East New York Rezoning Proposal
Chapter 18: Neighborhood Character

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter assess the Proposed Actions' potential effects on neighborhood character. As defined in the 2014 *City Environmental Quality Review* (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/or noise conditions; but not all of these elements contribute to neighborhood character in all cases. For a proposed project or action, a neighborhood character under CEQR first identifies the defining features of the neighborhood and then evaluates whether the project or action has the potential to affect these defining features, either through the potential for a significant adverse impact or a combination of moderate effects in relevant technical analysis areas. Thus, to determine the effects of a proposed action on neighborhood character, the salient features of neighborhood character are considered together. 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 in any of the relevant technical areas, a combination of moderate effects to the neighborhood would result in an impact to neighborhood character. Moreover, a significant impact identified in one of the technical areas that 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 outlined in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the East New York Rezoning proposal consists of a series of land use actions (collectively, the "Proposed Actions") intended to facilitate the implementation of the objectives of the *East New York Community Plan*. The affected area comprises approximately 190 blocks of the East New York, Cypress Hills, and Ocean Hill neighborhoods in Brooklyn Community Districts (CDs) 5 and 16. The Proposed Actions seek to facilitate vibrant, inclusive residential neighborhoods with a wide variety of local retail options, job opportunities, and attractive streets that are safe and inviting for residents, workers, and visitors.

In the 2030 reasonable worst-case development scenario (RWCDS), the Proposed Actions are expected to facilitate the development of 6,312 dwelling units (DU), including 3,447 affordable DU; 557,290 sf of commercial uses; 457,870 sf of community facility uses; and 1,138 accessory parking spaces; as well as a net reduction of 27,035 sf of industrial uses on the 80 identified projected development sites (compared to the No-Action condition).

This chapter includes a preliminary assessment of neighborhood character, which was prepared in conformance with 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 relies on the technical analyses presented in other chapters of this EIS.

B. PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

The rezoning area and surrounding study area include parts of the following neighborhoods: Ocean Hill; East New York; Cypress Hills; City Line; Brownsville; and Broadway Junction/East New York Industrial Business Zone (IBZ). The East New York study area is characterized by the presence of multiple disconnected neighborhoods, physically separated by the presence of vehicle-dominated major roadways and major transportation infrastructure. While the majority of the study area is characterized by residential uses, particularly on the side streets, a variety of uses are found along the major roadways that often create a disjointed streetscape, and pockets of industrial and auto-related uses. East New York is also characterized by its transit accessibility, with multiple subway stations located within the study area. As described elsewhere in this EIS, the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse

impacts in the areas of land use, zoning, and public policy; socioeconomic conditions; or urban design and visual resources. The significant adverse open space, historic resources, shadows, traffic, and noise impacts would not affect any defining feature of neighborhood character, nor would a combination of moderately adverse effects affect such a defining feature.

The Proposed Actions would facilitate the development of a mix of residential, commercial, community facility, and light-industrial uses that would be consistent with the mixed-use character of the neighborhoods. With the Proposed Actions, new residential development anticipated on vacant and underutilized land along the rezoning area's side streets would be required to complement the existing built residential character under the proposed contextual zoning districts through strict height and street wall regulations. In addition, the affordable housing units would help to ensure that a considerable portion of the new households would have incomes that would more closely reflect existing incomes in the study area and help ensure that the neighborhoods continue to serve diverse housing needs.

While the Proposed Actions would result in significant adverse open space impacts, as 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 resultant impacts to open space would not have a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character. In addition, although the Proposed Actions would result in a significant adverse shadow impact on the Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church, it would not affect the church's exterior façade nor its essential functions and visual status in the community, nor would the identified significant adverse direct impacts on the S/NR- and NYCL-eligible Empire State Dairy Building alter the overall character of the neighborhood. While the Proposed Actions would result in increased transportation activities and significant adverse transportation impacts, the resulting conditions would be similar to those seen in the urban neighborhoods defining the study area and would not result in density of activity or service conditions that would be out of character with the surrounding neighborhoods. Development facilitated by the Proposed Actions is expected to result in increased noise levels in the rezoning area and surrounding neighborhoods, and would also be expected to result in significant adverse noise impacts on Richmond Street between Fulton Street and Dinsmore Place. Increased noise levels would not be out of context with the neighborhood, as many roadways in the area are currently characterized by elevated noise levels. Thus, the changes in transportation and noise due to the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character.

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 in 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 changes expected in other technical analysis areas may affect a defining feature of neighborhood character. The preliminary assessment first identifies the defining features of the existing neighborhood character and then evaluates whether the proposed project or action has the potential to affect those defining features, either through the potential for a significant adverse impact or a combination of moderate effects in the relevant technical areas. 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 under CEQR that contribute to the

defining features of the neighborhood. In the context of an area-wide rezoning such as the Proposed Actions, 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 18-1, the study area for this assessment of neighborhood character comprises an area within a ¼-mile radius of the rezoning area.

D. PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

Defining Features

The East New York study area is characterized by the presence of multiple disconnected neighborhoods, physically separated by the presence of vehicle-dominated major roadways and major transportation infrastructure. While the majority of the study area is characterized by residential uses, particularly on the side streets, a variety of uses are found along the major roadways that often create a disjointed streetscape, and pockets of industrial and auto-related uses. East New York is also characterized by its transit accessibility, with multiple subway stations located within the study area. For purposes of assessing neighborhood character, the study area is divided into six districts/neighborhoods ("subareas"): (1) Ocean Hill; (2) East New York; (3) Cypress Hills; (4) City Line; (5) Brownsville; and (6) Broadway Junction/East New York Industrial Business Zone (IBZ) (refer to Figure 18-1). Each of these subareas is discussed separately in the following sections.

Ocean Hill

The Ocean Hill subarea is characterized by a mix of uses and the presence of the Atlantic Avenue viaduct, a heavily trafficked elevated roadway that divides the northern and southern portions of the subarea.

The Ocean Hill subarea contains a mix of longstanding residential buildings, light industrial activities, and institutional uses. While most of the area is characterized by small lots, exceptions include several large predominantly residential building complexes located outside of the rezoning area. There is also a significant amount of vacant land and public facilities/institutions in the Ocean Hill subarea, as compared to the remainder of the rezoning area**.** Institutional uses within the Ocean Hill subarea include academic and religious institutions, as well as homeless shelters; many of the homeless shelters opened in recent years in former industrial loft buildings.

The Broadway Junction subway station, which includes the A, C, J, Z, and L lines, is located within the Ocean Hill subarea, and the East New York LIRR station is located at Atlantic Avenue and Van Sinderen Avenue, providing regional rail service. The Atlantic Avenue viaduct, carrying the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR), cuts through the Ocean Hill subarea separating the areas to the north and south. This elevated roadway creates a disjointed landscape, cutting off the areas to its north and south, both physically and visually, and makes the subarea difficult for pedestrians to navigate. As a result, pedestrian volumes in the subarea, which is dominated by vehicular traffic, are generally low. The convergence of multiple roadways within the Ocean Hill subarea contributes to high elevated noise levels, particularly along Eastern Parkway and Broadway, Fulton Street, Atlantic Avenue, which are the most heavily trafficked, and which are also associated with the presence of additional transportation infrastructure, including the LIRR rail line and designated truck routes.

East New York

The East New York subarea is disjointed in character, bordered by the car-dominated Atlantic Avenue to the north, characterized by smaller scale residential uses along side streets, and a mix of uses, including many vacant lots now occupied by community gardens, along the subarea's east-west secondary corridors.

The East New York subarea lies south of Atlantic Avenue, the largest corridor in the primary study area at 120 feet wide with a central median, which is lined with a mix of low-scale semi- and/or light-industrial buildings, auto-related uses (e.g., gas stations, car washes, and auto repair shops), self-storage facilities, and fast food drive-thru restaurants interspersed with mixed residential and commercial uses. New development along Atlantic Avenue is almost entirely

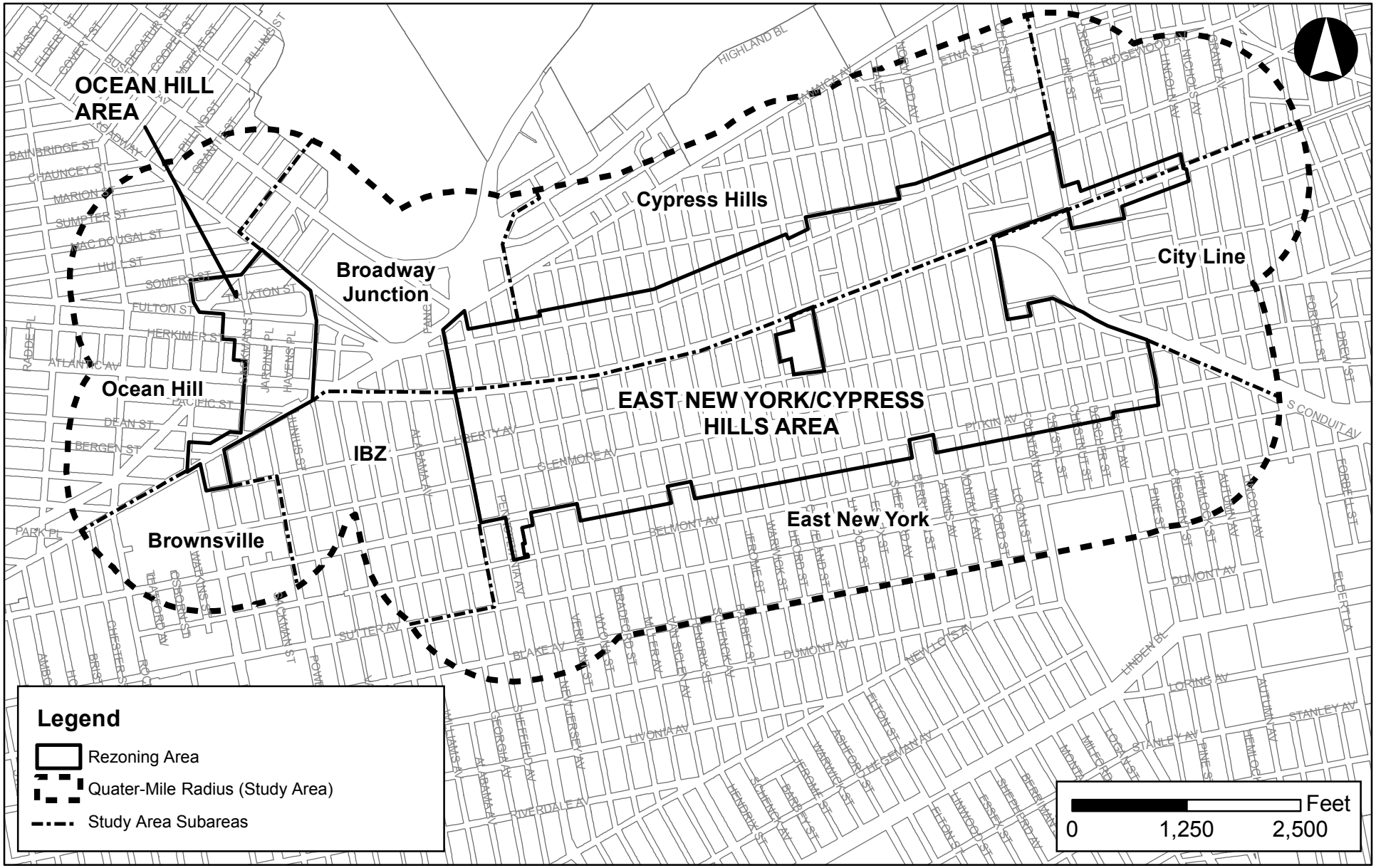

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Figure 18-1
Neighborhood Character Study Area

comprised of fast food restaurants and self-storage centers. The avenue is also a designated truck route and is heavily traveled by trucks moving goods through the borough. The substantial width of the roadway, in combination with its heavy fast-moving truck traffic and minimal pedestrian crossings, creates a divide between Cypress Hills to the north and East New York to the south. There is minimal pedestrian activity along Atlantic Avenue and limited pedestrian amenities. Atlantic Avenue was also designated as a "Priority Corridor" in the *Vision Zero Brooklyn Safety Action Plan*, indicative of the unsafe pedestrian conditions along the roadway.

As described in Chapter 16, "Noise," Atlantic Avenue is also characterized by elevated existing noise levels, with all receptor locations along the corridor indicating "unacceptable" noise levels. The high elevated noise levels along the corridor are predominantly due to the existing traffic conditions along the roadway. As described in Chapter 13, "Transportation," Atlantic Avenue has the greatest number of congested locations among the analyzed traffic corridors. The East New York subarea includes four subway stations (Liberty Avenue, Van Siclen Avenue, Shepherd Avenue, and Euclid Avenue); the Liberty Avenue, Van Siclen Avenue, and Shepherd Avenue stations are served by the C line, and the Euclid Avenue station is served by both the A and C lines.

The area south of Atlantic Avenue is characterized by residential use, with two-and three-story row houses and small three- to four-story apartment buildings midblock. Several large residential developments occupying entire lots are also found within the area, including Grace Towers, a 168-unit complex constructed in 1972; Sutter Houses, a 258-unit complex constructed in 1983; the 72-unit NYCHA Belmont-Sutter Area development, constructed in 1983; and the 1,444-unit NYCHA Cypress Hills development, constructed in 1954. A greater mix of uses is present along Liberty Avenue (one block south of Atlantic Avenue), which is characterized by scrap metal yards, auto repair shops and other light-industrial uses, such as warehouses, interspersed with residential buildings, schools, and houses of worship. Along Pitkin Avenue, a once-thriving continuous commercial strip, many former retail spaces have been converted to residential uses. Vacant lots are interspersed throughout the East New York subarea; many of these vacant lots are occupied by community gardens.

While the East New York subarea includes multiple historic resources, due to the disjointed character of the building stock and uses in the surrounding area, these historic buildings are not a defining feature of the subarea's neighborhood character.

Cypress Hills

The Cypress Hills subarea is characterized by the elevated train along Fulton Street and its associated elevated noise levels, as well as its predominantly residential uses north of Fulton Street, and its sloping topography leading to Highland Park to the north.

The Cypress Hills subarea lies north of Atlantic Avenue and includes the Fulton Street corridor. Fulton Street is mainly lined with older two- to four-story attached mixed-use buildings with ground floor retail and housing above and is an active local retail corridor with important shopping, services, and dining destinations for the surrounding community. The streetscape of Fulton Street is dominated by the presence of the elevated tracks of the J/Z line. Most of the corridor is typically lined with parallel-parked cars. The elevated J/Z train also contributes to high noise levels along the corridor. As presented in Chapter 16, "Noise," monitored existing noise levels along the corridor range from "unacceptable" to "clearly unacceptable." Several intersections along Fulton Street also currently operate under congested conditions, as presented in Chapter 13, "Transportation"; specifically, at Pennsylvania Avenue, Elton Street, and Chestnut Street.

The midblock areas between Fulton Street and Atlantic Avenue and to the north of Fulton Street are characterized by two- to three-story row houses and small three- to four-story apartment buildings built in the early 1900s. As presented in Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions," the Cypress Hills study area is also associated with slightly higher median contract rents and median household incomes, the highest percentage of owner-occupied units, and the highest percentage of housing units constructed before 1959, as compared to the remainder of the study area. Open space resources within the Cypress Hills subarea are minimal; however, the approximately 101-acre Highland Park, along with the National Cemetery and Salem Fields Cemetery, border the subarea to the north.

City Line

The City Line subarea is characterized by its predominantly residential character and its location bordered by two major roadways (Atlantic Avenue and North Conduit Avenue) to the north and west.

The City Line subarea is separated from points west by North Conduit Avenue, a major north-south roadway and is characterized by one- and two-family and multi-family walkup buildings occupying small lots. As presented in Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions," the City Line subarea is characterized by the highest median contract rent of the study area. Commercial uses and mixed-use buildings are clustered along Liberty Avenue and Fulton Street, consistent with the mapped commercial overlays along these roadways. Liberty Avenue is an active retail corridor in the subarea, and awnings, sandwich boards, and displays often spill out onto the corridor's narrow sidewalks. The City Line subarea is also characterized by the presence of few vacant lots and minimal open space. As there are no open space resources located within the subarea, open space is limited to private front yards and the limited number of vacant and surface parking lots found in the subarea. Industrial and transportation/utility uses within the subarea are limited and are generally located along Fulton Street, Atlantic Avenue, and North Conduit Avenue.

As the subarea is generally characterized by residential uses on small side streets, traffic volumes are not particularly elevated within the subarea, with the exception of North Conduit Avenue and Atlantic Avenue, which border the subarea to the south and have some of the highest existing traffic volumes in the study area.

Brownsville

The Brownsville subarea is characterized by its multiple large scale residential complexes, active streetscapes, and clusters of vacant land.

The Brownsville subarea includes several large multi-family residential building complexes, which distinguish the area from the remainder of the study area. Building complexes within the Brownsville subarea include the NYCHA Howard Houses and the NYCHA Glenmore Plaza, which are built in the tower-in-the-park style. These superblock buildings are significantly taller than the buildings found in the remainder of the subarea, many of which rise to only three or fewer stories in height. Another characteristic of the Brownsville subarea is the prevalence of commercial buildings, which line Rockaway Boulevard, Pitkin Avenue, and the side streets to the south of Pitkin Avenue. These commercial corridors are also characterized by higher traffic volumes than characteristic of the residential side streets. There are large stretches of vacant lots within the Brownsville subarea along portions of Rockaway Avenue, Mother Gaston Boulevard, and Glenmore Avenue.

As discussed in Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions," the Brownsville subarea is also characterized as having the lowest median and mean household incomes of the study area, as well as the highest percentage of persons below poverty level, which is partially attributable to the presence of the aforementioned public housing complexes. The concentration of public housing in the subarea also contributes to the low percentage of unprotected housing units in the subarea.

Broadway Junction/IBZ

The Broadway Junction/IBZ subarea is characterized by its industrial character, disjointed streetscape, elevated noise levels, and the convergence of multiple transportation elements.

The Broadway Junction/IBZ subarea is comprised mainly of transportation/utility uses, manufacturing, and parking uses, reflecting the manufacturing zoning of the area. North of Atlantic Avenue is the New York City Transit East New York bus depot and rail yard, which is located on the superblock bounded by Jamaica Avenue, Broadway, Bushwick Avenue, and Conway Street. Semi-industrial uses include open vehicle storage, vehicle repair shops, and warehouses, and manufacturing uses in the subarea include metal works, food processing facilities, and construction-related businesses. The Broadway Junction/IBZ subarea is also associated with minimal recent housing construction and one of the lowest median household incomes of the study area.

The subarea is characterized by the convergence of multiple transportation elements layered at several different levels above and below ground. Partly due to the physical barriers and development constraints imposed by this transportation infrastructure, few businesses or other uses are located around the transit stations, resulting in minimal street level activity. In addition, inadequate street lighting makes the subarea feel unsafe, particularly at night. Sidewalks are often blocked by truck traffic or loading, and illegal dumping and littering is common, which contribute to the overall desolate and uninviting nature of the streetscape. As a result, pedestrian activity is limited to sidewalks and crosswalks in close proximity to the subarea's subway stations.

While pedestrian activity is low within the Broadway Junction/IBZ subarea, traffic dominates many of the roadways that traverse the subarea, including Bushwick Avenue, Broadway, Jamaica Avenue, and Atlantic Avenue. Due to the high traffic volumes, in concert with the multiple elevated rail lines in the subarea, noise levels, particularly along the aforementioned roadways, are elevated under existing conditions. Other noise sources in the IBZ portion of the subarea include truck traffic and other stationary noise sources associated with industrial activity in the area.

Assessment of the Potential to Affect the Defining Features of the Neighborhood

The sections below discuss potential changes 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 findings 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 affected either through the potential of any 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 singularly, or in combination with potential impacts in other relevant technical areas discussed in this section. The Proposed Actions would facilitate the development of a mix of residential, commercial, community facility, and light-industrial uses that would be consistent with the mixed-use character of the neighborhoods.

As described in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy," no significant adverse impacts related to land use, zoning, or public policy would occur in the future with the Proposed Actions. Overall, the Proposed Actions would encourage land uses that support the revitalization of East New York, a neighborhood with excellent transit accessibility, encouraging mixed-use higher density development along key corridors, while providing for appropriately scaled residential development along the neighboring low-rise residential side streets.

The proposed zoning changes would strengthen the residential neighborhoods of the primary study area by facilitating the development of higher density new housing (including a significant amount of affordable housing) and mixed-use development along primary corridors and medium-density development along key corridors served by transit. New residential and local retail development along these corridors would complement the existing residential and mixed residential/commercial uses that are predominant under existing conditions.

The Proposed Actions would also be compatible with the character of existing low-density neighborhoods along East New York's residential core side streets, through contextual zoning. New residential development anticipated on vacant and underutilized land along these side streets under the RWCDS would be required to complement the existing built residential character under the proposed contextual zoning districts through strict height and street wall regulations. As a result, the possibility of future development that is out of scale with the current neighborhood context would be precluded.

Manufacturing areas would be maintained in areas with substantial amounts of industrial uses through the mapping of mixed-use zoning districts, thereby maintaining the existing industrial character in these areas, while also permitting industrial businesses to expand in these areas. While some existing manufacturing districts would be rezoned to residential districts, particularly in the Ocean Hill subarea, many of these areas are characterized by long-standing residential blocks, and thus, the change in zoning designation would not significantly affect the character of the neighborhood.

Socioeconomic Conditions

Defining features of the neighborhood would not be adversely affected due to potential effects of the Proposed Actions on socioeconomic conditions, either singularly, or in combination with potential impacts in other relevant technical areas discussed in this section. As discussed in Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions," it is concluded that the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse socioeconomic impacts on direct residential displacement, direct business displacement, indirect residential displacement, indirect business displacement and effects on specific industries in the rezoning area or larger ½-mile secondary study area.

The Proposed Actions and associated RWCDS would introduce up to approximately 6,862 DU, 1,210,389 sf of commercial uses, 98,851 sf of industrial uses, and 614,842 sf of community facility uses, as well as 2,442 accessory parking spaces. The projected incremental (net) change between that No-Action and With-Action conditions that would result from the Proposed Actions would be a net increase of 6,312 dwelling units, 3,447 of which would be affordable, 557,290 sf of commercial space; 457,870 sf of community facility space; and 1,138 accessory parking spaces; as well as a net reduction of 27,035 sf of manufacturing space. As discussed in Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions," The Proposed Actions would result in a net increase of 18,801 residents in the area, which would represent an approximately 51 percent increase of the 2030 residential population in the rezoning area and a population increase of approximately ten percent over the future No-Action condition in the study area.

The surrounding ½-mile study area includes a considerable amount of residential households that could be at-risk of indirect displacement if their rents were to increase. Given the trends experienced in surrounding neighborhoods, the limited housing stock, and overall high demand for housing, it is likely that rents in the study area would potentially increase significantly without the Proposed Actions. The Proposed Actions' provision of affordable housing would expand housing options available to lower-income residents in the study area, and could help relieve, rather than increase market pressure in the in the study area and surrounding area, balancing the upward momentum toward increased rents that would occur with or without the Proposed Actions.

In addition, the Proposed Actions would not result in a trend towards indirect business displacement. While the Proposed Actions would facilitate substantial redevelopment within the rezoning area, none of the anticipated uses would be new types of economic activity in the study area that would introduce a new trend that could substantially alter economic patterns. It is the intent of the Proposed Actions to balance preservation and growth in the area. The proposed zoning changes are intended to promote affordable housing development, encourage economic development, create pedestrian-friendly streets, and introduce new community resources to foster a more equitable East New York. There is already a trend towards a conversion of the area's manufacturing uses to other uses, including the conversion of industrial lofts on Atlantic Avenue to warehousing/self-storage uses. The proposed retail space is expected to be primarily local retail that would largely support the local resident and worker populations and strengthen the existing commercial corridors and expand shopping and service options. The new land uses that would result in the future with the Proposed Actions are foreseen as a continuation of current established land use trends in a manner sensitive to the surrounding land uses and built form. The area would retain its mixed-use character and create opportunities for new investment on underutilized sites.

Open Space

Defining features of the neighborhood would not be adversely affected due to potential effects of the Proposed Actions on publicly accessible open space, either singularly, or in combination with potential impacts in other relevant technical areas discussed in this section. The Proposed Actions would not have a direct impact on any open space resources in the study area. No open space would be displaced, and no significant shadows would be cast on

any publicly accessible open spaces to a degree that would affect their utilization. The Proposed Actions would not affect any particular user group, nor would it introduce a population with any unusual characteristics.

As described in Chapter 5, "Open Space," under the RWCDS, the non-residential (¼-mile) study area would remain well-served by passive open spaces in the With-Action condition, with a ratio of 0.4 acres per 1,000 workers. As the passive open space ratio for non-residents would continue to be higher than the City's guideline measure for adequacy (0.15 acres per 1,000 workers), the non-residential study area would continue to be well-served by passive open space, and there would be no significant adverse open space impacts in the non-residential study area as a result of the Proposed Actions.

However, the Proposed Actions would result in a significant adverse indirect impact on open space in the residential (½-mile) study area. The total residential study area open space ratio would decline by 8.16 percent to 0.56 acres per 1,000 residents; the active residential study area open space ratio would decline by 8.09 percent to 0.28 acres per 1,000 residents; and the passive residential study area open space ratio would decline by 8.22 percent to 0.28 acres per 1,000 residents. As 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 adverse impact on neighborhood character.

Shadows

As discussed in Chapter 6, "Shadows," the incremental shadows from the RWCDS projected and potential development sites would have significant adverse impacts on only one historic resource: the Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church, located within the East New York subarea. The remaining open space and historic resources in the study area would not be significantly affected or affected at all. This incremental shadow cast on sunlight-sensitive features of the Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church would occur on all four representative analysis days, with durations ranging from 36 minutes to one hour and 59 minutes. On these days, incremental shadows would cover a maximum of two stained glass windows at any one time. On the December 21 analysis day, incremental shadows would reach sunlight-sensitive features on both the clerestory and lower level of the church's western and southern facades. At any given time between 10:41 and 12:40 PM on December 21, incremental shadows would cover parts of anywhere from one to eight stained glass windows. However, although the shadow impact would have an effect on the visual enjoyment of a maximum of eight of the church's twenty-two stained glass windows at any one time from inside the church, it would not affect the church's exterior façade nor its essential functions and visual status in the community. Thus, this shadow impact would not create a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character.

Historic and Cultural Resources

Defining features of the neighborhood would not be adversely affected due to potential effects of the Proposed Actions on historic and cultural resources, either singularly or in combination with potential impacts in other relevant technical areas discussed in this section. As discussed in Chapter 7, "Historic and Cultural Resources," the Proposed Actions would not result in any significant adverse impacts to archaeological resources or designated architectural resources, but have the potential to result in significant adverse impacts to eligible architectural resources.

The LPC reviewed all of the sites that could experience new/additional in-ground disturbance as a result of the Proposed Actions, and concluded that none of the lots comprising those sites have any archaeological significance. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not result in any significant adverse impacts to archaeological resources. Additionally, the projected and potential development sites identified in the RWCDS do not include any designated architectural resources, and any development that would be located within 90 feet of a designated historic resource – where new development has the potential to cause damage due to ground-borne construction vibrations – would be subject to the procedures of the New York City Department of Building (DOB) Technical Policy and Procedure Notice (TPPN) #10/88, which governs the protection of adjacent historic properties from accidental construction damage. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not result in any significant adverse impacts to designated architectural resources.

The Proposed Actions could result in direct impacts to one resource that is eligible for S/NR-listing and NYCL-designation. The Empire State Dairy Building is located on projected development site 37 and could be demolished, either partially or entirely, as a consequence of the Proposed Actions. While the identified significant adverse direct impact would constitute an unavoidable significant adverse impact on this eligible historic resource, this single impact would not alter the overall character of the neighborhood.

As discussed above, the Proposed Actions would also result in a significant adverse shadow impact on one historic resource, namely the Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church. However, this impact would not result in significant adverse impacts to neighborhood character.

Additionally, although the developments resulting from the Proposed Actions could alter the setting or visual context of several of the identified historic resources in the study area, none of the alterations would be significant adverse impacts. The Proposed Actions would not alter the relationship of any existing historic resources to the streetscape, since all streets in the study area would remain open and each resource's relationship with the street would remain unchanged in the future with the Proposed Actions. No projected or potential developments would 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. Additionally, no incompatible visual, audible, or atmospheric elements would be introduced by the Proposed Actions to any historic resource's setting under RWCDS With-Action conditions. As such, the Proposed Actions would not adversely affect the architectural character of the historic resources in the study area, and therefore no significant adverse impacts to neighborhood character can be expected in relation to historic and cultural resources.

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 singularly, or in combination with potential impacts in other relevant technical areas discussed in this section. As described in Chapter 8, "Urban Design and Visual Resources," the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse impact on urban design or visual resources. Compared to the future without the Proposed Actions, the visual appearance, and thus the pedestrian experience of the area would change considerably, with now vacant and underutilized lots replaced with residential and ground floor retail uses that would activate the streetscape and fill existing voids in the streetwall. The most appreciable change in building bulk, height, and uses would occur along Atlantic Avenue; buildings on secondary corridors would serve as a transition from this primary rezoning area corridor. Along the residential side streets, the implementation of contextual zoning would be sensitive to the local neighborhood scale and context.

The Proposed Actions would considerably change views of and within the area. However, development under the Proposed Actions is not expected to block significant public view corridors, vistas, or natural or built features and would not have significant adverse visual or contextual impacts on other architectural resources.

In sum, the urban design and visual resources analysis finds that the Proposed Actions would result in considerable improvements to the urban design and neighborhood character of the area. The RWCDS development would improve the pedestrian experience by replacing underutilized and vacant lots with greater transparency active ground floor uses. The anticipated With-Action developments would also reestablish the streetwall and would activate the streetscape with greater transparency ground floor retail uses and street trees. New development is generally expected to replace vacant lots and underbuilt buildings along these corridors that currently detract from the neighborhood character. Many lots currently surrounded by fencing or accessed by multiple curb cuts would be replaced by buildings that activate the streetscape and enhance the character of the neighborhood. The Proposed Actions would also preclude the continuation of the existing trend in new construction towards buildings set back significantly from the lot line with large front yards and parking, which also detract from the neighborhood character.

Transportation

Defining features of the neighborhood would not be adversely affected due to potential effects of the Proposed Actions on transportation, either singularly, or in combination with potential impacts in other relevant technical

areas discussed in this section. As described in Chapter 13, "Transportation," the Proposed Actions would result in significant adverse traffic, subway line haul, bus, and pedestrian impacts. The Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts on subway station or parking availability. With implementation of the subway line haul, bus, and pedestrian mitigation measures outlined in Chapter 20, "Mitigation," the identified significant adverse transit and pedestrian impacts would be fully mitigated. While most of the identified significant adverse traffic impacts would be fully mitigated, as outlined in Chapter 20, 14 lane groups at nine intersections during the weekday AM peak hour, eight lane groups at two intersections during the midday peak hour, 17 lane groups at nine intersections during the PM peak hour, and nine lane groups at four intersections during the Saturday midday peak hour would remain unmitigated. These unmitigated impacts would generally occur at intersections along existing heavily trafficked roadways, specifically Atlantic Avenue, Jamaica Avenue, Broadway, Fulton Street, and Pitkin Avenue.

As the intersections at which these unmitigated traffic impacts would occur are generally characterized by high levels of traffic currently, while there would be increased transportation activity as a result of the Proposed Actions, the resulting conditions would be similar to those seen in the urban neighborhoods defining the study area and would not result in density of activity or service conditions that would be out of character with the surrounding neighborhoods. Thus, the changes in transportation due to the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character.

Noise

Defining features of the neighborhood would not be adversely affected due to potential noise effects of the Proposed Actions, either singularly, or in combination with potential impacts in other relevant technical areas discussed in this section. As described in Chapter 16, "Noise," noise level increases of up to 4.7 dBA would be experienced on Richmond Street between Fulton Street and Dinsmore Place, which constitutes a significant adverse impact with respect to mobile source noise associated with operations of the Proposed Actions for this location. At all other mobile source receptor sites, the maximum noise level increase would be 2.2 dBA, which would not be considered a significant adverse noise impact.

While development facilitated by the Proposed Actions is expected to result in increased noise levels in the rezoning area and surrounding neighborhoods, and significant adverse mobile source noise impacts are anticipated at one location, as noted above, many roadways within the neighborhood character study area are currently characterized by elevated noise levels, with "unacceptable" and "clearly unacceptable" noise levels monitored at select receptor locations along Fulton Street, Broadway, and Atlantic Avenue. At receptor site 10 (where significant adverse mobile source noise impacts were identified), existing noise levels are in the "marginally unacceptable" category under existing conditions, and would remain "marginally unacceptable" in the future with the Proposed Actions. As such, the anticipated increases in noise levels in the area would not constitute a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character.