8

Urban Design and Visual Resources

In an urban design assessment under CEQR, one considers whether and how a project may change the 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 and natural environment in the context of the project.

Introduction

According to the *2021 CEQR Technical Manual*, urban design is defined as the totality of components—including streets, buildings, open spaces, wind, natural resources, and visual resources—that shape a pedestrian's experience of public space. A visual resource is defined as the connection from the public realm to significant natural or built features, including views of the waterfront, public parks, landmark structures or districts, otherwise distinct buildings or groups of buildings, and natural resources.

Based on the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a preliminary assessment of urban design and visual resources is appropriate when there is the potential for a pedestrian to observe, from the street level, a physical alteration beyond that allowed by existing zoning. Examples include projects that permit the modification of yard, height, and setback requirements, and projects that result in an increase in built floor area beyond what would be allowed "as-of-right," or in the future No-Action condition.

As described in **Chapter 1, Project Description**, the proposed Queens Future Project is anticipated to comprise up to approximately 3.7 million square feet of new construction, with destination entertainment that includes a music hall, hotel, a gaming facility,[1] convention and meeting space, restaurant and retail space, and office and community facility space. The Proposed Project would also include public park space—at least 20 acres of the Development Site would be improved with landscaping and other amenities for public recreation—improved connections to the Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station, and other public realm improvements as well as structured parking facilities to accommodate up to 13,750 spaces (see **Figure 8-1**).

[1] The inclusion of a gaming facility is contingent upon receiving a gaming license from the New York State Gaming Commission.

Figure 8-1 Illustrative Site Plan



For Illustrative Purposes Only
Source: SHoP Architects and Field Operations

Principal Conclusions

Urban Design

The Proposed Project would transform the existing underutilized parking lots (which are not accessible to pedestrians on a regular basis) into a unique mixed-use recreational, commercial, and entertainment venue. The Proposed Actions would facilitate substantial improvements in the pedestrian experience within and around the Development Site by creating a safe and walkable pedestrian network. The proposed public park open spaces, as well as the roadway, transit, sidewalk, and accessibility improvements, would create improved pedestrian connections to existing parks as well as improved circulation for pedestrians from Citi Field to parking areas and transit stations during events. The Proposed Actions would also improve pedestrian connections to the new mixed-use neighborhood that will be developed in the No-Action condition as part of the Willets Point Phase 1 and Phase 2 developments. Changes to urban design elements of the study area as a result of the Proposed Actions would be consistent with both existing urban design elements and those being developed in the area under future No-Action conditions, such as the Willets Point Phase 1 and Phase 2 developments, that will transition the Willets Point peninsula from an industrial area into a mixed-use neighborhood and entertainment destination, adding more pedestrian activity and open spaces to the area. Therefore, the Proposed Actions are not expected to result in significant adverse impacts to urban design.

Visual Resources

The following five visual resources are located in the study area: Flushing Bay, the Malcolm X Promenade, the Candela structures, the Passerelle Bridge, and Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Existing views of these resources are limited due to elevated roadways surrounding the resources. It is not expected that the new development would block views of these resources. The Proposed Project would improve view corridors towards these resources, as new walkways would be constructed that would provide for enhanced and safer pedestrian connections between the Malcolm X Promenade and Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Overall, the Proposed Actions would facilitate significant improvements to the pedestrian experience within and around the Development Site. As a result, it is not anticipated that the Proposed Project would result in any significant adverse impacts to visual resources.

Methodology

Per the *CEQR Technical Manual*, an urban design and visual resources assessment is conducted in three basic steps. First, a proposed action is reviewed to determine whether such an assessment is warranted, based on whether it would be expected to result in changes to elements particular to urban design—such as streets, buildings, visual resources, open space, natural features, and/or potential wind effects, and whether there is the potential for a pedestrian to observe, from the street level, a physical alteration beyond that allowed by existing zoning. Pursuant to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, projects that permit modification of yard, height, and setback requirements, and projects that result in an increase in built floor area beyond what would be allowed as-of-right, or in the future without a proposed action, require preliminary assessment. When such changes, or "effects," could be expected with a proposed action, the preliminary assessment of urban design and visual

resources is conducted to determine which particular effects expected with the proposed action may warrant further investigation in a detailed analysis. A detailed analysis may be needed for projects or actions that 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. It is within the detailed analysis that the effects are characterized, and a determination is made as to whether any changes to the urban design and visual resources of an area would alter the pedestrian's experience of public space in a significant way.

The elements contributing to urban design are described in the *CEQR Technical Manual* as follows:

- Streets: For many neighborhoods, streets are the primary component of public space. The arrangement and orientation of streets define the location and flow of activity in an area, set street views, and create the blocks on which buildings and open spaces are organized. The apportionment of street space between cars, bicycles, transit, and sidewalk is critical to making a successful streetscape, as is the careful design of street furniture, grade, materials used, and permanent fixtures, including plantings, streetlights, fire hydrants, curb cuts, or newsstands.
- Buildings: Buildings support streets. A building's street walls form the most common backdrop in the City for public space. A building's size, shape, setbacks, lot coverage, placement on the zoning lot and block, orientation of active uses, and pedestrian and vehicular entrances all play major roles in the vitality of the streetscape. The public realm also extends to building façades and rooftops, offering more opportunity to enrich the visual character of an area.
- Open Space: For the purpose of urban design, open space includes public and private areas such as parks, yards, cemeteries, parking lots and privately owned public spaces.
- Natural Features: Natural features include vegetation and geologic, topographic, and aquatic features. Rock outcroppings, steep slopes or varied ground elevation, beaches, or wetlands may help define the overall visual character of an area.
- Visual Resources: A visual resource is the connection from the public realm to significant natural or built features, including views of the waterfront, public parks, landmark structures or districts, otherwise distinct buildings or groups of buildings, or natural resources.
- Wind: Channelized wind pressure from between tall buildings and downwashed wind pressure from parallel tall buildings may cause winds that jeopardize pedestrian safety.

Although the Proposed Project is located in an area with limited pedestrian facilities, it is adjacent to historic and visual resources and would replace surface parking areas with up to approximately 3.7 million gross square feet (gsf) of new development. As such, an urban design and visual resources analysis is warranted. Given the proposed scale of development, this chapter provides a detailed analysis of the potential impacts of the Proposed Actions on urban design and visual resources consistent with the *CEQR Technical Manual*. The analysis describes existing conditions and compares the future with and without the Proposed Actions in order to determine potential urban design and visual resource impacts.

Per the criteria listed in Section 230 of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a pedestrian wind condition analysis is not warranted for the Proposed Actions. The *CEQR Technical Manual* identifies wind as a concern when channelized wind pressure from between multiple, tall buildings and/or downwashed wind pressure from parallel tall buildings causes winds that affect pedestrian comfort and safety. Downwashed wind is wind that is propelled downward by an intervening structure, such as a high-rise building, that causes high wind speeds at the street level. The Project Area is not located in a high

wind location, such as directly along the waterfront, and would not create a uniform street wall that would result in channelization or downwash effects. Therefore, wind is not considered in this analysis.

Information pertinent to the assessment of the urban design and visual resources analysis includes data collected and analytical information prepared as part of other analyses included in this DEIS, specifically: **Chapter 2, Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy**; **Chapter 5, Open Space**; and **Chapter 7, Historic and Cultural Resources**. In addition, the study of existing urban design and visual resources conditions has been informed by field visits and photography, and the depiction of future conditions without and with the Proposed Action also rely on computer imaging and graphic renderings. Photos included in this assessment were taken on February 23, 2022; May 15, 2022; March 22, 2023; and July 19, 2023. Photos used to create renderings of the With-Action condition were taken on June 19, 2023.

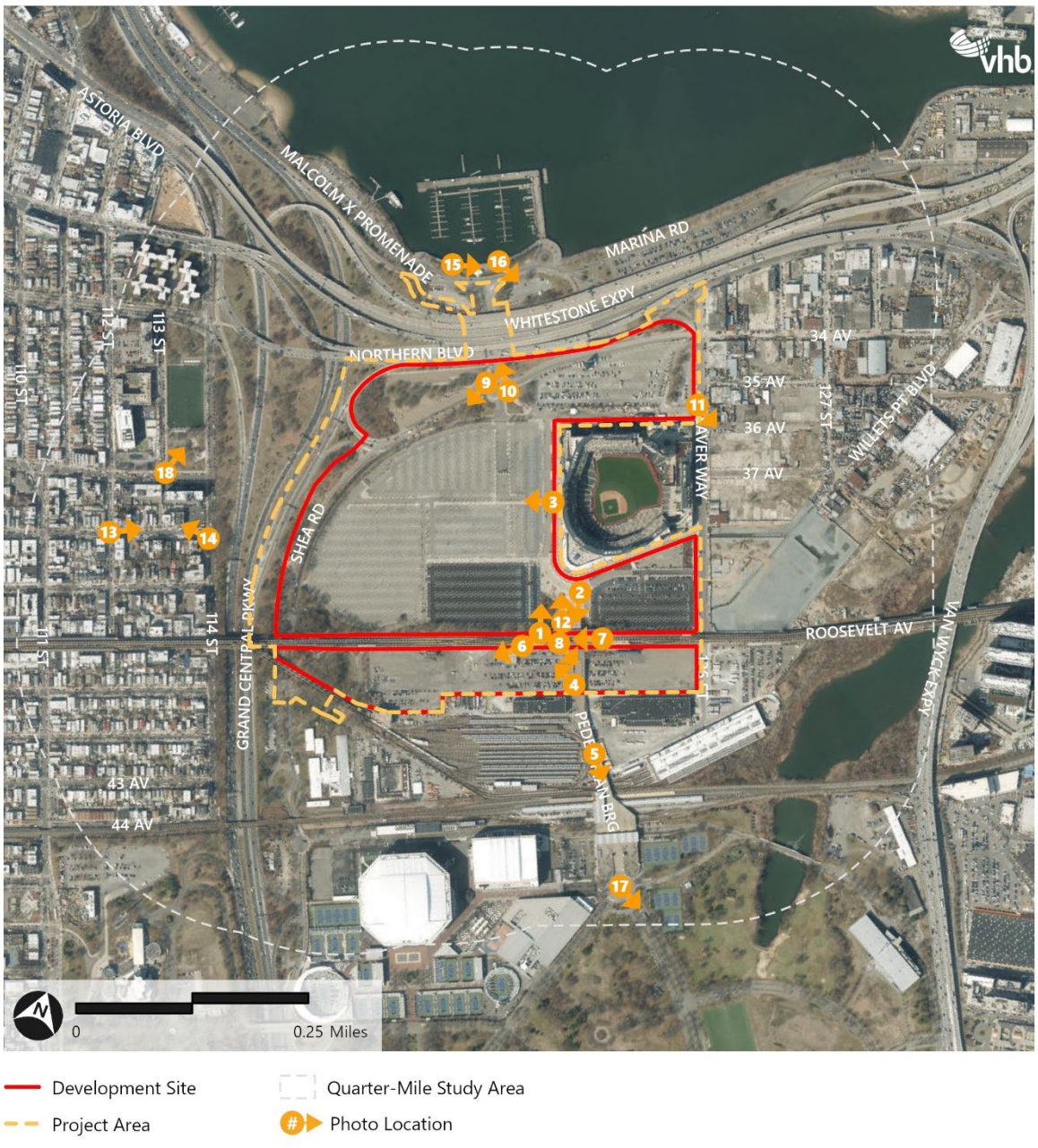
Consistent with **Chapter 2, Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy**, given existing roadway infrastructure; the natural barrier created by large natural features such as Flushing Bay and Flushing Creek; and the physical buffer from the southern portion of Flushing Meadows Corona Park created by the LIRR tracks, MTA Rail Yard, and USTA Tennis Center, a quarter-mile study area was determined to be appropriate for the purposes of this assessment. The study area (see **Figure 8-2**) is generally bounded by Flushing Bay to the north, the Willets Point neighborhood and the Van Wyck Expressway to the east, Flushing Meadows Corona Park to the south, and 111th Street in the Corona neighborhood to the west.

Detailed Analysis

Existing Conditions

Figure 8-2 provides an aerial image of the Development Site, Project Area, and study area, and provides a photo key for area photographs. **Photo 8-1** through **Photo 8-18** show the existing conditions of the Development Site, Project Area, and study area.

Figure 8-2 Urban Design and Visual Resources Study Area and Photograph Locations



Development Site

The Development Site comprises approximately 78 acres of underutilized, largely paved surface parking lots adjacent and accessory to Citi Field (see **Photo 8-1**). It also includes Shea Road and some parking access roads as well as the landscaping surrounding these roads. The surface parking surrounding Citi Field is used only on game days during baseball season (generally April through October), for other private events held at Citi Field, and for certain other scheduled events in Flushing Meadows Corona Park, including the U.S. Open. Up to 1,795 spaces are designated as paid

commuter parking on business days. Otherwise, the vacant asphalt parking is not available to the public and left unused.[2]

The Development Site is traversed by the MTA No. 7 Line, which runs east to west, on elevated tracks along Roosevelt Avenue (see **Photo 8-2**). The portion of the Development Site to the north of Roosevelt Avenue is surface parking. It is lit by tall floodlights, and there are sidewalks and traffic islands within and around the perimeter of the surface parking area that are planted with trees. Traffic islands are located along interior vehicular circulation routes that divide the surface parking into different parking areas. These lots are gated and surrounded by a decorative metal fence or bollards (see **Photo 8-3**). The portion of the Development Site to the south of Roosevelt Avenue consists of additional paved surface parking lots associated with Citi Field (see **Photo 8-4**). This area is surrounded by chain-link fencing and contains flood lights. The area south of Roosevelt Avenue also contains two MTA structures associated with the MTA No. 7 Line. There are no other permanent structures on this portion of the Development Site, except for small temporary structures related to the parking use.

A portion of the Passerelle Bridge is located within the southern end of the Development Site; the Proposed Actions would not have any direct effect or impact on the Passerelle Bridge. The bridge is an elevated historic walkway with a timber-plank surface, lampposts and railings (see **Photo 8-5** and **Chapter 7, Historic and Cultural Resources** for more information). The Passerelle Bridge extends south from the Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station near Citi Field. The bridge spans across the parking lots, the MTA Corona Yard, and the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) tracks and comes to grade adjacent to the United States Tennis Association Billie Jean King National Tennis Center (USTA Tennis Center) and Flushing Meadows Corona Park (**Photo 8-5**).

Roosevelt Avenue runs through the southern portion of the Development Site and connects the Corona neighborhood west of Grand Central Parkway east to Flushing (see **Photo 8-6**). The MTA No. 7 Line runs above Roosevelt Avenue on a steel viaduct structure and spans the entire width of Roosevelt Avenue, casting the street in shadow. Roosevelt Avenue has wide sidewalks on both sides (generally 18 to 20 feet wide) with streetlamps and no parking lanes or cyclist facilities. The Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station has platforms that are constructed in concrete and bordered by corrugated metal walls with overhangs that partially shade the platforms (see **Photo 8-7**). The platforms are accessed via numerous staircases (see **Photo 8-8**).

Shea Road runs north-south along the western side of the Development Site (see **Photo 8-9**). This two-lane bidirectional road acts as a connector between Flushing Meadows Corona Park and Willets Point and also as an access road between the various regional highways that serve the area. Currently traffic on this road consists primarily of gameday traffic and truck and utility vehicles moving around the local area. The road is lined with trees, which provide limited shade during the summer and act as a slight visual buffer from the large parking lot to the east. The portion of Shea Road from Boat Basin Place to Seaver Way has pedestrian sidewalks and pathways; the portion west of Boat Basin Place does not.

[2] There are also occasional temporary private pop-up events, such as outdoor movie nights and carnivals, that operate in the parking lots of Citi Field on a seasonal basis under temporary agreements with Queens Ballpark, LLC. None of these events have long-term contracts, nor are there other standing businesses within the Development Site.

Project Area

The Project Area extends slightly beyond the Development Site and includes areas that would contain roadway improvements, highway access improvements, and improved connections to the Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station as a result of the Proposed Project. The streets within the Project Area primarily consist of a combination of major sunken and elevated parkways and expressways along with at-grade local roads that allow traffic to pass through the area.

There are several inaccessible open spaces to the west of the Development Site, within the Project Area, that are interspersed with the Grand Central Parkway, Shea Road, Northern Boulevard, and assorted entrance and exit ramps to and from those roadways. In the area west of Shea Road and north of the entrance ramp to the Grand Central Parkway from Shea Road, the open spaces are comprised of vegetation. These areas are surrounded by high-speed roadways and there are no sidewalks or crosswalks providing access to them.

Just beyond the northeast corner of the Development Site is a small inaccessible open space that is located between exit ramps from the Grand Central Parkway and Northern Boulevard and is adjacent to Seaver Way, which becomes a one way arterial in that area. There is some vegetation on this narrow strip of land. It is not usable by the public.

To the north, the Project Area contains the area surrounding Boat Basin Place beneath the Whitestone Expressway and some circulation space north of Shea Road near Seaver Way (see **Photo 8-10**). The Whitestone Expressway is a six-lane, east to west, bidirectional expressway that is elevated, creating a visual barrier between the Flushing Bay waterfront and Citi Field. Pedestrians and vehicles can cross beneath the expressway at Boat Basin Place and at 126th Street (Seaver Way). Along Boat Basin Place, the roadway provides two lanes in each direction for vehicles and sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. Pier supports for the expressway line the sidewalks. Beneath the expressway are a combination of vacant lots, parking fields, and circulation space.

The southwestern portion of the Project Area contains two-way circulation roadways surrounded by forested areas with walking paths and grassy fields with some picnic benches.

Photo 8-1 View Looking North Towards the Development Site from Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station



Photo taken on March 22, 2023

Photo 8-2 View Looking South Towards the Elevated Tracks of the MTA No. 7 Line



Photo taken on July 19, 2023

Photo 8-3 View Looking West Towards the Surface Parking Lot from Mets Plaza



Photo taken on March 22, 2023

Photo 8-4 View Looking Northwest from Passerelle Bridge



Photo taken on May 15, 2022

Photo 8-5 View Looking South from Passerelle Bridge



Photo taken on March 22, 2023

Photo 8-6 View Looking Southwest from Roosevelt Avenue



Photo taken on March 22, 2023

Photo 8-7 View Looking West from the Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station



Photo taken on February 23, 2022

Photo 8-8 View Looking Southeast Towards the Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station from Roosevelt Avenue



Photo taken on March 22, 2023

Photo 8-9 View Looking Southwest Towards Shea Road from Boat Basin Place



Photo taken on March 22, 2023

Photo 8-10 View Looking North Towards the Whitestone Expressway from Boat Basin Place



Photo taken on March 22, 2023

Study Area

Urban Design

The study area is generally bounded by Flushing Bay to the north, Willets Point Boulevard and the Van Wyck Expressway to the east, Flushing Meadows Corona Park to the south, and 111th Street in the Corona neighborhood to the west. The urban design character of the study area is influenced by several features, including its proximity to Citi Field and its associated paved surface parking lots; the elevated Whitestone Expressway, Northern Boulevard, and the Grand Central Parkway; rail lines; and open space and natural resources (i.e., Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Flushing Bay/East River, and Malcolm X Promenade) with significant historic features associated with the 1939 and 1964 New York World's Fairs.

Streets

The roadway network within the study area is a mix of highways, long avenues, and distinct neighborhoods with street grid patterns.

The Whitestone Expressway and Northern Boulevard together form approximately 17 lanes of elevated roadway to the north of the Development Site. The Grand Central Parkway runs to the west of the Development Site and contains nine lanes. The northern portion of the study area, particularly the eastern and western corners, is dominated by ramps to access these roadways and surrounding space containing trees and grassy areas or areas associated with yards and equipment storage. Just north of the Whitestone Expressway, Marina Road runs along the Malcolm X Promenade, connecting the various parking lots with Grand Central Parkway, Northern Boulevard, and the Whitestone Expressway. Boat Basin Place also links to Marina Road, which brings traffic to and from the northern portion of the Development Site. Pedestrian access to the promenade is limited. From the Project Area, there is no direct crosswalk that allows pedestrians to cross Marina Road to the promenade. Formal access to the promenade can only be found at the pedestrian bridge accessible from Ditmars

Boulevard in the Corona neighborhood, outside the study area. Along Marina Road, there are also tall box hedges that create a barrier to accessing the waterfront esplanade.

Citi Field is located immediately east of the Development Site. Citi Field is surrounded by a walking path that is only open to the public on game days during the baseball season. Citi Field also contains Mets Plaza, which fans use to access the stadium from the Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station. The Willets Point neighborhood within the study area, northeast of Citi Field, is generally bounded by Seaver Way to the west, Northern Boulevard to the north, the Van Wyck Expressway to the east, and Roosevelt Avenue to the south. It is partially developed with a street grid, with 34th and 35th Avenues running east-west and 127th Street running north-south between Northern Boulevard and Willets Point Boulevard. Short north-south streets—126th Place, 127th Street, and 127th Place—extend between Northern Boulevard and 34th Avenue. Willets Point Boulevard is the main thoroughfare through the neighborhood. Starting at approximately 127th Street, it runs on a diagonal that extends northeast to the entrance of the Van Wyck Expressway.

The overall streetscape typology of the Willets Point neighborhood is primarily industrial by nature, serving the many autobody and small industrial workshops that make up the district (see **Photo 8-11**). Portions of the neighborhood are under construction as part of the Willets Point Phase 1 and Phase 2 developments (discussed further under the No-Action condition section). Most of the streets are flanked by paved sidewalks, which are in poor condition. The sidewalks have wide curb cuts and are only slightly elevated; in some parts, the sidewalks are almost flush with the streets. The sidewalks as well as road lanes are also used for car parking, auto parts storage, and waste storage. The streets in the neighborhood also are in various states of disrepair; areas of partial pavement and potholes are visible. The only streets with designated or marked traffic lanes are 126th Street and Willets Point Boulevard. There are few sidewalk crossings or stop signs. Street trees are located along the south side of Northern Boulevard and on Willets Point Boulevard near 36th Street. Streetscape elements are limited to cobra-head streetlights, utility poles with overhanging wires, street signs, fire hydrants, and concrete jersey barriers and large masonry blocks along and on sidewalks. In some areas, the streetscape is broken up by lots surrounded by chain-link fencing or sheets of corrugated metal, which are used for parking and storage of used cars and other auto parts. Construction fencing is located along most of the east side of 126th Street/Seaver Way between Roosevelt Avenue and 36th Avenue.

The southern portion of the study area consists of the MTA Corona Yard and a portion of Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Meridian Road circles around a portion of Flushing Meadows Corona Park and carries one lane of traffic in each direction. Most of Meridian Road does not have sidewalks; sidewalks are located in various segments along the road (e.g., near the USTA Tennis Center, Queens Museum, and 59th Avenue). A bike lane is located along a short segment on the west side of the park, generally between New York Avenue/United Nations Avenue North and the USTA Tennis Center. Metal fencing that encloses the rail yard and portions of the park border most of the roadway. The road is lined with trees and street furniture includes lamp posts, fire hydrants and trash receptables. The Grand Central Parkway travels north/south through the far western portion of this area.

In the western portion of the study area is the Corona neighborhood, which consists of a traditional grid pattern. This area is generally bounded by the Whitestone Expressway to the north, 44th Avenue to the south, 11th Street to the west, and 114th Street and the Grand Central Parkway to the east. The topography of the neighborhood consists of a rolling hillside, with higher elevations being located towards the west. The neighborhood is primarily residential with one- and two-way streets.

Streets are lined with parked cars; some streets have marked bike lanes. Streets have sidewalks with street trees and other pedestrian amenities. Roosevelt Avenue is the primary commercial street in the neighborhood. The elevated MTA No. 7 Line travels over the roadway, leaving most of the road in shadow. The avenue carries one lane of traffic in each direction. Cars are parked along both sides of the avenue. It has wide sidewalks, numerous traffic lights, and striped pedestrian crossings at the intersections with cross streets. Street furniture includes lamp posts, fire hydrants, mailboxes, and flower planter boxes in front of a few business establishments.

Buildings

Just outside the Project Area to the east is Citi Field, the baseball stadium for the Mets that opened in 2009 (replacing the former Shea Stadium, which occupied Area of Development A from 1964-2007). The exterior of the stadium is clad in red brick with limestone, granite, and cast stone details. The main entrance to the stadium is oriented toward Roosevelt Avenue; this southwest corner of the building is rounded (see **Photo 8-12**). The stadium has large round-arch openings at this entrance corner that lead to the Jackie Robinson Rotunda. Full-height round-arch windows are located at the upper story as well, with the upper levels of the stadium seating visible above this brick façade. The stadium is a modern structure, with a historic character reminiscent of early 20th century ball fields, such as Ebbets Field. The stadium is surrounded by parking (on the Development Site), except for the side along Seaver Way, where the stadium is built to the lot line.

Beyond Citi Field, the eastern portion of the study area contains the Willets Point neighborhood. This neighborhood has large tracts of vacant land, lots with vacant buildings, or lots under construction due to the planned Willets Point Phase 1 and Phase 2 developments. Most of the buildings within the neighborhood are small, temporary metal structures; metal Quonset huts; and brick buildings with small footprints and large, projecting advertising signs. These buildings house automotive repair shops, wholesale auto parts stores, and other auto-related uses. Most of the buildings in this area are attached or located close together. In contrast, the northeast section of the neighborhood is developed with several freestanding buildings that are larger and boxier in form. Large trucks and other manufacturing equipment are stored on many sites. A notable building in this portion of the neighborhood is the historic former Empire Millwork Corporation Building. This two-story, Georgian Revival-style red brick building is located near the intersection of Willets Point Boulevard and the Van Wyck Expressway.

The Corona neighborhood in the western portion of the study area largely contains residential buildings with some mixed-use and commercial buildings interspersed. Roosevelt Avenue acts as the primary neighborhood retail and services corridor, with commercial and residential buildings forming a more uniform street wall, often with local retail at the ground floor, and auto businesses or vacant lots that break up the streetscape. Residential buildings in the neighborhood consist of a mix of multi-story brick apartment buildings and one- to two-story detached or semi-detached frame and brick dwellings (see **Photo 8-13** and **Photo 8-14**). Most commercial and apartment buildings are built to the lot line. Detached dwellings typically have small fenced-in front yards and most of these front yards are paved. Some dwellings have paved driveways. Buildings in the neighborhood were predominantly constructed in early-20th century. Dwellings are eclectic in style, with some examples of Italianate and Victorian style architecture. Buildings are primarily clad in brick, aluminum siding, or vinyl siding. Overall, the pattern of building types and property setbacks creates an inconsistent street wall throughout the neighborhood.

Within the southern portion of the study area, the MTA Corona Yard and Casey Stengel Bus Depot separate the Development Site from the southern portion of Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Bounded by the Southfield Lot, the LIRR tracks, Olmstead Drive, and Flushing Creek, the rail yard contains a storage area for subway cars as well as repair shops. The rail yard is spanned by the Passerelle Bridge, which connects Flushing Meadows Corona Park to the MTA No. 7 Line and Citi Field. Also south of the Southfield Lot is the Olmsted Center, a facility that is used as office space by NYC Parks and includes several one-story modern office buildings and parking areas.

Open Space and Natural Resources

Open spaces located within the study area include the Malcolm X Promenade, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, and two neighborhood parks. Two natural resources are in the study area—Flushing Bay, located at the northern end of the study area and Flushing Creek, a two-mile-long waterway that connects to Flushing Bay, located to the southeast and east of the Development Site.

The Malcolm X Promenade is a 1.4-mile waterfront park that runs along Flushing Bay from LaGuardia Airport to Flushing Meadows Corona Park. The promenade includes an asphalt biking and walking path, benches, and lighting (see **Photo 8-15**). Shea Road and Northern Boulevard provide vehicle access to the promenade, but the Grand Central Parkway and Northern Boulevard largely isolate the promenade from residential neighborhoods to the southwest. The portion of the promenade within the study area includes a biking/walking path and seating as well as the World's Fair Marina, where private and commercial boats dock. Two historic white sculptural pavilions, called Candelas, are located within the promenade and overlook the World's Fair Marina near the intersection with Boat Basin Place. The Candelas feature sheltered resting areas (see **Photo 8-16**); there are benches both inside the pavilions and along a linear plaza.

A portion of Flushing Meadows Corona Park is in the southern portion of the study area. The portion of the park that is within the study area encompasses a large share of the USTA Tennis Center. It also encompasses a parking lot serving the New York Hall of Science; the New York Hall of Science is located further south just outside of the study area. To the east of the USTA Tennis Center and within the study area are public restrooms, public tennis courts, and a miniature golf course. Within the park, pedestrians have access to fields, forested areas, and many walking paths (see **Photo 8-17**). A unique feature of the park is the Passerelle Bridge. The bridge spans approximately a quarter mile—a portion of which is over the MTA Corona Yard, located to the south of the Development Site between Roosevelt Avenue and Meridian Road. The Passerelle Bridge is both accessible to pedestrians and bikers.

Two additional parks are located in the Corona neighborhood in the western portion of the study area—Louis Armstrong Playground and Hinton Park. Louis Armstrong Playground consists of a small park with playground equipment and basketball and handball courts. Hinton Park features a small public green and ball fields (see **Photo 8-18**).

Photo 8-11 View Looking Southeast from Seaver Way In Between 35 Avenue and 36 Avenue

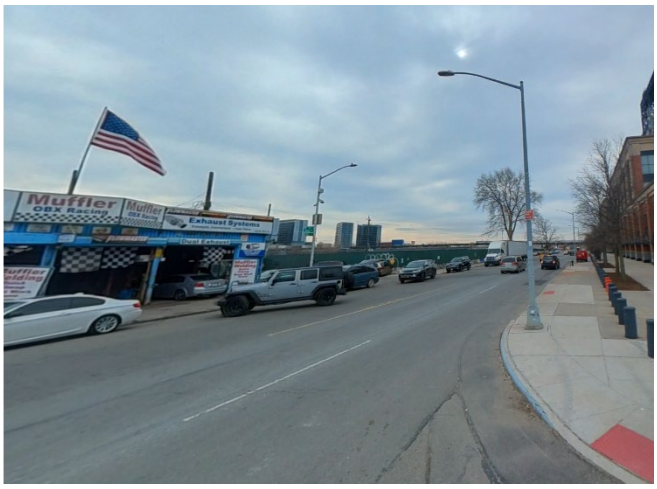


Photo taken on March 22, 2023

Photo 8-12 View Looking North Towards Citi Field from Mets Plaza



Photo taken on March 22, 2023

Photo 8-13 View Looking East Towards 38th Avenue from 112th



Photo taken on March 22, 2023

Photo 8-14 View Looking Northwest Towards 38th Avenue from 114 Street



Photo taken on March 22, 2023

Photo 8-15 View Looking East from the Malcolm X Promenade



Photo taken on March 22, 2023

Photo 8-16 View Looking Southeast Towards the Candela from the Malcolm X Promenade



Photo taken on March 22, 2023

Photo 8-17 View Looking Southeast from Flushing Meadows Corona Park

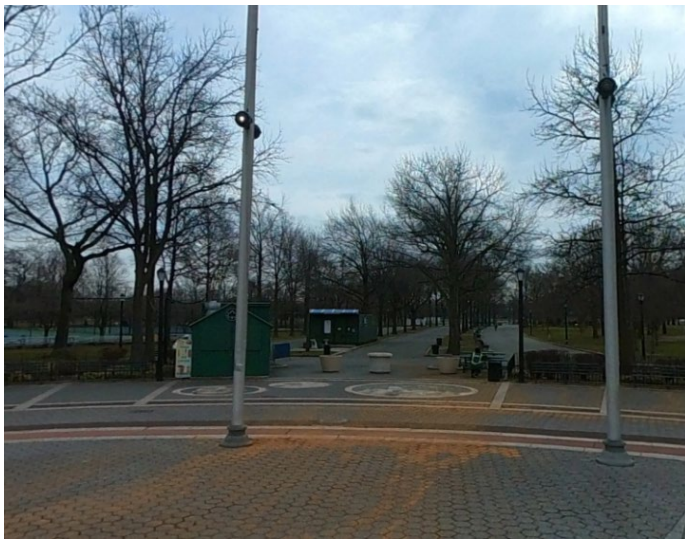


Photo taken on March 22, 2023

Photo 8-18 View Looking Northeast Towards Hinton Park from 37th Avenue



Photo taken on March 22, 2023

Visual Resources

Visual resources within the study area consist of parks, natural resources, and historic resources. These resources are identified in **Table 8-1** and **Figure 8-3**.

Table 8-1 Study Area Visual Resources

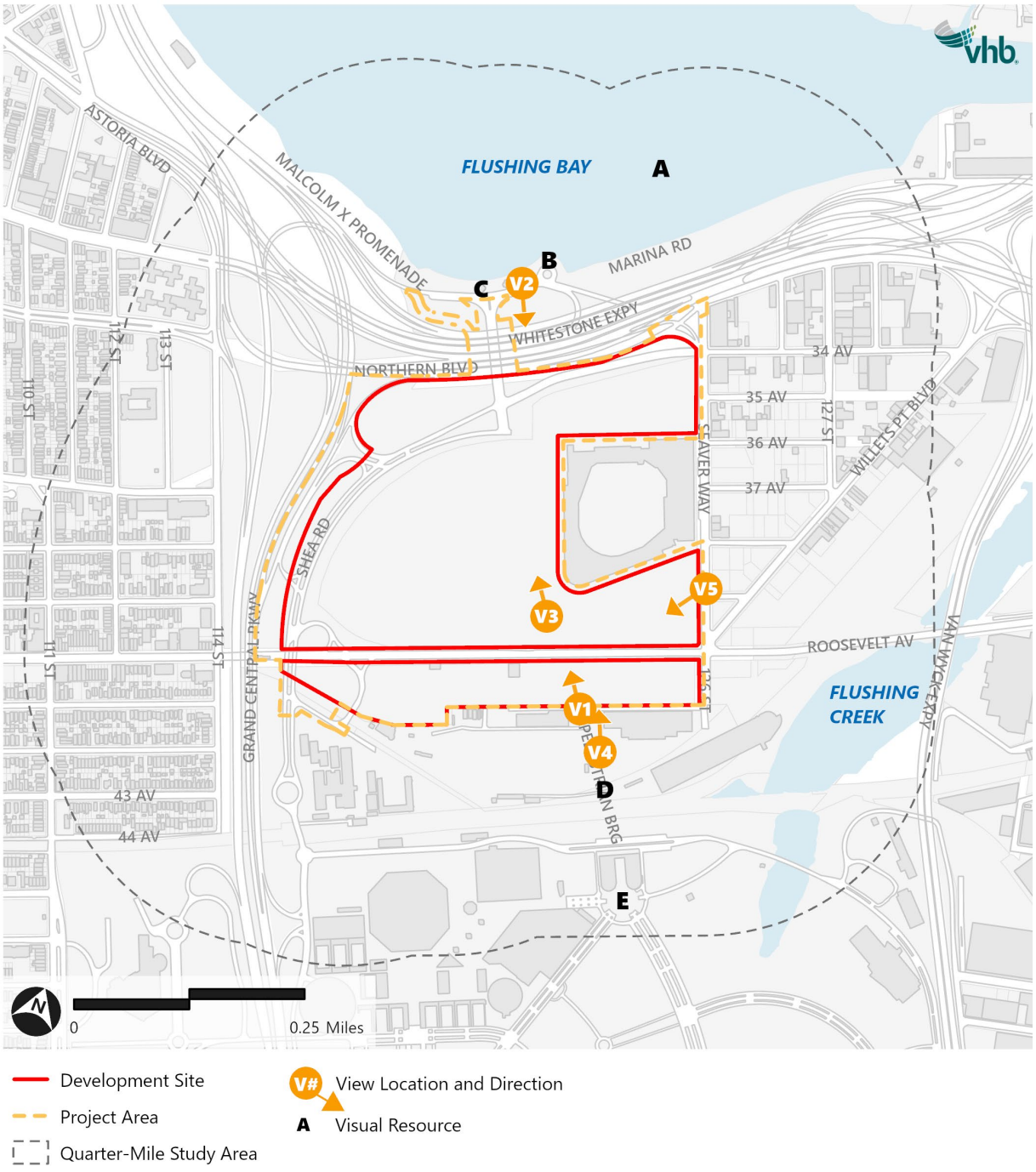
Figure 8-2 Reference	Visual Resource
A	Flushing Bay
B	Malcolm X Promenade
C	Candela Structures
D	Passerelle Bridge
E	Flushing Meadows Corona Park

Flushing Bay and the Malcolm X Promenade are located at the northern edge of the study area. The Candela Structures (also known as the World's Fair Marina Pavilions) are located within the Malcolm X Promenade. Pedestrian walkways within the promenade provide expansive views of the bay as well as views of the Candela Structures. Because of the elevated Whitestone Expressway, views of Flushing Bay, the Malcolm X Promenade, and the Candela Structures are limited to pedestrian accessible areas within the Malcolm X Promenade itself (see **Photo 8-15** and **Photo 8-16**). The waterfront cannot be clearly seen from Boat Basin Place due to a combination of the view being obstructed by elevated roadways and the box hedges along the esplanade. The Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station and the elevated tracks along Roosevelt Avenue also block views of these resources from areas to the south, including from within the Development Site.

The Passerelle Bridge is located in the southern portion of the Development Site (see **Photo 8-5**). This historic bridge is a contributing resource within the Flushing Meadows Corona Park S/NR-eligible historic district. Views of this historic resource are available from entrances to the bridge at Mets Plaza to the north and Flushing Meadows Corona Park to the south, or on the bridge itself. The Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station blocks views of the Passerelle Bridge from surrounding pedestrian accessible locations.

The northern portion of Flushing Meadows Corona Park is located south of the Project Area (see **Photo 8-17**). While views of the park are available from many locations surrounding the park, the Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station and the elevated tracks along Roosevelt Avenue block views toward the park from locations north of Roosevelt Avenue. The park's historic Unisphere and New York State Pavilion can be seen from within the study area from public walkways within the park. The 140-foot-tall stainless steel globe acts as the centerpiece of the park; most views of the globe from the Project Area are obscured by the USTA Tennis Center and the elevated rail line.

Figure 8-3 Study Area Visual Resources and Comparative Viewpoints Map Key



Note: View location and direction correspond with **Figure 8-13** through **Figure 8-22**.

No-Action Condition

As discussed in **Chapter 1, Project Description**, absent the Proposed Actions, it is assumed that the Development Site would continue operating under existing conditions; it would remain as a paved parking area for Citi Field under the current lease agreement with the City, and no additional public realm improvements would be made. The surface parking lots currently contain 7,423 parking spaces.

Under the No-Action condition, several new developments and other improvements will be completed within the study area by the 2030 analysis year (see **Appendix A** for a complete list of projects). These include developments under the Willets Point Phase 1 and Phase 2 developments and several infrastructure improvements.

Willets Point Phase 1 commenced development in late 2023 and includes redevelopment of an approximately eight-acre southern portion of the site to contain affordable housing, local retail, a school, open space and accessory parking. Phase 2 is located on an approximately 17-acre site and will include approximately 2 million gsf of development, including residential development, a hotel, local retail, open space, a soccer stadium and accessory parking.[3] Willets Point Phase 2 will also utilize and improve the existing built street network surrounding the site. The soccer stadium will be located immediately east of Citi Field with residential units and retail space to the north and south. The hotel will be located along Seaver Way, south of the stadium and open space will be located around the stadium and on the block to the south. The tallest building within Phase 2 will be approximately 216 feet tall above the base plane. Willets Point Phase 3 is expected to build out the remaining portion of the site not developed under the prior phases; as of this publication, no developer has been designated for the Phase 3 site and a specific development plan has not been determined.

The Willets Point Development will transition the Willets Point peninsula from an industrial area into a mixed-use neighborhood with active ground-floor retail, sports/entertainment, residential and hotel uses, open space, and an improved street network. The development is expected to enhance the vitality of streets in the neighborhood by creating a new mixed-use neighborhood that will increase and improve pedestrian activity.

Other No-Action projects proposed to be completed by the 2030 analysis year include rehabilitating the Porpoise Bridge over Flushing Creek within Flushing Meadows Corona Park. NYC Parks proposes improvements to the Candela structures and Malcolm X Promenade intersections at Boat Basin Place. These improvements will help to maintain these historic resources and create added amenities for pedestrians utilizing the promenade. The current conceptual design of the promenade improvements plan also puts forward an overall framework to improve future pedestrian access and circulation to the promenade from Boat Basin Place and 126th Street. LIRR plans to reconstruct the Mets-Willets Point LIRR Station starting in 2026. A completion date has not yet been announced.

With-Action Condition

Development Site and Project Area

The Proposed Actions would facilitate the construction of up to 3.7 million square feet of new construction on the 78 acres of underutilized, largely asphalt surface parking areas. The new construction would consist of destination entertainment that includes a music hall, hotel, a gaming

[3] The zoning and land use actions associated with the Willets Point Phase 2 Development were approved by the City Council in April 2024.

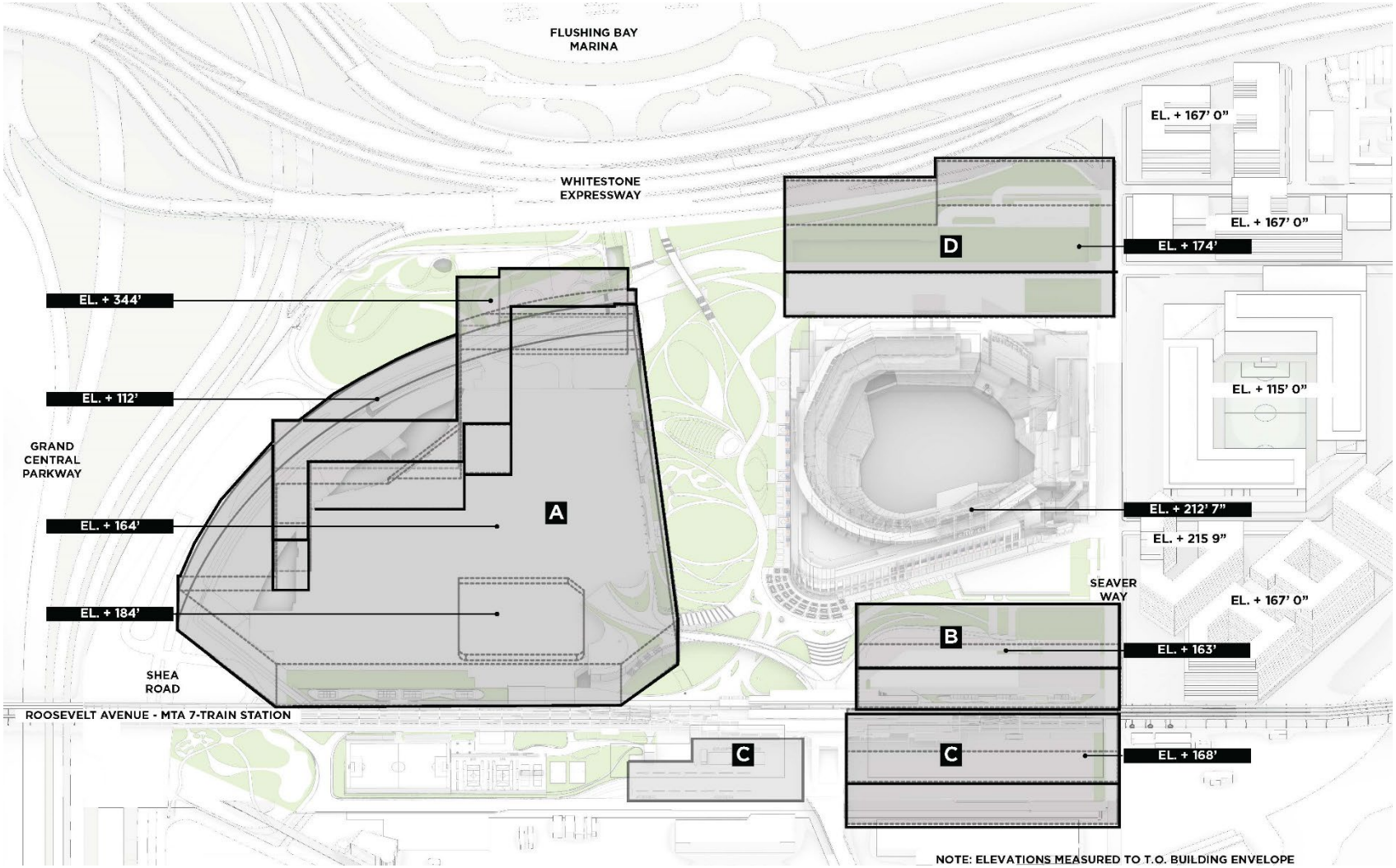
facility, convention and meeting space, restaurant and retail space, and office and community facility space. The Proposed Project would also include public park space—at least 20 acres of the Development Site would be improved with landscaping and other amenities for public recreation—and other public realm improvements as well as structured parking facilities to accommodate up to 13,750 spaces. The areas of development facilitated by the Proposed Actions would contain the following:

- **Area of Development A**: On the west side of the Development Site, the development would include a hotel with up to 2,300 rooms, gaming, retail, restaurants, amenities for the hotel and gaming facility, a music hall, and convention and meeting space. The first two levels would include parking for cars and buses. The uses above the parking would rise to a range of heights, with the tallest portion of the development, from level 2 to level 25, containing the hotel rooms and reaching a maximum height of 280 to 344 feet, as dictated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) due to the Development Site's proximity to LaGuardia Airport. A section of Area of Development A would also include a six-level parking structure that is assumed for analysis purposes to rise to a maximum height of approximately 184 feet.
- **Area of Development B**: Just south of Citi Field and north of Roosevelt Avenue, the building within Area of Development B would contain restaurant space, including a "Taste of Queens" local food hall, and local retail, community facility, and administrative office space (ancillary offices to support the Area of Development B and stadium uses). The buildings within Area of Development B would be approximately 163 feet tall inclusive of up to nine levels of parking.
- **Area of Development C**: Just south of Roosevelt Avenue, Area of Development C would include one parking structure with up to ten levels of parking rising to a maximum height of approximately 168 feet and one surface lot.
- **Area of Development D**: The area north of Citi Field would include a parking structure with up to twelve levels of parking rising to a height of approximately 174 feet.

Figure 8-4 shows a conceptual project plan based on the maximum building envelope that provides an illustrative massing of the Proposed Project.

In addition to the up to 3.7 million square feet of new uses within the Development Site and Project Area, roadway improvements would include highway access improvements for Grand Central Parkway, and other roadway improvements along Shea Road and Seaver Way. While these roadway improvements would result in modifications to the ramps connecting Shea Road and Grand Central Parkway, a ramp to the Whitestone Expressway, the intersection of Northern Boulevard and Seaver Way, and Shea Road, these changes would not alter the fundamental character of the area's roadway infrastructure or result in changes to the urban design character of the area.

Figure 8-4 Maximum Building Envelope Plan



Source: SHoP Architects and Field Operations

Study Area

Urban Design

Streets

As noted above, roadway improvements are proposed as part of the Proposed Project. These improvements would not result in significant changes to existing street patterns or street grids in the study area but would instead improve both pedestrian and cycling amenities in an area that is currently lacking both. **Chapter 14, Transportation** provides more detailed information on the pedestrian and cyclist improvements proposed as part of the Proposed Project.

Promenades, landscaped pathways, and pedestrian bridges are proposed to connect pedestrians from the Marina and Seaver Way through the Development Site and to the transit and open spaces within and south of the Project Area. New sidewalks, improved crosswalks, new bicycle lanes and amenities, and additional lighting would also be added to enhance the pedestrian/cyclist experience and increase safety.

Improvements would be made to the existing passage from the Marina under the elevated Whitestone Expressway. Marina Road and Boat Basin Place will be signalized with crosswalks striped on all approaches. Sidewalks would be added along Shea Road and widened along Roosevelt Avenue. The mid-block crosswalks connecting the north and south sides of Roosevelt Avenue at the Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station would be widened and enhanced. In addition, a new crosswalk would be added across Roosevelt Avenue at Stadium Place South. Lighting improvements and a protected zone for bikes and pedestrians along Roosevelt Avenue under the elevated No. 7 Subway tracks would improve the pedestrian experience and safety (see **Figure 8-5**).

Improvements within the area of the Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station would strengthen connections to and from the Development Site. The proposed station improvements would enhance the connection between the Development Site north of Roosevelt Avenue and the Passerelle Bridge south of Roosevelt Avenue, thereby enhancing the pedestrian connection from the southern portion of Flushing Meadows Corona Park to the Development Site and the waterfront beyond. This enhanced connection would be achieved through modifications to the station structure, including enhancements to the vertical circulation elements within the station and expansion of key corridor and turnstile elements (see **Figure 8-6**).

The proposed transit and pedestrian improvements, along with the proposed roadway improvements and highway access points, would be consistent with existing transportation infrastructure and would improve connections to the Development Site as well as pedestrian safety, helping visitors better access and experience the site. The Proposed Project would also improve pedestrian connections to the new mixed-use neighborhood that will be developed in the No-Action condition as part of the Willets Point Development.

Figure 8-5 Illustrative Image of Open Space North of Roosevelt Avenue, West of the Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station, View East



Source: Field Operations

Figure 8-6 Illustrative View of Applicant's Vision for MTA Station Improvements (Under Review by MTA), View South



Source: SHoP Architects and Field Operations

Buildings

The Proposed Project would transform the existing underutilized parking lots (which are not currently accessible to pedestrians) into more than 20 acres of new public park space and a unique mixed-use recreational, commercial, and entertainment development that will contribute to the study area's overall unique identity and increase pedestrian's access to a range of dynamic and enlivened public spaces. The proposed mixed-use development would be consistent with the existing mixed-use development found in the Corona neighborhood. It is anticipated that the design for the new development would evoke a modern skyline and would build upon existing and historic elements of New York and the study area, such as historic structures from the New York World's Fairs held on the site in 1939 and 1964.

The proposed new commercial development is anticipated to be of a modern metal and glass façade design with setbacks along its width and at the upper levels to modulate scale and distinguish the upper levels of the facades for visual diversity and interest. Inspired by a classic New York City streetscape, the proposed mixed-use buildings would be accessible by new landscaped pathways with inviting entrances to activate the facades. The buildings would be constructed at varied heights and would have façade lighting that would be visible to pedestrians (see **Figure 8-7** and **Figure 8-8**). The new buildings would be sensitively connected to both the public park space and the existing street grid to maintain continuity of the neighborhood fabric, weaving together the Development Site, the adjacent neighborhoods, and Flushing Meadows Corona Park.

The proposed hotel on the west side of the Development Site (Area of Development A) is proposed to have a series of setbacks; the main portion of the building is proposed to be up to 164 feet tall (six levels), and the tallest portion of the building is proposed to be up to 344 feet tall (29 levels). A section of Area of Development A is also proposed to include a six-level parking structure which is proposed to rise to a maximum height of approximately 184 feet. These proposed buildings would be surrounded by a new public park space, containing new open spaces and vegetation, including trees and planting beds, and wide, curvilinear paved walkways. The park walkways would provide pedestrians with an inviting space that directly connects Flushing Meadows Corona Park to Flushing Bay and the new mixed-use buildings to Citi Field, parking, and the Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station.

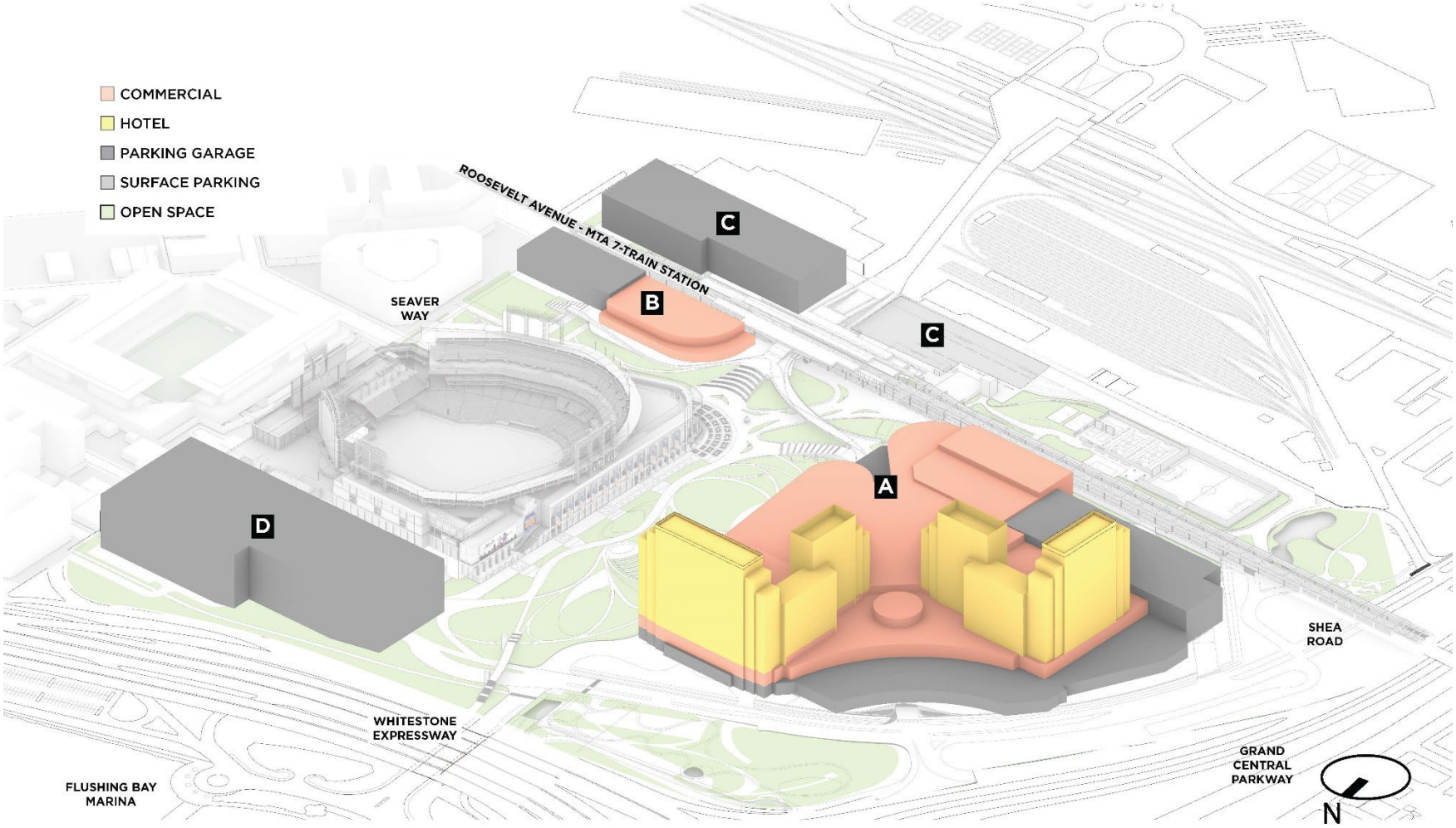
Just south of Citi Field and north of Roosevelt Avenue, the building within Area of Development B is proposed to be a maximum height of 163 feet. This development would include the proposed "Taste of Queens" local food hall. Pedestrian amenities surrounding the building would include new public park space with wide paved walkways, seating areas, trees, and planting beds. Area of Development C, south of Roosevelt Avenue, would include one parking structure with up to ten levels of parking rising to a maximum proposed height of approximately 168 feet. The pedestrian experience around this structure would be improved with wide sidewalks, wide striped crosswalks, street trees, and planting beds. In addition, the proposed buildings along the north side of Roosevelt Avenue are proposed to be set back 60 feet from the property boundary to allow sunlight and to open up Roosevelt Avenue. This would also create space for planting and active and vibrant uses, again enhancing the pedestrian experience. Area of Development D, north of Citi Field would include a parking structure proposed up to twelve levels of parking rising to a proposed height of approximately 174 feet. Pedestrian improvements would include wide paved walkways, trees, and planting beds.

Although the Proposed Project would change the existing urban design experience of the study area by introducing new modern buildings to an area currently developed with surface parking lots, these

changes would be consistent with proposed use and heights of buildings elsewhere in the study area expected to be completed under the No-Action condition—such as Willets Point Phase 1 and Phase 2, which will transition the Willets Point peninsula from an industrial area into a mixed-use neighborhood and entertainment destination, adding more pedestrian activity and open spaces to the area.

Phase 2 of the Willets Point Development would improve the pedestrian experience by redeveloping vacant lots and auto-related and other industrial buildings with new buildings that would provide an active streetscape with ground-floor retail, stadium, residential, and hotel uses. The Proposed Project includes a similar transformation by redeveloping surface parking lots with new mixed-use developments and public park space. The Proposed Project would introduce new buildings that would be similar in height and design to those that will be constructed under Phase 2 of the Willets Point Development—buildings under Phase 2 will range between 40 and 170 feet in height and will be constructed in a contemporary style. The tallest building within Phase 2 of the Willets Point Development will be approximately 216 feet tall above the base plane. By comparison, Citi Field's stadium is approximately 142 feet tall and the stadium's scoreboard and lights are approximately 212 feet tall. Phase 2 of the Willets Point Development will also utilize and improve the existing built street network surrounding the site.

Figure 8-7 Illustrative Massing of Proposed Development



Source: SHoP Architects and Field Operations

Figure 8-8 Seaver Way Elevation View of Proposed Buildings Maximum Envelopes



Source: SHoP Architects and Field Operations

Open Space

The proposed 20 acres of public park space on the site would be consistent with the urban design and pedestrian experience already established by existing parks in the study area as well as new open spaces elsewhere in the study area expected to be completed under the No-Action condition (see **Figure 8-9** through **Figure 8-13**). The creation of significant new public open spaces would allow visitors to walk directly from the waterfront and Malcolm X Promenade through the Development Site to Flushing Meadows Corona Park in completely new open space and would improve pedestrian amenities along major connection points. The Proposed Project would provide to local residents, workers, and area visitors major new amenities like sports courts, lawns, playgrounds, and walking paths, adding enhanced opportunities for pedestrians.

The open spaces would be open to the public during daytime as well as nighttime, with the exact hours of operation to be determined in consultation with NYC Parks. The design of the structures and furnishings within the proposed open space would draw from current elements in the surrounding neighborhoods as well as the history of the New York World's Fairs held on the site. It is anticipated that the proposed designs would be in keeping with the iconic sleek curves of the historic features constructed for the fairs. The proposed public park space would complement the proposed open space under Willets Point Phase 2, which will include approximately 2.77 acres of publicly accessible open space located around buildings within the development. These open spaces will include paved areas, lawns, seating areas, trees, and raised planting beds. New open spaces with the Proposed Project would include similar features that would bring more activity to the Development Site, as well as creating direct pathways from Roosevelt Avenue and the MTA Station to the Willets Point open space. Overall, these open space improvements would provide for enhanced pedestrian access and experiences.

Other open space areas throughout the Development Site would maintain existing trees and would include picnic areas, new landscaping and gardens, active recreational spaces, new lighting, and bicycle lanes, among other features.

Urban Design Conclusion

The proposed transit and pedestrian improvements, along with the proposed roadway improvements and highway access points, would be consistent with existing transportation infrastructure and would improve connections to the Development Site as well as pedestrian safety, helping visitors better access and experience the site. The Proposed Project would also improve pedestrian connections to the new mixed-use neighborhood that will be developed in the No-Action condition as part of the Willets Point Development. The proposed public park open spaces, as well as the roadway, transit, sidewalk, and accessibility improvements, would create improved pedestrian connections to existing parks as well as improved circulation for pedestrians from Citi Field to parking areas and transit stations during events.

The Proposed Project would transform the existing underutilized parking lots (which are not currently accessible to pedestrians) into more than 20 acres of new public park space and a unique mixed-use recreational, commercial, and entertainment development. Although the Proposed Project would change the existing urban design experience of the study area by introducing new modern buildings to an area currently developed with surface parking lots, these changes would be consistent with proposed use and heights of buildings elsewhere in the study area expected to be completed under the No-Action condition.

The proposed 20 acres of public park space on the site would be consistent with the urban design and pedestrian experience already established by existing parks in the study area as well as new open spaces elsewhere in the study area expected to be completed under the No-Action condition.

Therefore, the Proposed Actions are not expected to result in significant adverse impacts to urban design.

Figure 8-9 Illustrative Image of Open Space Looking Northwest from Mets Plaza



Source: SHoP Architects and Field Operations

Figure 8-10 Illustrative Image of Open Space adjacent to the Western Perimeter of Citi Field Stadium, View North



Source: Field Operations

Figure 8-11 Illustrative Image of Open Space Looking Southeast



Source: Field Operations

Figure 8-12 Illustrative Image of Open Space South of Roosevelt Avenue, West of Stadium Place South, View North



Source: Field Operations

Figure 8-13 Illustrative Image of Open Space near Area of Development B, View East



Source: SHoP Architects and Field Operations

Visual Resources

There are five visual resources located in the study area—Flushing Bay, the Malcolm X Promenade, the Candela structures, the Passerelle Bridge, and Flushing Meadows Corona Park. The analysis of the

With-Action condition is based on the maximum building envelopes for the Proposed Project shown on **Figure 8-4**.

Flushing Bay, Malcolm X Promenade, and Candela Structures

As discussed earlier, views of Flushing Bay, the Malcolm X Promenade, and the Candela Structures are limited to pedestrian accessible areas within the Malcolm X Promenade itself. Views of Flushing Bay are not visible from at-grade locations within the study area to the south (see **Figure 8-14** and **Figure 8-15** for a comparison of the No-Action and With-Action views to the north from Citi Field Plaza). Because of topography, distance, and the elevated Whitestone Expressway, only distant views toward Flushing Bay are available from the Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station platform, which is elevated. In the existing and No-Action condition, this view from the subway platform includes both Citi Field and the adjacent plaza as well as the Development Site. In the With-Action condition, the Development Site portion of this view would be transformed from a flat, hardscape area of surface parking with a few intermittent trees to a newly landscaped open space area with a substantial number of trees, new curved circulation elements, and new development consisting of a hotel and parking structures. Flushing Bay would remain visible in the distance, as would portions of the elevated Whitestone Expressway.

While the most important views from within the Malcolm X Promenade and Marina Road are views toward Flushing Bay and of the Candela structures within the promenade, views south toward the Development Site were considered.[4]

Views from within the Malcolm X Promenade and in the area of the Candela Structures would not substantially change in the With-Action condition, as demonstrated by **Figure 8-16** and **Figure 8-17**, which show a comparison of the No-Action and With-Action views from Flushing Bay Marina. **Figure 8-18** and **Figure 8-19** show a comparison of views from the Project Area towards the Flushing Bay area visual resources, which can only be seen slightly from an elevation. As new development associated with the Proposed Project would be located southwest of these resources, it is not expected that the new development would block views of these resources. Instead, the Proposed Project would improve view corridors towards these resources as new walkways would be constructed which would provide for enhanced and safer pedestrian connections between the Malcolm X Promenade and Flushing Meadows Corona Park. As demonstrated in the comparison views, the surface roadway and the elevated Whitestone Expressway infrastructure are notable features in the view.

[4] The Proposed Project would not alter views from within the Malcolm X Promenade and Marina Road toward Flushing Bay and of the Candela structures.

Figure 8-14 No-Action — View North from Citi Field Plaza



Photo taken on June 19, 2023

Figure 8-15 With-Action (Maximum Envelopes) — View North from Citi Field Plaza



Photo taken on June 19, 2023

Figure 8-16 No-Action — View South from Flushing Bay Marina



Photo taken on June 19, 2023

Figure 8-17 With-Action (Maximum Envelopes) — View South from Flushing Bay Marina



Photo taken on June 19, 2023

Figure 8-18 No-Action — View North from Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station Platform Towards Flushing Bay



Photo taken on June 19, 2023

Figure 8-19 With-Action (Maximum Envelopes) — View North from Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station Platform Towards Flushing Bay

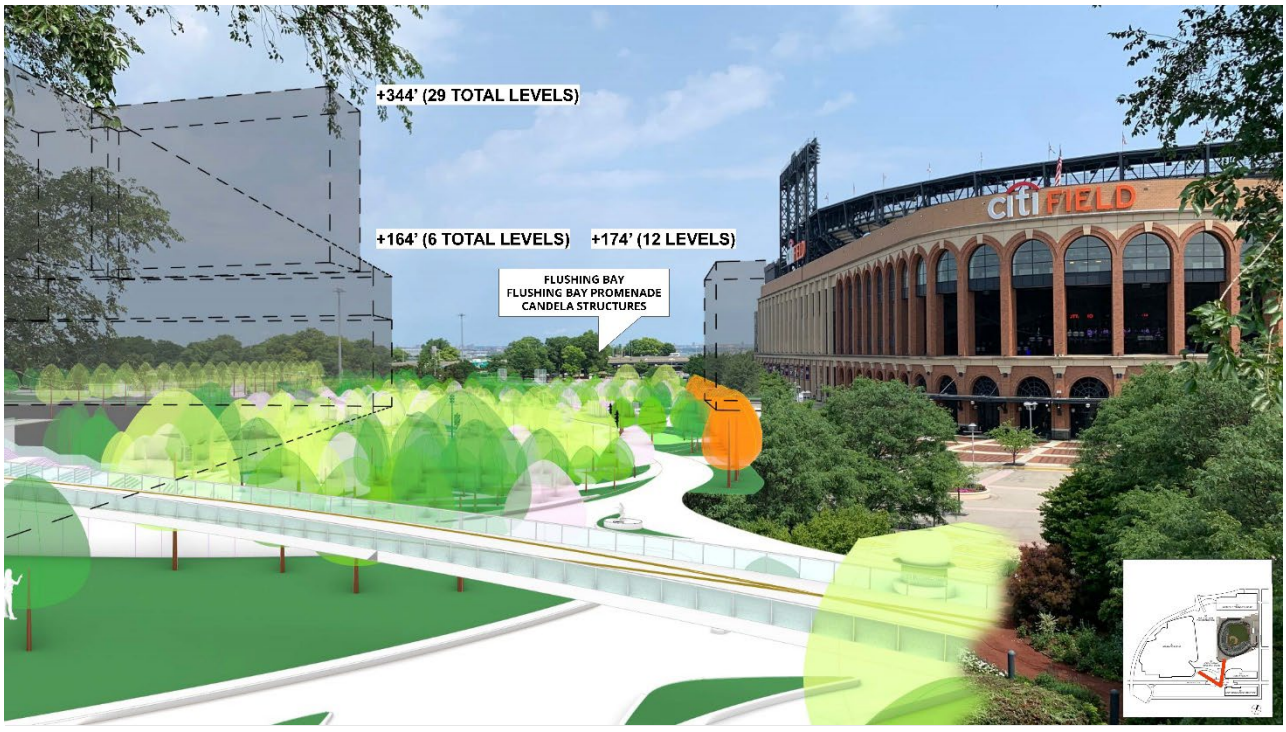


Photo taken on June 19, 2023

Passerelle Bridge

Views of the Passerelle Bridge are available from the bridge itself and from within Flushing Meadows Corona Park to the south. Views of the elevated structure of the bridge are also available from the parking lots adjacent to the bridge. Views from the area to the east of the Development Site—Seaver Way—are limited because of distance and intervening trees planted in parking islands. It is not expected that new development associated with the Proposed Actions would block views of this resource. **Figure 8-20** and **Figure 8-21** show a comparison of the view north from the Passerelle Bridge. **Figure 8-22** and **Figure 8-23** show the view towards the Passerelle Bridge from a publicly accessible sidewalk along Seaver Way. The view south towards Flushing Meadows Corona Park from the Passerelle Bridge would remain unchanged.

As shown in the comparison views from the Passerelle Bridge, in the With-Action condition, the view north would include new project components, consisting of the new destination entertainment uses and parking structures. As shown in the comparison views from Seaver Way, a new parking structure and landscaping, including new street trees, would be visible.

Figure 8-20 No-Action — View North from Passerelle Bridge



Photo taken on June 19, 2023

Figure 8-21 With-Action (Maximum Envelopes) — View North from Passerelle Bridge



Photo taken on June 19, 2023

Figure 8-22 No-Action — View Southwest from Seaver Way towards Passerelle Bridge



Photo taken on June 19, 2023

Figure 8-23 With-Action (Maximum Envelopes) — View Southwest from Seaver Way towards Passerelle Bridge



Photo taken on June 19, 2023

Flushing Meadows Corona Park

Within the study area, views of a portion of Flushing Meadows Corona Park are available from Meridian Road, which circles around a portion of the park, as well as from public walkways within the park. Views of Flushing Meadows Corona Park are not available from the Development Site. It is not expected that the Proposed Actions would block views toward the park or block views of any of the historic features located within the park. As explained above, the Proposed Actions would improve view corridors towards the park as new walkways would be constructed which would provide for enhanced and safer pedestrian connections.

Visual Resources Conclusion

Views of Flushing Bay, the Malcolm X Promenade, and the Candela Structures are limited to pedestrian accessible areas within the Malcolm X Promenade itself. Views of the Passerelle Bridge are available from the bridge itself and from within Flushing Meadows Corona Park to the south. Views of the elevated structure of the bridge are also available from the parking lots adjacent to the bridge. Views of Flushing Meadows Corona Park are not available from within the Development Site, although views of a portion of the park are available from Meridian Road and from public walkways within the park.

Existing views toward these visual resources from many locations within the study area are limited due to topography, distance, the elevated Whitestone Expressway, and intervening trees. It is not expected that the new development would block views of these resources. The Proposed Project would improve view corridors towards these resources, as new walkways would be constructed that would provide for enhanced and safer pedestrian connections between the Malcolm X Promenade and Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Overall, the Proposed Actions would facilitate substantial improvements in the pedestrian experience within and around the Development Site. As a result, it is not anticipated that the Proposed Project would result in any significant adverse impacts to visual resources.