HERKIMER-WILLIAMS EIS
Chapter 26: Response to Comment on the DEIS[1]

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes and responds to all substantive oral and written comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Proposed Actions made during the public comment period. These consist of comments made at the public hearing held by the New York City Planning Commission (CPC) and written comments submitted to the New York City Department of City Planning (DCP) through the channels established to receive comments on the DEIS and included in the Notice of Public Hearing on the DEIS, consistent with the standard practice of the department. The Notice of Completion for the DEIS was issued on May 30, 2025, which marked the beginning of the public comment period for the DEIS. The public hearing on the DEIS was held concurrently with the hearing on the Proposed Actions' Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) application at the CPC Public Hearing Room, Lower Concourse, 120 Broadway, New York, New York 10271, on October 8, 2025, at 10:00 AM. The DEIS public hearing was held in-person and remotely via the teleconferencing application Zoom to allow for broad public participation. The comment period for the DEIS remained open until 5:00 PM October 20, 2025.

Section B below lists the elected officials, community board, organizations, and individuals who commented on the DEIS, and Section C contains a summary of relevant comments on the DEIS and a response to each. These summaries convey the substance of the comments made, but do not necessarily quote the comments verbatim. Comments are organized by subject matter and generally parallel the chapter structure of the DEIS. Where more than one commenter expressed similar views, those comments have been grouped and addressed together.

A transcript of oral remarks made at the DEIS public hearing is included in **Appendix I** to this Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Written comments received during the DEIS comment period ending October 20, 2025 are also included in **Appendix I**.

B. LIST OF ELECTED OFFICIALS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO COMMENTED ON THE DEIS

Community Board, Organizations, and Individuals

1. Hailie Kim, East New York Coalition for Community Advancement; oral statement on behalf of Paul Toomer Muhammad at the public hearing on October 8, 2025, as well as written testimony submitted on October 20, 2025.
2. La'shawn Allen-Muhammad, Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation; oral statement at the public hearing on October 8, 2025.
3. Omarro Benjamin, Crescent Companies; oral statement at the public hearing on October 8, 2025.
4. Diane Sanders; oral statement at the public hearing on October 8, 2025.
5. Craig Wright; oral statement at the public hearing on October 8, 2025.
6. Reginald Bowman; oral statement at the public hearing on October 8, 2025.

[1] This Foreword is new to the FEIS.

7. William Wilkins, Local Development Corporation of East New York; oral statement at the public hearing on October 8, 2025.
8. Sophia Brewster Ford, 32BJ SEIU; oral statement at the public hearing on October 8, 2025.
9. Quincy Ely-Cate, Business Outreach Center (BOC) Network; oral statement at the public hearing on October 8, 2025.
10. Paul Toomer Muhammad, East New York Coalition for Community Advancement; oral statement at the public hearing on October 8, 2025 (provided by Hailie Kim) and written testimony submitted on October 16, 2025 and October 20, 2025.
11. Juan Diaz, East New York Coalition for Community Advancement; written testimony submitted on October 20, 2025.
12. Anonymous, East New York Coalition for Community Advancement; written testimony submitted on October 20, 2025.
13. Lettice Layne, East New York Coalition for Community Advancement; written testimony submitted on October 20, 2025.
14. Pia Isabella Palomino, East New York Coalition for Community Advancement; written testimony submitted on October 20, 2025.
15. Ro Johnson, East New York Coalition for Community Advancement; written testimony submitted on October 20, 2025.
16. Lawrence Gonzalez, East New York Coalition for Community Advancement; written testimony submitted on October 20, 2025.
17. Reverend Christine Valentine, East New York Coalition for Community Advancement; written testimony submitted on October 20, 2025.
18. Ethel Cooks, East New York Coalition for Community Advancement; written testimony submitted on October 20, 2025.

C. COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON THE DEIS

1. Project Description

COMMENTS RELATED TO PROPOSED ZONING

Comment 1.1: *Question the need for the C6-4 and large scale zoning designations being requested by the developer. The C6-4 zoning designation allows for a wide range of commercial uses, particularly high-bulk commercial and mixed-use developments, with a focus on central business district locations. It allows for the most development possible in New York City and allows the developer to switch density without height and set back rules between parcels. For example, Hudson Yards has a C6-4 zoning designation. This zoning designation is contextually anachronous to existing uses in East New York. This zoning designation paired with a proposal for 440,000 square feet of office space is reminiscent of the slippery slope of zoning designations permitted in Long Island City and Downtown Brooklyn. In the absence of a financial feasibility study or proposed anchor tenants, it is challenging to conceptualize possible tenants for this zoning in this low density neighborhood. This does not reflect the vision for East New York that residents and small businesses have for Broadway Junction. The maximum zoning permitted on this site should be C6-3 with a maximum height of 15 stories. Additionally, R5B zoning as was requested in the East New York Community Plan, ten years ago, should be mapped on all side streets to balance out increases in density. Increased zoning density without set asides for community uses and facilities exacerbates existing community challenges. (Anonymous)*

Response 1.1: **As described in the EIS, due to the scarcity of available developable land and the resulting high land costs, the bulk and density of the proposed C6-4 (R10 equivalent) and M1-6 zoning districts are necessary and appropriate to facilitate the development of the Proposed Development on underutilized properties in a transit rich area of the City. Although C6-4 zoning districts are mapped in Midtown and Lower Manhattan, C6-4 zoning districts are also mapped at key transportation hubs in Downtown Brooklyn, Jamaica, Queens, and East Harlem, Manhattan. In addition to the proposed C6-4 and M1-6 zoning districts, the Applicant proposes special permits within a Large-Scale General Development (LSGD) pursuant to ZR Sections 74-743(a)(1) and (2), which will be applicable to the Applicant's five development sites (Projected Development Sites 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, and 1E) within the Project Area. The proposed LSGD would distribute floor area across the five development sites and modify rear yard and height and setback regulations. The proposed height and setback waivers would improve the LSGD's site plan and relationship between buildings and adjacent streets and surrounding development because these waivers allow for a more varied built form throughout the five development sites within the LSGD. The range of envelope variety would enhance the LSGD's unique and distinct context amongst its own buildings, which would range in height from 17- to 29-stories, and the surrounding neighborhood character, supporting its establishment as a regional mixed-use hub adjacent to ample mass transit options, and thereby resulting in better urban design and better site planning for the five development sites within the LSGD. As described in the EIS, the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts with regard to Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy, Urban Design and Visual Resources, and Neighborhood Character.**

As described in the EIS, the Applicant's Proposed Development contains approximately 549,526 gross square feet (gsf) of total commercial space, of which approximately 435,766 gsf would be commercial office space and approximately 113,760 gsf would be commercial retail space. The Alternate Community Facility Scenario would contain approximately 598,775 gsf of total commercial space, of which approximately 461,749 gsf would be commercial office space and approximately 137,026 gsf would be commercial retail space. As such, the Applicant's contemplated development proposal and the RWCDS for the EIS contain less commercial space than the densities that were initially outlined in the DSOW. Furthermore, given the proposed M1-6 zoning district that would be mapped on the portion of the Proposed Development anticipated for commercial retail and office space (i.e., Projected Development Site 1E), residential use is not permitted, and only a very limited range of community facility use (e.g., hospitals and ambulatory care facilities) is permitted. Thus, residential or community facility space would not be a viable alternate use of the building planned within the proposed M1-6 zoning district and thus commercial retail and office use does represent a reasonable worst-case scenario for the development of this building. However, note that residential and community facility uses are anticipated for the building planned for Projected Development Site 1D within the proposed C6-4 zoning district.

The Proposed Actions are intended to facilitate the development of new residential, office, retail, light industrial, manufacturing, and community facility space at the Project Area by increasing the permitted residential, commercial, and community facility FARs within the Project Area. In addition to providing open space and affordable housing, the Proposed Actions would also provide economic opportunities

benefitting the surrounding neighborhoods. The Proposed Actions would facilitate the new development of up to approximately 1.6 million gsf of mixed-use development that would accommodate a variety of tenants, including an institutional anchor like an academic university, retail designed to cater to the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods, as well as offices. Overall, the Proposed Actions would facilitate new mixed-use development that would align with the goals of the 2016 East New York Community Plan, which sought to preserve and create affordable housing, promote jobs and economic opportunities, and invest in community resources. Furthermore, the mixed-use development facilitated by the Proposed Actions would build on the planned public investments in the Broadway Junction area, which include renovations and accessibility upgrades for the Broadway Junction Subway Station complex, the development of new public open space, as well as streetscape and pedestrian safety improvements on Van Sinderen Avenue between Atlantic Avenue and Fulton Street.

2. Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy

No comments.

3. Socioeconomic Conditions

Comment 3.1: *I would like to testify on the lack of a real economic development plan for Broadway Junction and the lack of a market for office space in the proposed Herkimer-Williams development. Totem claims that their project will bring jobs to East New York. They say their office jobs are what East New York needs, but those jobs too are empty promises. There is also no commitment for local hire and procurement. Anyone familiar with the history of East NY and what has built the middle class of this community understands that we need jobs in healthcare, education, transportation and manufacturing. Instead, according to the DEIS, they are displacing 100 light manufacturing jobs in East NY–half of those in NYC transit. Broadway Junction has been a strong transit hub for 125 years, we should be investing in the generation of good transit jobs with the MTA, with the Transit Authority, with the IBX and the Long Island Railroad and in electrification of buses and the repair and maintenance of the new light rail line. Furthermore, there is little to no market demand for office space at the present moment in Brooklyn and while Totem reduced their square footage for office space, they are still proposing 440,000 sq feet that they have no office tenants to occupy the towers. According to a memo composed by Pratt Center [footnote link to a Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation memo], prior developments that promised a lot of office space ended up NOT building as much office space. Furthermore, the Comptroller's office released a report [footnote link to a report published by the New York City Comptroller's office] on the state of the market for office space which directly states "In the aftermath of the pandemic and the seismic shift toward work-from-home, New York City's office market remains slack." Office vacancy rates have doubled to 12.8% since the pandemic. (Kim)*

Response 3.1: **Comment noted. Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions" of the EIS provides an assessment of the Proposed Actions' potential for direct business displacement, in accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* methodology. The EIS determined that the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse socioeconomic impacts**

related to direct business displacement. As described in Chapter 3, Projected Development Site 1E (Lots 1, 7, 56, and 58 on Block 1577) is currently leased to the MTA for NYCTA's Automated Fare Collection (AFC) and Electronic Maintenance Division (EMD). The MTA Lease Agreement for Lots 1, 7, 56, and 58 was executed in September 2015, and the MTA agreed to a 10-year term set to expire in 2025, with a single five-year renewal option that could be exercised by the MTA to remain in place until 2030. The MTA facility is estimated to employ approximately 50 workers; as described in Chapter 3, while it is possible that the MTA facility would be incorporated into the Proposed Development and/or Alternate Community Facility Scenario, for conservative analysis purposes it is assumed that it would be directly displaced from Projected Development Site 1E.

Comment 3.2: *By the City's own standards our community has the highest risk of displacement of current residents and yet nothing in the Herkimer-Williams plan explicitly addresses policies and benefits that might prevent displacement. The plan needs to show how the developer and the City will prevent rents and sales prices from skyrocketing, how evictions and foreclosures will be prevented, how big box retail establishments will NOT displace small businesses and how property taxes will be prevented from increasing. Unless these drivers of displacement are mitigated, low and moderate income tenants and homeowners and small businesses will be forced to leave East New York. (Muhammad)*

Response 3.2: **Comment noted. Refer to Response 3.1. Preliminary assessments of indirect residential and business displacement were conducted for the EIS in accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* methodology. As outlined in Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions" of the EIS, the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts with respect to indirect residential and business displacement, in accordance with 2021 *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance.**

Comment 3.3: *I would like to express my concerns on the impact that the Herkimer-Williams development will have on small businesses on the Fulton Street corridor and neighborhood in general. While Totem claims their project will have no impact on small businesses, and that they have reduced their retail space to accommodate more neighborhood scale retail, we are concerned that there remains 114,000 square feet of retail space with a design that includes space for a loading dock which would accommodate 6 trucks. This is not indicative of neighborhood scale retail, but big box retail. Big box retail undermines small businesses and entrepreneurs that cannot compete with their ability to offer lower pricing because of their tremendous buying in bulk power and ability to negotiate down suppliers. They do not bring good jobs, and are notorious for part-time positions that do not offer benefits of any kind. They generally pay lower wages than local businesses. Totem describes their plan for retail in their development as "destination retail." Residents have expressed that they want smaller shops like grocery stores and healthy/affordable supermarkets, dry cleaners, shoe repair shops, restaurants, etc. and services like child care and banking at Broadway Junction. East New York deserves a plan for small businesses that includes EQUITY for East New York entrepreneurs, NOT more big box retail. We need AFFORDABLE commercial rents and opportunities to OWN our own retail outlets. Priority needs to be given for East New York entrepreneurs. (Diaz)*

Response 3.3: **Comment noted. Refer to Responses 3.1 and 3.2.**

Comment 3.4: *Despite the claims that there will not be displacement in the Broadway Junction area as a result of the Totem development, it is impossible to deny that displacement has ALREADY been happening in East New York. After 2018, the black population of East New York fell from 50% to 44%. The average rent has gone up to a median of $2,200 a month for a studio apartment in the area and $2,700 a month for a two-bedroom apartment. These rents are too high already for East New Yorkers who earn around 40% of the Area Median Income. This development will raise property taxes on owners of one to four family homes who are already struggling with increased water, utilities and insurance costs and further raise rents for tenants in these small homes. Downtown Brooklyn and Gowanus saw their residential property tax rates increase exponentially after rezonings. A residential property tax freeze should be implemented for a minimum of ten years post construction for properties within a quarter mile radius of the study area. It is also worth noting that while the developer claims they will provide 100% affordable housing, out of their nearly 1,000 residential units, they currently only have financing commitments for 231 "affordable" units that are not affordable enough for local residents. Any plan that the Community Board approves MUST have proper displacement prevention policies and programs, including substantive funding for tenant organizing and resources to help low and moderate income homeowners like forgivable home repair loans. We need to preserve homeownership in the Junction area and we must offer equity in the form of new homeownership opportunities which prioritize current East New York residents. (Palomino)*

Response 3.4: **Comment noted. Refer to Responses 3.1 and 3.2. As described in the EIS, pursuant to the City's MIH program, up to 20-30 percent, or approximately 222-334 of the Applicant's Proposed Development, would be designated as permanently affordable at an average of 40-80 percent AMI depending on the selected MIH Option. Further, the Applicant has stated their intention to work with HPD to allow all of the proposed units in either the Proposed Development or the Alternate Community Facility Scenario to be designated as 100 percent affordable units, pursuant to available subsidy. The City Council will determine the final MIH option(s) to be mapped, which may include Options 1, 2, and/or 3.**

Comment 3.5: *This major development proposal is being framed as beneficial for the community of East New York but many claims in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement are deeply misleading and fail to show the devastating impact this project could have on this community. The repeated claim of no adverse impacts does not align with the lived experiences of our community members. If existing rents are already rising and new development increases speculative interest, then a project of this magnitude in this community becomes a catalyst for displacement-even without any direct evictions on the land. There are many two and three family homes in and around the Broadway Junction area that are not rent stabilized and a project of this magnitude will increase rents, forcing low and moderate income renters to be forced out. East New York's median household income is $51,220/year as of 2023 per a study by Furman Center [footnote link to a report published by the Furman Center] which, according to the same study, is about 36% less than the city-wide average. However, Totem's proposed affordability brackets do not include any units at 40% AMI which encompasses incomes between $45,360-75,200. In other words, there are NO units being built for current East New York residents. AMIs targeted that align with the AMI bands of current ENY residents, for example, affordable housing units for 80% of the construction at 40% AMI. (Johnson)*

Response 3.5: **Comment noted. Refer to Responses 3.1, 3.2, and 3.4. A preliminary assessment of indirect residential displacement was conducted for the EIS in accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* methodology. As outlined in Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions" of the EIS, the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts with respect to indirect residential displacement, in accordance with 2021 *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance.**

4. Community Facilities and Services

Comment 4.1: *The draft impact studies presented by Totem both claim that the schools in the area will not be severely impacted by this development, even though there's potentially 3,000-4,000+ new residents who may be introduced through this development. There will be school aged children amongst these new residents. According to a report by the Municipal Arts Society, in previous developments such as the Downtown Brooklyn rezoning, it was predicted that 276 elementary school seats, 103 middle school seats, and 65 high school seats would be needed. This underestimated the number of children that came to the district. What was ACTUALLY needed was 3,111 elementary school seats, 1,302 middle school seats, and 912 high school seats [footnote link to a report published by the Municipal Arts Society]. This proposal does not take any of this into consideration and is an insufficient estimation of the impact of this project on the schools of East New York. A rough rule of thumb has been that 226 school seats are needed for every 1000 units of housing built-hence we need at least one new elementary school in the area.*

I urge the Board to vote NO on the Totem development with the following recommendations:

- *At least two educational uses: either CUNY, a DOE public school, trade school.*
- *Early childhood centers that are affordable to East New York parents. (Valentine)*

Response 4.1: **A detailed analysis of Proposed Actions' potential to result in significant adverse impacts on public schools is provided in Chapter 4, "Community Facilities and Services," in accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* methodology. The analysis indicated that the Proposed Actions would not result in any significant adverse impacts to elementary and intermediate schools in Sub-district 1 of CSD 19; an analysis of Brooklyn high schools was not warranted for the Proposed Actions. Furthermore, as described in Chapter 4, the analysis indicated that the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse impact to child care centers.**

Comment 4.2: *Many of East New York's community needs such as schools, pre-K programs, and health facilities are currently unmet or functioning at capacity. (Anonymous)*

Response 4.2: **Refer to Response 4.1. Detailed analyses of the Proposed Actions' potential to result in significant adverse impacts on public schools and early childhood programs are provided in Chapter 4, "Community Facilities and Services," in accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* methodology. As described in Chapter 4, the Proposed Actions would not result in any significant adverse impacts to public schools or early childhood programs. As outlined in Chapter 4, a detailed analysis of health care**

facilities was not warranted for the Proposed Actions, in accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* methodology.

5. Open Space

Comment 5.1: More true greenspaces are needed at the Junction. (Gonzalez)

Response 5.1: As described in Chapter 5, "Open Space," the Proposed Actions would include approximately 20,080 sf (approximately 0.46 acres) of publicly accessible area (PAA) space. The PAA spaces proposed within the Project Area would provide passive recreation space and amenities, including walkways, seating options, landscaping, and trees.

6. Shadows

No comments.

7. Historic and Cultural Resources

No comments.

8. Urban Design and Visual Resources

No comments.

9. Hazardous Materials

No comments.

10. Water and Sewer Infrastructure

No comments.

11. Solid Waste and Sanitation Services

No comments.

12. Energy

No comments.

13. Transportation

Comment 13.1: *The proposed development by Totem would generate, according to the Draft Environmental Impact Study, approximately 1,046 and 1,235 subway trips at Broadway Junction during peak commute times, 213 and 286 bus trips on the B12, B20, B25, B83, the Q24 and Q56. Furthermore, the project would increase the number of pedestrians on the street to 993 in the morning peak hours, 2,616 pedestrians during the weekday during midday, 2,261 pedestrians during evening peak hours, and 2,856 pedestrians during Saturday peak hours. In 2017, Broadway Junction served 100,000 riders per day [footnote link to the Wikipedia page for the Broadway Junction Subway Station] and was the 16th most used subway station in the entire city. This is context missing from the DEIS, which provides only the isolated numbers of people their development will add to the transit system. It is therefore difficult to believe that simply because "southbound A trains are projected to operate with available capacity" that we will truly see no significant adverse impact to the transit system when we add a potential 1,000-3,000 new residents and commuters to our overtaxed subway station. (Layne)*

Response 13.1: **Comment noted. Chapter 13, "Transportation," of the EIS provides an assessment of the Proposed Actions' effects on transportation conditions, including analyses of transit (bus and subway modes). As outlined in Chapter 13 "Transportation," a detailed analysis of local bus conditions for the B12, B20, B25, B83, Q24, and Q56 bus routes was not warranted, in accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* methodology. As outlined in Chapter 13, the subway line haul analysis prepared for southbound A trains in the PM peak hour determined there would be no impacts to subway service, per the guidance of the *CEQR Technical Manual*.**

14. Air Quality

No comments.

15. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change

No comments.

16. Noise

No comments.

17. Public Health

No comments.

18. Neighborhood Character

No comments.

19. Construction

No comments.

20. Mitigation

No comments.

21. Alternatives

No comments.

22. Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

No comments.

23. Growth-Inducing Aspects of the Proposed Actions

No comments.

24. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

No comments.

25. Effects on Disadvantaged Communities

No comments.

D. MISCELLANEOUS[2]

GENERAL SUPPORT

Comment 1: *I believe that the Herkimer-Williams project heralds a potential transformative shift that extends well beyond Broadway Junction and will help ensure the community directly benefits from economic development on par with the prosperity enjoyed by wealthier neighborhoods in the borough. I urge you to support Herkimer-Williams and aid our efforts to lay the groundwork for a more inclusive and prosperous Brooklyn for all. (Allen-Muhammad)*

Response 1: **Comment noted.**

[2] The comments in this section express recommendations concerning the project or are otherwise unrelated to specific CEQR impact analyses set forth in the EIS.

Comment 2: *Broadway Junction is one of the busiest transit hubs in New York, yet the area around it has been overlooked for far too long. This project is a chance to change and create real opportunity for businesses. The developer has committed to MWBE contracting opportunities and local hiring opportunities, which would include businesses we work with, while along investing and training to help people access good-paying jobs. Which is essential to build, to build, building a stronger East New York. Overall, I am confident that the Herkimer-Williams project will bring economic opportunity to the community, so I'm excited to express my support for the proposal today. (Benjamin)*

Response 2: **Comment noted.**

Comment 3: *We need more housing to be built in this area that is affordable and accessible. That's why I'm here today, to support the Herkimer-Williams project. The proposal things bring something we've needed for a long time, deeply affordable housing that's built for the people who are simply and already here. Herkimer-Williams would bring 1,000 affordable apartments to East New York, giving more people a real chance to stay in their homes and their community, and it includes 25,000 square feet of public open square spaces to make our streets safer and more walkable, especially around Broadway Junction. The project represents hope for seniors, families, and future generations of East New Yorkers. Thank you for hearing me, and I urge you to support this new vision for our community. (Sanders)*

Response 3: **Comment noted.**

Comment 4: *The rising cost of rent has made it harder for long-term residents, especially seniors like myself to remain in a place that I call home. That's why I'm here for this, Herkimer-Williams project. We urgently need more housing in East New York that is truly affordable and designed for older adults and people with disabilities in mind. The Herkimer-Williams proposal would bring 1,000 new affordable apartments to this area. The proposed 25,000 square feet of open space will make it safer for children to play and navigate the area. This is our moment to build an East New York that works for all generations and I urge you to support this project. (Wright)*

Response 4: **Comment noted.**

Comment 5: *As someone who's lived in East New York and Brownsville for a long time, I know how urgently we need more housing. Totem has listened to our voices, updated their proposal to reflect our desire for affordable housing and I think that this is the type of investment and a model that is needed for East New York and other areas of the community. So I urge you to support this project. (Bowman)*

Response 5: **Comment noted.**

Comment 6: *We have a chance to turn fear into hope, nightmares into dreams, distress into opportunities by transforming urban decay into an urban oasis, a campus consisting of housing, commercial space, retail space, industrial space, institutions of higher learning, and a community facility. Together, yes, we can create an urban masterpiece that is 100% affordable. (Wilkins)*

Response 6: **Comment noted.**

Comment 7: *I'm here today to express my support for the Herkimer William proposal. As a Brooklyn resident, I know how badly we need more affordable housing. (Ford)*

Response 7: **Comment noted.**

Comment 8: *I serve as the Director of Industrial Business Development at the Business Outreach Center BOC Network. In this role, I work closely with industrial businesses across New York City, including the East New York and Flatlands Fairfield Industrial Business Zones, supporting businesses' ability to remain competitive and grow in place. It is because of this work that we support the vision for a Green Economy Institute at Herkimer-Williams. A 5,000 square foot space which will empower entrepreneurs, support industrial development, bolster a green local workforce pipeline, and create space that supports the growth of industrial businesses in East New York. Over the past several years, we have been working alongside Totem Development, Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corp, and the LDC of East New York to create a co-ventured incubator space to provide training opportunities, develop a green workforce pipeline, and provide affordable workspace to grow local businesses. Industrial and manufacturing businesses are critical to meeting the needs of this new green economy, and Broadway Junction's transit-oriented location, adjacent to the East New York Industrial Business Zone, can help strengthen linkages, enabling small businesses to start there and grow there into larger industrial space within the East New York IBZ in the future. (Ely-Cate)*

Response 8: **Comment noted.**

GENERAL OPPOSITION

Comment 9: *Totem's plans to bring four large towers does not align with the needs of the East New York community. There is very little demand for office space in Brooklyn. "Office space demand in Brooklyn in Q1 2025 rose by 80 basis points to 25%." (link to a Cushman & Wakefield New York City office market report). The strategy of building office space without demand to convert to condos was utilized in the Downtown Brooklyn and Long Island City rezonings. We need a trade school, a space for arts and culture, a healthcare facility, NOT office spaces and expensive apartments. Currently, Totem states they are "working with" CUNY to bring them as an anchor tenant. As proof, they provide a copy of a very non-committal letter from CUNY. This is NOT a commitment. While CUNY would be a fantastic anchor tenant, there are also so many needs that East New York has that could be addressed. For example, there could be a maternity clinic, given that maternal deaths among black mothers are five times higher than the average–the issue with this development is that it does NOT take our community needs into consideration. (Gonzalez)*

Response 9: **Comment noted.**

Comment 10: *I want to testify on the importance of equity for our community in the form of home ownership. The residential blocks surrounding Broadway Junction have historically been one of the city's few bastions of affordable homeownership, particularly for Black and Latino owners who are too often shut out of the market. However, over the past 20 years, this community has faced blow after blow, chipping away at its affordability and causing waves of displacement. In the early 2000s, the neighborhood was aggressively targeted with subprime loans and suffered some of the highest foreclosure rates in the city. Just as the community was starting to recover, the 2016 East New York rezoning was approved, unleashing a tidal wave of speculation in the small home market. Homeowners were bombarded with offers and there was an onslaught of scams, rapid*

home flipping, and deed theft. As a result, we've seen the median home price grow by a staggering 89% between 2009 and 2024 (adjusted for inflation). The area is no longer affordable to new homebuyers and many existing owners are struggling to keep up with repair costs and property taxes. This history demonstrates the seismic effects a major rezoning can have on small homes and the low to moderate income owners AND renters that live in them. Any future rezonings MUST come with stronger protections for these vulnerable residents, as well as affordable pathways to homeownership for new buyers. (Cooks)

Response 10: Comment noted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Comment 11: I ask you to vote NO on the Totem development with the following recommendation:

● *50% of the construction and permanent jobs generated should be should reserved for local residents.*

● *A vocational training school and/or an engineering/sciences college should be located at the Junction similar to many of the SUNY campuses like SUNY Delhi and SUNY Corning.*

● *Explore with the NYC Department of Education locating a Brooklyn STEAM Center at the Junction similar to the one in the Navy Yard.*

● *We need a robust and sustainable economic development plan for Broadway Junction. Economic development/jobs planning should focus on expanding and greening the transportation sector for the MTA-bus depot, LIRR, IBX and private bus companies. There needs to be investment in the transportation sector and training ENY residents for the transportation jobs of the future. These efforts must be linked with the great CTE high schools in ENY, for example in conjunction with Transit Tech High School.*

● *Provide the already promised 3,900 jobs prior to new development.*

● *Local hire at 50% in construction and in permanent jobs of Totem (i.e. building services) and of commercial tenants. (Kim)*

Response 11: Comment noted. Some of the suggested recommendations and measures are outside the purview of the Proposed Actions and environmental analyses under CEQR. However, regarding the two recommendations for educational uses, the FEIS includes an analysis of academic (community facility) space for the building on Projected Development Site 1D, which could be occupied by educational uses, such as a branch of CUNY.

Comment 12: Our demands and recommendations include the following:

1. Strong restrictive declarations being placed on the land being upzoned-so that the uses, affordability and commitments are clear and survive any change of ownership.

2. A Community Benefits Agreement with enforcement mechanisms signed prior to the City Council hearing.

3. Home ownership opportunities. We want 240 units to be ownership opportunities.

4. The height of the buildings should be reduced to a maximum of 15 stories. The current heights of 24-29 stories are out of context with the community and will stress our current crumbling infrastructure and polluted environment.

5. 100% of units must be affordable and match the needs of East New York, and must be below ELLA income bands to ensure the most vulnerable community members are not displaced. Roughly speaking, 60% of units must be low income to 50% AMI, and 40% of all units must be between 50-80% AMI with no market rate rental units. All 1,000 units proposed by the developer must be income restricted.

6. A displacement fund should be established by the developer to support current renters and homeowners. Some of the profits the developer is extracting for the neighborhood should be set aside to support East New Yorkers to stay in East New York. The fund should support tenant organizing, foreclosure prevention, and grants for property repair.

7. A Property Tax Freeze within a .25 mile radius of the site for ten years post-construction should be enacted.

8. The development should include at least two educational facilities. For the educational uses, while CUNY is our preference, we would also strongly consider a vocational training school and/or an engineering/sciences college at the Junction similar to many of the SUNY campuses like SUNY Delhi. Other options for educational uses include another Department of Education STEAM center similar to the one in the Navy Yard, a daycare center, or a DOE public school.

9. Reduce the amount of office space from 440K by ¼ or 110,000 sq ft. We have repeatedly asked where the demand is for office space?? The developer has been unable to show commitments from any tenants who will occupy the proposed office space.

10. 50% of the construction and permanent jobs generated from the development should be should reserved for local residents.

11. Set aside 25% of retail space for local entrepreneurs and small businesses at rents that are 25% below market rate.

12. A Community Grocery Store would be a great addition to the Junction to provide healthy, culturally competent, lower cost food to East New York. (Muhammad)

Response 12: **Comment noted. Some of the suggested recommendations and measures are outside the purview of the Proposed Actions and environmental analyses under CEQR.**

Regarding item 4 (building heights), refer to Response 1.1. The EIS analyzed the effects of the Proposed Development's and Alternate Community Facility Scenario's building heights in all relevant technical areas, including Shadows (Chapter 6), Historic and Cultural Resources (Chapter 7), and Urban Design and Visual Resources (Chapter 8). These analyses related to building height and the maximum bulk envelope permitted by the LSGD Special Permit determined that the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts with regard to Shadows, Historic and Cultural Resources, and Urban Design and Visual Resources. As outlined in the EIS, while the Proposed Development and Alternate Community Facility Scenario would be taller than existing and planned buildings in the surrounding area, the increased density of the Proposed Development and Alternate Community

Facility Scenario would be subject, with some design flexibility, to building envelope and open space controls in the LSGD Special Permit that is responsive to the neighborhood context and improves the pedestrian realm adjacent to the Project Area.

Regarding item 5 (affordability), refer to Response 3.4. The Applicant has stated their intention to work with HPD to allow all of the proposed units in either the Proposed Development or the Alternate Community Facility Scenario to be designated as 100 percent affordable units, pursuant to available subsidy. As described in the EIS, pursuant to the City's MIH program, up to 20-30 percent, or approximately 222-334 of the Applicant's Proposed Development, would be designated as permanently affordable at an average of 40-80 percent AMI depending on the selected MIH Option.

Regarding item 8 (educational facilities), refer to Response 11.

Regarding item 9 (office space), refer to Response 1.1.

Regarding item 9 (community grocery store), as outlined in the EIS, the Applicant's RWCDS includes a supermarket land use for the building on Projected Development Site 1E.

Comment 13: *I urge you to vote NO on the Totem development with the following recommendations for the health of our small businesses:*

● *Provide ownership opportunities for small businesses owners.*

● *No big box retail at Broadway Junction-No unnecessary competition with existing businesses in commercial corridors in close proximity.*

● *Commitments on setting aside 25% of the retail space at discounted rents ($20 a sq ft) for East New York merchants and entrepreneurs.*

● *A pilot program for a city owned/community supermarket grocery store at the Junction.*

● *Provide small business technical assistance for merchants to help them put together business plans, secure financing to expand, organize into merchants associations and support commercial revitalization of neighborhood shopping corridors.*

● *Assist small businesses in a mile radius of Junction to purchase properties and extend their lease terms. (Diaz)*

Response 13: **Comment noted. Some of the suggested recommendations and measures are outside the purview of the Proposed Actions and environmental analyses under CEQR. However, regarding the recommendation for big box retail, as outlined in the EIS, the Applicant's Proposed Development would contain approximately 113,760 gsf of commercial retail space, while the Alternate Community Facility Scenario would contain approximately 137,026 gsf of commercial retail space. Under both the Proposed Development and Alternate Community Facility Scenario, the commercial retail space would contain local retail, supermarket, and destination retail tenants. As outlined in Chapter 3 "Socioeconomic Conditions," the Proposed Actions would not facilitate the development of 200,000 sf or more of retail on a single development site, nor 200,000 sf or more of region-serving retail across multiple sites under either**

RWCDS. As such, an assessment of indirect business displacement due to retail market saturation is not warranted for the Proposed Actions, in accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* methodology.

Comment 14: *We urge you to vote NO on the Totem development with the following recommendations:*

- *Reduce heights to 15 stories-C6-3 zoning instead of C6-4.*
- *Strong restrictive declarations on land being upzoned on uses, affordability and commitments on specific types of tenants.*
- *Property Tax Freeze within .25 mile radius of the site for ten years post C of O.*
- *FAR set aside for community facilities.*
- *Affordability consistent with current East New York AMI levels of 40% or lower.*
- *No hotels.*
- *No night life.*
- *No casinos.*
- *No cannabis.*
- *No shelters. (Anonymous)*

Response 14: **Comment noted. Some of the suggested recommendations and measures are outside the purview of the Proposed Actions and environmental analyses under CEQR.**

Regarding the recommendation to reduce building heights, refer to Responses 1.1 and 12.

Regarding the recommendation for an FAR set aside for community facilities, under the Proposed Actions, for both the proposed C6-4 and M1-6 zoning districts, a maximum of 10.0 FAR would be permitted for community facility use. In addition, refer to Response 11.

Regarding the recommendation for affordability, refer to Responses 3.4 and 12.

Regarding hotels, across the City, a special permit is required for the construction of a new hotel. No hotels would be permitted as-of-right under the Proposed Actions and the Applicant does not propose a discretionary action seeking to develop a hotel.

Regarding casinos, no casino would be permitted as-of-right under the Proposed Actions and the Applicant is not seeking a license from the State of New York for a casino.

Comment 15: *We urge the Board to vote NO on the Totem development with the following recommendations:*

- *Additional North-South Bus Service is needed in CB5.*
- *ADA accessibility accomplished at Broadway Junction with connectivity to the LIRR station before development begins.*

● *Further studies on the feasibility of accommodation of an extra 1,000+ commuters at Broadway Junction.*

● *LIRR improvements are desperately needed.*

● *50 additional parking spaces for the community must be incorporated. (Layne)*

Response 15: **Comment noted. The suggested recommendations and measures are outside the purview of the Proposed Actions and environmental analyses under CEQR. Chapter 13, "Transportation," of the EIS provides an assessment of the Proposed Actions' effects on transportation conditions, including analyses of transit (bus, subway, and commuter rail modes) and parking conditions. As outlined in Chapter 13, a detailed analysis of local bus conditions for the B12, B20, B25, B83, Q24, and Q56 bus routes was not warranted, in accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* methodology. As outlined in Chapter 13, the subway line haul analysis prepared for southbound A trains in the PM peak hour determined there would be no impacts to subway service, per the guidance of the *CEQR Technical Manual*. As outlined in Chapter 13, a detailed analysis of commuter rail conditions for the LIRR was not warranted, in accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* methodology. As outlined in Chapter 13, the analysis of parking conditions surrounding the Project Area determined that the Proposed Actions may potentially contribute to, or result in, off-street and on-street parking shortfalls in the With-Action condition; however, per the guidance of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, any projected shortfall would not generally be considered significant due to the magnitude of available alternate modes of transportation.**

Comment 16: *In order to mitigate the impact the displacement that will happen as a result of this development, we urge the Board to vote No on the Totem development with the following recommendations:*

● *Prohibit market rate housing of any kind.*

● *Maximize regulatory periods of the housing to be built.*

● *Align the income bands in the developer's financing plans to match the income bands of local residents.*

● *Include 240 units of low-mid income homeownership opportunities in the mix of housing to be built.*

● *An anti-displacement fund which will include resources and benefits to defend and protect tenants and homeowners.*

● *Unit mix must be a mixture of one, two, three and four bedrooms with studios no less than 450 sq ft, and a focus on family sized units (1-3 bedrooms). (Palomino)*

Response 16: **Comment noted. Some of the suggested recommendations and measures are outside the purview of the Proposed Actions and environmental analyses under CEQR. Refer to Responses 3.1, 3.2, 3.4. 3.5, and 12. Preliminary assessments of indirect residential and business displacement were conducted for the EIS in accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* methodology and are provided in Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions" of the EIS. As outlined in Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions" of the EIS, the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts with respect**

to indirect residential and business displacement, in accordance with 2021 *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance.

Comment 17: *I urge the Commission to vote NO on the Totem development with the following recommendations:*

● AMIs targeted must align with the AMI bands of current ENY residents-e.g. Affordable Housing units for 80% of the construction at 40% AMI. ELLA term sheet is good but doesn't go far enough.

● Include 200 units of low-mid income homeownership opportunities in the mix of housing to be built.

● Prohibit market rate housing of any kind.

● Maximize regulatory periods.

● Unit mix must be a mixture of one, two, three and four bedrooms.

● Shelters in and around the Junction need to be acquired and land banked for permanently affordable housing for disposition to nonprofit developers and CLTs.

● Include LMI homeownership opportunities in the mix of housing to be built. (Johnson)

Response 17: **Comment noted. Some of the suggested recommendations and measures are outside the purview of the Proposed Actions and environmental analyses under CEQR. However, regarding affordable housing units, refer to Response 12.**

Comment 18: *I urge the Board to vote NO on the Totem development with the following recommendations developed for almost a decade, through countless surveys and town halls:*

● We want a vocational training school and/or an engineering/life sciences college.

● We want a NYC Department of Education STEAM Center at the Junction similar to the one in the Navy Yard.

● We want a healthcare facility such as a maternity clinic.

● A community grocery store would be supported by East New Yorkers.

● An arts and community space such as a senior center or local theater space are needed.

● Protection of our current senior and day care centers is needed-we have seen in gentrifying neighborhoods like Williamsburg that when City long term leases expire, landlords will not renew these leases because they are selling to real estate developers. Community facilities in and around the Junction are vulnerable to displacement-any City leased facilities for day care or senior centers should have leases extended another 30 years now. (Gonzalez)

Response 18: **Comment noted. Some of the suggested recommendations and measures are outside the purview of the Proposed Actions and environmental analyses under CEQR. However, regarding the two recommendations for educational uses, refer to Response 11. Regarding the community grocery store recommendation, refer to Response 12. Regarding recommendations for a maternity clinic and senior center,**

community facility uses such as medical clinics, ambulatory care facilities, or community centers would be permitted pursuant to the proposed C6-4 and M1-6 zoning districts.

Comment 19: *I urge the Board to vote NO on the Totem development with the following recommendations:*

- *Include ENY in the life science expansion planned by EDC with lab facilities.*

Response 19: **Comment noted. The life science recommendation is outside the purview of the Proposed Actions and environmental analyses under CEQR.**

Comment 20: *We urge the Board to vote NO with the following demands:*

- *Include 200 units of affordable homeownership units in the mix of housing to be built.*
- *Establish a small homes preservation fund for owner-occupied 1-4 family homes to subsidize retrofits, aging modifications and home repairs.*
- *Increase income limits and the tax break amount for the NYC Senior Homeowners Exemption and SCRIE for senior tenants.*
- *Increase funding for the Homeowner help desk, which provides outreach, education and counseling services for low/moderate income homeowners.*
- *Increase HomeFirst grants for prospective homebuyers who live in CB5.*
- *Renew and extend the ENY Cease & Desist Zone–so homeowners will not be constantly besieged by hard sell solicitations.*
- *Fund basement legalizations in East New York. (Cooks)*

Response 20: **Comment noted. Some of the suggested recommendations and measures are outside the purview of the Proposed Actions and environmental analyses under CEQR. However, regarding affordable housing units, refer to Response 12.**