A. INTRODUCTION

The 2014 *City Environmental Quality Review* (CEQR) *Technical Manual* states that the urban design components and visual resources determine the "look" of a neighborhood – its physical appearance, including the street pattern, the size and shape of buildings, their arrangement on blocks, streetscape features, natural resources, and noteworthy views that may give an area a distinctive character. Pursuant to CEQR methodology, actions that would allow a project to potentially obstruct view corridors, compete with icons in the skyline, or make substantial alterations to the streetscape of a neighborhood by noticeably changing the scale of buildings may warrant a detailed urban design and visual resources analysis. Since the proposed action/RWCDS would facilitate the construction of buildings that would be different in bulk, type, and use from the urban design of the project site and the surrounding area, a detailed urban design and visual resources analysis was prepared.

This chapter considers the potential for the proposed action/RWCDS to affect the urban design characteristics and visual resources of the project area and the study area. As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the proposed action/RWCDS would result in a new mixed-use, predominantly residential development on two blocks owned by the applicant in southeastern Williamsburg in Brooklyn Community District 1. The project area's two blocks include the "Northern Block" and "Southern Block". The Northern Block (Block 2249, Lots 23, 37, 41, and 122) is bounded on the north by a demapped section of Walton Street which continues to function of a street, on the east by Harrison Street, on the south by Wallabout Street, and on the west by Union Street. The Southern Block (Block 2265, Lot 14) is bounded on the north by Wallabout Street, on the east by Harrison Street, on the south by Gerry Street, and on the west by Union Avenue. The technical analysis presented below follows the guidelines of the *CEQR Technical Manual* and addresses each of the above-listed characteristics for existing conditions, the future without the Proposed Project (the No-Action condition), and the future with the Proposed Project (the With-Action condition) for a future projected development.

As discussed in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the proposed action would consist of zoning map and text amendments affecting a 182,368-gross-square-foot (gsf) project area. The zoning map amendment would change the project area zoning from an M3-1 district to R7A, R7D, and R8A districts with a C2-4 commercial overlay covering most of the area. The zoning text amendment would designate the rezoning area as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Area (MIHA).

Under the With-Action RWCDS, the project area would be redeveloped with a new predominantly residential mixed-use development on the two-block-project-area owned by the applicant. The reasonable worst case development scenario (RWCDS) With-Action condition for the proposed action consists of approximately 1,147 dwelling units (DUs), of which approximately 344 DUs would be affordable housing DUs (30 percent of the total); 64,807 gsf

of local retail space; approximately 128,128 gsf of parking space, consisting of 427 spaces, as required by zoning; and approximately 26,000 sf of publicly-accessible open space.

The RWCDS consists of eight high lot coverage, streetwall buildings. On each of the two blocks, there would be a 65-foot wide publicly-accessible open space located approximately 200 feet west of Harrison Avenue with buildings massed to the east and west. Streetwall and maximum building heights would vary, generally stepping up from building heights of 75 feet in the R7A district along Harrison Avenue to 145 feet in the R8A district along Union Avenue, with maximum building heights of115 feet in the midblock areas zoned R7D.

As discussed in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy," the existing M3-1 zoning allows a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 2.0 for commercial, general service, and manufacturing uses. In terms of bulk, M3-1 zoning allows streetwalls at a maximum height of 60 feet or 4 stories (whichever is less) and above the base bulk is regulated by height-factor sky exposure plane regulations. However, the project area is currently vacant (except for temporary storage activities) and, as discussed in Chapter 1, it is considered unlikely that the project area would be redeveloped under No-Action conditions with the current zoning remaining in place.

As the proposed action/RWCDS would result in the construction of new development built pursuant to a rezoning that would change bulk regulations and increase permitted density, an urban design and visual resources analysis is warranted.

B. PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

The proposed action would not result in significant adverse impacts related to urban design and visual resources. The analysis presented in this chapter finds that the proposed action would not result in any significant adverse urban design and visual resources impacts. The proposed action/RWCDS would result in development that is compatible with the existing and expected future built environment in the surrounding study area and the proposed action/RWCDS would not affect views of any visual resources from publicly-accessible locations.

C. METHODOLOGY

Together, the urban design components and visual resources of an area define the distinctive identity of a neighborhood. In an urban design assessment under CEQR, one considers whether and how a project may change the visual experience of a pedestrian in the project area. The assessment focuses on the components of a proposed project that may have the potential to alter the arrangement, appearance, and functionality of the built environment, as experienced by pedestrians in the study area. These components include building bulk, use, and type; building arrangement; block form and street pattern; streetscape elements; street hierarchy; and natural features. The concept of bulk is created by the size of a building and the way it is massed on a site. Height, length, and width define a building's size; volume, shape, setbacks, lot coverage, and density define its mass. A visual resources analysis identifies and assesses the effects of the proposed action on the study area's visual resources, which are its unique, or important public view corridors, vistas, or natural or built features. Waterfront views, public parks, landmarked

structures, landmarked districts, and natural resources are examples of visual resources. As per the guidelines of CEQR, only views of visual resources from public and publicly-accessible locations will be assessed. The analysis in this chapter addresses each of these characteristics of existing conditions and the future without and with the proposed action for the year 2019.

In accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual*, this assessment considers the effects of the proposed action/RWCDS on the following elements that play an important role in the pedestrian's experience of public space:

- ***Streets*** – the arrangement and orientation of streets define location, flow of activity, street views, and create blocks on which buildings and open spaces are arranged. Other elements including sidewalks, plantings, street lights, curb cuts, and street furniture also contribute to an area's streetscape.
- ***Buildings*** – building size, shape, pedestrian and vehicular entrances, lot coverage and orientation to the street are important urban design components that define the appearance of the built environment.
- ***Open Space*** – open space consists of public and private areas that do not include structures, such as parks and other landscaped areas, cemeteries, and parking lots.
- ***Natural Features*** – natural features include vegetation, geologic and aquatic features that are natural to the area.
- ***View Corridors and Visual Resources*** – visual resources include significant natural or built features, such as important view corridors, public parks, landmark structures or districts, or otherwise distinct buildings.
- ***Wind*** – Channelized wind pressure from between tall buildings and down-washed wind pressure from parallel tall buildings may cause winds that may jeopardize pedestrian comfort and safety.

As the Proposed Project could result in physical changes to the project site beyond the bulk and form currently permitted as-of-right, it has the potential to result in development that could alter the arrangement, appearance, and functionality of the built environment and, therefore, change a pedestrian's experience of the project area. Therefore, it is appropriate to assess the proposed actions/RWCDS's potential impacts to urban design and visual resources. As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," this analysis assumes that the With-Action condition would attempt to maximize the building envelope permitted through zoning. The urban design analysis presented below follows the guidelines of a *CEQR Technical Manual.*

Wind Screening

Per criteria of Section 230 of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a study of wind conditions and their effect on pedestrian level safety may be warranted under certain circumstances for projects involving the construction of large buildings at locations that experience high wind conditions. Tall buildings at, or in close proximity to waterfront sites may result in an exacerbation of wind conditions due to "channelization" or "downwash" effects that may affect pedestrian comfort and safety. The proposed action/RWCDS is not expected to result in the construction of unusually large or tall buildings. Pursuant to the proposed action, the maximum building height permitted in the project area would be 145 feet tall (roof height) with permitted rooftop obstructions, which

is not substantially different from existing buildings in the area. In addition, the project area is located in an inland area of Brooklyn that does not typically experience high wind conditions. Therefore, a study of wind conditions and their effect on pedestrian level safety is not warranted.

Definition of Study Area

The *CEQR Technical Manual* states that "the study area for urban design is the area where the project may influence land use patterns and the built environment, and is generally consistent with that used for the land use analysis." As discussed in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy," the study area for that analysis has been identified as a quarter-mile radius extending from the project area, with the boundary expanded to include in their entirety all blocks falling partially within the radius. This is considered to be the area within the surrounding area in which the effects of the proposed action/RWCDS would have the potential to indirectly affect land use and zoning conditions.

As shown in Figure 8-1, the urban design and visual resources study area includes all blocks completely or partially within a quarter-mile radius of the project area. It extends as far west as Bedford Avenue, as far south as Myrtle Avenue, as far east as Broadway and Marcus Garvey Boulevard, and as far north as Montrose Avenue, aka New Montrose Avenue. The analysis of the urban design and visual resources study area is based on field visits, photography, and 3-D computer imaging of the proposed action/RWCDS and buildings forming the surrounding built context.

D. PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

Under CEQR, a preliminary assessment of urban design is appropriate when there is the potential for a pedestrian to observe from the street level a physical alteration beyond that allowed by existing zoning, including the following: 1) projects that permit the modification of yard, height, and setback requirements; and 2) projects that result in an increase in built floor area beyond what would be allowed 'as-of-right' or in the future without the proposed action. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, detailed analyses are generally appropriate if an action introduces a new building requiring exception to existing zoning and would result in changes in height and setback requirements. As the proposed action includes a zoning map amendment that would facilitate buildings with bulk characteristics and density beyond what is permitted as-of-right, a detailed urban design and visual resources assessment is warranted.

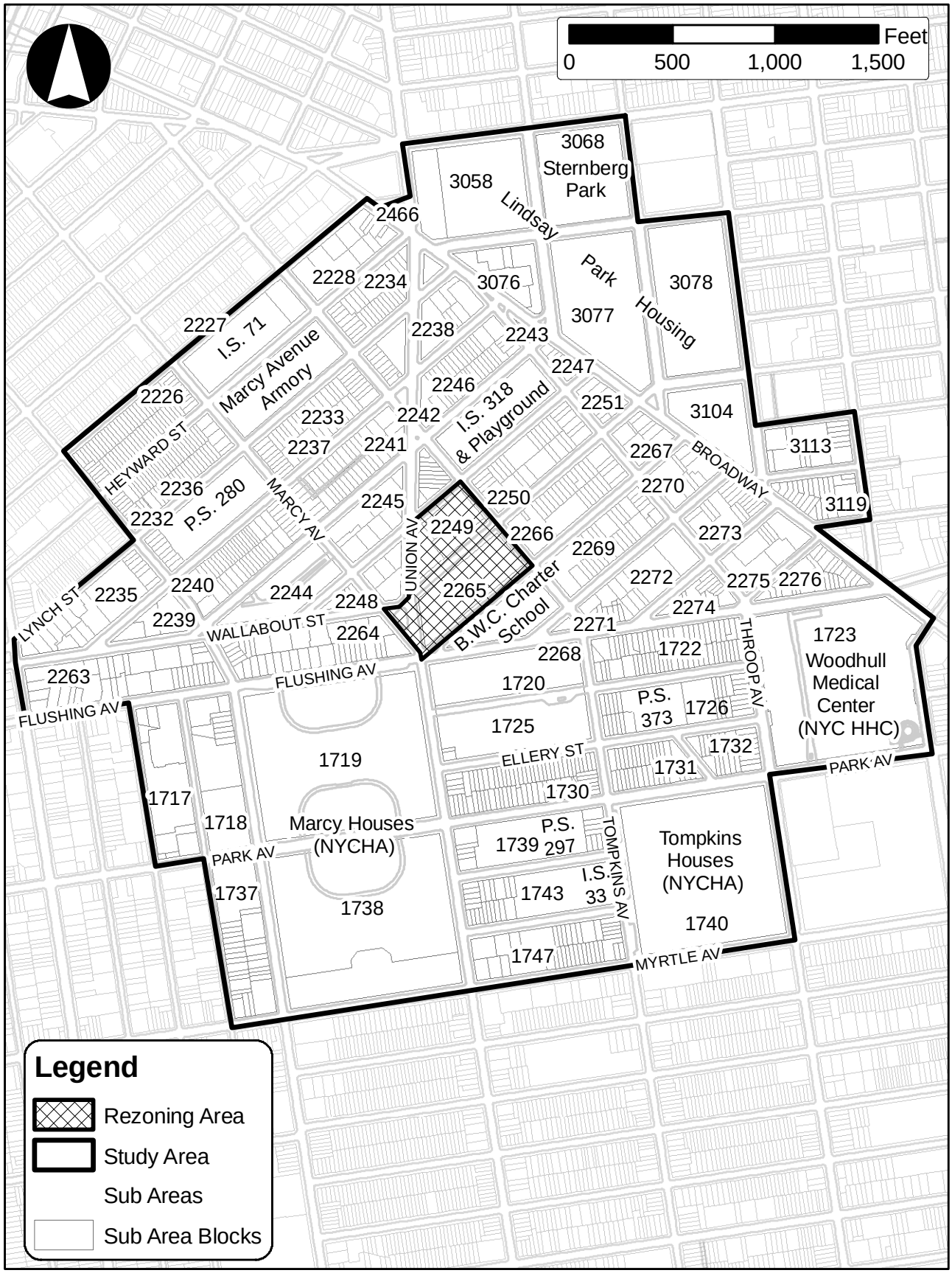
E. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Project Area

The project area is composed of a two-block area which is currently vacant. These include: the Northern Block – Lots 23, 37, 41, and 122 on Block 2249[1]; and the Southern Block - Lot 14 on

[1] As this area's street grid and tax blocks were established prior to the extension of Union Avenue south of Broadway, which occurred in the 1930s to facilitate construction of the G subway line, Union Avenue split Block 2249 into two parts: (1) the

Urban Design and Visual Resources Study Area



Block 2265. Both blocks have been used on a temporary basis for vehicle and equipment storage. Refer to Figure 8-2, Aerial Photograph and Figure 8-3, Birds-eye Views.

Streets. The project area is bounded by Harrison Avenue on the east, the Walton Street on the north, Union and Marcy avenues on the west, and Gerry Street on the south. Wallabout Street bisects the two blocks. The project area and each of the two blocks comprising it are trapezoidal-shaped, reflecting the diagonal alignment of Union Avenue relative to the grid of South Williamsburg. The Northern Block has approximately 200 feet of frontage along Harrison Avenue, approximately 268.36 feet of frontage along Walton Street, approximately 444.88 feet of frontage along Wallabout Street, and approximately 266.76 feet of frontage along Union Avenue. The Southern Block has approximately 493 feet of frontage along Wallabout Street, approximately 200 feet of frontage along Harrison Avenue, approximately 617 feet of frontage along Gerry Street, and approximately 235 feet of frontage along Union Street.

Walton Street, Wallabout Street, and Gerry Street each have a mapped width of 70 feet, with an approximately 34-foot-wide roadway flanked by approximately 18-foot-wide concrete sidewalks, although along most of the Northern Block, the public sidewalk includes a ribbon sidewalk (paved concrete) flanked by unpaved planting strips along the curb and property line. Walton Street operates one-way eastbound while the segments of Wallabout Street and Gerry Street adjacent to the project area operate two-way. Harrison Avenue has a mapped width of 70 feet with an approximately 40-foot-wide roadway flanked by approximately 15-foot-wide concrete sidewalks. Harrison Avenue is a one-way southbound street terminating to the south of the project area on Flushing Avenue. Adjacent to the project area, Harrison Avenue operates with one moving lane, one bike lane, and two parking lanes. Union Avenue has an unusual alignment adjacent to the project area. North of Wallabout Street, Union Avenue operates two-way and has a mapped with of 80 feet, with an approximately 47 foot-wide roadway flanked by an approximately 19-foot wide sidewalk lining the project area and an approximately 14-foot wide sidewalk on the western side of the street. Union Avenue from Wallabout Street to Flushing Avenue, fronting on the Southern Block, operates one-way northbound and has an irregular mapped width as the right-of-way merges with Marcy Street in a roughly triangular shape as the two streets converge at Flushing Avenue and their roadways are divided by a landscaped traffic island (see Figure 8-2) located in the mapped street. This section of Union Avenue has an approximately 57-foot wide roadbed, including an approximately 20-foot wide striped area adjacent to the traffic island. The Southern Block's Union Avenue sidewalk is approximately 19 feet wide. Extending north from the project area, Union Avenue is two-way arterial in this area of Brooklyn. Refer to Chapter 12, "Transportation," for more information on the transportation characteristics of these streets.

Buildings. There are no buildings on the Northern Block or the Southern Block. The Northern Block is unpaved and vacant and is surrounded by chain-link fencing. The Southern Block is covered by a paved parking area.

Visual Resources. There are no notable visual resources in the project area as it does not contain any significant natural or built features.

Northern Block described in the text; and (2) the block bounded by Walton Avenue, Union Avenue, Wallabout Street, and Marcy Avenue, which is not part of the project area.



Rezoning Area

Source: Bing Map
N.T.S.

Pfizer Sites Rezoning EIS

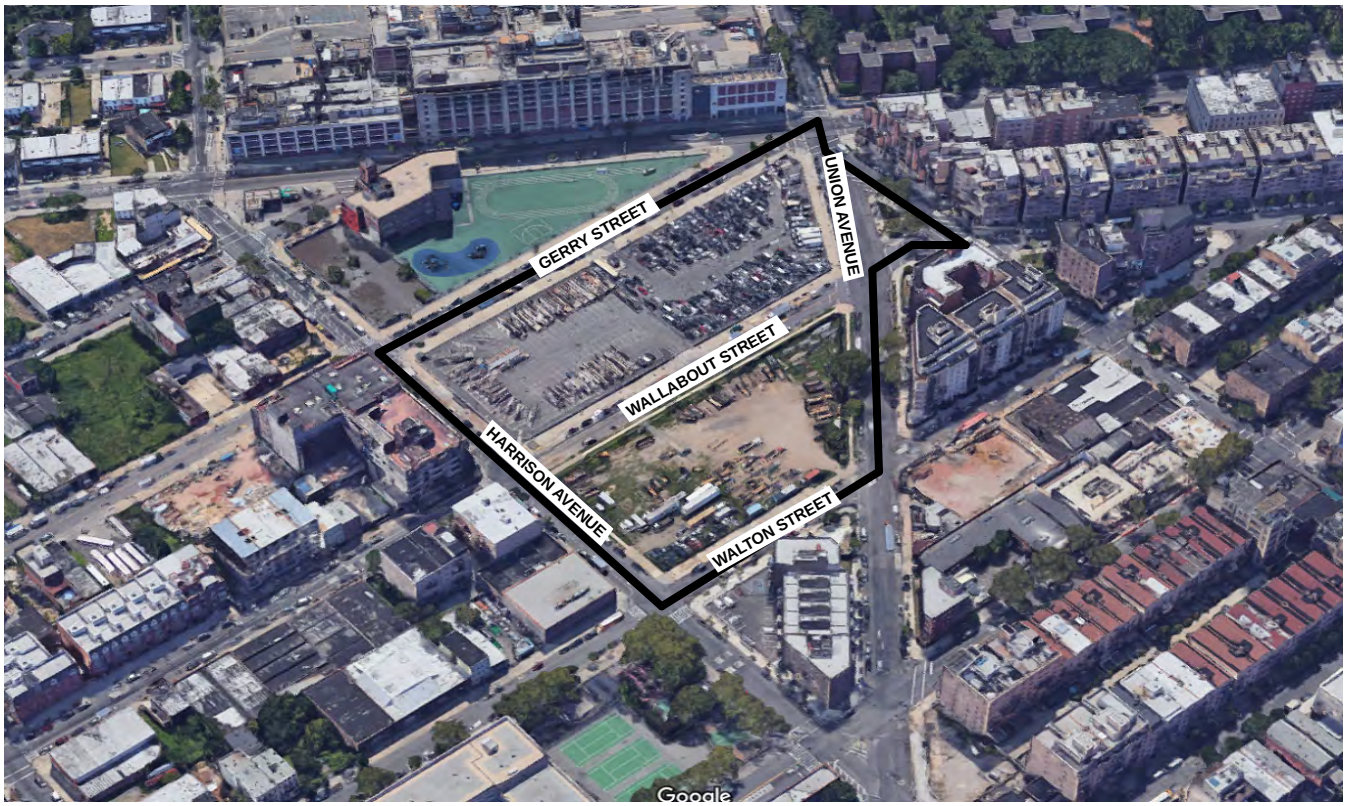
Figure 8-2
2014 Aerial Photo



Above: View of Rezoning Area Looking North (2014)

Rezoning Area

Below: View of Rezoning Area Looking South (2014)



Open Space. As defined for the purposes of urban design assessment, open space on the project area is primarily limited to parking areas and vacant grassy areas. There are no parks or landscaped areas.

Natural Features. The topography of the project area is generally flat. Site elevations in the area generally range from approximately +9.5 feet to approximately +13.5 feet (NAVD 88). As it is an improved, urbanized location, there are no natural features on the project area.

Study Area

Excluding the project area, the urban design and visual analysis study area encompasses approximately sixty-one blocks.[2] As part of this analysis, several site visits were made to the study area and extensive photo documentation has been utilized to aid the discussion and assessment of resources.

***Sub-Areas*.** For the purposes of this analysis of urban design characteristics, the study area is divided into four distinct sub-areas. These sub-areas include:

* *Western Sub-Area.* The Western Sub-Area is bounded by Flushing Avenue on the south, Union Avenue on the east, Rutledge Street on the north-west, and Lynch Street, Bedford Avenue and Lee Avenue on the west. This sub-area encompasses eighteen blocks and includes small house lots on some blocks where residential uses predominate but also includes several blocks with large lot institutional properties.

* *Broadway Triangle Sub-Area.* The Broadway Triangle Sub-Area is bounded by Broadway on the northeast, by Flushing Avenue on the south, and by Union Avenue on the west. This sub-area includes twenty-two blocks including the project area; the nine block area bounded by Throop Avenue on the east, Flushing Avenue on the south, Walton Street, Union Avenue and Harrison Avenue on the west, and Lynch Street on the north was part of a 2009 rezoning aimed at developing affordable housing, commercial space and community space.

* *Northern Sub-Area.* The Northern Sub-Area is bounded by Leonard Street, Boerum Street, Moore Street, Graham Street, and Manhattan Street on the east, Broadway on the southwest, and Montrose Avenue/New Montrose Avenue on the north. This area encompasses eight blocks mostly occupied by large lot residential and commercial buildings.

* *Southern Sub-Area.* The Southern Sub-Area is bounded by Flushing Avenue on the north, Marcus Garvey Boulevard and Throop Avenue on the east, Myrtle Avenue and Park Avenue on the south, and Sanford Street and Walworth Street on the west. This seventeen block area is occupied by a range of both large lot residential and non-residential land

[2] For the purposes of this urban design and visual resources analysis, a "block" is defined as a contiguous area of private properties bounded by public streets or railroad rights of way. It should be noted that in this study area the city-defined "tax blocks" in some cases include multiple blocks and in other cases include partial blocks.

uses, the latter including an institutional campus and a commercial/light industrial property with on-site parking, and residential units on smaller lots.

These sub-areas are identified in Figure 8-4, Urban Design and Visual Resources Sub-Areas, and in Figure 8-5, Urban Design and Visual Resources Photo Key. Photographs of typical urban design elements in these sub-areas keyed to Figure 8-5 are shown in Figure 8-6, Urban Design and Visual Resources Study Area Photos.

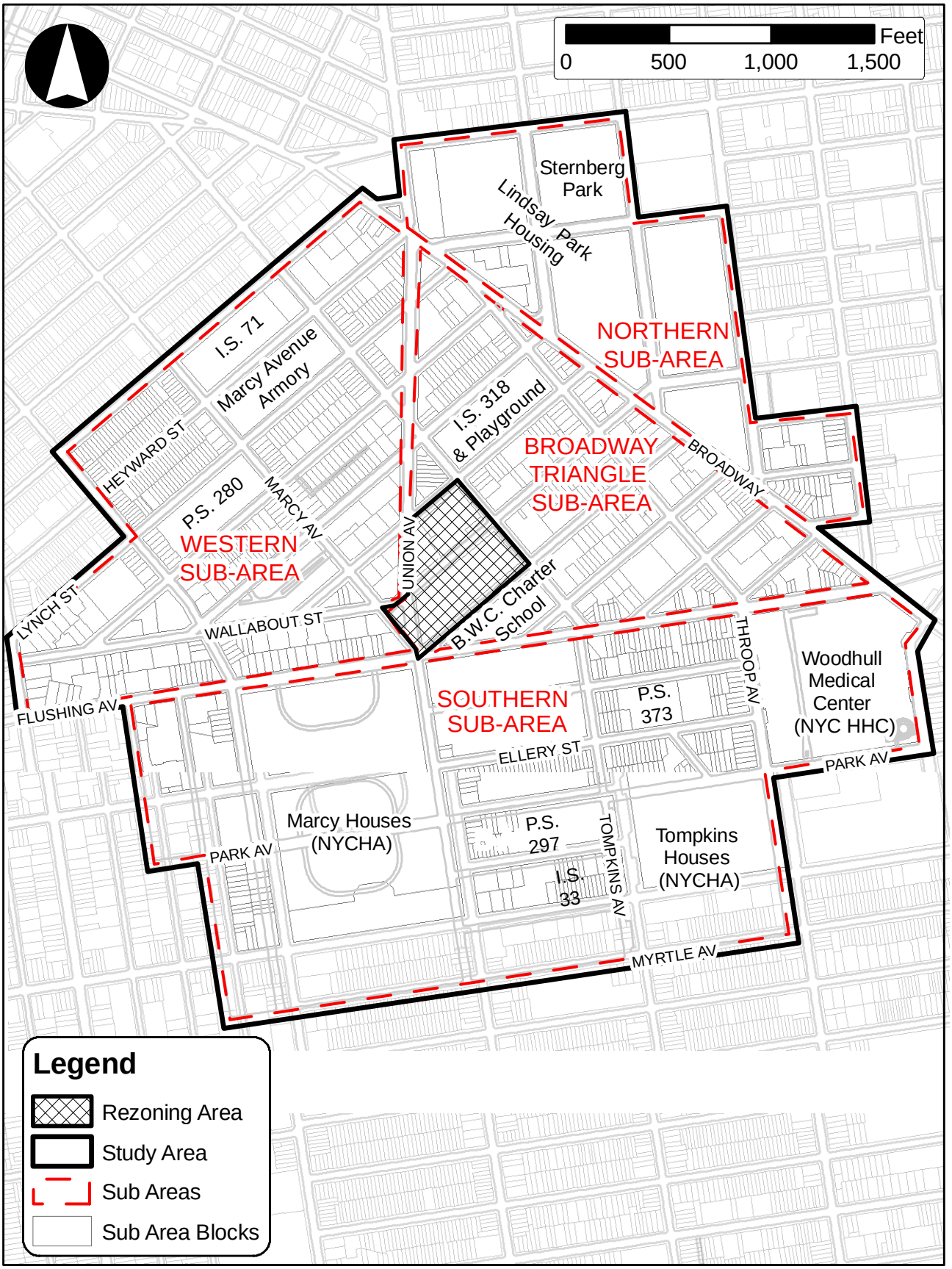
Streets

The study area is comprised of several different, intersecting street grid patterns, as it overlaps parts of different neighborhoods each with its own distinct street layout and orientation.

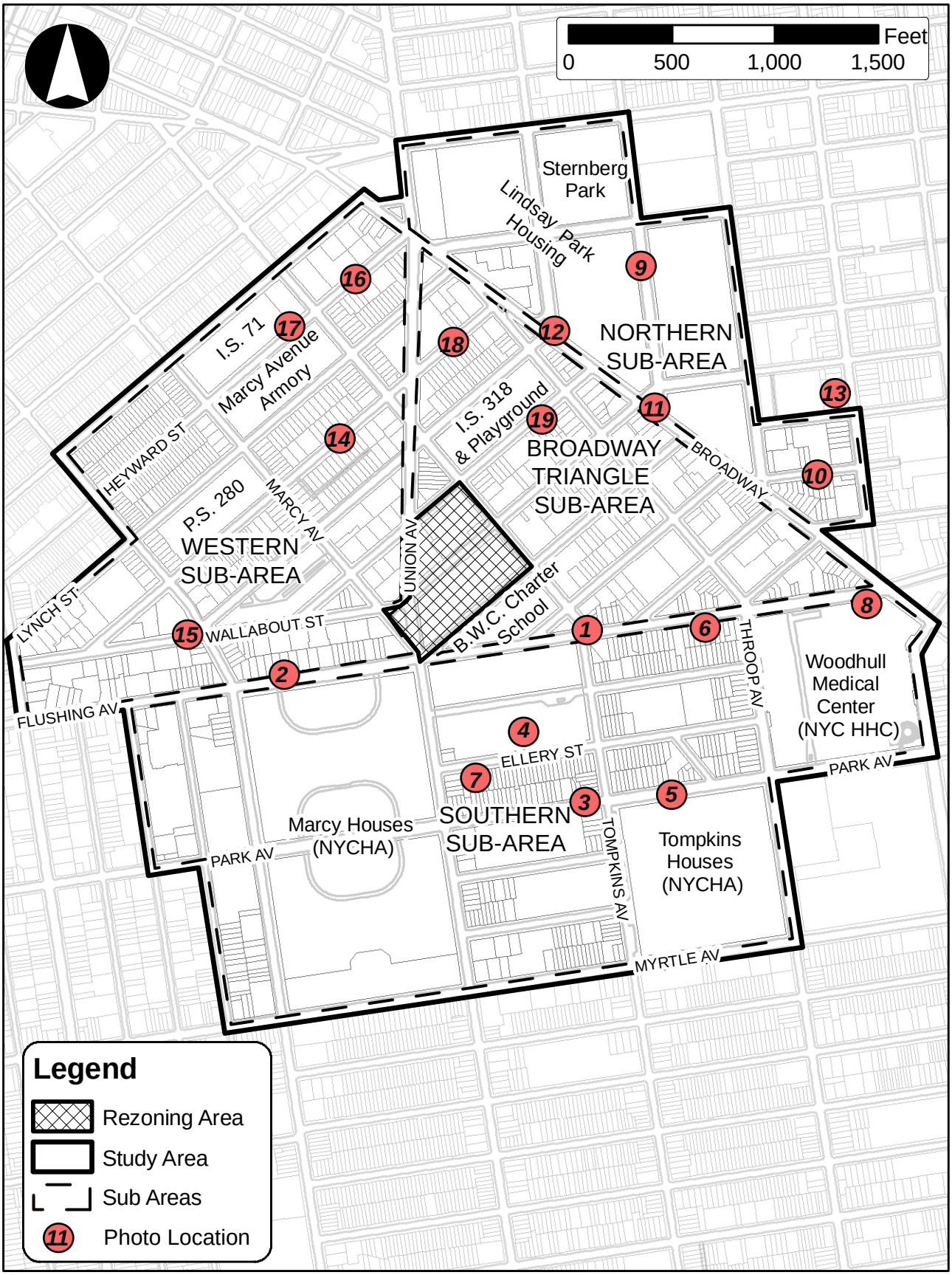
Western Sub-Area. The street pattern in South Williamsburg, which includes this sub-area, is typified by a rectilinear grid of blocks composed of narrow streets on a northeast-southwest alignment spaced 200 feet apart and wider streets on a northwest-southeast alignment spaced 625 feet apart. However, three major roads interrupt the rectilinear street grid forming irregular-shaped city blocks, at the southern, southwestern, and eastern edges of the sub-area. These streets include, Union Avenue, Flushing Avenue and Wallabout Street (west of Union Avenue). Flushing Avenue serves as an arterial in this area of Brooklyn extending from the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway to the Long Island Expressway carrying both local and through traffic. In the study area, it extends diagonal to the South Williamsburg grid on an east-west alignment and defining the northern limit of the Bedford-Stuyvesant grid. Union Avenue extends from McCarren Park in the Greenpoint section of Brooklyn to Flushing Avenue in South Williamsburg. Union Avenue, which follows the North Williamsburg grid pattern north of Broadway, extends south of Broadway on a diagonal alignment intersecting blocks of the South Williamsburg grid. Union Avenue terminates at the multi-leg intersection with Flushing Avenue, Marcy Avenue, and Gerry Street, where Marcy Avenue is realigned southwards on a north-south alignment that functions as an extension of the Union Avenue corridor. One block to the north, where Wallabout Street intersects Union Avenue, west of Union Avenue the Wallabout Street roadway realigns to extend to the west following a route parallel to Flushing Avenue and as such diagonal to the South Williamsburg grid.

Within the Western Sub-Area, sidewalks provide important pedestrian corridors to subway station entrances, bus stops, and retail shops located further east along Broadway. The sidewalks typically do not carry heavy residential pedestrian traffic as the streets have little retail activity although some activity is present coinciding with the start and end of school hours as the area contains several public and parochial schools. Street conditions in the Western Sub-Area vary. Residential blocks in the sub-area are lined with street furniture and standard street signs. The portions of Flushing Avenue, Heyward Street, and Lynch Street included in the Western Sub-Area are lined with street trees. The streetscape in the Western Sub-Area consists of wide sidewalks, generally 15 to 20 feet wide, with typical street furniture including mailboxes, newspaper dispensers, telephone poles, tree pits, wire mesh garbage cans, parking meters, and fire hydrants. Additionally, the streetscape in the Western Sub-Area is defined by extensive streetwalls and fine grain urban scale, with most blocks featuring multiple doors and windows fronting on the streets and some larger buildings embellished with architectural details. Some

Urban Design and Visual Resources Sub-Areas



Urban Design and Visual Resources Study Area Photos





1. The All Saints Roman Catholic Church at the intersection of Flushing Avenue and Thornton Avenue.



2. 3-story residential buildings on Park Avenue in the Southern Sub-Area.



3. Marcy Houses, located on the southwest corner of the intersection of Thornton and Park Avenues.

4. The P.S. 297 school building located on Ellery Street.





6. An example of older residential properties in the study area, on Park Avenue in the Sothern Sub-Area.

5. A view of the northern frontage of Flushing Avenue showing mixed-residential-commercial buildings.



7. Single family attached row houses on Ellery Street. (Edmund T. Pruitt, Jr. Houses)





8. The Woodhull Medical Center, which occupies the entire block bounded by Throop Avenue, Park Avenue, Flushing Avenue, Broadway, and Marcus Garvey Boulevard.



9. One of the seven co-op buildings that comprise Lindsay Park Housing in the Northern Sub- Area.

10. The frontage of newly constructed residential properties on Cook Street.



11. An irregular shaped building at the intersection of Broadway and Boerum Street.





12. Commercial activity on Broadway in the Northern Sub-Area.



13. The landmarked Public National Bank of NY Building at 67 Varet Street just outside the study area boundary. The building is currently occupied by a Bank of America branch.



14. A typical tree-lined residential street in the Western Sub-Area.

15. Typical multi-family residential buildings in the Western Sub-Area.





16. Frontages of multi-family residential buildings and vacant lots in the Western Sub-Area.

17. The Marcy Avenue Armory located between Lynch and Heyward Streets.





18. Shuttered manufacturing buildings in the Broadway Triangle Sub-Area.



19. Vacant lots in the Broadway Triangle Sub-Area.

residential streets in the Western Sub-Area sometimes feature fences and gates along the front lot lines of buildings. Most sub-area streets are typically lined with parking lanes.

Broadway Triangle Sub-Area. Streets in the Broadway Triangle Sub-Area follow the South Williamsburg street grid pattern similar to the Western Sub-Area described above, with the defining exception of the three major roads that form the triangle boundary. As such, this sub-area consist of a core area of rectilinear blocks (600 feet by 200 feet) surrounded by trapezoidal and triangular blocks of varying sizes. This unique street layout is the result of Broadway and Union Avenue as both arterials intersect at the northeastern part of the study area and then extend south on different diagonal alignments through the street grid to Flushing Avenue, which as noted above forms the northern limit of the Bedford-Stuyvesant grid. (Outside the study area, Broadway extends from the East River near the Williamsburg Bridge and continues further to the southeast separating the Bedford-Stuyvesant and Bushwick grids until it terminates at Broadway Junction.) Within the sub-area, avenues following the grid pattern include Harrison Avenue, which terminates at Flushing Avenue at the southern edge of the study area, and Throop Avenue, which begins at the intersection of Middleton Street and Broadway in the study area and extends south throughout the neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant. With the exception of Lorimer Street, all east-west streets in the Broadway Triangle Sub-Area terminate along Broadway, the northeast border of the sub-area. Gerry, Bartlett, Whipple and Thornton Streets only span distances of approximately 450 feet, 850 feet, 1,200 feet and 1,600 feet, respectively, between Flushing Avenue and Broadway.

Union Avenue and Broadway support two-way traffic with parking lanes while Harrison Avenue and Throop Avenue support one-way traffic with parking lanes. Whipple Avenue is the only east-west street support two-way traffic in the sub-area. The streetscape in the study sub-area possesses typical street furniture, similar to that described above for the Western Sub-Area.

Northern Sub-Area. The Northern Sub-Area is the eight block area lying to northeast of Broadway and roughly bounded by Montrose, Manhattan and Graham Avenues on the north and east. This sub-area is typified by superblocks occupied by 22-floor residential towers which are a part of Lindsay Park Housing, a Mitchell-Lama cooperative complex. The resident towers in Lindsay Park Housing are anchored by Sternberg Park (formerly known as Lindsay Park) located on Lorimer Street between Montrose Avenue and Boerum Street. This area is variously identified as being the western portion of Bushwick or part of East Williamsburg.

Apart from Broadway at its southwestern edge, streets in the Northern Sub-Area follow a rectilinear grid pattern, which follows a different orientation from the South Williamsburg grid. North-south streets in this study area include Union Avenue (north of Broadway), Lorimer Street (which realigns by approximately 45 degrees after it intersects Broadway), Leonard Street, Manhattan Avenue, and Graham Street. With the exception of Union Avenue and Lorimer Street, all other north-south streets in the study area terminate along Broadway. East-west streets in the sub-area include Debevoise Street, Cook Street, Varet Street, Moore Street, Boerum Street and Montrose Avenue. These streets extend from Broadway further east into Bushwick.

Within the Northern Sub-Area streetscape conditions area generally similar to those described above for the other sub-areas in terms of the types of street furniture present, but the context is different. As discussed below, most of the Northern Sub-Area is characterized by large scale

buildings with substantial open space; as such, this sub-area lacks extensive streetwalls that define the character of the study area blocks south and west of Broadway. This sub-area, with its large lots and separation of uses, does not have fine grain streetscapes with multiple doors and windows facing onto public sidewalks. Instead the streetscapes have an open character with less variation and fewer vertical elements to match the horizontal scale of the public sidewalks and streets.

Southern Sub-Area. The Southern Sub-Area is a 17-block area roughly bounded by Myrtle Avenue on the south, Throop Avenue and Marcus Garvey Boulevard on the east, Sanford and Walworth Street on the west, and Flushing Avenue on the north. This sub-area is dominated by the multi-block Marcy Houses in the west and Tompkins Houses in the east. Marcy Houses and Tompkins Houses are owned by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), both affordable housing complexes occupying rectangular superblocks in the study area. The Woodhull Medical Center, administered by the New York City Health and Hospital Corporations, is located at the intersection for Flushing Avenue and Broadway on another superblock bounded by Throop Avenue, Park Avenue, and Marcus Garvey Boulevard. The Southern Sub-Area possesses a rectilinear street grid which forms no irregular shaped blocks excepting the rectangular block between Park Avenue, Throop Avenue, Tompkins Avenue, and Ellery Street which is bisected midblock by Delmonico Place. Superblocks occupied Marcy Houses, Tompkins Houses, and the Woodhull Medical Center interrupt the regular street grid of the Southern Sub-Area. Another atypical feature of this sub-area is the orientation of blocks west of Nostrand Avenue, which feature a rectilinear street grid with the long dimensions of blocks extending north-south, a pattern that extends into the adjoining Clinton Hill and Fort Greene neighborhoods to the west. By contrast, east of Nostrand Avenue, and similar to many other sections of New York City, the long dimensions of blocks extend east-west.

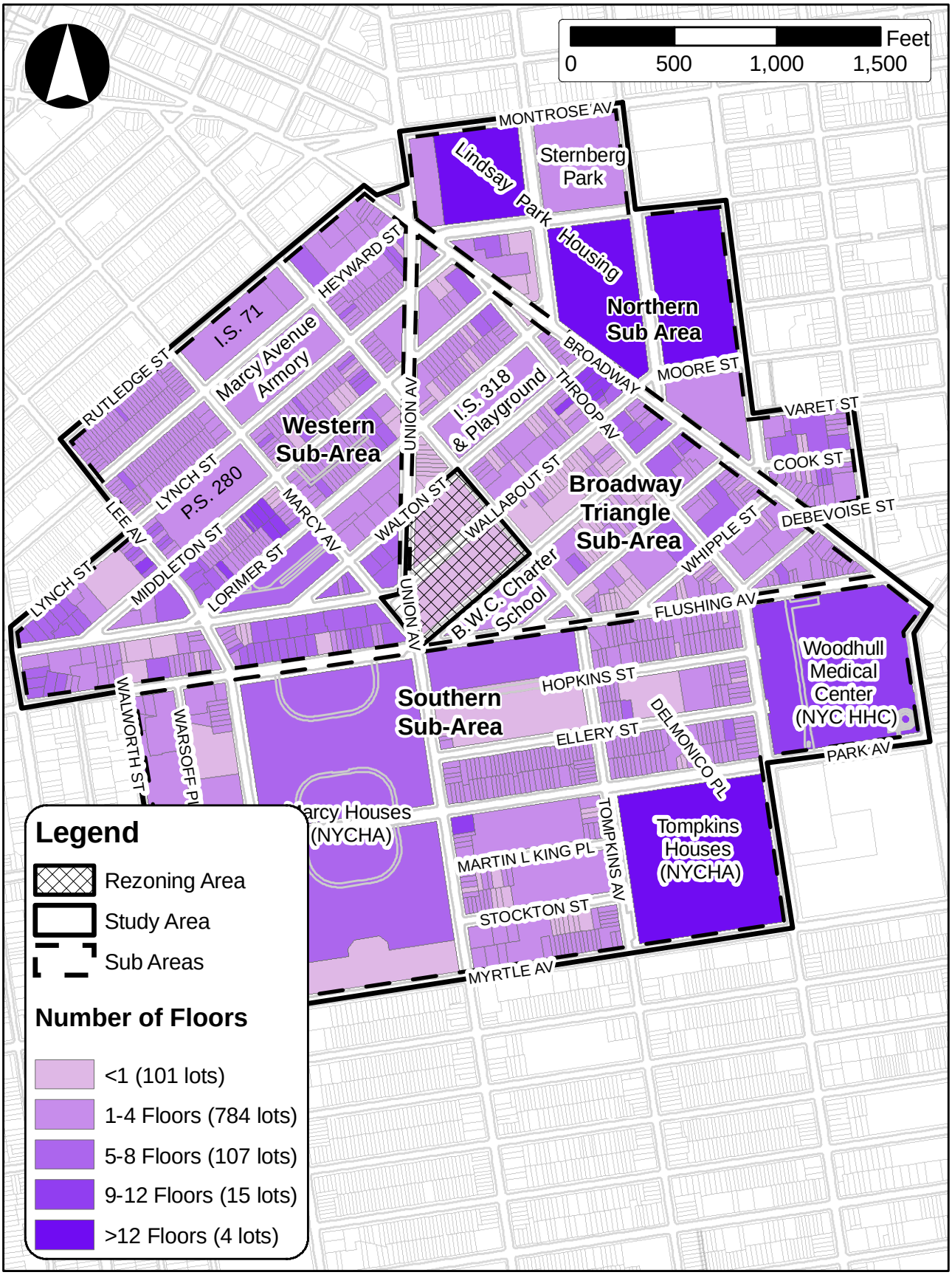
Within the Southern Sub-Area, there are a variety of streetscape conditions. Along Flushing Avenue the streetscape consists of concrete sidewalks generally 15 to 20 feet wide, standard street signs, street furniture, parking meters, over-head telephone wires and poles, fences, gates and plantings. There is signage to support the B43 and B57 bus route along Flushing Avenue in both directions. There are no dedicated bus lanes or bikes lanes along Flushing Avenue within the study area.

Park Avenue and Myrtle Avenue have similar street conditions as Flushing Avenue. They support two-way traffic, on street parking and no bike lanes. In the sub-area, the streetscapes of Myrtle Avenue and Park Avenue consist of plantings, standard signage, fire hydrants, bus shelters and signage for the B54 bus.

Buildings

As discussed below, across the study area's four sub-areas, there is considerable variation in terms of building type and size. Figure 8-7, Building Heights, and Figure 8-8, Building Density, indicate the range of building size and bulk found in the study area.

Western Sub-Area. The Western Sub-Area is primarily occupied by small- and medium-sized lots with residential buildings between 3- and 5-stories, although it is not uniformly developed at this fine grain scale. Building lots range in size from 1,800 sf to 125,000 sf with a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Sternberg Park
Housing
Northern Sub Area
HEYWARD ST
I.S. 71
Marcy Avenue Armory
RUTLEDGE ST
Western Sub-Area
UNION AV
I.S. 318 & Playground
BROADWAY
THROOP AV
MOORE ST
VARET ST
COOK ST
LYNCH ST
P.S. 280
LEE AV
MARCY AV
WALTON ST
WALLABOUT ST
Broadway Triangle Sub-Area
DEBEVOISE ST
WHIPPLE ST
MIDDLETON ST
LORIMER ST
LYNCH ST
B.W.C. Charter School
FLUSHING AV
Woodhull Medical Center (NYC HHC)
HOPKINS ST
Southern Sub-Area
WALWORTH ST
WARSOFF PL
ELLERY ST
DELMONICO PL
PARK AV
arcy Houses (NYCHA)
MARTIN L KING PL
TOMPKINS AV
Tompkins Houses (NYCHA)
STOCKTON ST
MYRTLE AV
Legend
Rezoning Area
Study Area
Sub Areas
Number of Floors
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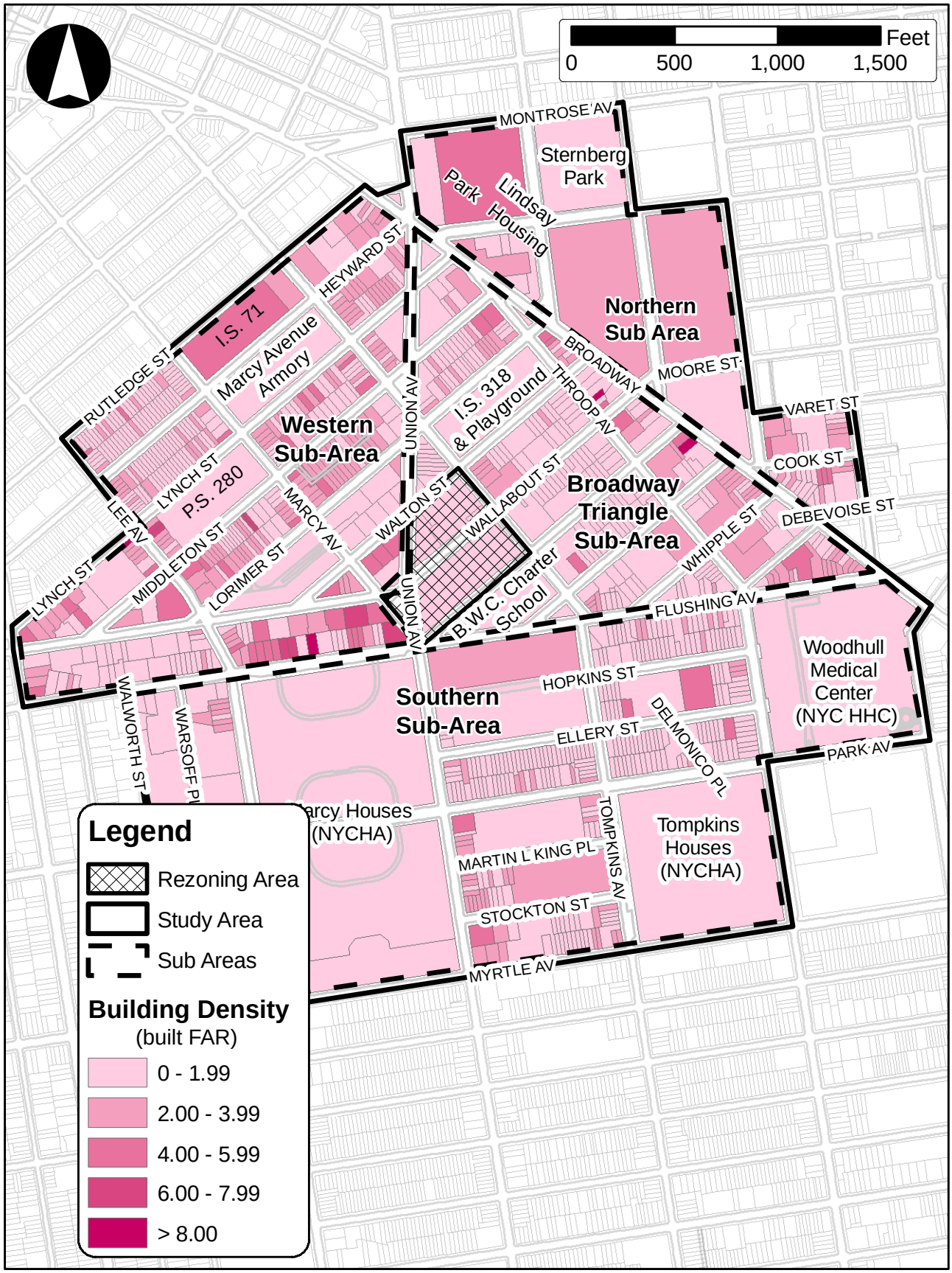
1-4 Floors (784 lots)
5-8 Floors (107 lots)
9-12 Floors (15 lots)
>12 Floors (4 lots)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Marcy Avenue Armory
Northern Sub Area
BROADWAY
MOORE ST
VARET ST
RUTLEDGE ST
Western Sub-Area
UNION AV
I.S. 318 & Playground
THROOP AV
COOK ST
LEE AV
LYNCH ST
P.S. 280
MARCY AV
WALTON ST
WALLABOUT ST
Broadway Triangle Sub-Area
DEBEVOISE ST
MIDDLETON ST
LORIMER ST
WHIPPLE ST
LYNCH ST
B.W.C. Charter School
FLUSHING AV
Woodhull Medical Center (NYC HHC)
HOPKINS ST
Southern Sub-Area
WALWORTH ST
WARSOFF PL
ELLERY ST
DELMONICO PL
PARK AV
arcy Houses (NYCHA)
MARTIN L KING PL
TOMPKINS AV
Tompkins Houses (NYCHA)
STOCKTON ST
MYRTLE AV
Legend
Rezoning Area
Study Area
Sub Areas
Building Density
(built FAR)
0 - 1.99
2.00 - 3.99
4.00 - 5.99
6.00 - 7.99
> 8.00

significant number of approximately 2,000-sf lots with dimensions 20 feet by 100 feet. Larger building lots are generally occupied by institutional uses. In the areas along Lynch Street and Heyward Street within the sub-area, the buildings form a continuous street wall. Exceptions to the small building scale in the sub-area are the institutional uses in the north of the sub-area and larger residential developments in the south closer to Flushing Avenue. In the north, the Marcy Avenue Armory, I.S. 71 and P.S. 280 occupy lot areas of 105,000 sf, 125,000 sf, and 114,287 sf respectively. In the south, residential buildings occupying the irregular shaped lots at the intersections of Wallabout Street with Lorimer, Lynch and Middleton Streets deviate from the form of typical residences seen throughout the study area. Newer development includes some buildings with greater height, such as new apartment buildings on the block bounded by Walton Street, Union Avenue, Wallabout Street and Marcy Avenue that are 7 stories tall. These building possess a distinct character created by multi-color brick and cascading wrought-iron balconies. In this part of the sub-area, there is a concentration of religious and social institutions.

In terms of building bulk, use and type in the Western Sub-Area, there are few commercial buildings along main arterials. Flushing Avenue in the sub-area is lined primarily by residential, institutional and a few remaining manufacturing buildings.

Broadway Triangle Sub-Area. In terms of building bulk, use, and type, in the Broadway Triangle Sub-Area along main arterials and streets, there are older commercial and industrial buildings and newer residential buildings including detached homes and apartment buildings. Most buildings in the sub-area are built at or close to the front lot lines and form streetwalls as most buildings are attached, semi-detached, or feature narrow side lots. While many sub-area buildings typically range from one to five stories, some of the buildings constructed within the last several years are taller, such as new apartment buildings on the block bounded by Walton Street, Broadway, Wallabout Street, and Throop Avenue that range from 7 to 10 stories tall. Vacant land and buildings are also prominent in the Broadway Triangle Sub-Area, although the area has experienced a significant trend in recent years of redevelopment of such properties with new residential, mixed-use, and community facility uses. The project area consists of vacant blocks in the western part of the sub-area and numerous other vacant lots can be found on the block between Throop and Harrison Avenues to the east of the project area, though only the project area blocks are entirely vacant. Several institutions can also be found in the sub-area, including I.S. 318 which has a building area of 200,000 sf. I.S. 318, along with the De Hostos Playground, occupies one whole block; the Beth Rachel School for Girls which occupies 25,000 sf of the block at the intersection of Throop Avenue, Bartlett Street and Whittle Street; and, the All Saints Roman Catholic Church at the intersection of Throop Avenue and Whipple Street.

Northern Sub-Area. The Northern Sub-Area, which is separated from the Broadway Triangle Sub-Area by the elevated train structure that extends above Broadway, is also distinguished by different building types. The sub-area includes the Lindsay Park apartment development, consisting of tower-in-a-park high rise (22-story) apartment buildings, with large rectangular footprints set back from the street line on superblocks. The Modernist-style buildings, which feature brick exteriors and balconies, rise without setbacks. The sub-area also includes a large, one-story supermarket (Food Bazaar), also on a superblock. Portions of this commercial building are built to the street line, but the building entrance is located within the lot and is accessed adjacent to the on-site accessory parking lot.

With these larger buildings on superblocks and separation of uses, the Northern Sub-Area has a larger and uniform building scale in contrast to the smaller, mixed-use and mixed scale Western and Broadway Triangle Sub-Areas.

However, the two southernmost blocks in the sub-area have a building scale more similar to the Western and Broadway Triangle Sub-Areas. They consist of high lot coverage, mid-rise apartment buildings. These include recently constructed, mid-sized 8-story apartment buildings and older buildings with ground floor retail along Graham Avenue.

Southern Sub-Area. The predominant building type and use in the Southern Study Area is midrise apartment buildings in the Marcy Houses (27 6-story brick apartment buildings) and Tompkins Houses (8 8- and 16-story brick apartment buildings) developments built in tower-in-a-park plans on superblocks. The sub-area also includes a large 9-story Brutalist-style institutional building, Woodhull Medical Center, which is also sited on a superblock.

The superblock developments are the most visually prominent buildings in the study area and occupy substantial lot area within the Southern Sub-Area. The sub-area also includes eight blocks located between the Marcy Houses on the west and Woodhull Medical Center and the Tompkins Houses on the east that are generally occupied by low and mid-rise buildings on smaller lots, although there is considerable variability in building type, scale, and arrangement. Some buildings on these blocks are attached or semi-detached and built to the front lot line. These include rowhouses, small apartment buildings and commercial buildings. These blocks also includes other types of buildings, including the Edmund T. Pratt, Jr. Houses, a scatter-site development consisting of 2-story semi-detached townhomes, which are set back from the street but have wrought iron fencing with brick pillars and front yards at the street line that establish a streetscape character separating the public sidewalk and the private property. Other buildings include larger scale institutional facilities including PS 373, a 4-story school building occupied by a high school for students with special needs, PS 297, and the former IS 33 building (now occupied by charter schools). The Southern Sub-Area also includes other blocks along the study area periphery, including in closest proximity to the project area the 8-story 630 Flushing Avenue building, also known as 630 Flushing Incubator (formerly the Pfizer Main Plant building but sold by the pharmaceutical company in 2011), a full-block building on the south side of Flushing Avenue between Tompkins Avenue and Marcy Avenue, currently occupied by a number of commercial and light industrial establishments

Storefront retail in the Southern Sub-Area is concentrated along sections of Tompkins Avenue, Marcy Avenue, and Flushing Avenue.

Visual Resources

Although the project area is vacant, it is enclosed by fencing and has been used for temporary storage, which tend to obstruct potential views of surroundings buildings, which in any event do not feature prominent built or natural features.

Within the Urban Design and Visual Resources Study Area, there are no significant visual resources. This is due in part to the elevated subway line which extends above Broadway and large residential complexes on superblocks, such as Lindsay Park and the Marcy Houses, which

block distant views. In addition, the differing orientations of the street grid patterns found in the study area limit the visual corridors formed by public streets. Overall, there are few views of notable features, apart from those on public streets immediately adjacent to buildings with some prominent architectural elements such as All Saints Roman Catholic Church and the Marcy Avenue Armory.

Open Space

Reflecting the differing buildings patterns that predominate throughout the study area, there is relatively little open space in the Western and Broadway Triangle Sub-Areas while there is substantial open space in the Northern and Southern Sub-Areas.

Western Sub-Area. Open space in the Western Sub-Area is limited to a few public open spaces in parks and school playgrounds, as most of the area is developed with high lot coverage buildings.

Broadway Triangle Sub-Area. Similar to the Western Sub-Area, most of the buildings in the Broadway Triangle Sub-Area are high lot coverage structures and open space generally consists of a few public open spaces, including Greenstreets and school playgrounds, including PS 168 Playground (aka Bartlett Playground) and De Hostos Playground at IS 318. The sub-area includes several vacant lots, but generally these are not defined as open space for urban design purposes as many are enclosed with fencing and do not have an interim use such as a community garden or parking.

Northern Sub-Area. The Northern Sub-Area has a significant amount of open space including large lawns and surface parking lots within the Lindsay Park apartment complex, Sternberg Park, large public open space occupying a superblock, and a surface parking lot which is accessory to a supermarket.

Southern Sub-Area. Similar to the Northern Sub-Area, the Southern Sub-Area has significant open space, reflecting the prevalence of superblocks with tower-in-a-park buildings. There is substantial open space in the form of lawns, parks, and parking lots in the Marcy Houses and Tompkins Houses developments. Additional open spaces in the sub-area include a full-block parking lot that is accessory to 630 Flushing Avenue and parking lots within the Woodhull Medical Center complex.

Natural Features

The entire study area has a generally flat topography. As this is a highly-urbanized area, there are no significant natural features. Green space in the area is limited to landscaped features such as parks, discussed above under open space, and other plantings such as street trees.

F. FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTION (NO-ACTION)

Project Area

In the 2019 future without the proposed action (No-Action conditions), the project area would not be redeveloped with a new development. It is expected that site conditions will continue to be similar to existing conditions. This provides a baseline condition to identify the effects of the proposed action/RWCDS.

Study Area

As discussed in Chapter 2, there are several developments expected to be completed in the future without the proposed action by 2019. These new developments are identified in Table 2-2 and Figure 2-8.

These development will include mostly medium-scale residential, mixed-use, and community facility buildings that will be developed on infill sites in the portions of the study area that permit residential and community facility development and where vacant or underutilized properties exist. They will comply with the building bulk, use and density set forth by their respective zoning districts. (As noted in Chapter 2, residential zoning districts in the study area include R6, R6A, R6B, R7-1, R7A, and R7D.) They will not significantly alter the existing urban design or visual resources in the area, but will improve the area's urban design elements by replacing vacant and underutilized manufacturing and general commercial properties with new buildings that will be at a scale and massing compatible with existing occupied buildings in the area. As such, these new developments will contribute to creating a more cohesive urban fabric in portions of the study area where residential development is permitted and infill development sites are available. Although there will be some changes to street operations implemented by NYC DOT intended to address circulation and safety concerns[3], the study area No-Build developments are not anticipated to alter existing street hierarchy or block forms in the study area.

These new developments will include buildings immediately west of the project area. Three new residential buildings on the block bounded by Lorimer Street, Union Avenue, Walton Street, and Marcy Avenue, constructed pursuant to R7A contextual zoning, will be 7 stories, with approximately 60 to 65-foot tall streetwalls and total building heights of approximately 80 feet. These new developments will reinforce continuous streetwalls and the area's trend toward residential and complementary community facility uses. They will also contribute to the area's medium density and scale character with new mid-rise development built pursuant to contextual zoning regulations.

[3] Refer to the "Future Without the Proposed Action (No-Action)" section of Chapter 12, for more information on the *South Williamsburg Transportation Study* changes.

G. FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED ACTION (WITH-ACTION)

Project Area

As indicated in the RWCDS site plan (Figure 1-13 in Chapter 1), under RWCDS/With-Action conditions, the project area would be redeveloped with apartment buildings that would form continuous streetwalls along all street frontages on both the Northern and Southern Blocks, except for the midblock publicly-accessible open space. That 65-foot wide corridor would extend through the two blocks on an alignment parallel to and 200 feet west of Harrison Avenue.

On the Northern Block, there would be three buildings with the publicly-accessible open space separating Building A on the west and Buildings B and C on the east. Building A would have frontage along Union Avenue and Wallabout Street and would lie within the R8A district. It would have a 105-foot tall streetwall and a maximum roof height of 145 feet. Building B would be a midblock, through-lot building with frontage on Walton and Wallabout streets, directly east of the open space. It would lie within the R7D district and would have an 85-foot tall streetwall and a maximum roof height of 105 feet. Building C would have frontage along Harrison Avenue and Walton and Wallabout streets and would lie within the R7A district. It would have 55- and 65-foot tall streetwalls and maximum roof height of 75 feet.

On the Southern Block, there would be five buildings with the publicly-accessible open space separating Buildings F, G, and H on the west and Buildings D and E on the east. Buildings D and E would be twins of Buildings C and B, respectively. For example, Building E would have the same building area, massing, and midblock location as Building B. West of the open space, the building plan on this block would differ from the Northern Block. Buildings F and G would be midblock buildings with mirrored plans; Building F would have frontage on Wallabout Street, with its east façade facing the open space and extending to the centerline of the block where it would adjoin Building G. Conversely, Building G would have frontage on Gerry Street, with its east facade extending to the centerline of the block where it would adjoin Building F. Buildings F and G, which would each be split between the proposed R7D and R8A zoning districts, would have 65-foot tall streetwalls and maximum roof heights of 115 feet. On the west, Buildings F and G would adjoin Building H; the latter would occupy the western portion of the block. Building H would be a trapezoidal building with frontage on Union Avenue and Wallabout and Gerry streets and lie entirely within the R8A district. It would have a 105-foot tall streetwall and a maximum roof height of 145 feet.

The location and dimensions of the 65-foot wide publicly-accessible open space would be memorialized in a Restrictive Declaration or similar legal instrument binding on the property, though other elements of the site plan and buildings massing identified in the RWCDS are illustrative of what could be developed under the applicable R7, RD, and R8A contextual zoning.

Views of the RWCDS With-Action buildings from pedestrian vantage points are shown in Figures 8-9a to 8-9g.

Comparison of Existing and With-Action Conditions - View west from Gerry Street and Harrison Avenue



Existing

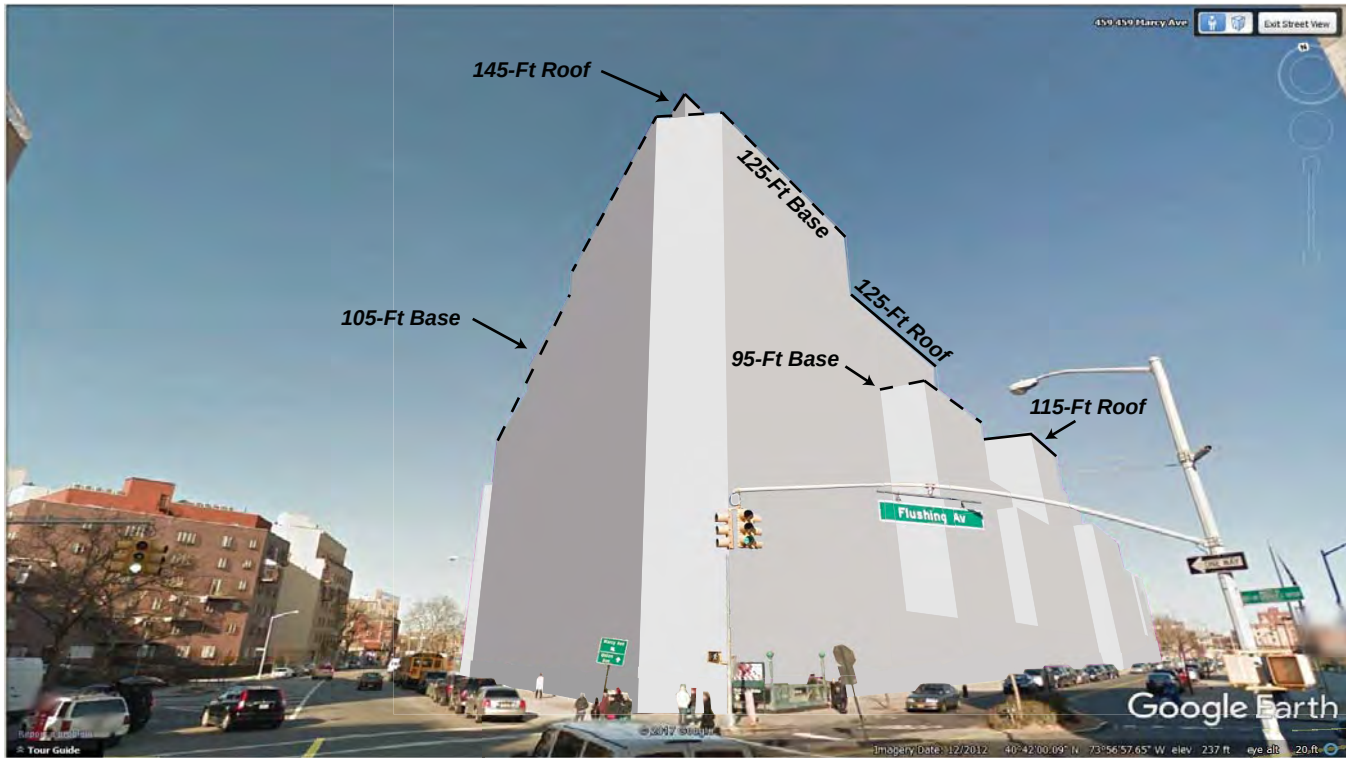


With-Action

Comparison of Existing and With-Action Conditions -
View north at Gerry Street, Flushing and Union avenues



Existing



With-Action

**Comparison of Existing and With-Action Conditions -
View southwest from Walton Street and Harrison Avenue**

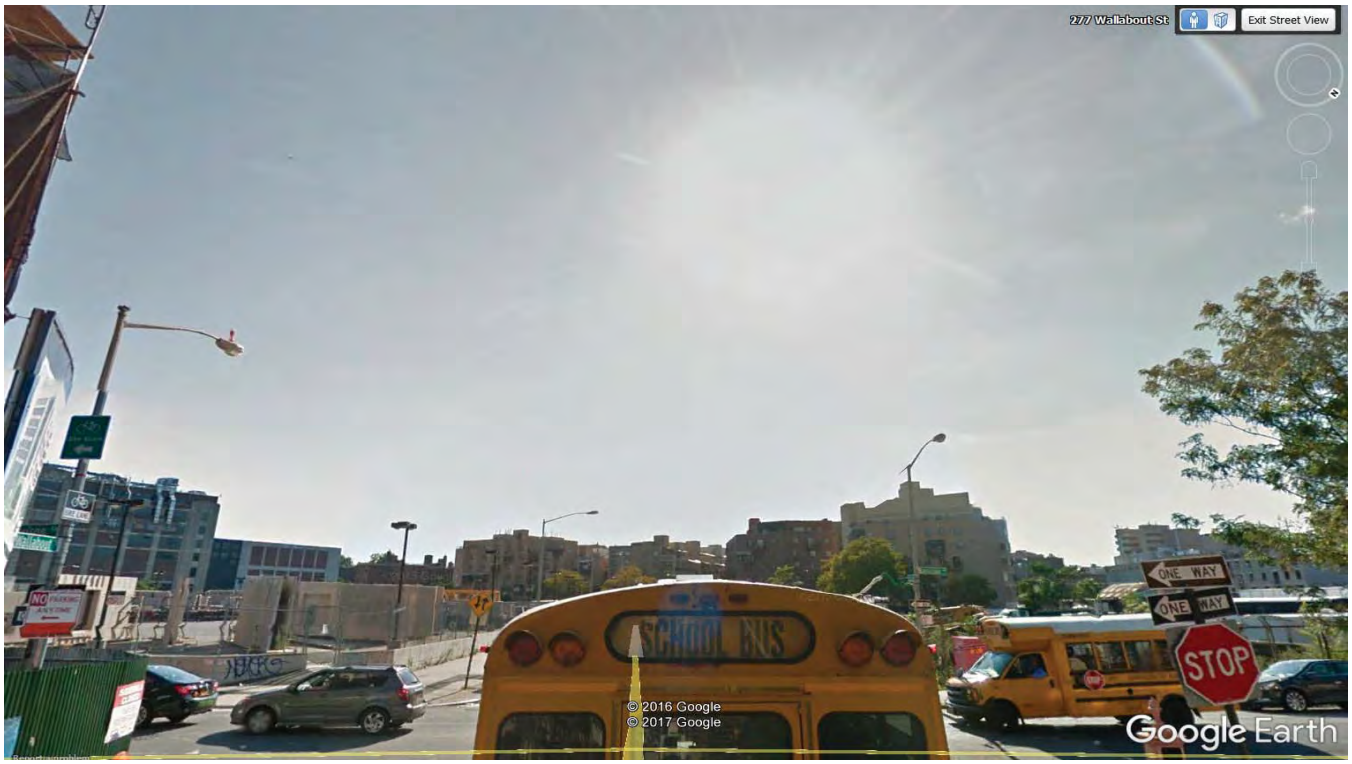


Existing

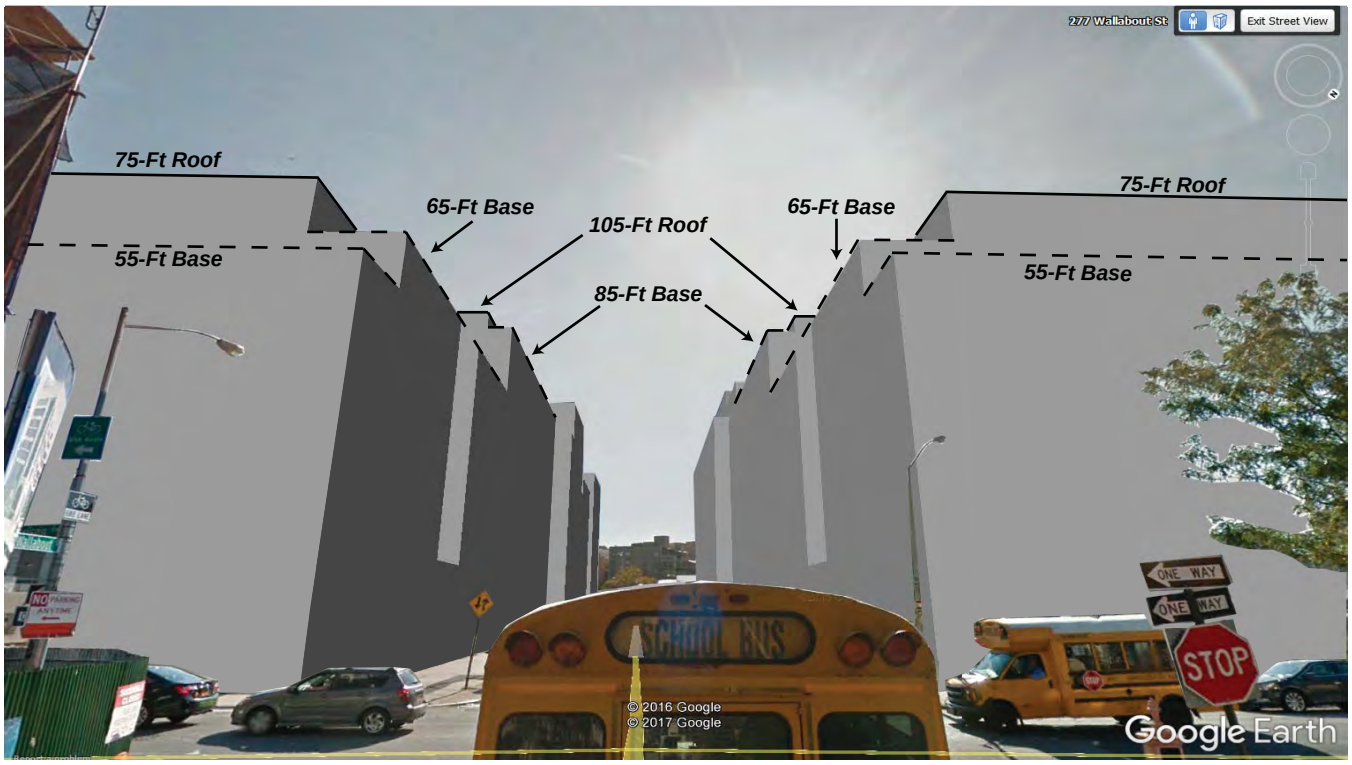


With-Action

**Comparison of Existing and With-Action Conditions -
View southwest from Wallabout Street and Harrison Avenue**



Existing

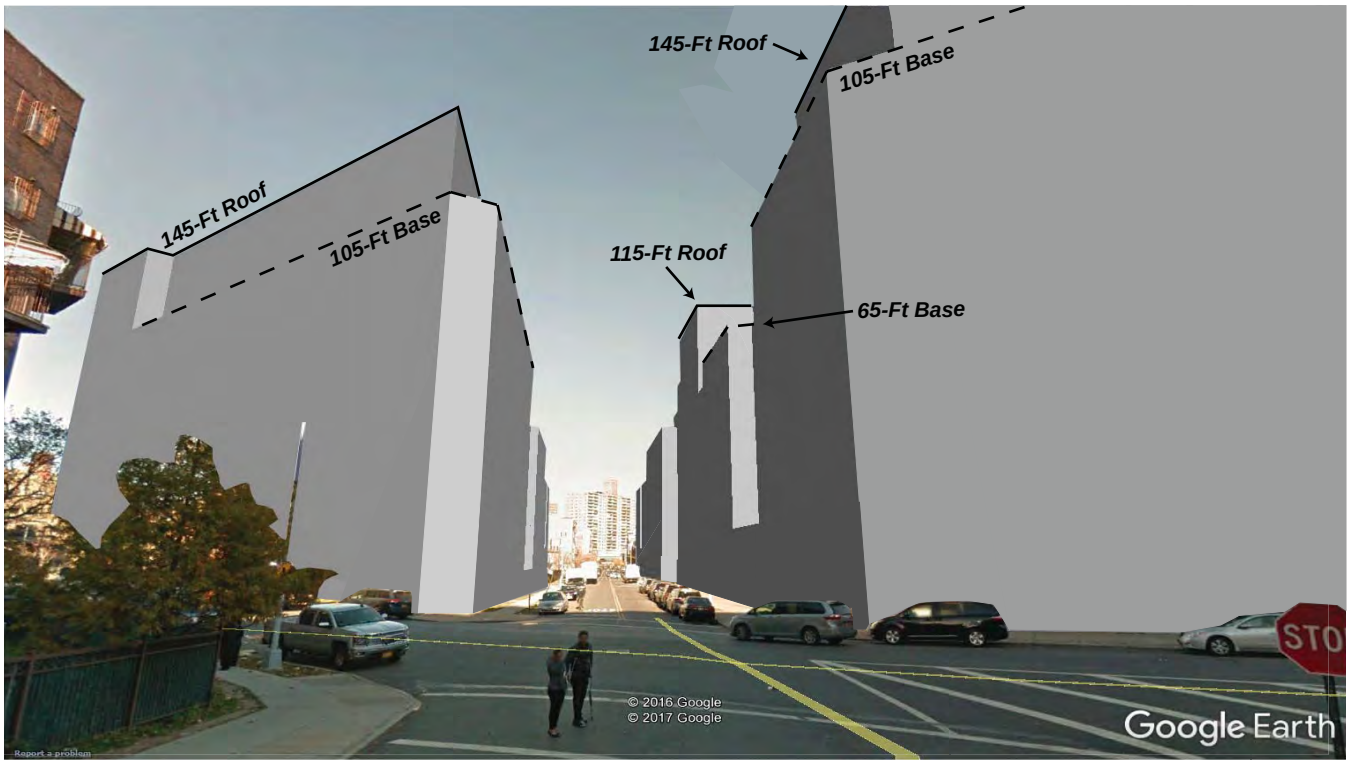


With-Action

**Comparison of Existing and With-Action Conditions -
View northeast from Wallabout Street and Union Avenue**



Existing

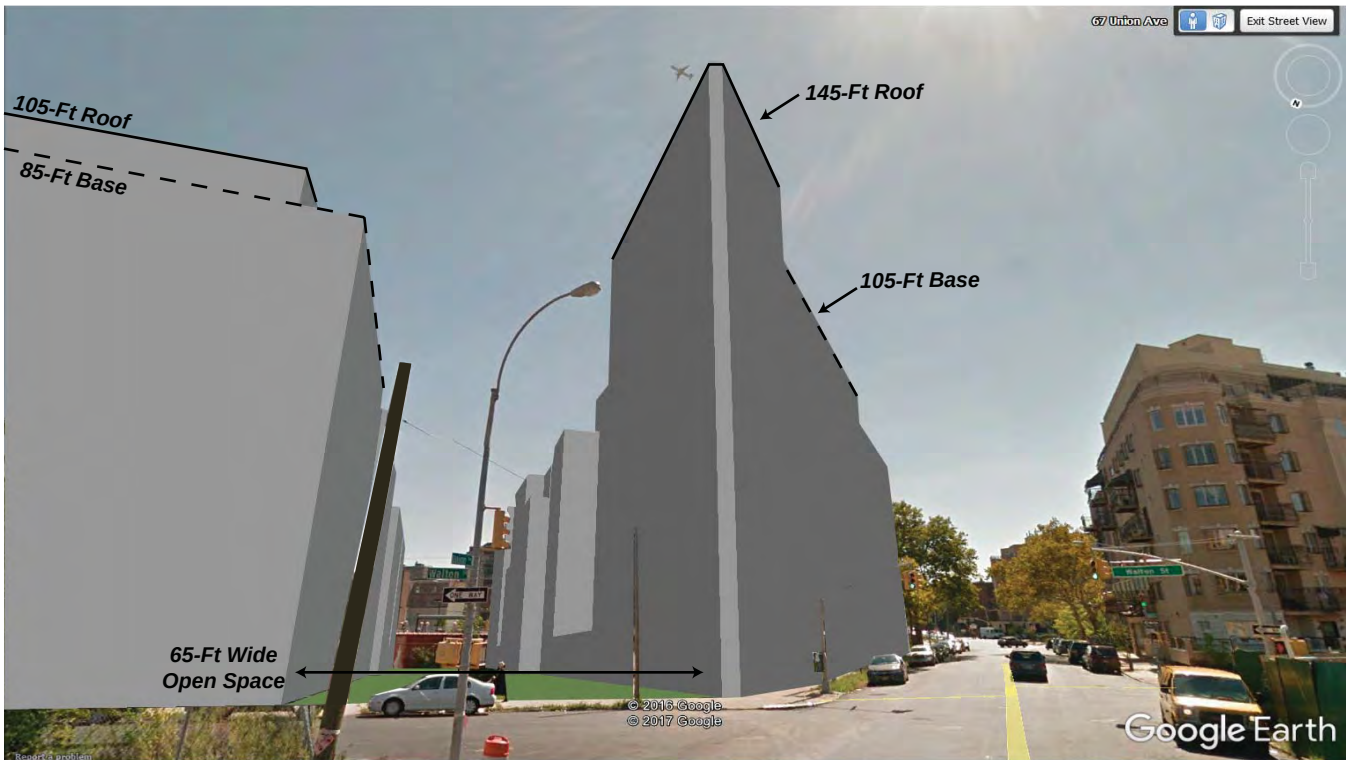


With-Action

Comparison of Existing and With-Action Conditions - View southeast from Walton Street and Union Avenue



Existing

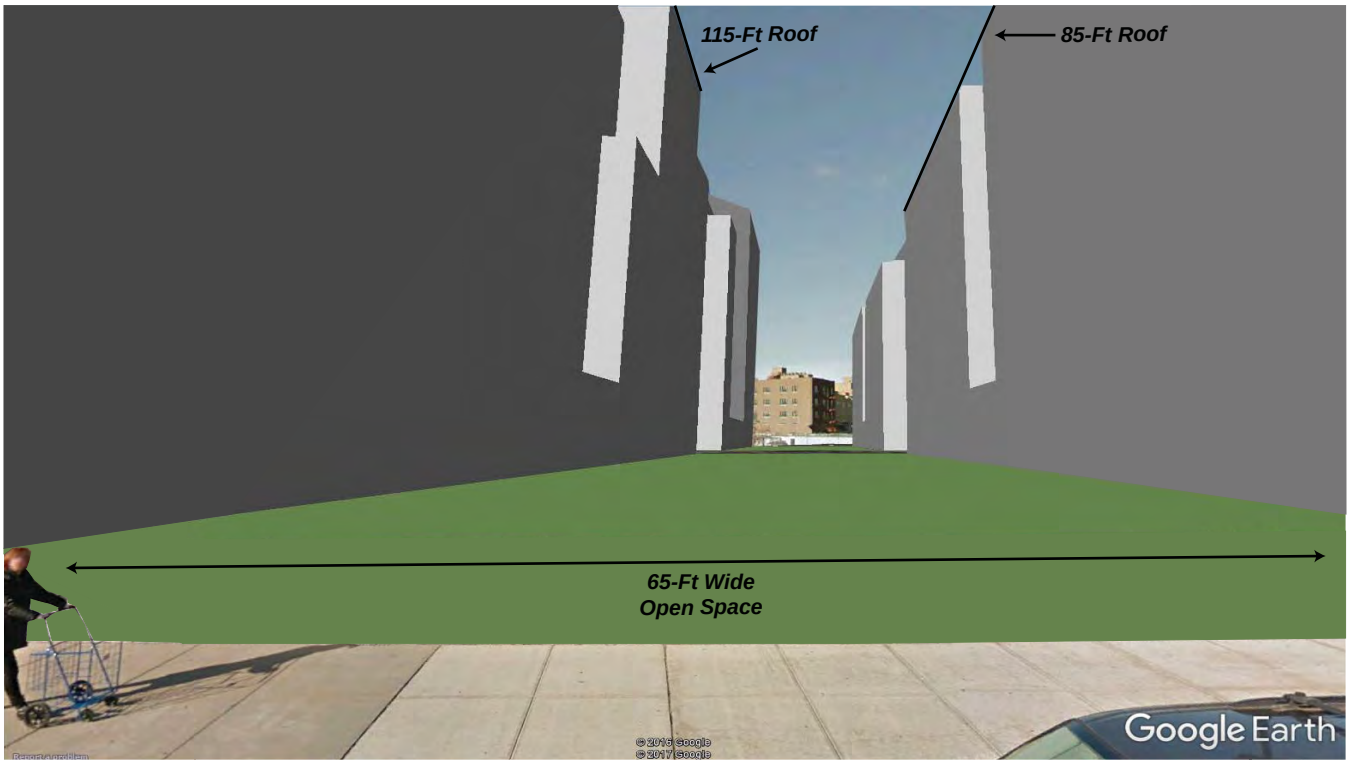


With-Action

Comparison of Existing and With-Action Conditions - View northwest from the mid-block of Gerry Street



Existing



With-Action

Study Area

Assessment

While the proposed action/RWCDS would result in a building form on the vacant the project area that is not permitted by the current zoning, the projected buildings would be similar in many respects to other existing buildings in study area in terms of their bulk characteristics. Similarly, projected future developments and other potential development in the longer-term within other parts of the study area mapped with contextual zoning districts, would also be expected to follow a similar building typology. As such, the action-generated buildings would provide streetwalls similar to those existing in many blocks in study area, particularly in the Broadway Triangle and Western Sub-Areas. While the study area also contains tower-in-a-park areas in the Northern and Southern Sub-Areas, that type of urban development reflects a design aesthetic that is not considered the desired urban form in the area. Recent rezonings have incorporated contextual zoning districts similar to those proposed in this application. As with many other recently built developments and those anticipated to be completed by the 2019 Build year, the projected buildings would have streetwalls with front setbacks and above the setbacks the buildings would rise to a maximum permitted height.

The building heights permitted by the proposed R7A, R7D, and R8A zoning districts would result in action-generated buildings of generally similar to those existing and planned in the study area. The 75-foot building height along Harrison Avenue would be similar to the 75-foot tall school recently built across the street in an R7A zone and the existing and planned 70 to 80-foot tall buildings on the blocks immediately west of the project area. The 115-foot midblock and 145-foot Union Avenue corridor building would be somewhat taller than most study area buildings; however as noted in the description of existing buildings and zoning, the study area does include some buildings of comparable or greater height, such as the 10-story buildings on the block bounded by Walton Street, Broadway, Wallabout Street, and Throop Avenue and buildings that will be developed in the southern part of the study area on the north side of Myrtle Avenue between Marcy Avenue and Tompkins Avenue which is zoned R7D (see Table 2-2, No-Build Site 1) and the 22-story, approximately 189-foot tall Lindsay Park buildings in the Northern Sub-area. The taller buildings permitted by the R7D and R8A zoning, would be compatible with the Union Avenue corridor which is a wide street with a subway station where increased density and height would reinforce the location's function as a core area for the neighborhood. This area is similar to the R7D zone located at the southern edge of the study area, rezoned as part of the City-initiated Bedford-Stuyvesant North Rezoning, which is also adjacent to a subway station along a wide street. Furthermore, in a condition not present in the R7D Bedford-Stuyvesant location, taller buildings on Union Avenue could function as a visual anchor for the junction of Flushing, Union, and Marcy avenues and Gerry Street. As such the taller buildings would be scaled to the unusually wide open area adjoining the project area on the southwest.

The new retail development projected for the project area would provide local retail for the study area's burgeoning residential population. Although storefronts have not been prominent in the area, their presence in the project area would activate street life, which is particularly appropriate given the area's location adjacent to a subway station and along two avenue corridors. In addition, retail storefronts would add visual interest and variation to the full-block building

development that would help to make the larger new buildings more compatible with the area's many small lot buildings by adding multiple doors and windows facing onto the public sidewalk.

In addition, the 65-foot wide midblock publicly-accessible open space, a programmed space with landscaping and seating, would provide a visual and functional amenity open to pedestrians. This public realm would serve as an "outdoor room,' i.e., a plaza space defined by the walls of the adjoining buildings but opened physically and visually to the streets along its vertical axis. It would also allow pedestrian movement through the block and offer public views in a way not typically provided in areas with streetwall buildings. This midblock open area, at a scale similar to a public street, would also reduce the overall mass of the buildings, breaking the blocks into three distinct sections.

Overall, the proposed action/RWCDS would be compatible with the surrounding built environment, including the adjoining Broadway Triangle area and areas immediately to the west which have been rezoned in recent years and are experiencing new development pursuant to contextual zoning. The proposed action would infill one of the remaining major gaps in the study area's urban fabric at a location where additional residential development at the scale permitted by the proposed R7A, R7D, and R8A districts would be compatible with the evolving character of the surrounding built environment. The project area, with its two blocks of vacant lots, detracts from the aesthetic quality of the study area. The proposed action/RWCDS buildings would improve the urban design conditions of the study area by providing visual and physical continuity to the project area and the blocks surrounding area rather than providing an interruption to the built environment as exists currently. Accordingly, the proposed action/RWCDS would not result in significant adverse urban design impacts.

Visual Resources

As discussed above under existing conditions, the project area and the study area do not contain any significant visual resources. The redevelopment of the project area would not have to potential to affect any important public views of visual resources. Therefore, the proposed action/RWCDS would not result in any significant adverse visual resources impacts.

Summary

The proposed action would introduce new buildings with massings that are not permitted under the current zoning and would also create a dedicated midblock publicly-accessible open space on the two-block project area. Pursuant to the proposed R7A, R7D, and R8A underlying zoning, buildings would feature streetwall bases, above which they would set back before rising to roof heights ranging from 75 to 145 feet. Although these building envelopes are not currently permitted in the project area, the projected buildings would be similar in many respects to other existing buildings in study area in terms of their bulk characteristics. The tallest building streetwalls and heights would be along the Union Avenue, reinforcing that corridor's significance as a transit hub along a wide street and an unusually broad right-of-way formed by the junction of several street adjacent to the Project Area's Southern Block. The action-generated buildings would remove an interruption to the area's built environment that has existed for decades and as such would provide visual and physical continuity to the neighborhood's urban fabric. Furthermore, in addition to providing compatible buildings, the proposed action would result in

the creation of the 65-foot wide midblock publicly-accessible open space with landscaping and seating, which would provide a visual and functional amenity open to pedestrians.

As there no existing notable visual resources in the immediate vicinity of the project area and the action-generated buildings would not encroach on any existing streets, the proposed action would not have the potential to affect any visual resources.

Accordingly, the proposed action/RWCDS would not result in significant adverse urban design impacts.