CHAPTER 19: NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter assesses the Proposed Actions' potential effects on neighborhood character. As defined in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, neighborhood character is an amalgam of various elements that give a neighborhood its distinct "personality." These elements may include a neighborhood's land use, socioeconomic conditions, open space, historic and cultural resources, urban design and visual resources, shadows, transportation, and noise conditions; however, not all of these elements contribute to neighborhood character in all cases. For a proposed project or action, a neighborhood character assessment pursuant to CEQR first identifies the defining features of the neighborhood and then evaluates whether the project or action has the potential to adversely impact these defining features. An impact can be caused by a combination of moderate effects in relevant technical analysis areas or through the potential for a significant adverse impact. Therefore, in order to determine the effects of a proposed action on neighborhood character, the relevant features of neighborhood character are considered cumulatively. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, neighborhood character impacts are rare, and it would be unusual that, in the absence of a significant adverse impact to any of the neighborhood's defining features, a combination of moderate effects to the neighborhood would result in an impact to neighborhood character. In addition, a significant impact identified in one of the technical areas that may contribute to a neighborhood's character is not automatically equivalent to a significant impact on neighborhood character, but rather serves as an indication that neighborhood character should be examined.

As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the Bay Street Corridor Rezoning and Related Actions consists of a series of land use actions (collectively, the "Proposed Actions") to occur on the North Shore of Staten Island. The potentially affected area comprises approximately 45 acres, including portions of the Tompkinsville, Stapleton, and St. George neighborhoods in Community District 1. The Project Area comprises four parts: (i) Bay Street Corridor Project Area; (ii) Canal Street Corridor Project Area; (iii) Stapleton Waterfront Phase III; and (iv) City Disposition Sites. The Proposed Actions would facilitate a net increase of approximately 2,553,585 square feet (sf) of residential use (2,557 dwelling units); 275,348 sf of commercial use; and 46,799 sf of community facility use as compared to the No-Action Condition on the 30 Projected Development Sites identified in the Reasonable Worst Case Development Scenario (RWCDS).

As detailed in Chapter 5, "Open Space," Chapter 7, "Historic and Cultural Resources," and Chapter 14, "Transportation," the Proposed Actions would result in significant adverse impacts in these three technical areas that contribute to neighborhood character. No significant adverse impacts to land use, zoning, and public policy, socioeconomic conditions, shadows, historic and cultural resources (architectural resources), or noise are anticipated.

This chapter includes a preliminary assessment of neighborhood character, which was prepared pursuant to the *CEQR Technical Manual.* This chapter describes the defining features of the existing neighborhood character and considers the potential effects of the Proposed Actions on these defining features. This assessment utilizes information and conclusions from technical analyses presented in other chapters of this EIS.

B. PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

Based on a preliminary assessment, the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts to neighborhood character. As described elsewhere in this EIS, of the relevant technical areas defined in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the Proposed Actions would not result in any significant adverse impacts to land use, zoning, and public policy, socioeconomic conditions, shadows, urban design and visual resources, historic and cultural resources (architectural resources), or noise. The scale of significant adverse impacts to open space, historic and cultural resources (archaeological resources), and transportation would not affect any defining features of neighborhood character nor would a combination of moderately adverse impacts affect the neighborhood's defining features. Ultimately, the Proposed Actions would be consistent with existing trends, would facilitate new residential, commercial and mixed-use development, and would improve connections to the waterfront and surrounding neighborhoods. Based on the results of the preliminary assessment, there is no potential for the Proposed Actions to result in any significant adverse impacts to neighborhood character and, therefore, further analysis is not warranted.

As stated in the *CEQR Technical Manual,* "In general, the more uniform and consistent the existing neighborhood context, the more sensitive it is to change. A neighborhood that has a more varied context is typically able to tolerate greater changes without experiencing significant impacts." Currently, the Bay Street Corridor Project Area is generally defined by commercial and industrial uses. Many of the parcels are underutilized or vacant, creating a discontinuous streetscape. In contrast, the areas surrounding the Bay Street Corridor Project Area vary greatly in terms of existing land uses and development scale. For example, the area to the west of the Bay Street Corridor Project Area is predominately characterized by lower density residential uses, including detached, semi-detached, and attached residential developments. The area to the north of the Bay Street Corridor Project Area includes residential, commercial (office), mixed-use, and smaller-scale retail and restaurants, while the area to the south of the Bay Street Corridor Project Area along Bay Street is defined by mixed-use buildings containing ground floor retail and upper floor residential. Additionally, new higher-density developments in the area include *Bay Street Landing*, a series of former industrial buildings that were converted to condominium units, and the large-scale mixed-use waterfront development known as *Urby*. It is this varied urban character – both within the Bay Street, as well as the surrounding area – that would allow the neighborhood to absorb new mixed-use development patterns facilitated by the Proposed Actions without experiencing significant changes to the overall character. By encouraging the redevelopment of vacant and underutilized parcels along Bay Street and Canal Street, and by providing stronger connections to the waterfront and surrounding neighborhoods, the Proposed Actions would create a more uniform and dynamic urban environment. In addition, the affordable housing units would help to support housing needs for new and existing low- and moderate-income residents in the Study Area and help ensure that Study Area neighborhoods continue to accommodate these diverse housing needs.

C. METHODOLOGY

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, an assessment of neighborhood character is generally needed when a proposed action has the potential to result in significant adverse impacts to any of the following technical areas: land use, socioeconomic conditions, open space, historic and cultural resources, urban design and visual resources, shadows, transportation, or noise. The *CEQR Technical*

Manual states that, even if a proposed action does not have the potential to result in a significant adverse impact in any specific technical area(s), an assessment of neighborhood character may be required if the project would result in a combination of moderate effects to several elements that may cumulatively affect neighborhood character. A "moderate" effect is generally defined as an effect considered reasonably close to the significant adverse impact threshold for a particular technical analysis area.

A preliminary assessment of neighborhood character determines whether anticipated impacts in other technical areas may adversely impact a defining feature of the neighborhood's character. The preliminary assessment first identifies the defining features of the neighborhood's character and then evaluates whether the proposed project or action has the potential to adversely impact those defining features, either through the potential for a significant adverse impact in a single relevant technical area or a combination of moderate effects in the relevant technical areas. The key elements that define neighborhood character, and their relationships to one another, form the basis of determining impact significance. In general, the more uniform and consistent the existing neighborhood context, the more sensitive it is to change. A neighborhood that has a varied context typically is able to tolerate greater change without experiencing significant impacts.

If there is no potential for the proposed project or action to affect the defining features of neighborhood character, a detailed assessment is not warranted.

STUDY AREA

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the study area for a preliminary assessment of neighborhood character is typically consistent with the study areas in the relevant technical areas assessed pursuant to CEQR that contribute to the defining features of the neighborhood. In the context of an area-wide rezoning, the study area boundaries of the preliminary assessment of neighborhood character are generally coterminous with those used in the analyses of land use and urban design. As shown in Figure 19-1, the Study Area for this assessment of neighborhood character comprises an area within a 400-foot radius around the Project Area.

D. PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

DEFINING FEATURES

The Project Area extends across Staten Island's North Shore and contains a number of neighborhoods, each with varying characteristics. For the purposes of assessing neighborhood character, the Study Area is divided into four "subareas": (1) Bay Street Corridor Subarea; (2) Stapleton Waterfront Subarea; (3) Van Duzer Street Corridor Subarea; and (4) Canal Street Corridor Subarea (Figure 19-1). Each of these subareas is discussed separately in the following sections.



FIGURE 19-1: NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER SUBAREAS
BAY STREET CORRIDOR REZONING AND RELATED ACTIONS

STATEN ISLAND, NY

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles

N

- Bay Street Corridor Project Area
- Canal Street Corridor Project Area
- Stapleton Waterfront Phase III Sites
- City Disposition Sites
- Neighborhood Character Subarea
- Open Space
- 503 City Block
- Staten Island Railroad (SIR)
- Historic District
- Historic Resources

Map Reference: NYC Department of City Planning; USGS National Hydrography Dataset (NHD). Prepared by Langan

BAY STREET CORRIDOR SUBAREA

The Bay Street Corridor Subarea is characterized by a mix of uses and Bay Street, which serves as a subarea bisector, is the primary transportation artery throughout the Study Area.

The Bay Street Corridor Subarea comprises all, or a portion of, 19 blocks on either side of Bay Street from approximately 200 feet north of Victory Boulevard to the north and nearly to Union Place to the south. The Staten Island Railway (SIR) elevated rail lines form the eastern boundary of the subarea and Van Duzer Street is the approximate western boundary. The subarea includes primarily commercial and automotive uses, with a lesser amount of residences and vacant lots interspersed across the subarea. The subarea also includes industrial uses fronting Bay Street and a small number of open parking lots interspersed along Bay Street. The majority of the buildings along Bay Street are between one and three stories in height.

Bay Street runs north-south through the center of the Bay Street Corridor Subarea, from the Bay Street and Central Avenue intersection to the north to Union Place to the south. Bay Street and the residential side streets do not follow a traditional street grid; rather, Bay Street follows the curvature of the Tompkinsville and Stapleton shoreline. The Tompkinsville SIR Station is located within the Bay Street Corridor Subarea, which provides direct access to the Staten Island Ferry Terminal.

STAPLETON WATERFRONT SUBAREA

The Stapleton Waterfront Subarea is characterized by vacant properties, an industrial nature, and proximity to waterfront.

The Stapleton Waterfront Subarea extends approximately 200 feet north of Victory Boulevard to the north, the New York Bay to the east, approximately to Prospect Street to the south, and the elevated SIR tracks to the west. Approximately 95 percent of the Subarea is vacant and undeveloped. The northern portion of the lot includes Tompkinsville (Joseph H. Lyons) Pool ("Lyons Pool"), a publicly accessible recreation facility. A series of industrial and commercial buildings are located across Front Street, to the west of the former Homeport Site in the Stapleton Waterfront Subarea. The majority of these buildings are manufacturing and automotive repair-related facilities, opening onto Front Street.

The majority of the Stapleton Waterfront Subarea contains the former U.S. Navy Homeport site. Largely built as a warehousing complex, a series of internal private roads are interspersed throughout the property, traversing north-south on both the eastern and western side of the existing buildings. The only public street bordering the former Homeport Site is Front Street. An industrial aesthetic dominates the site both in the design of the buildings and the layout of the overall site.

The Lyons Pool complex is a Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC)-designated New York City Landmark (NYCL) and is eligible for listing on the State and National Register of Historic Places (S/NR). Therefore, this historic resource is considered to be a significant visual resource as well.

VAN DUZER STREET SUBAREA

The Van Duzer Street Corridor Subarea is characterized by low density residential development, foliage, and architecturally unique buildings.

The Van Duzer Street Subarea comprises all, or a portion of, 14 blocks on either side of Van Duzer Street between Victory Boulevard to the north and nearly to Beach Street to the south. The Van Duzer Street Subarea includes predominantly residential uses fronting Van Duzer Street and the residential side streets. Located east of St. Paul's Avenue, Van Duzer Street is angled from the northeast to the southwest and runs parallel to Bay Street and is the primary residential corridor in the Van Duzer Street Subarea. The Van Duzer Street Subarea includes a mix of older and newly constructed, one- and two-family detached homes along Van Duzer Street and St. Paul's Avenue. The east-west side streets in the subarea include commercial uses closer to the intersection with Bay Street; and solely residential buildings closer to the intersection with Van Duzer Street and St. Paul's Avenue to the west.

Some of the homes located in the Van Duzer Street Subarea that are adjacent to the LPC-designated St. Paul's Avenue/Stapleton Heights Historic District are reminiscent of several architectural styles popular from the 1870s through the early- to mid-1900s found in the historic district. These styles include Second Empire, Stick Style, Queen Anne style, Shingle Style, Colonial Revival buildings, and later one- and two-family Neo-Colonial and Craftsman style homes. In addition to the architecturally unique residences within the Van Duzer Street Subarea, there are two significant visual resources: the Mary and David Burgher House and 292 Van Duzer Street.

CANAL STREET CORRIDOR SUBAREA

The Canal Street Corridor Subarea is characterized by a mix of uses, low to medium density residences, and vacant lots.

The Canal Street Corridor Subarea comprises all, or a portion of, 14 blocks along Canal Street, Wright Street, Broad Street, Water Street, and Boyd Street. The Canal Street Corridor Subarea includes commercial, industrial, and community facility uses fronting Canal Street; one- and two-family residences fronting Wright Street; primarily one- and two-family residences and a few ground floor commercial uses fronting on Broad Street; and ground floor commercial uses fronting Water Street. There are also multiple vacant lots within the Canal Street Corridor Subarea. The majority of residential buildings in the Subarea are either attached row houses or one- and two-family detached houses.

There are several historic resources within the Canal Street Corridor Subarea. Edgewater Village Hall (S/NR-listed and LPC-designated), the Staten Island Savings Bank (LPC-designated), and the Stapleton Branch of the NYPL (S/NR-eligible) are all located within the northern portion of the Canal Street Corridor Subarea.

ASSESSMENT OF THE POTENTIAL TO AFFECT THE DEFINING FEATURES OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

The sections below discuss the potential for adverse impacts resulting from the Proposed Actions in the following technical areas that are considered in the neighborhood character assessment pursuant to the *CEQR Technical Manual*: land use, zoning, and public policy; socioeconomic conditions; open space; historic and cultural resources; urban design and visual resources; shadows; transportation; and noise. The assessment uses the information and conclusions from the respective chapters of this EIS to identify whether the Proposed Actions would result in any significant adverse impacts or moderate adverse effects in these technical areas and whether any such changes would have the potential to affect the defining features of neighborhood character. As described below, defining features of the Primary Study Area's constituent neighborhoods would not be adversely impacted either through the potential of any single significant adverse impact or combination of moderate effects in these technical areas.

LAND USE, ZONING, AND PUBLIC POLICY

Defining features of the neighborhood would not be adversely affected due to potential effects of the Proposed Actions on land use, zoning, and public policy, either singly, or in combination with potential impacts in other relevant technical areas discussed in this section. The Proposed Actions would not directly displace any land uses so as to adversely affect surrounding land uses, nor would it generate land uses that would be incompatible with existing land uses or zoning districts in the Study Area. The Proposed Actions would not result in land uses that conflict with public policies applicable to the Project Area or Study Areas.

The Proposed Actions would encourage land uses that support the revitalization of the St. George, Stapleton, and Tompkinsville neighborhoods by rezoning to encourage higher-density mixed uses along Bay Street and Canal Street, while providing for appropriately scaled residential development along the adjacent low-rise side streets. New residential and local retail development along these key corridors would complement the existing mixed residential and commercial uses that currently define the surrounding area. The Proposed Actions would be in keeping with existing trends in the neighborhood toward the transformation of former industrial areas to higher-density residential and commercial uses and, therefore, would ensure that the zoning designation more accurately reflects the area's development trends.

The Proposed Actions would result in new mixed-use areas consistent with the mix of uses in the surrounding neighborhoods. Based on this information, the Proposed Actions would not result in any significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character.

SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Defining features of the neighborhood would not be adversely affected due to potential effects of the Proposed Actions on socioeconomic conditions either singly or in combination with potential impacts in other relevant technical areas discussed in this section. As described in Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions," the Proposed Actions are not anticipated to result in significant adverse impacts on direct or indirect residential displacement, direct or indirect business and institutional displacement, or affect specific industries in the Project Area or Study Area.

The Proposed Actions are anticipated to introduce 2,557 new residential dwelling units, a number of which would be permanently affordable per the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) program. The Proposed Actions are not anticipated to introduce a new trend that places upward pressure on rents. As discussed in Chapter 3, this trend is already being observed in the Study Area. In the current real estate market, the Study Area is experiencing a gradual increase in median and average rents and home values. From 2015 to 2016, the North Shore of Staten Island saw an increase in the rent-to-income burden on residents.

Further, the residential market in the Study Area has become segmented between demand for new, high-end residential buildings on the waterfront and existing residential units. Market demand for housing from residents living outside of the borough has been geared towards new, high-end buildings, with little demand for older units in one- to four-family row houses where low-income residents currently reside. With housing available to current residents, there has been minimal upward pressure on older rental housing stock. At the same time, local developers indicate that there is not enough residential demand in the Study Area to support new multi-family development without public subsidy. In the near-term, the existing housing stock in the Study Area is likely to absorb additional demand, leading to residential displacement of low-income renters in unregulated housing.

A major goal of the Proposed Actions is to mitigate the effects of rising market rents and address unmet demand for new affordable housing in the Study Area. In line with the City's MIH policy, an estimated 25 to 30 percent of new housing units would be made permanently affordable within the Study Area. The impact of unregulated housing resulting from the Proposed Actions would be eased by the provision of affordable housing for a preexisting population vulnerable to indirect residential displacement. In the future With-Action scenario, the Bay Street Corridor and surrounding neighborhoods are expected to remain primarily residential communities.

The Proposed Actions could potentially directly displace 30 businesses representing retail, grocery, car repair, banking, manufacturing, and other services industries. Approximately 244 employees at these 30 businesses could also to be directly displaced, representing roughly five percent of employees in the Study Area and 0.26 percent of employees in Staten Island. However, businesses and institutions likely to experience potential direct displacement would be able to relocate to properties within the Study Area and relevant trade areas. In addition, local residents and businesses would continue to access similar goods and services from businesses in the Study Area and relevant trade areas. Except for a large-format grocery store (Western Beef) occupying a portion of Projected Development Site 5, the Proposed Actions would not directly displace businesses or institutions subject to regulations or publicly-adopted plans aimed at preserving, enhancing, or otherwise protecting them in their current location. While a large-format supermarket could be potentially directly displaced, there are several comparable supermarkets in the trade area. None of the potentially displaced businesses and industries are not uniquely tied to or dependent upon their current locations. The Proposed Actions are intended to create opportunities for new commercial and mixed-use development, in addition to new residential uses, by mapping C2-3 and C2-4 commercial overlays in the Bay and Canal Street Corridor Project Areas.

The Proposed Actions are anticipated to create a net increase of 1,312 jobs at the Projected Development Sites within the Project Area. The Proposed Actions are consistent with and help

advance the goals and community planning efforts presented by the Bay Street Corridor @ Downtown Staten Island Neighborhood Planning Study. The Proposed Actions also help accomplish the mission of the North Shore 2030 Plan by encouraging the creation of quality jobs and workplaces through new development.

The Proposed Actions would not introduce or exacerbate a trend that would lead to significant indirect business and institutional displacement. The Proposed Actions and associated RWCDS are expected to result in an incremental increase over the No-Action Condition of approximately 275,348 square feet (sf) of commercial uses, including retail, office, and restaurant space. This new development would be consistent with recent mixed-use development in the Study Area. The Proposed Actions would create commercial overlay districts that align with land use patterns in the St. George and Stapleton Special Purpose Districts within the Study Area. As discussed in Chapter 3, higher density zoning with commercial overlays at the Projected Development Sites are not likely to place upward pressure on commercial rents or indirectly displace businesses because it is expected that incoming businesses would utilize available space in the new developments or preexisting commercial vacancies instead of displacing current businesses and institutions.

Based on this information, the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character as a result of changes to the area's socioeconomic conditions.

OPEN SPACE

Defining features of the neighborhood would not be adversely affected due to potential effects of the Proposed Actions on open space either singly or in combination with potential impacts in other relevant technical areas discussed in this section. As described in Chapter 5, "Open Space," the Proposed Actions would not have a direct significant adverse impact on open space resources in the Study Area. It is anticipated that no open space would be displaced and no significant shadows would be cast on any publicly accessible open spaces.

As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the Proposed Actions are intended to facilitate implementation of recommendations of the Bay Street Corridor Neighborhood Planning Initiative (the "Plan"). There are eight known development projects (No-Build Projects) for the 2030 Analysis Year, of which three would introduce a total of 11.63 acres of new open space within the 0. 5-mile Residential Study Area. In addition, the new open space planned for the Stapleton Phase III in the With-Action Condition would introduce approximately five acres of open space (of which four acres would be passive open space and one acre would be active open space) within the 0.5-mile Residential Study Area. Therefore, in the With-Action Condition, the Non-Residential Study Area would be served by 32.60 acres of open space (including 23.49 acres of passive open space and 9.11 acres of active open space), and the Residential Study Area would be served by approximately 62.45 acres of open space (including approximately 36.40 acres of passive open space and 26.05 acres of active open space).

As described in Chapter 5, "Open Space," in the With-Action Condition, the Non-Residential Study Area would remain well-served by passive open spaces, with a ratio of 1.45 acres per 1,000 workers. Because the passive open space ratio for non-residents would continue to be higher than the City's guidance measure for adequacy (0.15 acres per 1,000 workers), the Non-Residential Study Area

would be well-served by passive open space and, therefore, no significant adverse open space impacts in the Non-Residential Study Area are anticipated.

Under the With-Action Condition, for residents within the 0.5-mile Residential Study Area, the total open space ratio would decrease to 1.22 acres per 1,000 residents (from 1.28 in the No-Action Condition); and would continue to be below the ratio of 2.50 acres per 1,000 residents, as defined as planning guidance by the *CEQR Technical Manual*. The passive open space ratio per 1,000 residents would also decrease to 0.71 acres per 1,000 residents from 0.72 in the No-Action Condition; however, it would remain above the *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance ratio of 0.50. The active open space ratio would also decrease to 0.51 acres per 1,000 residents from 0.56 in the No-Action Condition, and would continue to be below the guidance ratio of 2.00 acres per 1,000 residents, as defined by the *CEQR Technical Manual*.

The total and active open space ratio of 1.22 and 0.51 acres per 1,000 residents, respectively, would remain below the *CEQR Technical Manual* threshold of 2.5 acres of total open space and 2.0 acres of active open space per 1,000 residents. Therefore, the Residential Study Area would continue to be underserved by the total and active open space in the With-Action Condition as compared to the No-Action Condition. Because the Residential Study Area is currently underserved by open space and would remain so in both the No-Action and With-Action Conditions, open space is not a critical defining feature of the area, and any impacts to open space resulting from the Proposed Actions would not have a significant impact on neighborhood character.

SHADOWS

Defining features of the neighborhood would not be adversely affected due to potential effects of the Proposed Actions on shadows either singly or in combination with potential impacts in other relevant technical areas discussed in this section. Based on the detailed shadow analysis, the Proposed Actions would result in incremental shadow coverage on six sunlight-sensitive resources including five open space resources (Lyons Pool – Entire Property, Lyons Pool – Main Pool, Tompkinsville Park, Tappen Park, the Canal Street Greenstreets) and one natural resource (Upper New York Bay).

Incremental project-generated shadows would not substantially reduce or eliminate direct sunlight on any of the six sunlight-sensitive resources, and therefore would not have the potential to affect the utilization or enjoyment of any sunlight-sensitive resources. Although, the active recreation areas of Lyons Pool – Entire Property and Lyons Pool – Main Pool would receive sizable incremental shadow coverage during the summer analysis days, the pool would continue to receive direct sunlight throughout the late morning and early afternoon when utilization would be highest. Therefore, the incremental shadows on Lyons Pool – Entire Property and Lyons Pool – Main Pool would not result in a significant adverse impact on the usability of this resource. In addition, all five open space resources, would continue to receive a minimum of four- to six-hours of direct sunlight throughout the growing season and vegetation would not be affected.

The only natural resource under consideration is Upper New York Bay. While exposure to shadows would cause a decrease in light intensity and could affect primary productivity within the Study Area, productivity is mainly generated from phytoplankton, which have low light requirements and would only be exposed for a relatively short period of time while moving through the area. Additionally,

shadows would only enter the bay during the late afternoon when abundant diffuse light would be available in the water and deep shadows are not anticipated. Therefore, no significant adverse shadow impacts to natural resources are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Actions.

The project-generated incremental shadows would not substantially reduce or eliminate direct sunlight on any of the six sunlight-sensitive resources. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not result in any potentially significant adverse shadows impact on any nearby sunlight sensitive resources, and no significant adverse impacts to neighborhood character due to the Proposed Action's incremental shadows are anticipated.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Proposed Actions would not result in direct impacts on S/NR-eligible, S/NR-listed, or NYCL-designated resources, nor would they eliminate or substantially obstruct important public views of architectural resources, as all significant elements of these historic resources would remain visible in view corridors on public streets.

As described in Chapter 7, "Historic and Cultural Resources," 11 historic resources are located in close proximity (*i.e.*, within 400 feet) to the Projected/Potential Development Sites. Although development resulting from the Proposed Actions could alter the setting or visual context of several of these historic resources, none of the alternations would result in significant adverse impacts. The Proposed Actions would not alter the relationship of any identified historic resources to the streetscape, nor would any of the development sites would eliminate or substantially obstruct important public views of architectural resources, as all significant elements of these resources would remain visible from public streets and view corridors. Additionally, no incompatible visual, audible, or atmospheric elements would be introduced by the Proposed Actions to any historic resource's setting. However, the Proposed Actions would result in construction-related impacts to two potential historic buildings (the S/NR-eligible 292 Van Duzer Street and the S/NR-eligible and NYCL-eligible Stapleton Branch of the New York City Public Library), which are not S/NR -listed or NYCL-designated, and therefore not afforded the added special protections under the New York City Department of Buildings' (DOB's) Technical Policy and Procedure Notice (TPPN) #10/88. The affected potential historic resources are not defining elements of neighborhood character; therefore, no significant adverse impacts to neighborhood character would occur.

As also discussed in Chapter 7, the Proposed Actions would result in significant adverse impacts to potential archaeological resources on a single Projected Development Site. Whereas architectural resources may contribute substantially to neighborhood character by serving, as their name implies, as local landmarks, archaeological resources are not defining features of neighborhood character. By their very nature, they are necessarily hidden underground, invisible to neighborhood residents, workers, and visitors. The significant adverse archaeological impact would therefore not constitute a significant adverse neighborhood character impact.

URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Defining features of the neighborhood would not be adversely affected due to potential effects of the Proposed Actions on urban design and visual resources either singly or in combination with potential impacts in other relevant technical areas discussed in this section. The development facilitated by the Proposed Actions would result in potentially substantial changes to urban design within the Project Area. The Proposed Actions would result in development at a greater density and greater building heights than is currently permitted as-of-right within the Bay Street Corridor Project Area and Canal Street Corridor Project Area, and would result in greater building height than is currently permitted on the Stapleton Waterfront Phase III Sites. However, this change would not alter the arrangement, appearance, or functionality of the built environment within the overall Project Area such that the alteration would negatively affect a pedestrian's experience within the area. Rather, development anticipated in the With-Action Condition would improve underutilized and vacant lots with new buildings with active ground floor commercial uses that would promote a more vibrant and walkable neighborhood character, and enhance the pedestrian experience along Bay Street and Canal Street, and in the area adjacent to the Stapleton Waterfront Phase III Sites.

Furthermore, in the With-Action Condition, development along the residential side streets would be built to the existing street wall. New buildings would not significantly modify existing views of visual resources located within, or visible from, the Study Area. No significant view corridors would be blocked, and any modification of the resources' visual context generated by the Proposed Actions would not be considered a significant adverse impact under CEQR guidance.

Based on this information, the Proposed Actions would not result in any potentially significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character in relation to urban design and visual resources.

TRANSPORTATION

Defining features of the neighborhood would not be adversely affected due to potential effects of the Proposed Actions on transportation either singly or in combination with potential impacts in other relevant technical areas discussed in this section. The Study Area is generally comprised of (i) narrow one-way streets providing one lane of moving traffic and (ii) two-way, multilane, higher capacity roadways characterized by moderate congestion during peak travel times. The results of the traffic impact analysis indicate that there would be a potential for significant adverse impacts at 31 intersections during one or more analyzed peak hours. The results of the transit impact analysis indicate that the northbound and southbound S51/81, S74/84, S76/86 and S78 routes would experience significant adverse impacts during the Weekday AM and PM peak hours. The results of the pedestrian impact analysis indicate that a total of 18 pedestrian elements (11 sidewalks and seven crosswalks) would be significantly adversely impacted during one or more peak hours. No significant adverse impacts to the SIR or to parking are anticipated to result from the Proposed Actions.

As described in Chapter 21, "Mitigation," implementation of traffic engineering improvements such as signal timing changes or modifications to curbside parking regulations would provide mitigation for several of the anticipated traffic impacts. Of the intersections that would remain unmitigated, most would operate under congested conditions in the future without the Proposed Actions. As such,

the traffic impacts associated with the Proposed Actions would not be expected to result in substantial changes to neighborhood character. Moreover, the Study Area's traffic conditions are not a defining feature of the neighborhood character of the area; the neighborhood includes both narrow one-way streets, often carrying one or two lanes of moving traffic and two-way higher capacity roadways characterized by moderate to moderately congested conditions during peak travel times.

The Proposed Actions would result in a capacity shortfall on all bus routes serving the Study Area during the Weekday AM and PM peak hours. These significant adverse bus transit impacts could be fully mitigated by the addition of two to six additional standard buses to each direction of each route during both peak hours. Crosswalk widening between 0.6 feet and 10.3 feet would fully mitigate all seven impacted crosswalks. Due to constrained rights-of-way, mitigation measures to address the potential significant adverse pedestrian impacts for the 11 significantly impacted sidewalks are not feasible. Therefore, these sidewalks could not be mitigated and the impacts are considered significant and unavoidable. However, most of these sidewalks would operate under congested conditions in the future without the Proposed Actions. As such, pedestrian impacts associated with the Proposed Actions would not result in substantial changes to neighborhood character.

Based on this information, the Proposed Actions would not result in any potentially significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character in relation to traffic or pedestrian elements.

NOISE

Defining features of the neighborhood would not be adversely affected due to potential effects of the Proposed Actions on noise either singly or in combination with potential impacts in other relevant technical areas discussed in this section. Based on the results of the noise analysis, the Study Area would experience noise level increases of up to 1.4 A-weighted decibels[1] (dB(A)) as a result of increased traffic; however, this increase would not be considered a significant adverse noise impact.

The results of the building attenuation analysis indicate that to meet interior noise level requirements, up to 43 dB(A) of building attenuation would be required for the With-Action Condition. The requirement for these levels of façade attenuation, along with the requirement for an alternate means of ventilation, would be included in an (E) designation or other comparable measures for most Projected and Potential Development Sites. Therefore, there would be no significant adverse noise impact with respect to building attenuation.

Based on this information, the Proposed Actions would not result in any potentially significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character in relation to noise.

[1] "The letter 'A' indicates that the sound has been filtered to reduce the strength of the very low and very high frequency sounds, much as the human ear does."-*CEQR Technical Manual*, Chapter 19: Noise, page 19-3.