure 8-13** provides a ground floor plan for the proposed buildings and illustrates the conceptual plans for the proposed open spaces. See also **Figures 8-14 and 8-15** for illustrations of the Proposed Development and With Action scenario massings. Views A to E in **Figures 8-16a through 8-16e** provide illustrative renderings depicting the With Action development in comparison to the No Action condition.

URBAN DESIGN

PROJECT AREA

Development Site

In the With Action condition, as described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the Development Site would be redeveloped with the Proposed Development, a series of mixed-use buildings and publicly accessible open space. In total, the Proposed Development on the Development Site would include 12 buildings with approximately 2.9 million square feet of space, of which approximately 2.4 million gsf would be residential space, 250,000 gsf would be office space, 209,000 gsf would be other commercial uses, and 108,000 gsf would be community facility uses. The Proposed Development also would include approximately 2.17 acres of publicly accessible open space, as well as widened sidewalk space to improve pedestrian circulation, and private open space for residents.



Source: ODA

Residential *Cultural/Community Facility (CF)* *Office*

Commercial *CF - Retail*

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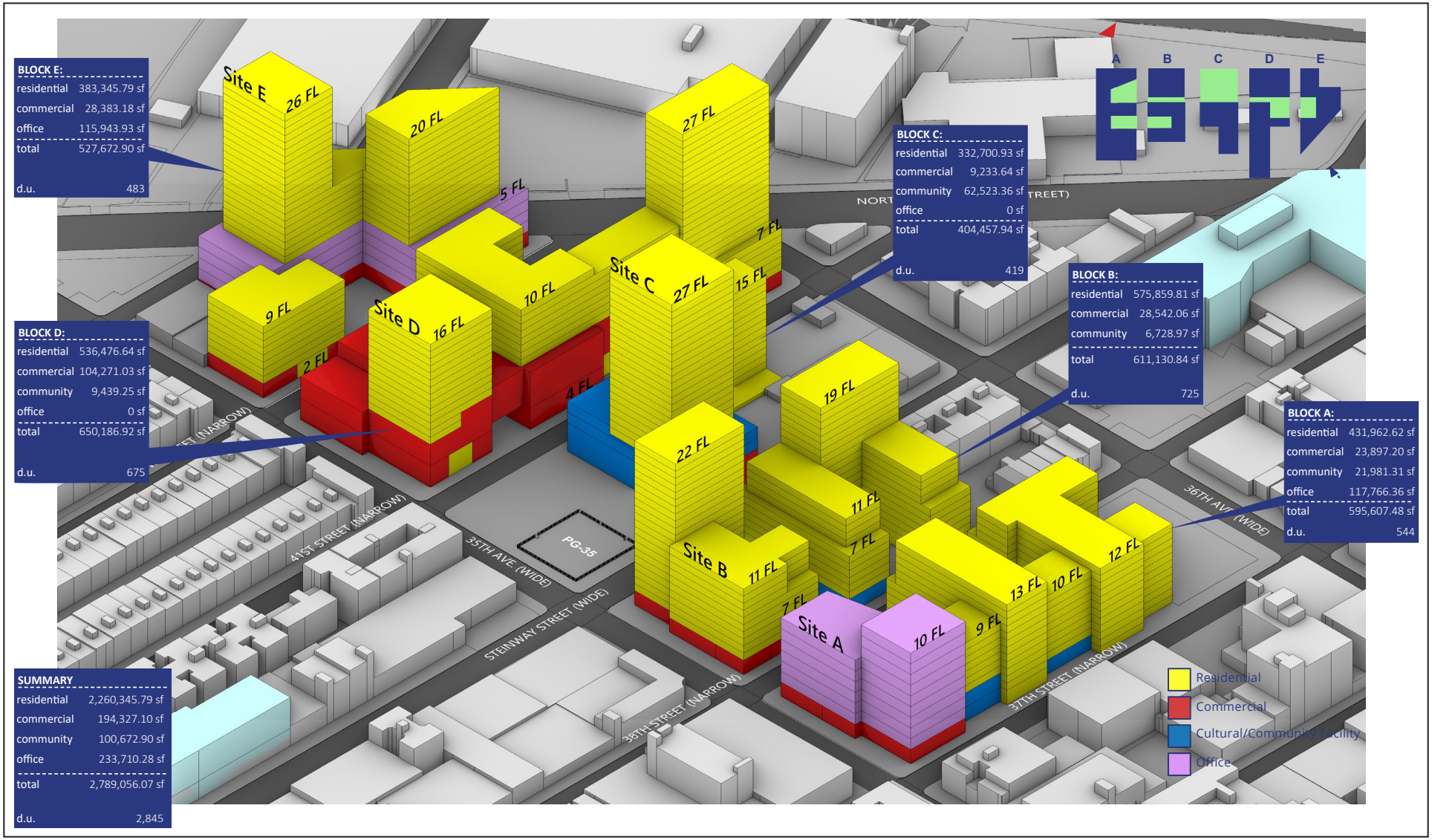
Proposed Development Ground Floor Plan

Figure 8-13



Source: ODA

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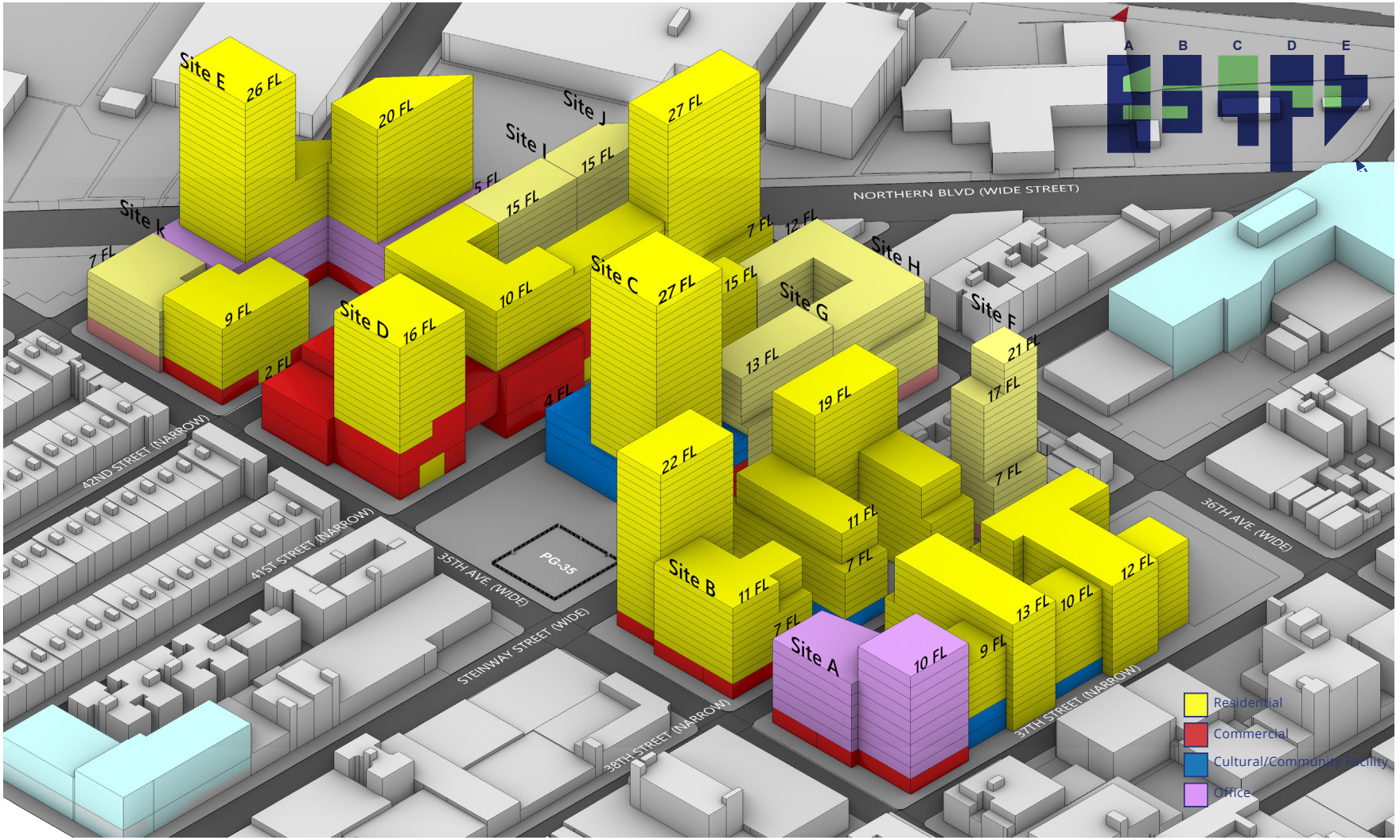
Proposed Development Massing
Figure 8-14



Source: ODA

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With Action Scenario Massing
Figure 8-15



Source: ODA

View A: No Action Condition

View A: With Action Condition

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Illustrative Renderings of No Action and With Action Conditions:
View East on 35th Avenue from 35th Street
Figure 8-16a

PROJECTED DEVELOPMENT SITES

ADDITIONAL AFFECTED AREAS



View B: No Action Condition



View B: With Action Condition

Source: ODA

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Illustrative Renderings of No Action and With Action Conditions:
View South on Steinway Street from 34th Avenue
Figure 8-16b



Source: ODA

View C: No Action Condition

View C: With Action Condition

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Illustrative Renderings of No Action and With Action Conditions:
View North on 41st Street from Northern Boulevard
Figure 8-16c





PROJECTED DEVELOPMENT SITES

ADDITIONAL AFFECTED AREAS

Source: ODA

View D: No Action Condition

View D: With Action Condition

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COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1

Illustrative Renderings of No Action and With Action Conditions:
View North on 37th Street from 37th Avenue
Figure 8-16d

PROJECTED DEVELOPMENT SITES

ADDITIONAL AFFECTED AREAS





Source: ODA

View E: No Action Condition

View E: With Action Condition

Illustrative Renderings of No Action and With Action Conditions:
View West on 35th Avenue from Northern Boulevard

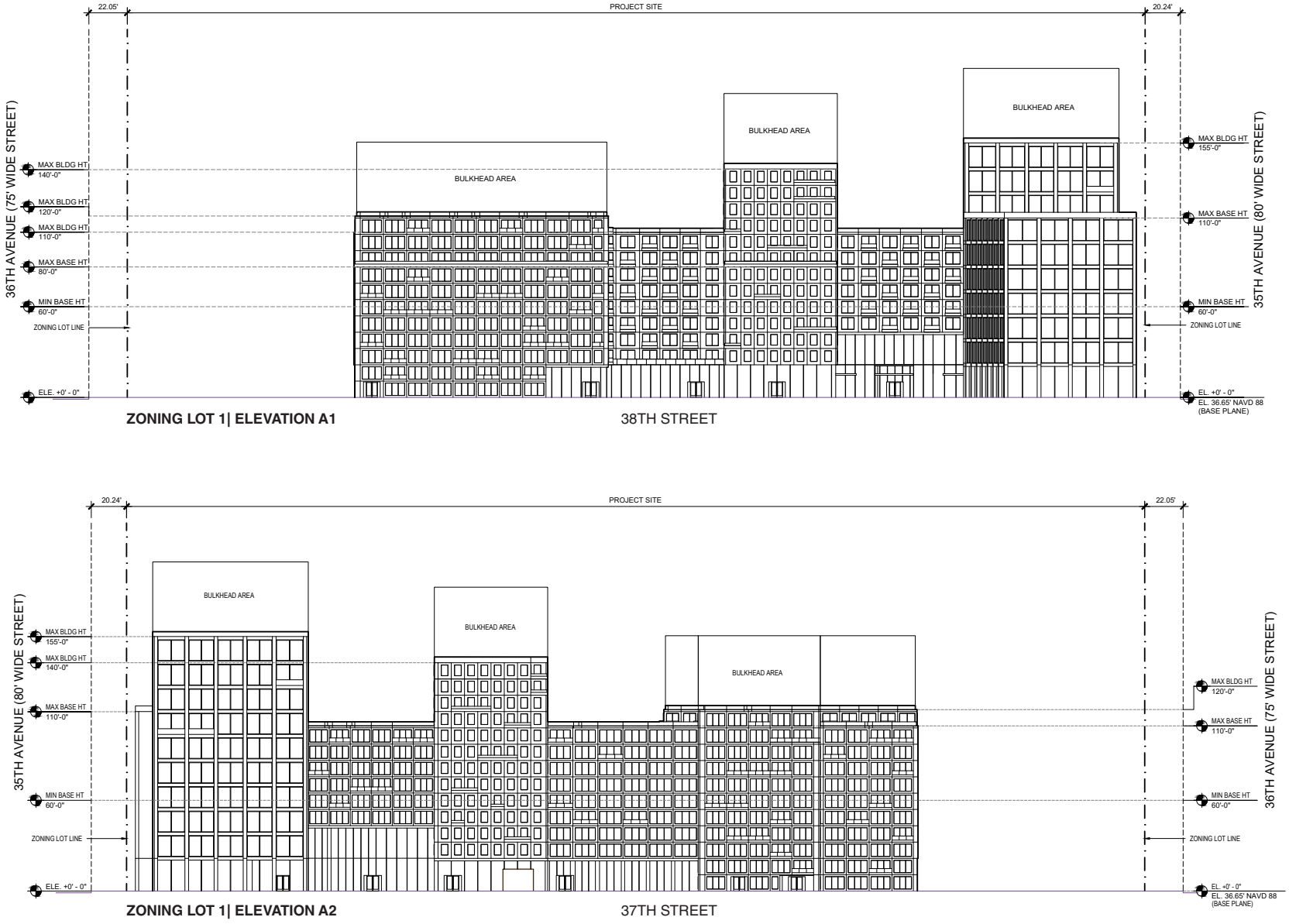
Figure 8-16e

The Proposed Development was designed around a series of guiding principles**:**

- Varied height profiles from east to west, responding to the surrounding neighborhood context;
- Location of the largest towers along Steinway Street, to anchor the Steinway Street commercial corridor, and along Northern Boulevard;
- Lower-scale buildings opposite the low-density residential buildings further to the east along 35th Avenue;
- Base heights between 65' and 85' with standard zoning setbacks and building heights (except where waivers are being sought under the Proposed Actions);
- Increased sidewalk widths along the south side of 35th Avenue between 37th Street and 42nd Street; and
- Open spaces that would be publicly accessible and activated to support the surrounding ground floor uses and enhance the pedestrian experience.

Projected Development Site A would be redeveloped with an approximately 155-foot-tall (10-story) technology and general office building with ground floor retail located on the south side of 35th Avenue between 37th and 38th Streets. The east side of the building would be approximately 110 feet tall (7 stories). The center of Projected Development Site A would be redeveloped with nine- to 13-story (110-foot-tall to 140-foot-tall) residential buildings set back 15 feet from 38th Street on 80-foot-tall bases, arranged around publicly accessible spaces fronting 38th Street, with a mix of local commercial/community facility flexible space on the lower levels. A loading berth would be provided on 37th Street, and entrances to the below-grade parking would be provided on 37th and 38th Streets (3 curb cuts). In total, Projected Development Site A would contain approximately 637,000 gsf of new development, for a built FAR of approximately 5.46, compared to a built FAR of 0.96 in existing/No Action conditions (see **Figures 8-17 and 8-18**). The proposed open spaces on Projected Development Site A would be located on 38th Street between 35th and 36th Avenues, and at the southern end of the block. Based on a conceptual design, one of these proposed open spaces is planned as a passive community gathering space which, as proposed, would include public seating, planted areas, a multipurpose lawn, and a water feature; another space is planned as a playscape for children. A third open space on the southern end of the block, with frontage along both 37th and 38th Streets and spanning the width of the block, would contain a 16,000-sf area containing trees, lawns, landscaping, walking paths, and seating for residential tenants. A fourth open space (the third publicly accessible open space on the block) would be 10,000 sf in area and abut the private open space, extending along the entire 36th Avenue blockfront from 37th to 38th Streets. This additional open space is planned for potential active public use. This residential amenity space and the publicly accessible space would be connected, and both would be accessible from the street in order to provide complementary passive and active spaces, in keeping with the Proposed Development's goal of providing open space amenities for both the existing community and new residents.

Projected Development Site B would be redeveloped with residential buildings with ground floor retail, service, and community facility uses (see **Figures 8-19 through 8-22**). Along 38th Street and 35th Avenue, Projected Development Site B would include an approximately 120-foot-tall (11-story) building with commercial ground floor space and residential units on the upper stories; this building is intended to be lower in scale, similar to the buildings to the west on Projected Development Site A. The northeastern corner of the site would include a 230-foot-tall (22-story) residential and commercial building with frontages along 35th Avenue and Steinway Street. Further south, a through-block building would have a 200-foot-tall (19-story) tower set back 10



Source: ODA

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COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1

Elevations of Projected Development Site A

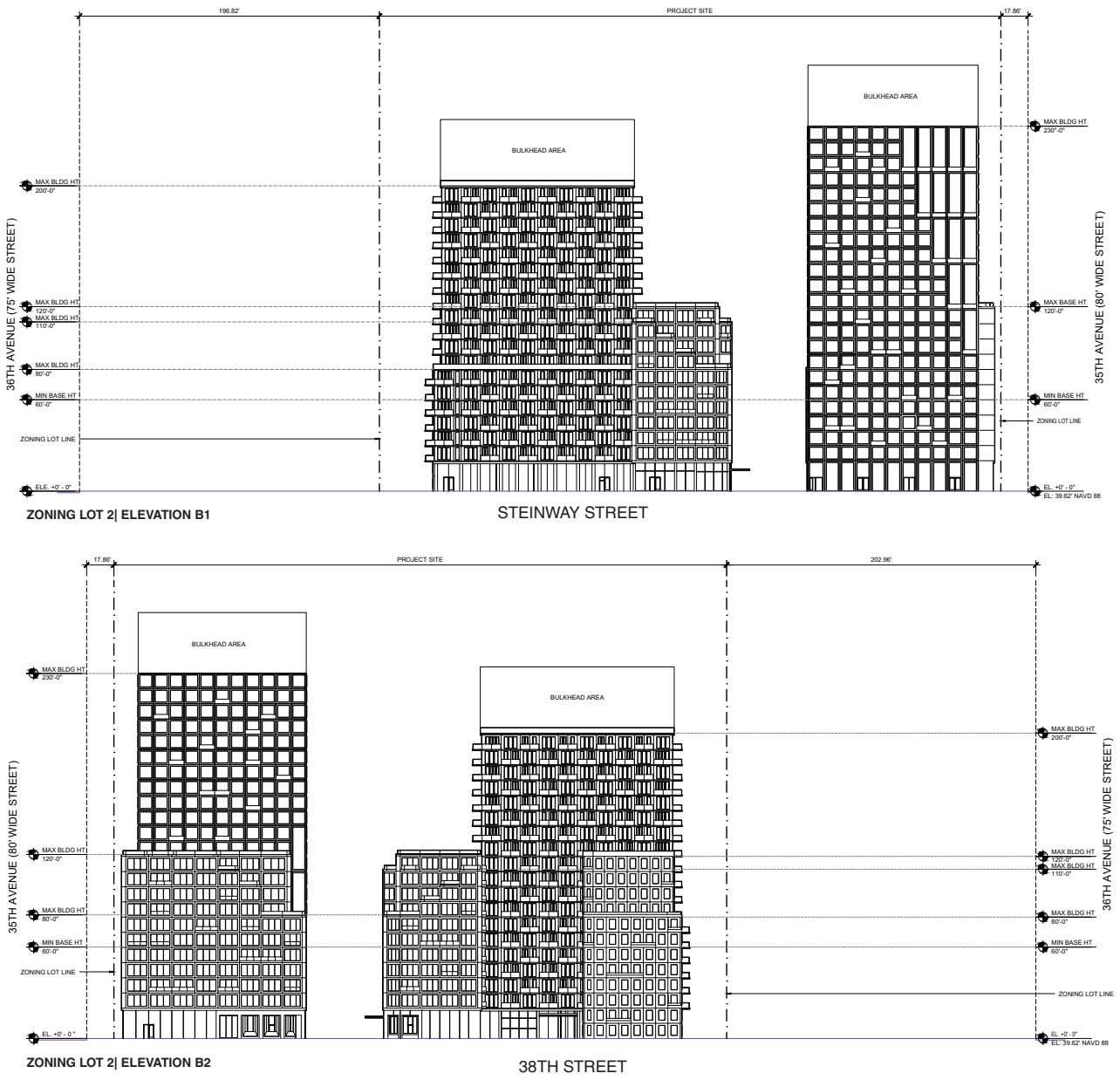
Figure 8-17



Source: ODA

Illustrative Rendering of Projected Development Site A,
View Southeast from 35th Avenue

Figure 8-18



Source: ODA

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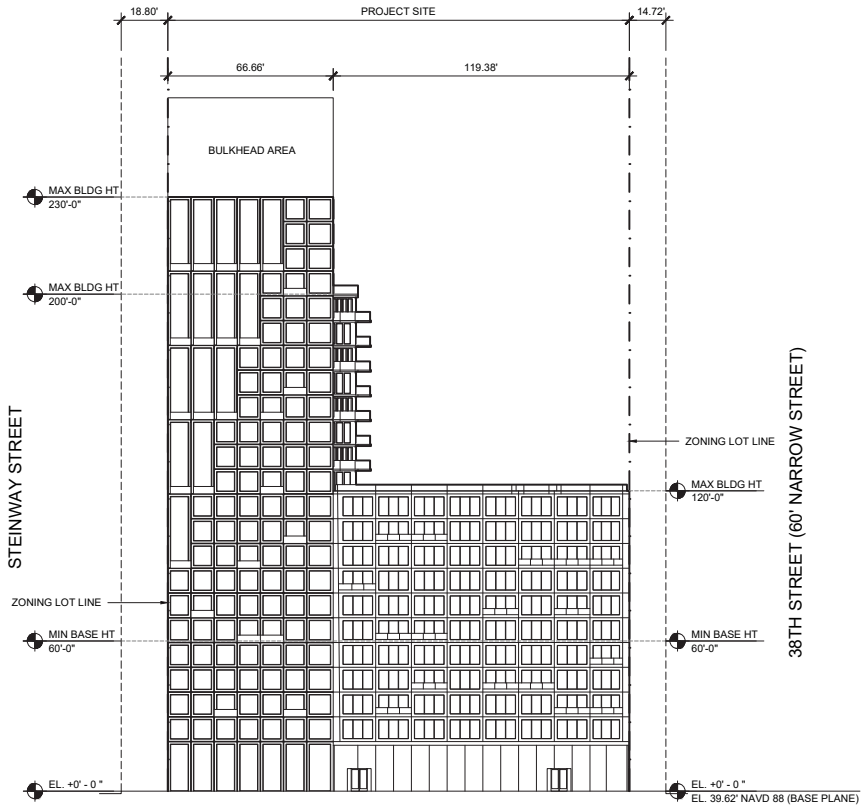
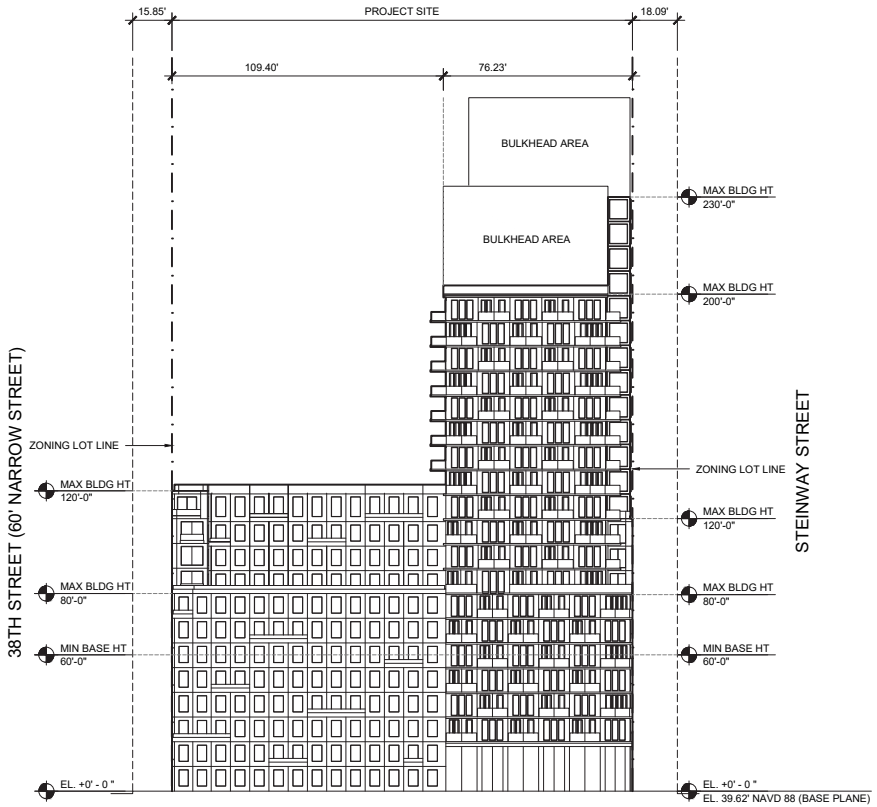
Elevations of Projected Development Site B
Figure 8-19



ZONING LOT 2| ELEVATION B3 35TH AVENUE



ZONING LOT 2| ELEVATION B4 36TH AVENUE

Source: ODA

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Elevations of Projected Development Site B
Figure 8-20



Source: ODA

Illustrative Rendering of Projected Development Sites B and C,
View South on Steinway Street from 35th Avenue

Figure 8-21



Source: ODA

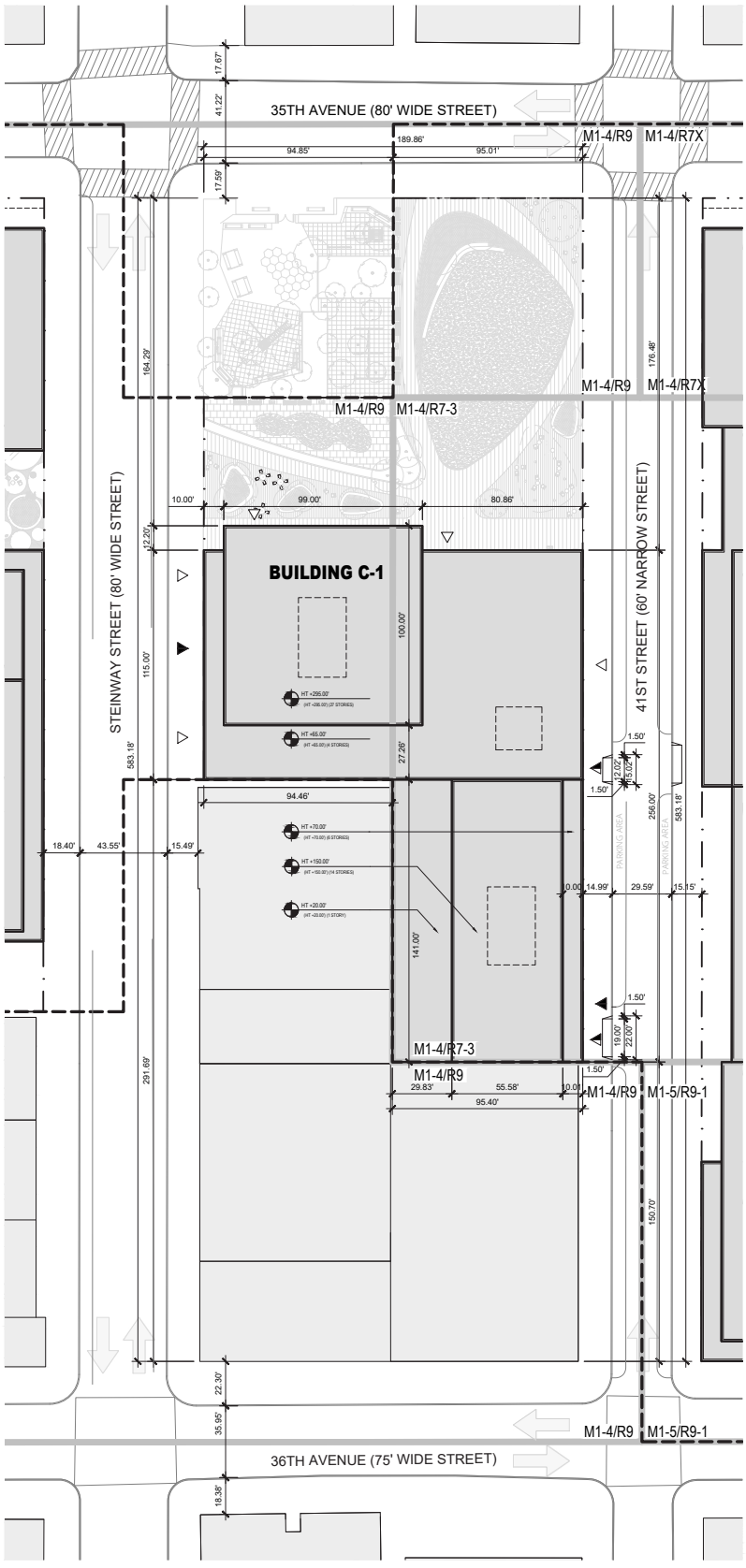
Illustrative Rendering of Projected Development, View Southwest on 35th Avenue with Site B in Background

Figure 8-22

feet from Steinway Street on a 80-foot-tall base, and an approximately 120-foot-tall (11-story) elevation set back 15 feet from 38th Street on an 80-foot-tall base. A loading berth and an entrance to the below-grade parking would be provided on 38th Street (2 curb cuts). In total, Projected Development Site B would contain approximately 654,000 gsf of new development, for a built FAR of approximately 8.69, compared to a built FAR of 0.43 in existing/No Action conditions. The streetscape on 38th Street would be broken up with a publicly accessible through-block passage and a courtyard. The planned open spaces for Projected Development Site B would include a through-block pedestrian plaza, with large planted areas and shade trees, public seating, wayfinding art and other public art installations such as overhead art/lighting, artistic pavement, and a flexible lawn. The block would also include another open space in the midblock area along 38th Street, planned as a community gathering space with seating, planting, and a skim fountain.

In order to complement the existing playground that occupies the northwest corner of the block (Playground Thirty Five XXXV), the Proposed Development would enhance the arts district by providing a large (0.55-acre), at-grade publicly accessible open space surrounding Playground Thirty Five XXXV along 35th Avenue to a depth of 176 feet, connected to the cultural and arts center (see **Figures 8-23 and 8-24**). Based on a conceptual design, the plaza would include a dog run and a walkway area along the playground's southern border and shade trees and seating along its eastern border. This plaza is also planned to include passive amenities such as large planters, public seating, a pedestrian promenade, a water feature, a pavilion, a multipurpose lawn, and interactive public art. South of the proposed open space, Projected Development Site C would also contain a 295-foot-tall (26-story) tower set back from Steinway and 41st Streets above a three-story base containing a community-centered multi-purpose arts and cultural facility, with retail and service uses on Steinway Street. Further south on 41st Street would be a 160-foot-tall (15-story) residential building set back 10 feet from Steinway Street on a 70-foot-tall base. A loading berth and an entrance to the below-grade parking would be provided on 41st Street (2 curb cuts). In total, Projected Development Site C would contain approximately 430,000 gsf of new development, for a built FAR of approximately 7.25, compared to a built FAR of approximately 0.51 in the No Action condition (see **Figures 8-25 and 8-26**).

The northeast corner of Projected Development Site D would be redeveloped with a new, relocated cinema above local commercial and service uses and a world market with smaller retail uses bordering a large, covered, publicly accessible open space. At the corner of 35th Avenue and 42nd Street, above the cinema, would be a private accessory outdoor space. To the west of the proposed cinema there would be a 200-foot-tall (16-story) residential tower, with frontages on 35th Avenue and 41st Street. In the middle of the block, Projected Development Site D would contain the large, covered, publicly accessible open space and a U-shaped, through-block, 160-foot-tall (10-story) residential building with a 150-foot-tall (9-story) portion on 41st Street. The southern end of the block, at the corner of 41st Street and 36th Avenue, near the Northern Boulevard corridor, would be developed with a 280-foot-tall (27-story) tower set back 10 feet from 36th Avenue and 41st Street above an 80-foot-tall base. A loading berth would be provided on 42nd Street and an entrance to the below-grade parking would be provided on 41st Street (2 curb cuts). In total, Projected Development Site D would contain approximately 696,000 gsf of new development, for a built FAR of approximately 7.92, compared to a built FAR of approximately 1.00 in the No Action condition (see **Figures 8-27 through 8-29**). The planned open space on Block D would be a covered, publicly accessible space lining 41st and 42nd Streets, between 35th Avenue and Northern Boulevard/36th Avenue. Based on the conceptual design, the proposed open space is planned as a through-block pedestrian promenade and plaza. The open space is planned to include amenities such as public art installations, holiday and farmer's markets, interactive plaza



Source: ODA

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Projected Development Site C
Figure 8-23



Source: ODA

Illustrative Rendering of Open Space on Projected Development Site C

Figure 8-24

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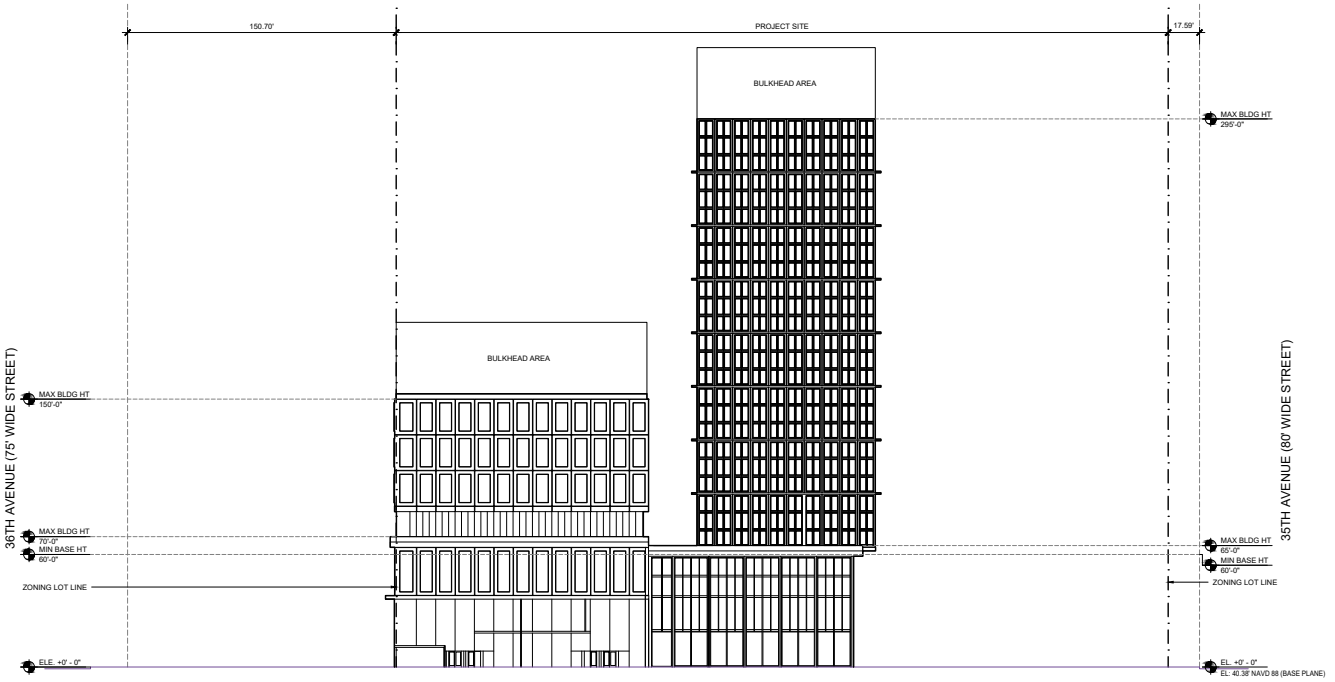
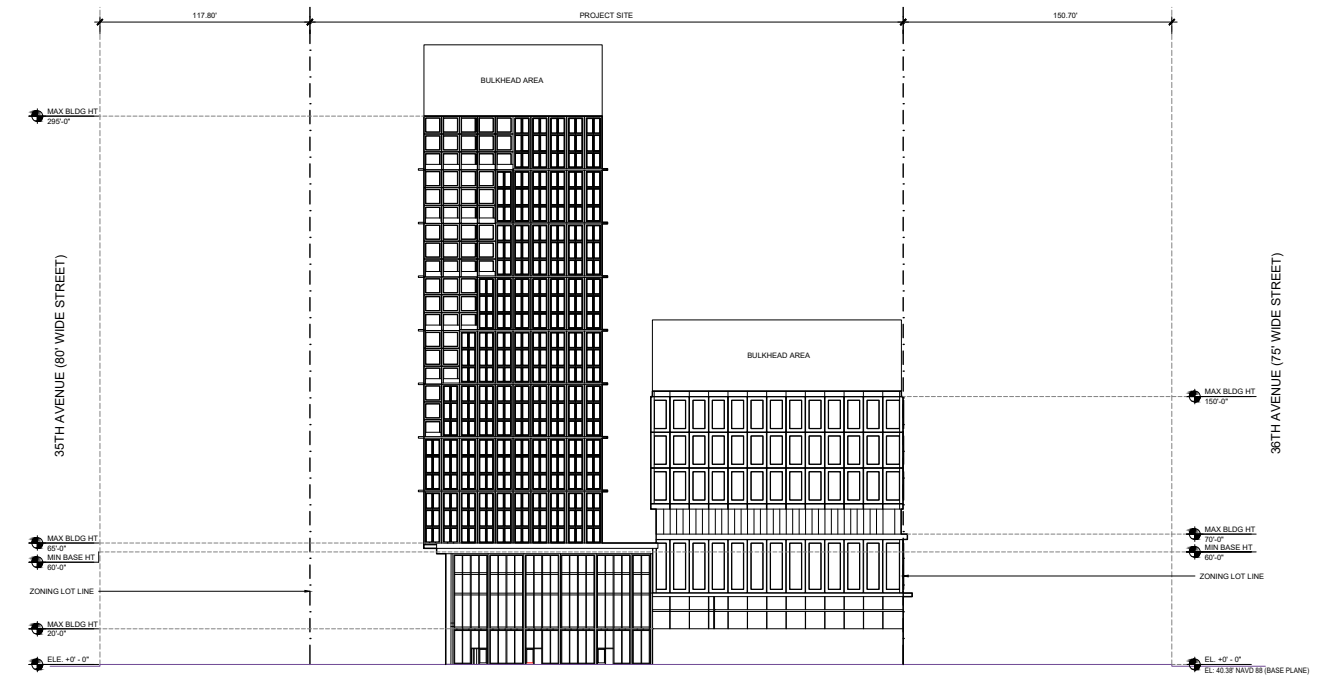


ZONING LOT 3| ELEVATION C1 41ST STREET



ZONING LOT 3| ELEVATION C2 STEINWAY STREET

Source: ODA

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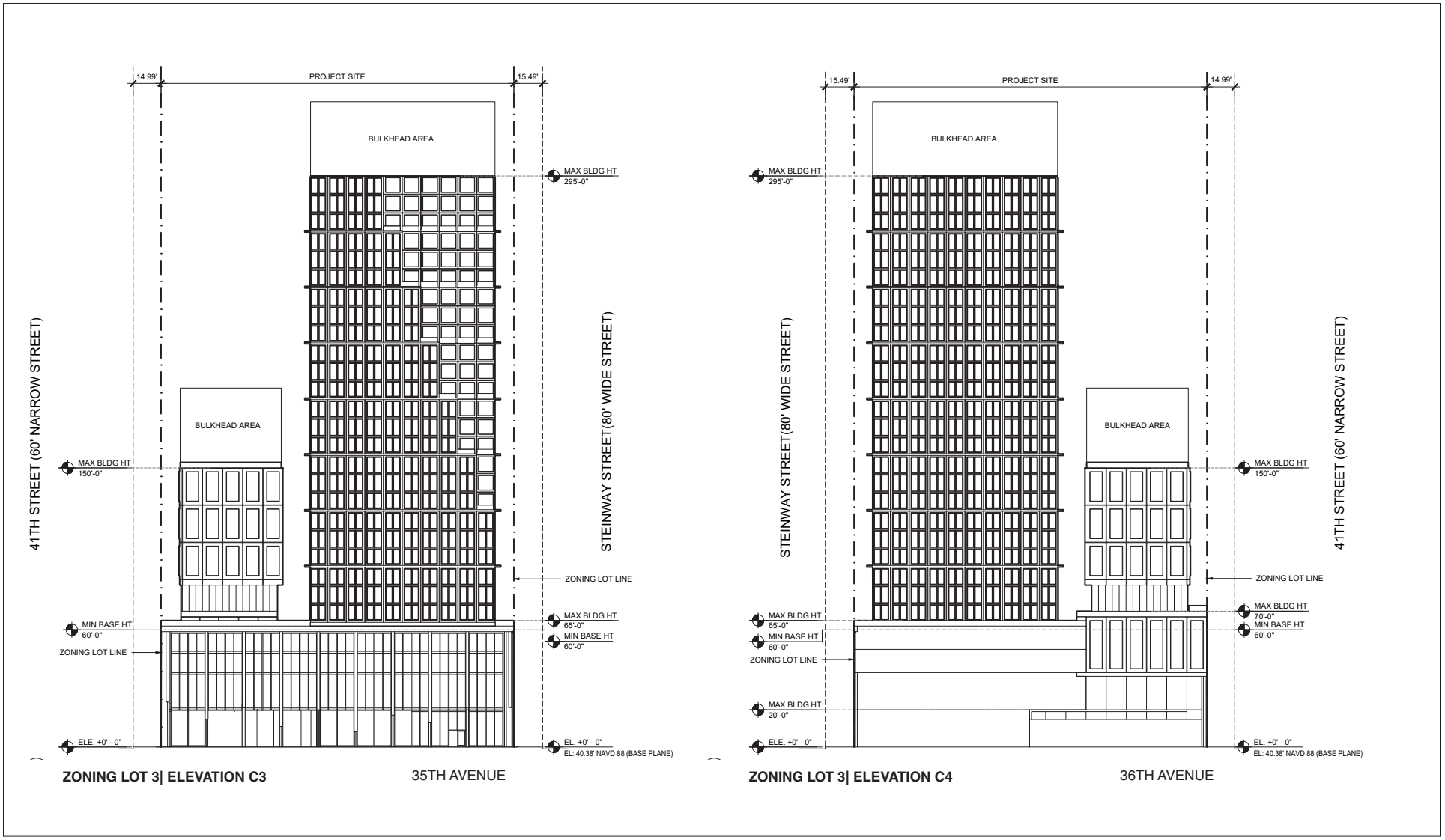
COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1

Elevations of Projected Development Site C
Figure 8-25



Source: ODA

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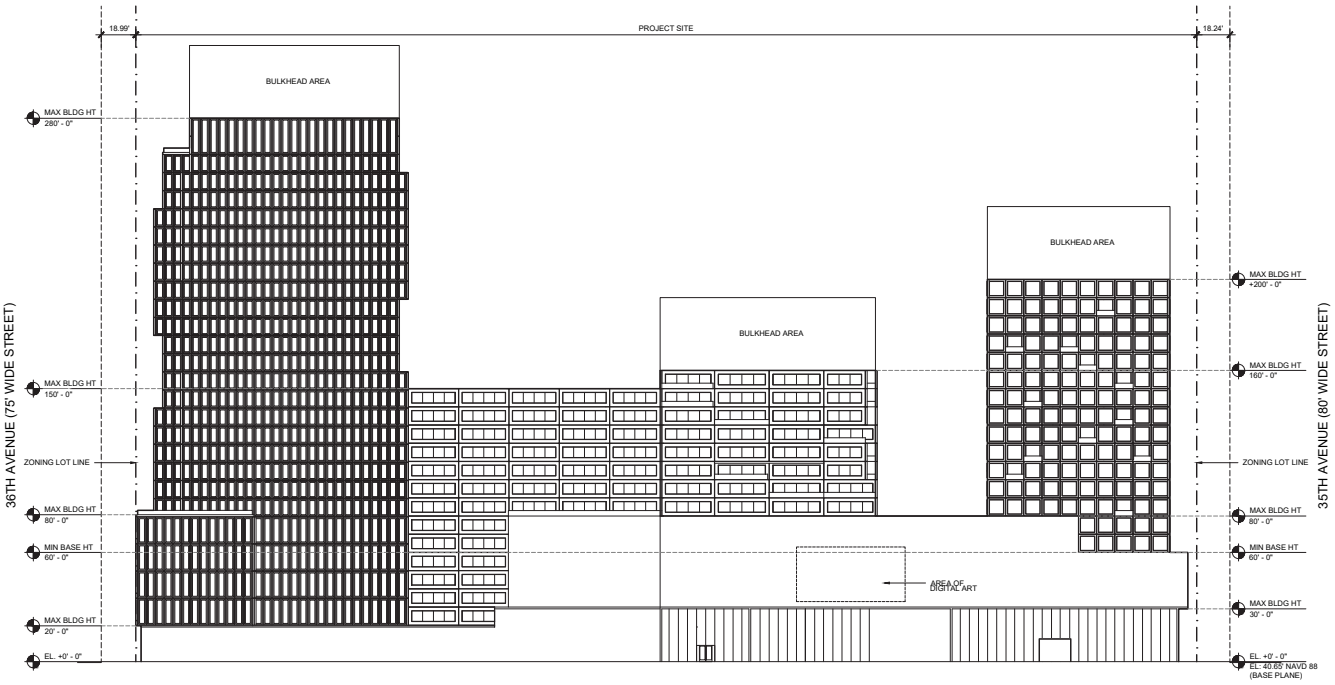
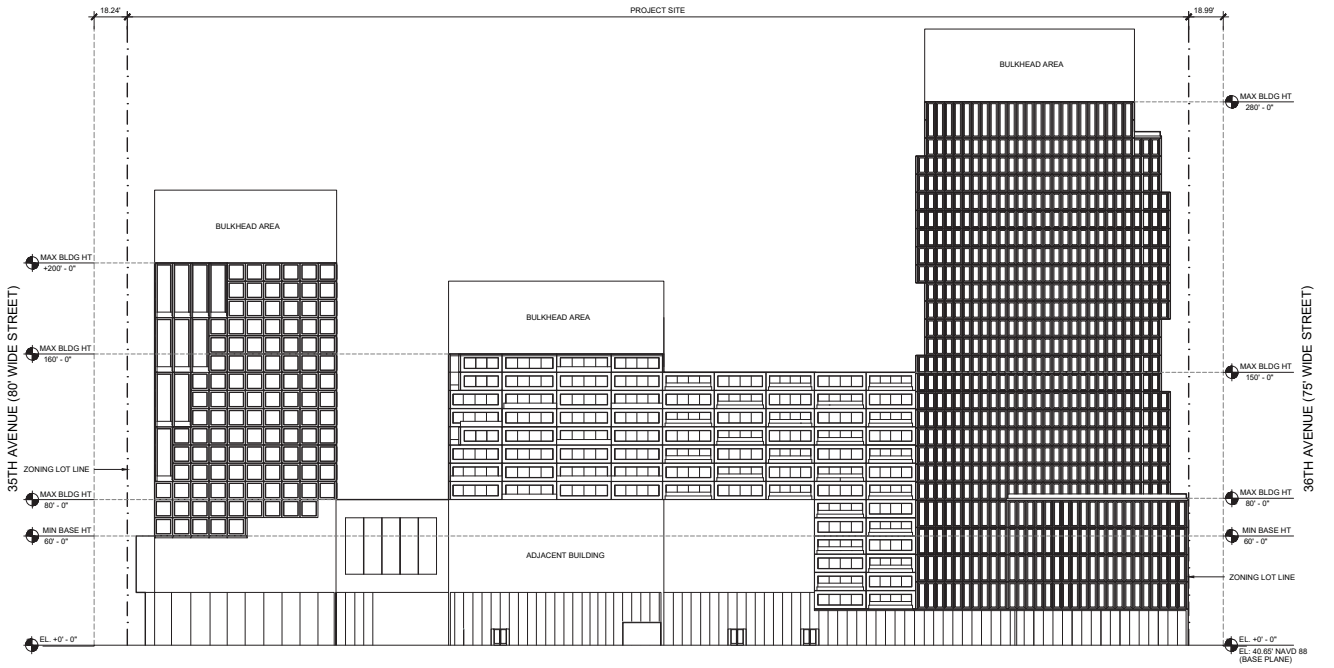
ASTORIA, QUEENS
COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1

Elevations of Projected Development Site C
Figure 8-26



ZONING LOT 4| ELEVATION D1

42ND STREET



ZONING LOT 4| ELEVATION D2

41ST STREET

Source: ODA

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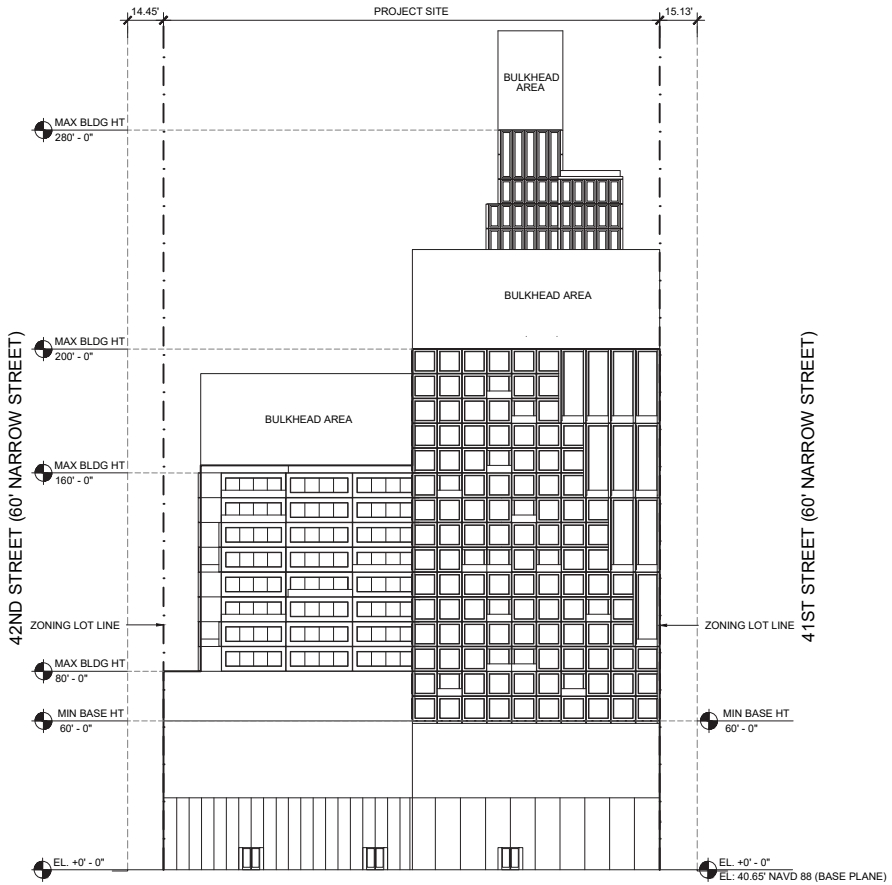
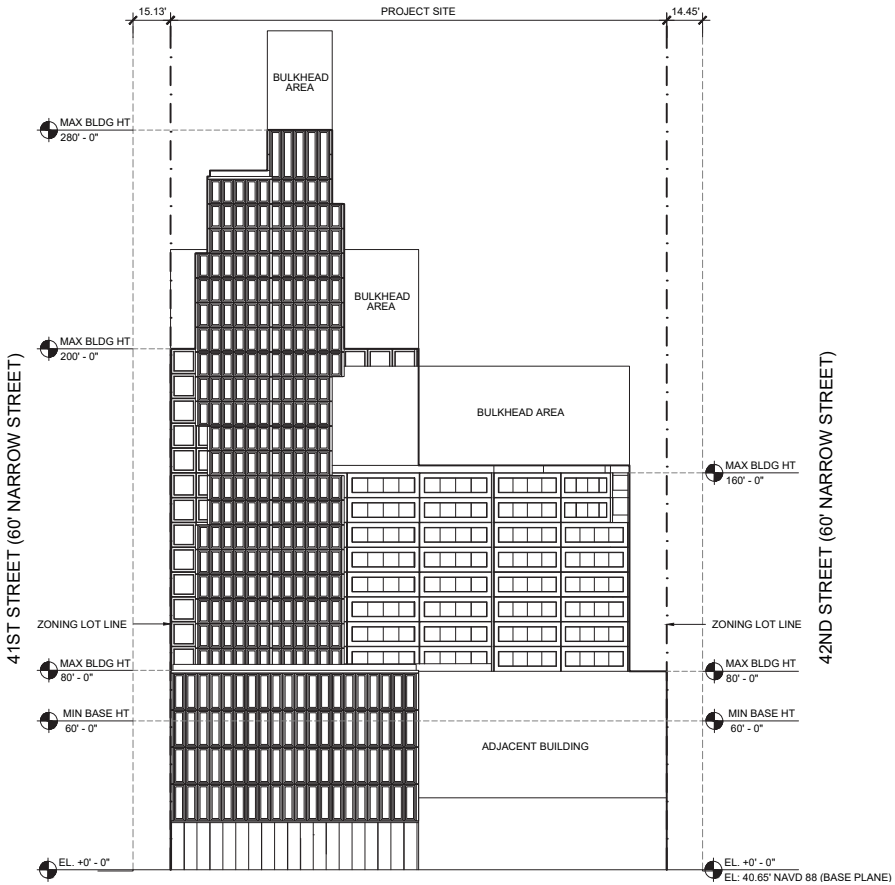
Elevations of Projected Development Site D
Figure 8-27



ZONING LOT 4| ELEVATION D3 35TH AVENUE



ZONING LOT 4| ELEVATION D4 36TH AVENUE

Source: ODA

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COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1

Elevations of Projected Development Site D
Figure 8-28



Source: ODA

Illustrative Rendering of Projected Development Site D,
View from 42nd Street

Figure 8-29

furnishings, and communal tables. Additionally, the plaza space is planned to be flexible space to include temporary recreational features such as seesaws, communal games, and adult swings.

Projected Development Site E would include a new 100-foot-tall (9-story) mixed-use building at the corner of 35th Avenue and 42nd Street. South of this building and opposite the covered open space on Projected Development Site D would be an at-grade, publicly accessible open space. The proposed open space is planned as a community plaza, which—based on a conceptual design—would include public seating, planters, and interactive public art installations. The remainder of the block fronting on Northern Boulevard and 42nd Street would include a large mixed-use building with an 80-foot-tall (5-story) office and ground floor retail base. Above this base and set back on both frontages would be a multi-story residential building with a 150-foot-tall (12-story) section and two towers, one 230 feet tall (20 stories) and one 290 feet tall (26 stories). One of the commercial spaces may include automotive or showroom uses. Loading berths would be provided on 42nd and 43rd Streets and an entrance to the below-grade parking would be provided on 43rd Street (3 curb cuts). In total, Projected Development Site E would contain approximately 565,000 gsf of new development, for a built FAR of approximately 10.58, compared to a built FAR of approximately 1.00 in the existing/No Action conditions (see **Figures 8-30 and 8-31**).

With the Proposed Actions, the urban design of the Development Site would be transformed. The land uses of the Development Site would be predominantly residential, with additional office, other commercial, and cultural/community facility uses, in comparison to the primarily warehouse, auto-related, and commercial uses on the Development Site in existing and No Action conditions. The Proposed Development's mix of land uses would be compatible with one another. The proposed arts and cultural venues, including the multi-purpose arts and culture center, re-envisioned multiplex movie theater, galleries, and artists' workshops, would complement the existing Kaufman Arts District. The proposed eating and drinking establishments, grocery store and world market, and other local retail, service and community facility uses would support both the new residential population and the existing business and residential communities.

In total, the Development Site would include approximately 2.17 acres of publicly accessible open space as well as approximately 0.47 acres of private open space for residents and expanded pedestrian circulation space near the building entrances. Therefore, the Proposed Development would create new publicly accessible, private, and circulation spaces in an area where there is currently limited open space. The proposed publicly accessible open spaces would link the blocks in the Project Area. The through-block pedestrian plaza on Projected Development Site B would provide a connection between 38th Street and Steinway Street. The proposed mid-block open spaces on Projected Development Site A and Projected Development Site B would face one another, providing a visual link, and the proposed open space at the southern end of Block A would extend along the entire 36th Avenue blockfront, opening up views through this portion of the block. The proposed open space on Projected Development Site D would face the expanded open space surrounding Playground Thirty Five XXXV, and would also face the proposed open space on Projected Development Site E. The amenities proposed to be provided in these open spaces include a plaza, courtyards, and landscaped pedestrian pathways; additional amenities could include playscapes for children, open markets, kiosks, public art installations, sculptures, and enhanced streetscapes. These spaces have been designed and programmed as publicly accessible open space, pursuant to community input.

The proposed open space on Block C would augment the existing Playground Thirty Five XXXV by surrounding it with a large, civic-oriented public open space, building on the synergy of this recently renovated resource. Based on a conceptual design, this open space could include a dog

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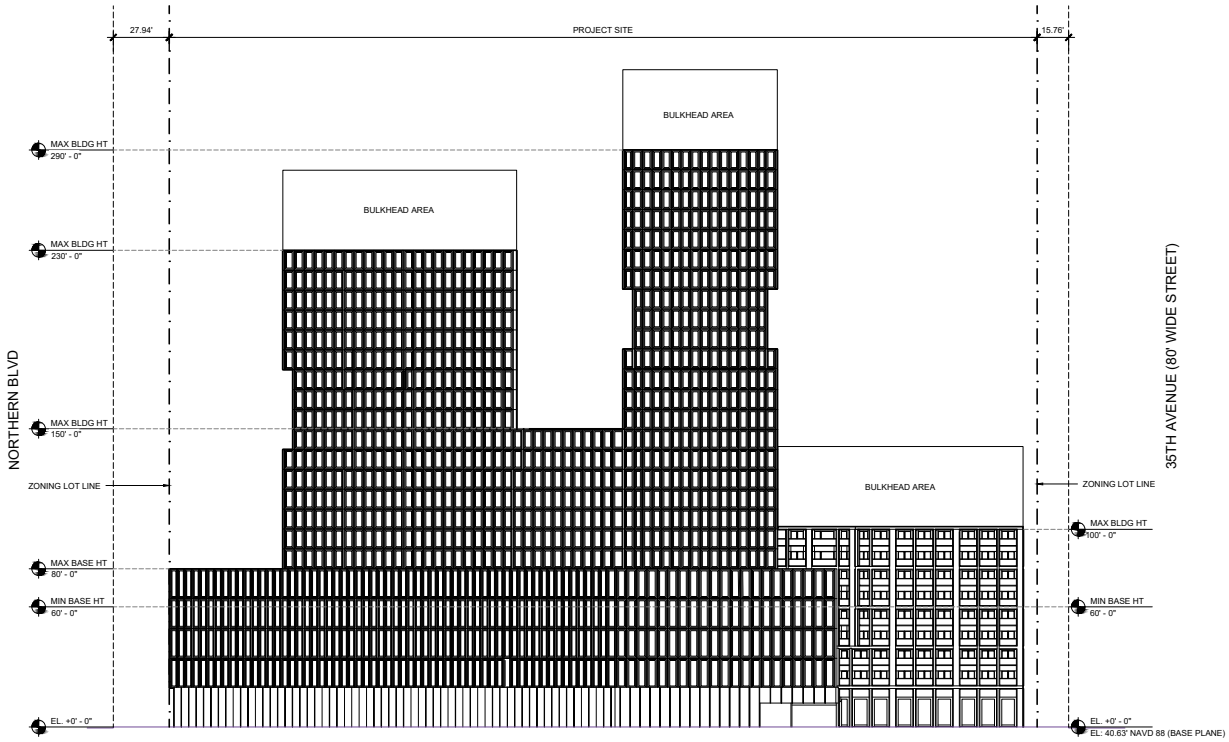
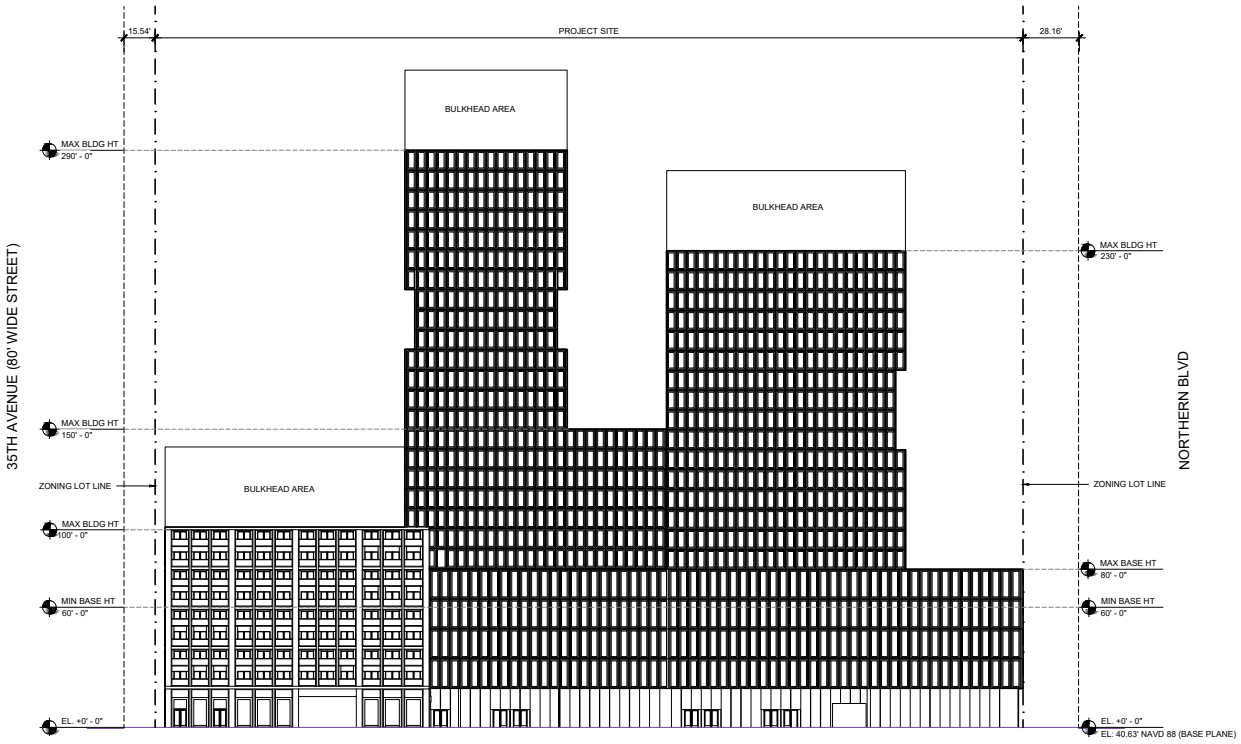


ZONING LOT 5| ELEVATION E1

43RD STREET



ZONING LOT 5| ELEVATION E2

42ND STREET

Source: ODA

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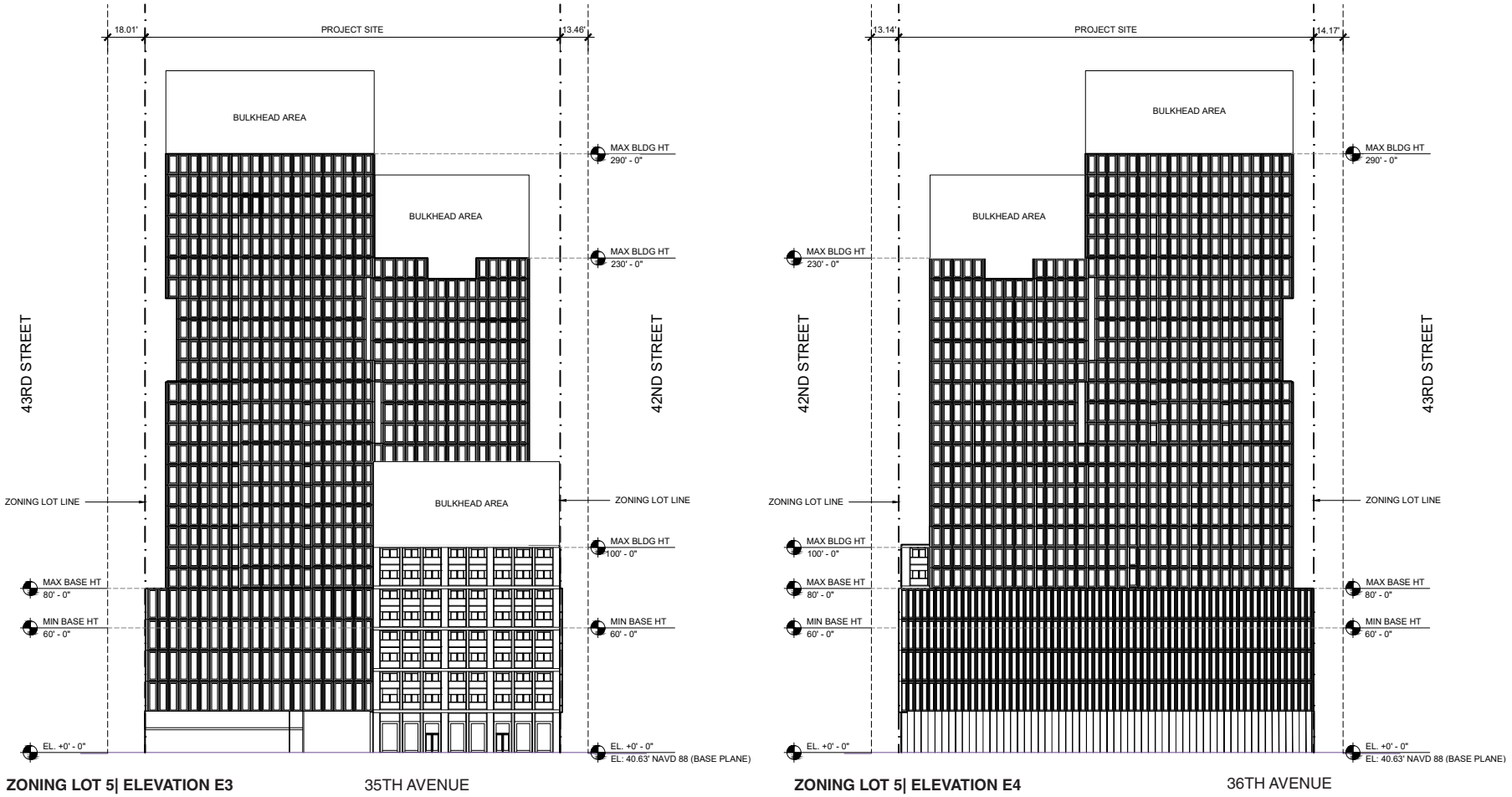
COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1

Elevations of Projected Development Site E

Figure 8-30



Source: ODA

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Elevations of Projected Development Site E
Figure 8-31

run and a walkway area along the playground's existing fence. This plaza is also planned to include passive amenities such as large planters, public seating, a pedestrian promenade, a water feature, a pavilion, a multi-purpose lawn, and interactive public art.

These new uses are anticipated to bring more pedestrian activity to the Project Area, and to enhance the pedestrian experience by replacing low-scale buildings of utilitarian design, windowless streetwalls, and surface parking lots with active ground-floor uses and new publicly accessible open spaces (see **Figures 8-18, 8-21, 8-22, 8-24, and 8-29** above). According to required zoning regulations, street trees would be planted along the sidewalks throughout the Development Site, improving the pedestrian environment. The street pattern within the Project Area would not be altered. As detailed in Chapter 13, "Transportation," out of the 40 sidewalks, 64 corner areas, and 32 crosswalks analyzed, the additional pedestrian activity that the Proposed Development would bring to the Project Area would be expected to result in significant adverse pedestrian impacts at only three sidewalks on 36th Avenue and two crosswalks on 35th Avenue, which are constrained by the presence of outdoor dining areas. Additional traffic, transit, and bike trips through the Project Area also would change the current pedestrian experience by increasing the flow of activity. Significant adverse impacts related to traffic and pedestrians are addressed in detail in Chapter 13, "Transportation." However, this change is not considered to be a significant adverse impact to urban design.

The built FAR of the Development Site would increase in the future with the Proposed Actions. The Projected Development Sites in the Development Site currently have built FARs ranging from 0.43 to 1.14; in the With Action scenario, these sites would have built FARs ranging from 5.46 to 10.58 (As proposed, the blended FAR of the Development Site would be 7.1.) As in existing conditions and the No Action condition, lot coverage within the Development Site would remain high.

Additional Affected Area

The Proposed Actions are also expected to facilitate the redevelopment of the Projected Development Sites in the Additional Affected Area with approximately 800,000 square feet of new residential and commercial space.

With the Proposed Actions, Projected Development Sites F, G, H, I, J, and K are expected to be redeveloped with higher-density buildings, each of which would contain ground floor retail space and residential units on the upper stories. Parking would be located below grade. The southern portion of Block 668, including the buildings along 36th Avenue and some buildings along 38th and Steinway Streets, would remain as in existing conditions.

In the With Action condition, Projected Development Site F is assumed to be redeveloped with a 220-foot-tall (21-story) building with a seven-story base, with a frontage on 38th Street. Projected Development Site G would contain an approximately 140-foot-tall (13-story) building with frontage on Steinway Street. Projected Development Site H would contain an approximately 130-foot-tall (12-story) building along 36th Avenue between Steinway and 41st Streets. The buildings on Sites G and H would have setbacks above the seventh floor. The new development on Projected Development Sites I and J would be approximately 160-foot-tall (15-story) buildings. The buildings would have frontage along 42nd Street and Northern Boulevard (Projected Development Site J only). On Projected Development Site K, the With Action development would be an approximately 80-foot-tall (7-story) building at the corner of 35th Avenue and 43rd Street.

With the Proposed Actions, the urban design of the Additional Affected Area could change notably, like that of the Development Site. The land uses of the Projected Development Sites in

the Additional Affected Area would be residential with ground-floor retail, in comparison to the primarily warehouse, auto-related, and commercial uses within this area in existing and No Action conditions. These new uses are anticipated to bring more pedestrian activity to the Project Area, and to enhance the pedestrian experience by replacing low-scale buildings of utilitarian design with active ground-floor retail. According to required zoning regulations, street trees would be planted along the sidewalks throughout the Additional Affected Area, improving the pedestrian environment. The street pattern within the Project Area would not be altered.

The built FAR of the Additional Affected Area would increase in the future with the Proposed Actions. The Projected Development Sites in the Additional Affected Area currently have built FARs ranging from 0.39 to 1.06; in the With Action scenario, these sites would have built FARs ranging from 6.60 to 11.73. As in existing conditions and the No Action condition, lot coverage within the Additional Affected Area would remain high.

Playground Thirty Five XXXV

No changes would be made to Playground Thirty Five XXXV in the future with the Proposed Actions. As noted above, the approximately 2.17 acres of publicly accessible open space to be created within the Development Site is anticipated to complement Playground Thirty Five XXXV and link the blocks in the Project Area (see **Figure 8-24**). The proposed open space on Block C would augment the existing Playground Thirty Five XXXV by surrounding it with a large, civic-oriented public open space. Based on a conceptual design, this open space could include a dog run and a walkway area along the playground's southern border and shade trees and seating along its eastern border.

STUDY AREA

As described above, the Proposed Development was designed around a series of guiding principles intended to respond to the surrounding neighborhood context. These include: varied height profiles from east to west; location of the largest towers along Steinway Street, to anchor the Steinway Street commercial corridor, and along the major thoroughfare of Northern Boulevard; lower-scale buildings along 35th Avenue, opposite low-density residential buildings; base heights between 65' and 85'; increased sidewalk widths along the south side of 35th Avenue; and new open spaces that would be publicly accessible and activated to support the surrounding ground floor uses and enhance the pedestrian experience.

The buildings in the Project Area that would be developed in the With Action condition would be considerably taller and larger than the surrounding built context. **Figures 8-32 through 8-41** illustrate the scale of the Proposed Development in relation to the surrounding study area. The tallest building in the study area is the 10-story, approximately 120-foot-tall residential building on the north side of Northern Boulevard at 36th Street; therefore, the tallest building in the Proposed Development (at 295 feet / 27 stories) would be approximately 175 feet taller than the tallest existing building in the study area. Most buildings within the study area are between 35 and 60 feet in height; thus, the buildings in the Proposed Development would be approximately 235-260 feet taller than most buildings in the study area. However, the massing and scale of the Proposed Development reflects the guiding design principles described above, and the Proposed Development has been designed by the Applicant to serve as a transition between the low- and mid-rise areas to the north and west of the Project Area, the heavily trafficked, commercial-centered Northern Boulevard corridor, and the higher-density mixed-use Long Island City area to the south. The tallest proposed buildings would be oriented, as planned, toward the Steinway Street corridor and the wide Northern Boulevard corridor, which forms a transitional space





Source: ODA

INNOVATION QNS
ASTORIA, QUEENS
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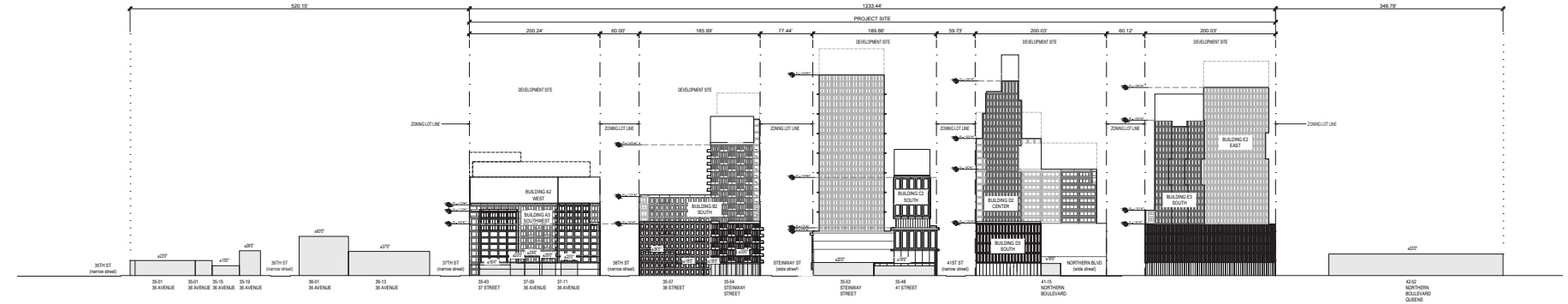
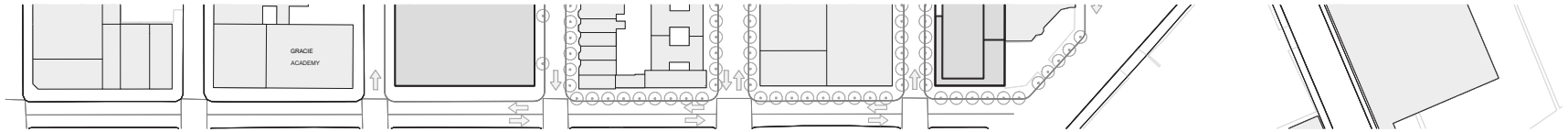
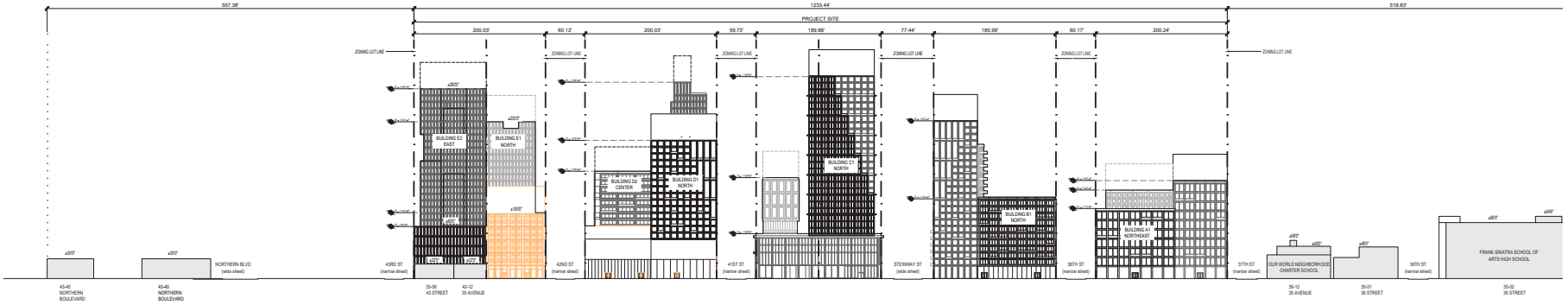
Aerial Views of the Projected Development
Figure 8-32



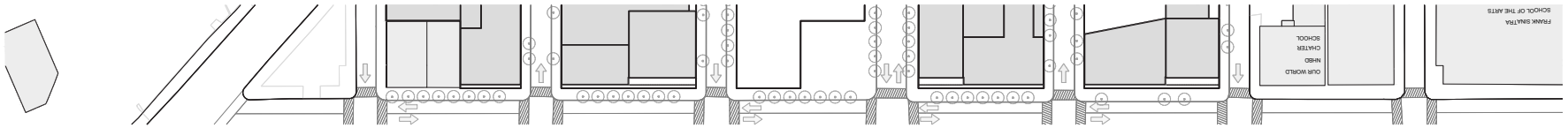
02 **36TH AVENUE ELEVATION A-A' - NORTH SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70



01 **36TH AVENUE ENLARGED PLAN - NORTH SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70



02 **35TH AVENUE ELEVATION D'-D - SOUTH SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70

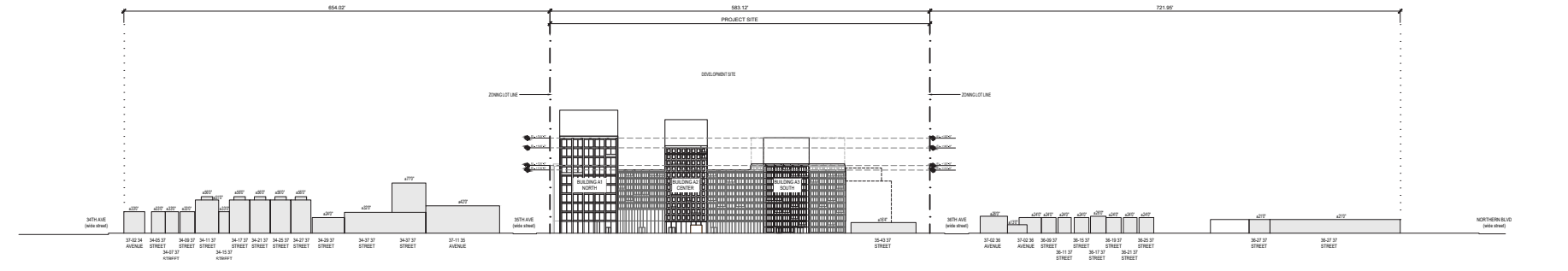


01 **36TH AVENUE ENLARGED PLAN - SOUTH SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70

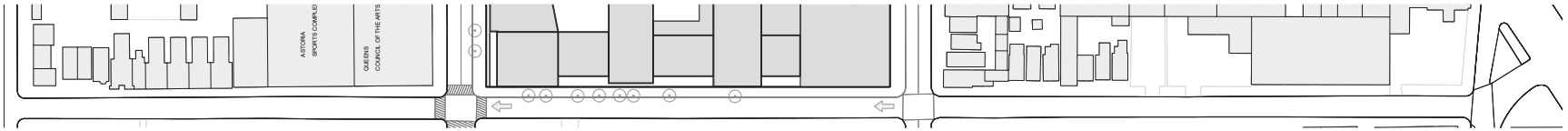
Source: ODA

INNOVATION QNS
ASTORIA, QUEENS
COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1

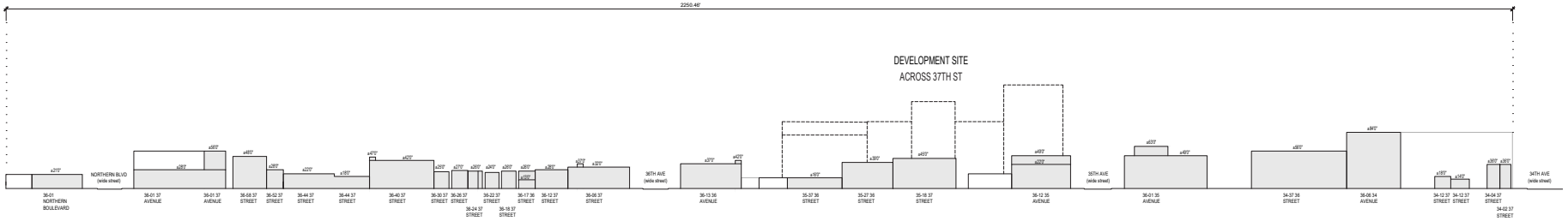
Projected Development in Context
Figure 8-33



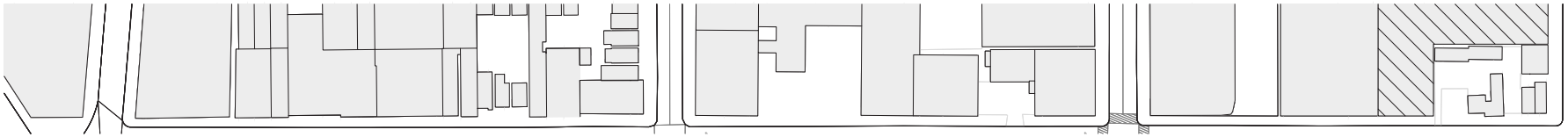
02 **37TH STREET ELEVATION E-E' - EAST SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70



01 **37TH STREET ENLARGED PLAN - EAST SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70



02 **37TH STREET ELEVATION F-F' - WEST SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70

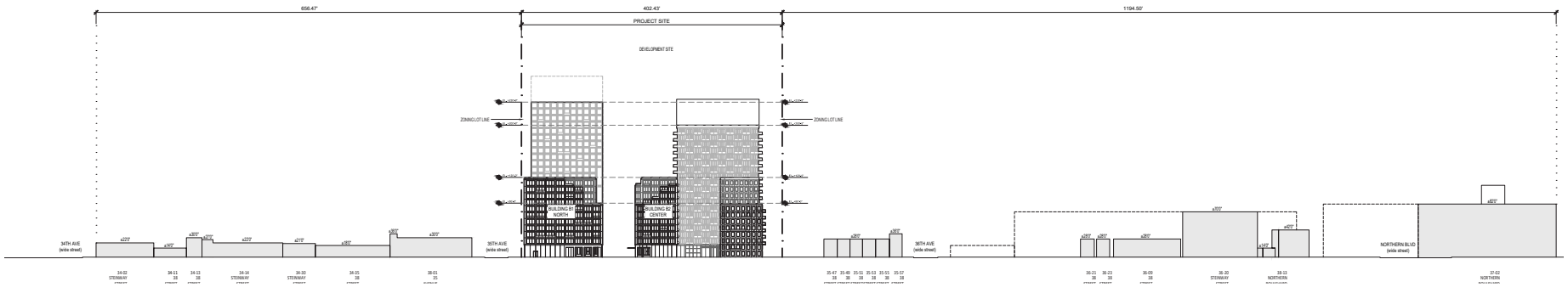


01 **37TH STREET ENLARGED PLAN - WEST SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70

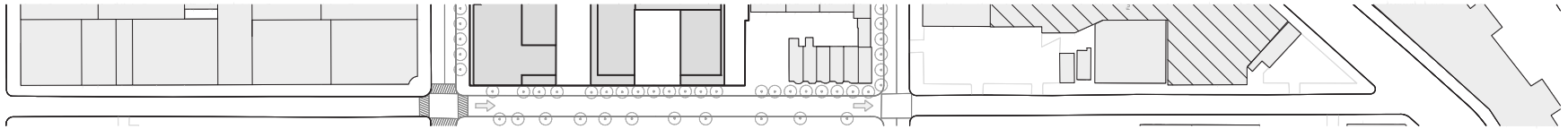
Source: ODA

INNOVATION QNS
ASTORIA, QUEENS
COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1

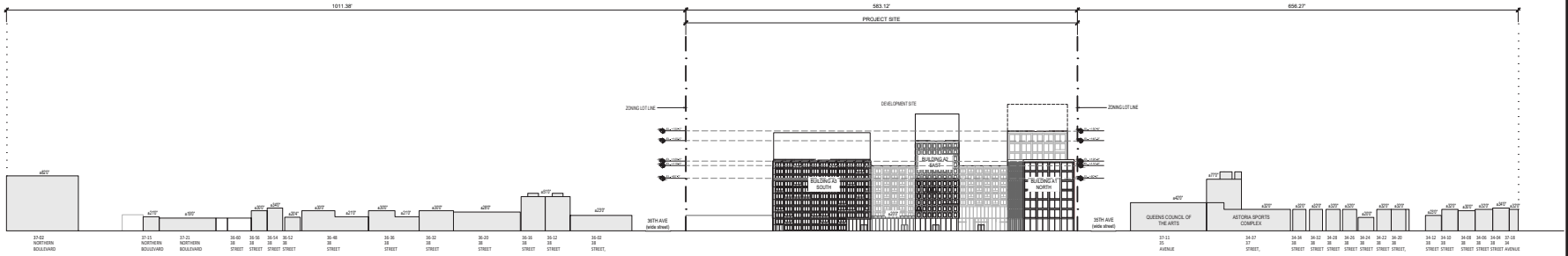
Projected Development in Context
Figure 8-34



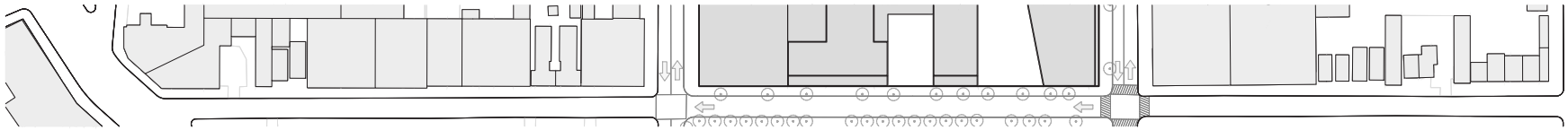
02 **38TH STREET ELEVATION G-G' - EAST SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70



01 **38TH STREET ENLARGED PLAN - EAST SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70



02 **38TH STREET ELEVATION H-H' - WEST SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70



01 **38TH STREET ENLARGED PLAN - WEST SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70

Source: ODA

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ASTORIA, QUEENS
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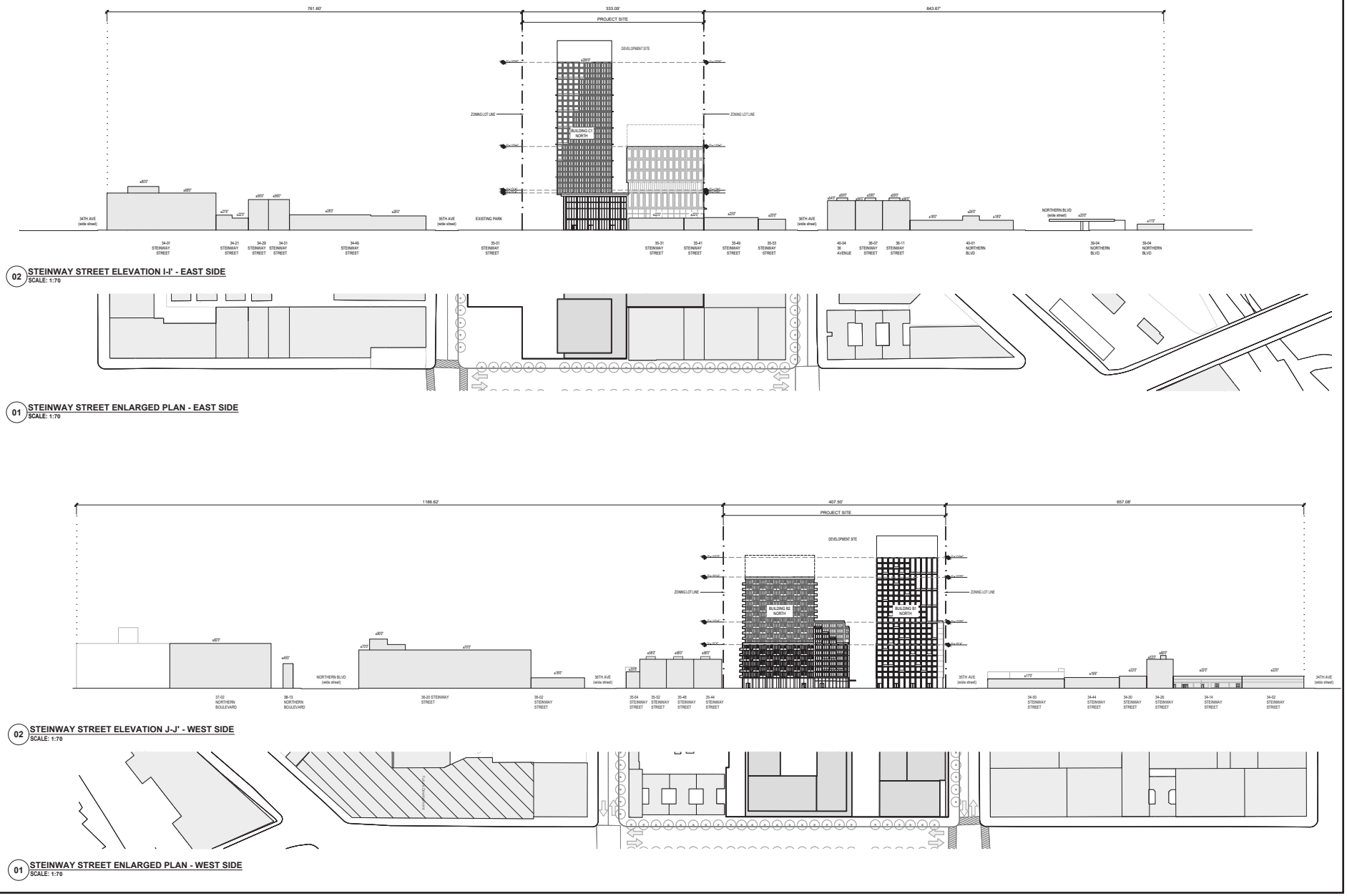
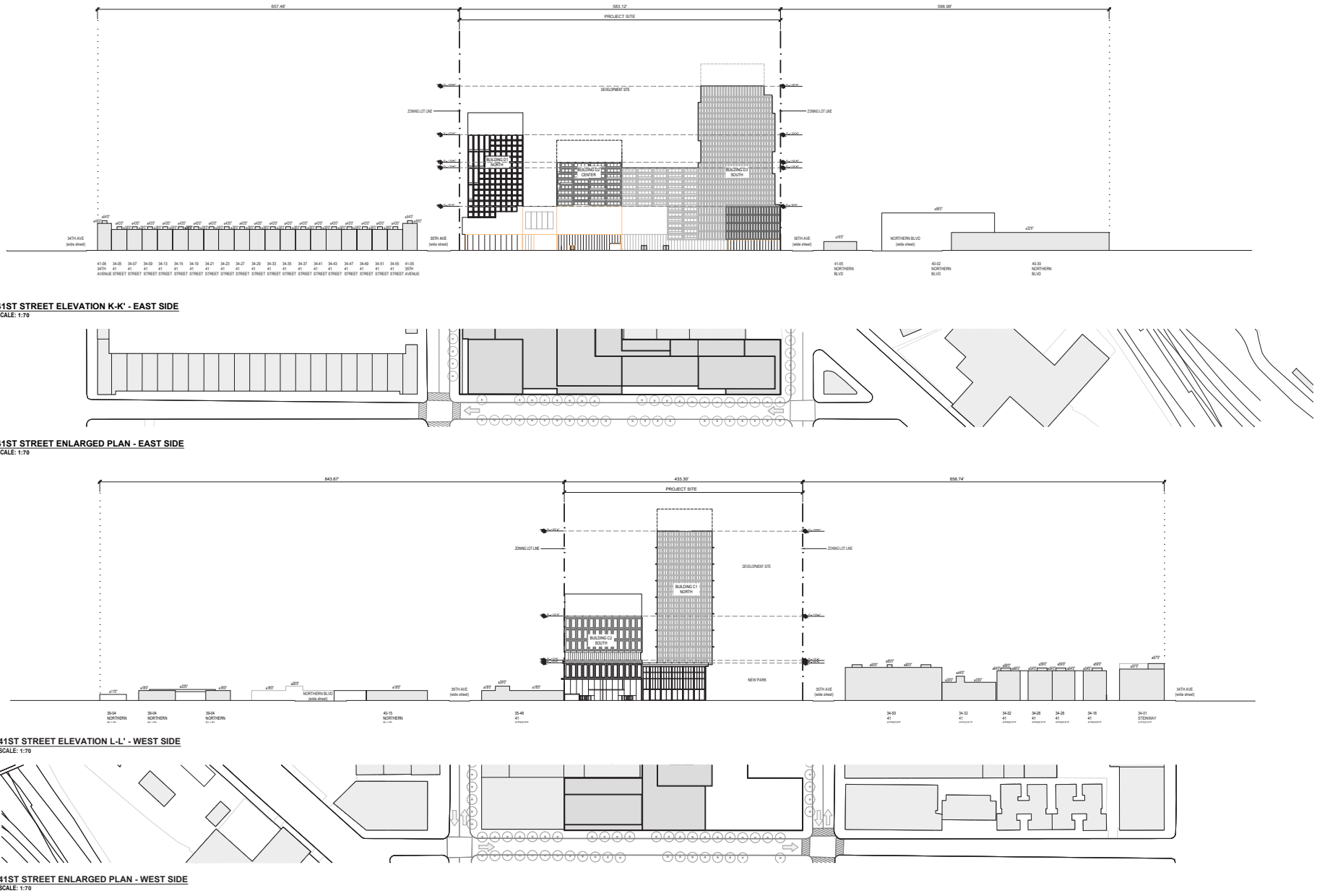
Projected Development in Context
Figure 8-35



Source: ODA

INNOVATION QNS
ASTORIA, QUEENS
COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1

Projected Development in Context
Figure 8-36



Source: ODA

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ASTORIA, QUEENS
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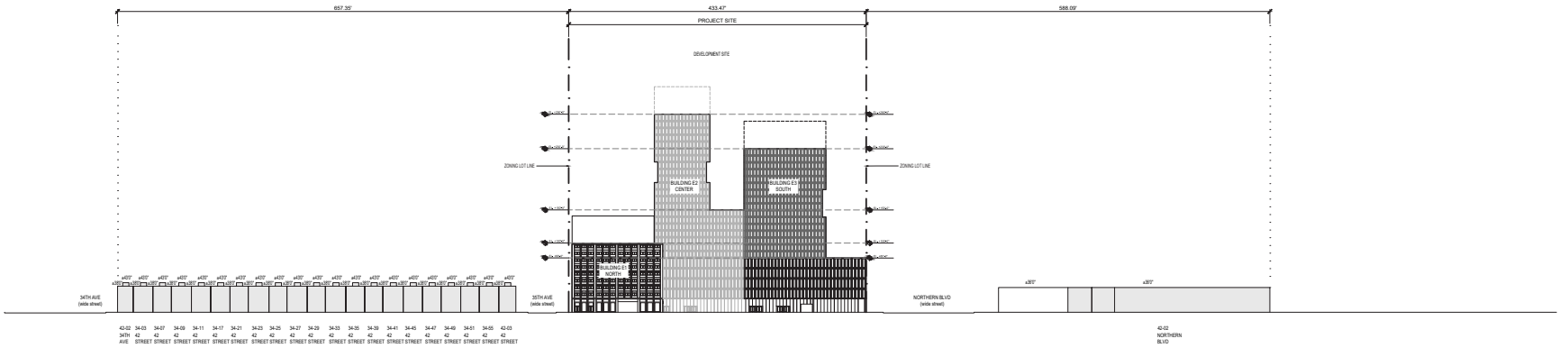
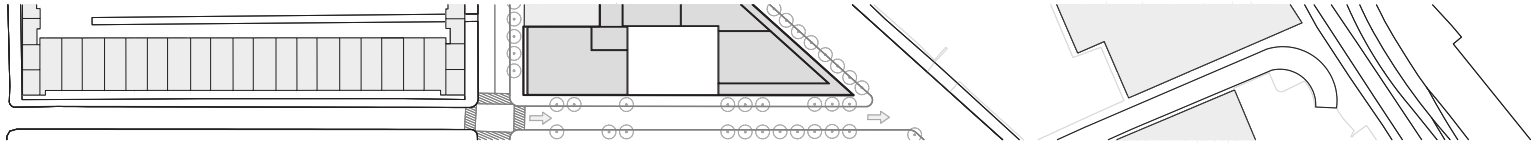
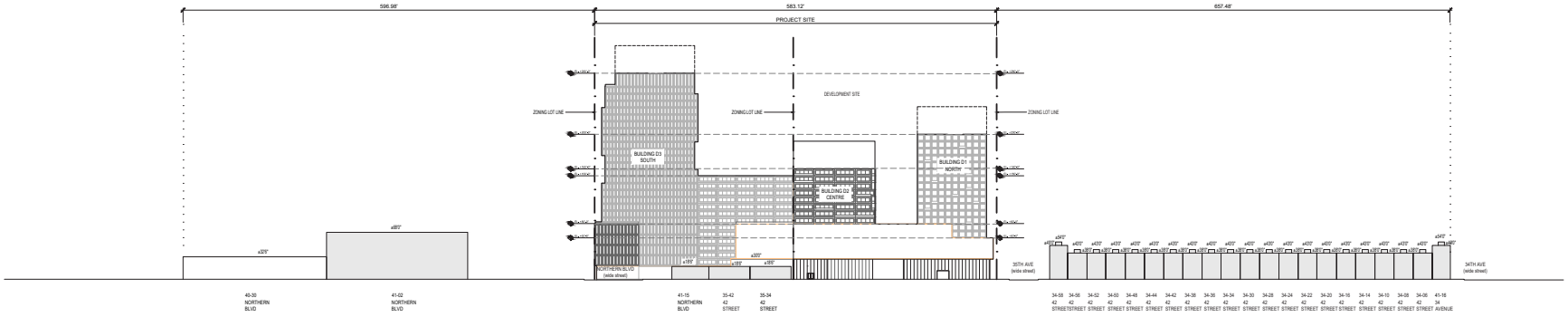
Projected Development in Context
Figure 8-37



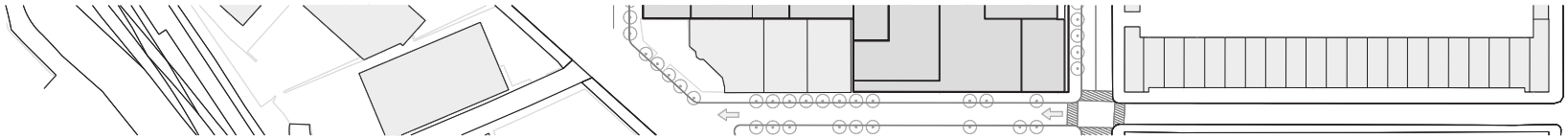
02 **42ND STREET ELEVATION M-M' - EAST SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70



01 **42ND STREET ENLARGED PLAN - EAST SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70



02 **42ND STREET ELEVATION N'-N - WEST SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70

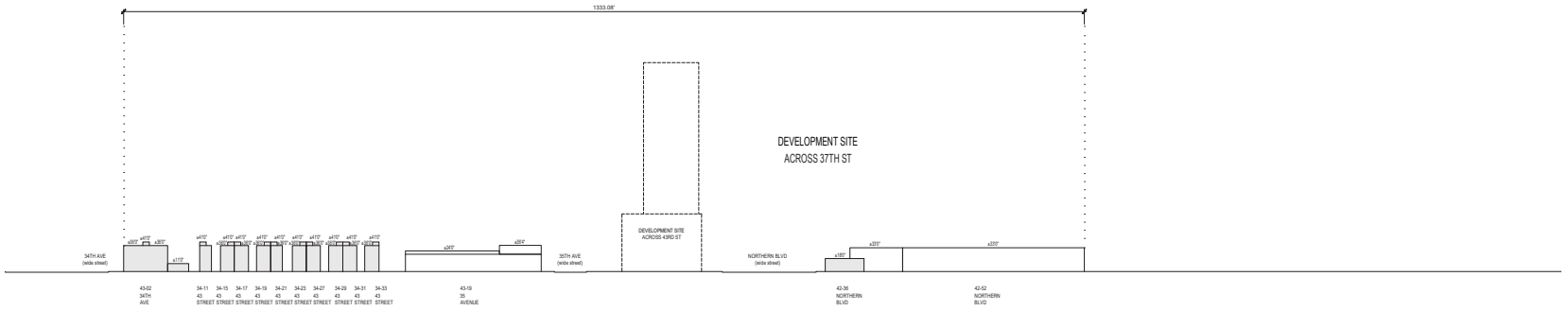


01 **42ND STREET ENLARGED PLAN - WEST SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70

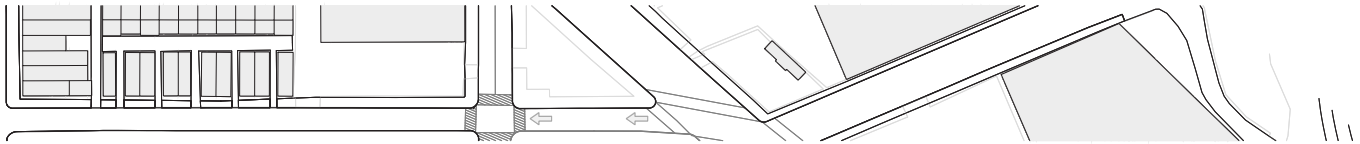
Source: ODA

INNOVATION QNS
ASTORIA, QUEENS
COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1

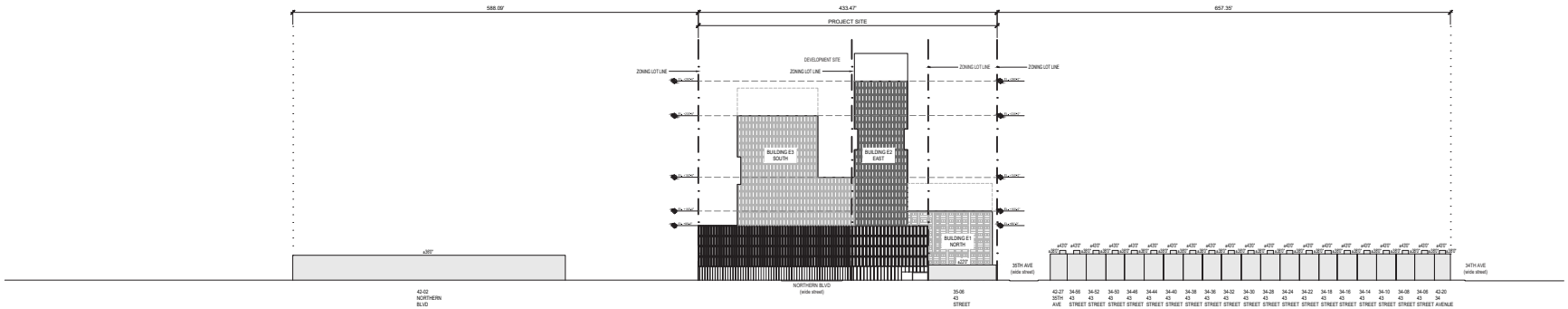
Projected Development in Context
Figure 8-38



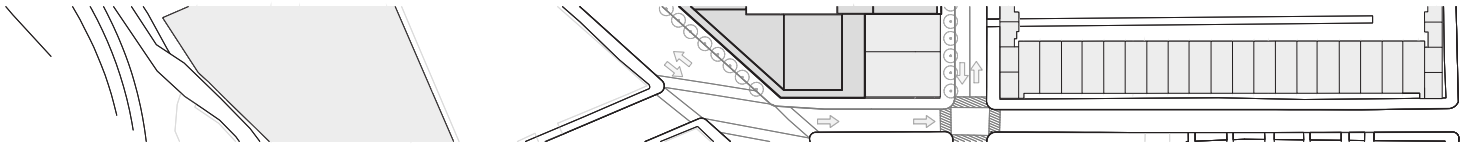
02 **43RD STREET ELEVATION O-O' - EAST SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70



01 **43RD STREET ENLARGED PLAN - EAST SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70



02 **43RD STREET ELEVATION P'-P - WEST SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70



01 **43RD STREET ENLARGED PLAN - WEST SIDE**
SCALE: 1:70

Source: ODA

INNOVATION QNS
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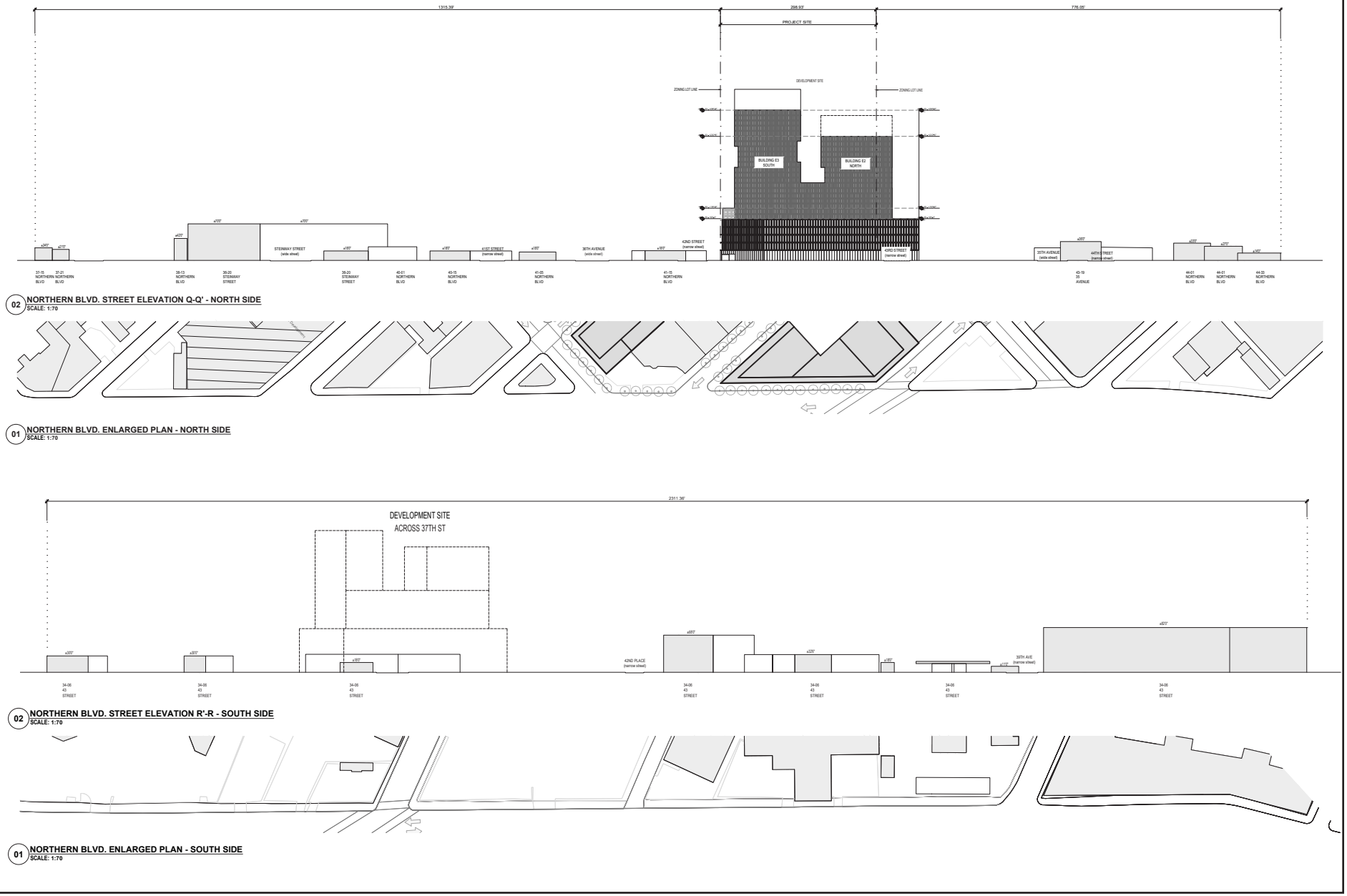
Projected Development in Context
Figure 8-39



Source: ODA

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COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1

Projected Development in Context
Figure 8-40



Source: ODA

Illustrative Rendering of the Projected Development,
View from 36th Street and 35th Avenue

Figure 8-41

between the rail yard to the southeast of the Project Area and the residential neighborhoods to the north and west and includes views to high rise buildings in Long Island City in the distance. The tallest building in the study area (the approximately 120-foot-tall building at 37-14 36th Street) and the 490-foot-long former Standard Motor Products building are also along this corridor. As previously stated, a master plan framework for a high-density mixed-use development for Sunnyside Yard was recently released; if developed, the character of the study area would be oriented to higher density. The proposed 110-foot-tall and 155-foot-tall (7- and 10-story) streetwalls at the northwestern corner of the Project Area would be compatible in height to the taller buildings immediately west of the Project Area along 35th Avenue, including the approximately 80-foot-tall (5-story) Frank Sinatra School of the Arts, the approximately 75-foot-tall (3-story) Kaufman Astoria Studios, and the 73-foot-tall (4-story) Public School 166 (see **Figure 8-19**). The proposed 9- to 13-story (110- to 155-foot-tall) buildings on Projected Development Sites A and B are intended to bridge the scales of the low-rise mixed-use neighborhoods to the north and west and the proposed towers at the eastern end of the Project Area (see Views A and B, **Figures 8-16a and 8-16b**). The study area is also in an area designated as a Transit Zone in the Zoning Resolution and is well-served by mass transit, which would support dense development.

Overall, the Applicant believes that the proposed density is an appropriate scale to support a new community without overwhelming the surrounding areas. Based on the *CEQR Technical Manual*, context is not the only benchmark for measuring urban design impacts, as the determination of the significance of an urban design impact requires consideration of the built environment's arrangement, appearance, functionality, and whether the change would negatively affect a pedestrian's experience of the area. As described above, the size and height of the Proposed Development would constitute a substantial change to the Development Site and study area; however, the Proposed Development would also positively contribute to the pedestrian's experience of the area, as described above and below.

The proposed buildings within the Project Area—with residential, office, other commercial, and cultural/community facility uses—would contain uses that are compatible with those located within the surrounding study area. It is the Applicant's intent to build upon the neighborhood's existing arts, culture, and media uses by forming a creative hub with a mix of office, open space and cultural uses, and the Proposed Development is anticipated to serve as an anchor for the synergistic expansion of the neighborhood's existing business and residential communities. The Proposed Actions also would extend the mixed-use corridors of Steinway Street and 34th Avenue, replacing predominantly light-industrial uses in the Project Area with residential, commercial, and cultural/community facility uses that are consistent with the existing uses along Steinway Street and 34th Avenue to the north and west.

It is expected that the Proposed Actions would activate the streetscape surrounding the Project Area with new ground-floor uses and publicly accessible open space; expand the sidewalks on the south side of 35th Avenue; and provide additional street furniture, lighting, street trees, and landscaping on the sidewalks in this area (see **Figures 8-19, 8-21, and 8-23** above, as well as **Figure 8-13** for the locations of expanded sidewalks along 35th Avenue and new street trees and landscaping). These changes would provide a more active and pedestrian-friendly environment than the existing and No Action conditions, which as described above consist primarily of low-rise warehouses with garage entrances, parking lots bordered by chain link fences, and windowless streetwalls (see Views C and D, **Figures 8-16c and 8-16d**). Loading and service entrances would be located at the mid-block, to provide for a more continuous streetwall and active pedestrian experience along the avenues.

According to conceptual designs, the proposed buildings would have high lot coverage, consistent with the existing urban design of the Project Area and surrounding study area. The proposed variation in streetwall heights and in building footprints, interspersed with new publicly accessible open spaces, would give the Proposed Development a varied form that would be consistent with the urban design of the western portion of the study area, which is developed with an array of different building forms, sizes, and heights.

With the Proposed Actions, land uses, lot coverage, natural features, and street patterns in the surrounding study area would not change. The new, predominantly residential uses within the Project Area would be compatible with uses found to the north and west of the Project Area (see View E, **Figure 8-16e**). The new residential, office, and cultural/community facility uses are anticipated to bring more pedestrian activity to the study area, and to enhance the pedestrian experience of the study area by replacing low-scale buildings of utilitarian design, windowless streetwalls, and surface parking lots with active ground-floor uses and new publicly accessible open spaces.

As described in Chapter 5, "Open Space," the Proposed Actions would result in a decrease to the study area's active open space ratio, but the new publicly accessible open spaces to be constructed in the Project Area also would result in increases to the study area's total open space ratio and in particular the passive open space ratio. As described in Chapter 6, "Shadows," development resulting from the Proposed Actions would cast new shadows on Playground Thirty Five XXXV throughout the day in all seasons, at times covering large areas of the playground at times or eliminating much or all of the remaining sunlight in the park; however, the proposed publicly accessible open space adjacent to Playground Thirty Five XXXV is intended to set back the buildings on Projected Development Site C and create a more open area surrounding the playground, and would complement this resource.

In conclusion, the Proposed Actions would not have a significant adverse effect on urban design in the Project Area or the study area.

VIEW CORRIDORS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

As detailed above, the Project Area does not contain any visual resources, views along the north-south streets within the Project Area are limited by mature street trees, and views south along these streets end at the buildings along Northern Boulevard. These factors would be expected to limit the visibility of the Proposed Development along north-south streets.

In the future with the Proposed Actions, views toward the Project Area from the area's view corridors would change (see **Figures 8-16a through 8-16e** above). The new development in the Project Area would be most visible along Northern Boulevard, 35th Avenue, and 39th Street as it crosses over Sunnyside Yard (see **Figures 8-16e, 8-19, and 8-40** above). The tallest buildings of the Proposed Development would be prominent in these views; however, this change would not adversely affect these view corridors. High rise buildings in Long Island City, including the curved Queens Plaza Park building, also would be visible to the southwest along the Northern Boulevard view corridor, beyond the tall buildings of the Proposed Development. Along 39th Street as it passes over Sunnyside Yard, the tall buildings of the Proposed Development would be prominent in the foreground—along with the massive Standard Motor Products building on Northern Boulevard—and the towers in Long Island City and the Manhattan skyline would be visible in the distance. The Proposed Actions would not block views to the Most Precious Blood Roman Catholic Church, and it would not affect the public's enjoyment or use of the resource. Views south and southeast on 37th Street immediately adjacent to the church could potentially include a

small portion of the new development on Projected Development Site A, or the taller portions of the Proposed Development, above the existing intervening buildings; however, the church is approximately 1,350 feet from the nearest portion of Projected Development Site A, and distance and the screening effect of mature street trees would be expected to minimize the visibility of the new development.

The Proposed Development would be visible along 35th Avenue, and thus could change the context of views to the Paramount Studios Complex buildings along this corridor; however, the Proposed Actions would not obstruct any views to the buildings, and the changed context of views along 35th Avenue would not be expected to diminish the pedestrian's experience of this visual resource (see **Figure 8-19**). The Proposed Development also would not obstruct any important visual resources or block any view corridors.

In conclusion, the Proposed Actions would not have a significant adverse effect on view corridors or visual resources in the Project Area or the study area.

CONCLUSION

The Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse impact to urban design and visual resources. ✷