17 NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

17.1 Introduction

This section assesses the Proposed Actions' potential effects on neighborhood character. Per the 2021 *CEQR Technical Manual*, neighborhood character is an amalgam of various elements that give a neighborhood its distinct "personality." These elements may include a neighborhood's land use, socioeconomic conditions, community facilities, open space, historic and cultural resources, urban design and visual resources, shadows, transportation, and noise conditions; however, not all of these elements contribute to neighborhood character in all cases. For a proposed project, a CEQR neighborhood character assessment should first identify the defining features of the neighborhood and then evaluate whether the project has the potential to adversely affect one or more of these defining features.

A project may have the potential to affect a neighborhood's character by a combination of moderate effects or significant adverse impacts to any of the defining features of the neighborhood. Therefore, to determine the effects of a proposed action on neighborhood character, the relevant features of neighborhood character are considered cumulatively. In addition, a significant impact identified in one of the technical areas that may contribute to a neighborhood's character is not automatically equivalent to a significant impact on neighborhood character, but rather serves as an indication that neighborhood character should be examined.

The Proposed Actions would allow the redevelopment of Projected Development Sites 1 and 2. Projected Development Site 1 comprises Block 3017, Lot 74 (1460 Sheridan Boulevard) and Projected Development Site 2 comprises Block 3017, Lot 29 (1480 Sheridan Boulevard). Projected Development Site 1 is currently occupied by a 14,000-gross-square-foot (gsf) automobile mechanic training facility. Projected Development Site 2 contains an open parking facility and four connected one-story accessory office buildings and one garage totaling approximately 25,197 gsf of building area. Projected Development sites 1 and 2 are wholly owned by the Applicant.

In addition to the Applicant's sites, the Reasonable Worst Case Development Scenario (RWCDS) identified one potential development site – Potential Development Site A. Potential Development Site A separates Projected Development Sites 1 and 2, and comprises Lots 60, 65 and 68 on Block 3017. Lot 60 is an approximately 23,495-square-foot (sf) lot improved with a 16,398-gsf one-story vacant industrial building. Lot 65 is an approximately 19,070-sf lot improved with a 26,353-gsf three-story hotel that was developed in 2007. Lot 68 is a 14,411-sf lot used as an open parking facility.

17.2 Principal Conclusions

The Proposed Action would not result in significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character. Overall, the technical areas that contribute to a neighborhood's character would not – either individually or in combination – result in moderate adverse impacts on neighborhood character. The Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts to land use, zoning, and public policy, socioeconomic conditions, community facilities, open space, historic and cultural resources, urban design and visual resources, shadows, or noise.

Regarding Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy, the Proposed Development would be similar to the surrounding land uses and would allow mixed-use buildings with active street frontage along Sheridan Boulevard. The Proposed Actions would establish a new zoning district in the Crotona Park East neighborhood, which would allow greater flexibility to develop residential, community facility, and commercial uses and would support multiple public policies by providing affordable housing, open space resources, and improvements to the waterfront.

The Proposed Actions are expected to introduce households that earn annual incomes higher than both the average and median of the Socioeconomic Conditions Study Area. Based on guidance in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the project-generated population would not be expected to affect real estate market conditions. Therefore, project-generated residents in the proposed affordable housing may increase the socioeconomic diversity of the neighborhood.

The Proposed Rezoning Area does not contain a community facility, and the Proposed Actions would not directly alter an existing community facility. Based on the latest data available as presented in Chapter 4 "Community Facilities", an analysis of the effects of the Proposed Actions on public schools, libraries, and publicly funded early childhood centers was performed. The analysis found that the existing public schools and publicly funded early childhood centers in the area would have the potential to accommodate project-generated demand for public school and publicly funded early childhood centers without exceeding CEQR impact criteria. The analysis of libraries found that the Proposed Actions would not result in a population increase over the CEQR impact criteria.

The Proposed Actions would not directly alter an existing open space or change the character of the Study Area's open space resources. The Proposed Actions would introduce new publicly accessible waterfront and non-waterfront open space into the Study Area that would complement recent improvements to Starlight Park and other open spaces along the Bronx River Greenway. The Proposed Actions would nominally decrease the overall open space ratio (OSR), which would be below the CEQR impact criteria.

The Proposed Actions would not directly alter a historic or cultural resource. From the proposed network of open spaces, new views from the Bronx River waterfront would

become available to the area's historic resources that would not be available in the No-Action Condition.

With the Proposed Development, some long-range views of visual resources in the Study Area may be obstructed either partially or fully. However, the proposed network of open spaces in the Proposed Rezoning Area is expected to allow opportunity for new publicly accessible views – particularly of the Bronx River, Starlight Park, and Amtrak Bascule Bridge – that would not be available in the No-Action Condition.

Project-generated shadow would occur on several resources within the Study Area, including the Bronx River, Daniel Boone Playground, PS X811's blacktop, PS 66's schoolyard, and Starlight Park on all four CEQR shadow analysis days. However, project-generated shadows are not expected to result in significant adverse impacts to these resources.

While the Proposed Actions would generate vehicular and pedestrian trips in the Study Area, the Proposed Actions would not significantly alter the transportation character of the Study Area. The analysis of the Proposed Development in Chapter 12, "Transportation," found that the Proposed Actions have the potential to result in significant adverse impacts in the contributing technical area of transportation, particularly in the areas of vehicular traffic and pedestrian circulation. However, because these impacts can be mitigated, the Proposed Actions are not anticipated to result in a significant adverse unmitigated impact related to transportation.

Chapter 20, "Mitigation," includes several proposed measures to mitigate impacts to traffic and pedestrians. These mitigation measures will be implemented in consultation with the New York City (NYC) Department of City Planning (DCP) and NYC Department of Transportation (DOT).

The project-generated buildings would be served by mechanical equipment that would comply with the New York City Mechanical and Noise codes, and would not significantly alter the ambient noise conditions in the area. The project-generated buildings would comply with the window-wall attenuation requirements of the proposed E-Designation; therefore, the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse noise impacts.

17.3 Methodology

An assessment of neighborhood character is generally required when a proposed action has the potential to result in significant adverse impacts to the technical areas listed previously. A preliminary neighborhood character assessment determines whether anticipated impacts in a CEQR technical area may adversely impact a defining feature of the neighborhood. The preliminary assessment first identifies the defining features and then evaluates whether the proposed project or action has the potential to adversely impact those defining features, either through the potential for a significant adverse impact in a single relevant technical area, or a combination of moderate effects in the relevant technical areas. A "moderate" effect is generally defined as being reasonably close to the significant adverse impact threshold for a particular technical analysis area. Moderate effects on several technical areas may affect the defining features of a neighborhood and the overall pedestrian experience. Moderate effects on land use, socioeconomics, and transportation have the potential to effect prevailing businesses and economics of an area, which collectively have the potential to affect the experience of pedestrians, workers, residents, and visitors in a neighborhood.

The key elements that define neighborhood character, and their relationships to one another, form the basis of determining impact significance. In general, the more uniform and consistent the existing neighborhood character, the more sensitive it is to change. A neighborhood that has a varied context typically is able to tolerate greater change without experiencing significant impacts.

A preliminary assessment of neighborhood character determines whether the changes expected due to the proposed actions would affect a defining feature of a neighborhood and its character. Typically, an assessment should focus on the major characteristics of a neighborhood and how they relate to the area's overall character by answering the following questions:

1. What are the defining features of the neighborhood?
2. Does the project have the potential to affect the defining features of the neighborhood, either through the potential for a significant adverse impact in any of the relevant technical areas or a combination of moderate effects in several of the relevant technical areas?

If there is no potential for the proposed project or action to affect the features that define the neighborhood's character, a detailed assessment is not warranted. For this project, a preliminary neighborhood character assessment was warranted.

Study Area

Per the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the Study Area for a preliminary assessment of neighborhood character is typically consistent with the study areas in other relevant technical areas assessed, such as a quarter-mile radius around the Proposed Rezoning Area for the Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy Study Area, and a 400-foot radius for the Historic and Cultural Resources Study Area.

The Proposed Rezoning Area is bound by Starlight Park to the north, the Bronx River and the Amtrak right-of-way to the east, a line 300 feet north of Westchester Avenue to the south, and the centerline of Sheridan Boulevard to the west. It is southeast of the Compass Residences, an affordable housing development containing 14- and 15-story buildings that was constructed in 2018.[1]

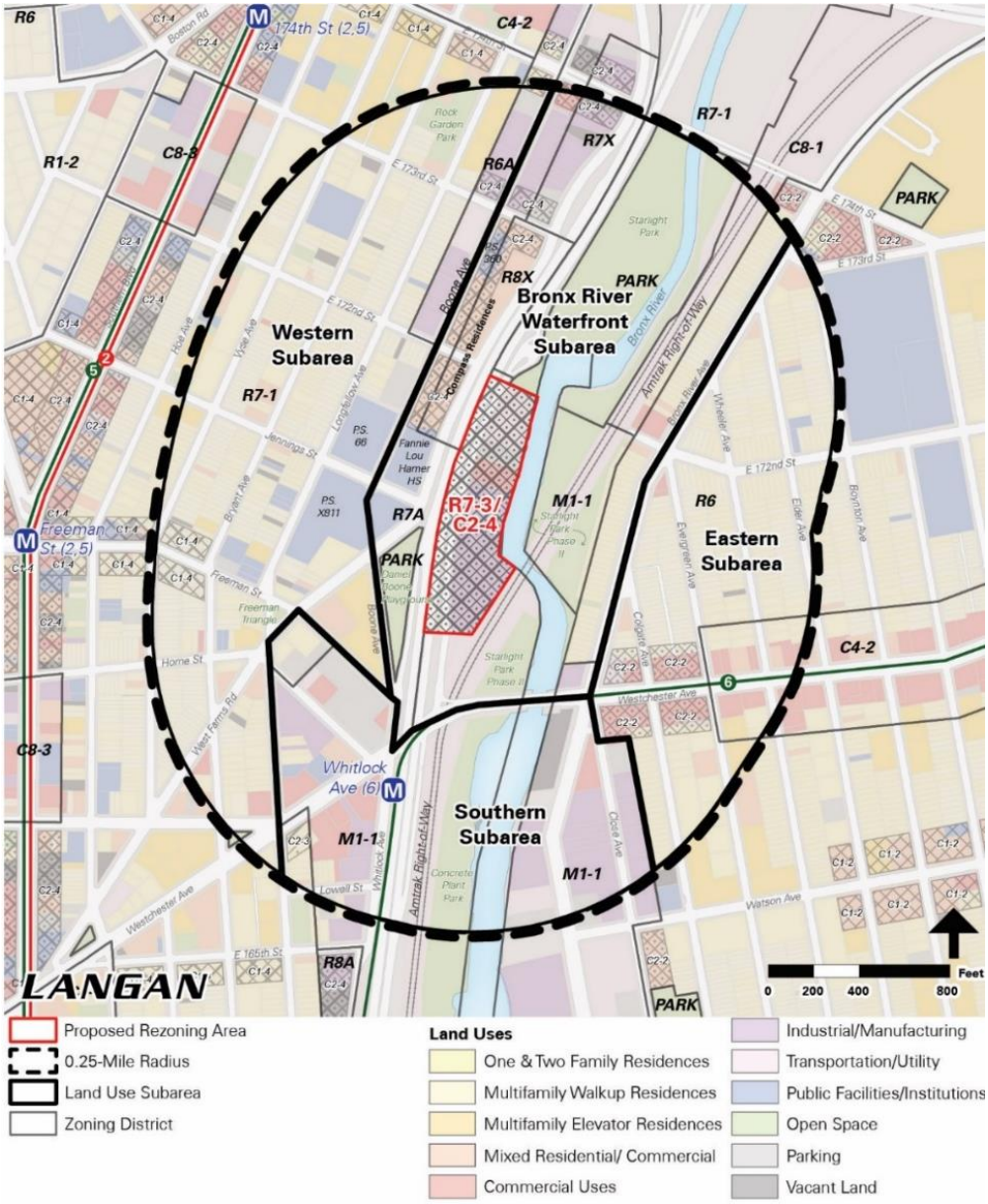
17.4 Existing Conditions

Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy

The Study Area is divided into four subareas, each with different defining characteristics and features. The defining characteristics of the Bronx River Waterfront subarea – the subarea that contains the Proposed Rezoning Area – include the Bronx River, Starlight Park, and Sheridan Boulevard, as shown in Figure 17-1.

[1] The Compass Residences are a six-building development that was the subject of a Large-Scale General Development (LSGD) Special Permit approved in October 2011 (Land Use Application C100312 ZSX). The LSGD modified the underlying zoning requirements for residential lot coverage, street wall location, height, and setbacks.

Figure 17-1: Study Area Subareas



The Western subarea is characterized by Rock Garden Park, commercial uses along Freeman Street, and several scattered institutional uses including the Samara Community School (former P.S. 50, currently P.S. X458), which is an S/NR-eligible resource. The Southern subarea is characterized by the Whitlock Avenue No. 6 Subway Station and the Amtrak-right-of-way. The Eastern subarea is characterized by commercial uses along Westchester Avenue and the Elder Avenue No. 6 Subway Station.

Bronx River Waterfront Subarea

The Bronx River Waterfront Subarea is generally defined by the Bronx River, Starlight Park and Sheridan Boulevard, all of which are features that generally run north-south through the subarea. The area south of East 172nd Street and between Sheridan Boulevard and the Bronx River is generally improved with industrial uses that are not waterfront dependent.

Areas west of Sheridan Boulevard include mixed-use residential with some community facility and retail uses along Boone Avenue. Several industrial uses and a commercial use are in the very northern portion of the subarea.

The street pattern allows for some views of the Bronx River along some of the subarea's upland streets. The principal vehicular route through the Study Area is Sheridan Boulevard, a two-way north-south street that was converted from an expressway to a boulevard in 2019 by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT).

Residential and mixed-use developments are located on the east and west boundaries of the Bronx River Waterfront Subarea. The portion of the subarea west of Sheridan Boulevard also includes Daniel Boone Playground and two public schools. The majority of the Bronx River Waterfront Subarea is defined by Starlight Park and light industrial uses extending south of Starlight Park (including the Proposed Rezoning Area) to Westchester Avenue along the river's west shore. The Bronx River Waterfront Subarea also contains manufacturing uses in the subarea's north.

Western Subarea

The Western Subarea is generally defined by residential and institutional uses, with some industrial uses in the subarea's north along Boone Avenue. There are also several mixed-use buildings with ground floor retail and stand-alone, one-story commercial spaces. The west end of Freeman Street is the beginning of a commercial corridor that runs west towards the Freeman Street No. 2 and 5 subway station (outside of the subarea).

The grid-like street pattern runs from the north end of the subarea until Freeman Street. The street pattern begins to be irregular south of Freeman Street forming a triangular pattern at Freeman Triangle – a 0.02 triangular-shaped plaza at the intersection of Freeman Street, Longfellow Avenue, and West Farms Road. The subarea's visual resources include Rock Garden Park and the Samara Community School (P.S. 458 – an S/NR-eligible resource formerly known as P.S. 50).

Southern Subarea

The Southern Subarea is generally defined by the Amtrak-right-of-way, Concrete Plant Park, the Bronx River and the Whitlock Avenue No. 6 Subway station, which all bisect the subarea into east and west portions. The western portion of the subarea between Freeman Street and Home Street contains a mix of one-story commercial, light industrial, and open parking uses. In the subarea's east beyond the Amtrak right-of-way and towards Close Avenue, the subarea contains mostly industrial uses.

The street pattern of the subarea is irregular and comes to a triangular pattern at the intersection of Westchester Avenue, Whitlock Avenue, and Home Street, with the Whitlock Avenue No. 6 Subway station as the defining feature of the intersection. The No. 6 Subway line runs above ground over Whitlock Avenue before crossing the Bronx River at Westchester Avenue. The Whitlock Avenue Subway station is located at the intersection of Whitlock Avenue and Westchester Avenue and provides service to the local No. 6 train line from Pelham Bay Park/Parkchester to Brooklyn Bridge-City Hall.

Eastern Subarea

The Eastern Subarea centers on the elevated No. 6 subway line and commercial uses along Westchester Avenue. Westchester Avenue contains the Study Area's densest concentration of commercial uses with various commercial uses that front Westchester

Avenue and range from one to two stories. This portion of the subarea also contains several mixed-use buildings with ground floor retail above residential units.

The subarea's street pattern is largely regular except for Bronx River Avenue, which generally runs parallel to the Bronx River. The No. 6 Subway line runs above ground over Westchester Avenue. The Elder Avenue Subway station is located at the intersection of Elder Avenue and Westchester Avenue and provides service to the local No. 6 train line from Pelham Bay Park/Parkchester to Brooklyn Bridge-City Hall.

North of Westchester Avenue, the Eastern Subarea is predominantly residential comprising one- and two-family residences with several churches intermixed. There are several commercial uses, which front Bronx River Avenue at the intersection of Bronx River Avenue, Evergreen Avenue, and East 172nd Street. Farther north along Bronx River Avenue are several mixed-use buildings with commercial uses on the ground floor and residential units above.

Socioeconomic Conditions

Projected Development Site 1 is currently improved with a one-story automobile mechanic training facility. Projected Development Site 2 contains an open parking facility with four connected one-story accessory office buildings and one garage. These existing businesses on the projected development sites collectively generate an estimated 22 jobs. These existing businesses are not location dependent. There are no residences or affordable housing in the Proposed Rezoning Area.

Community Facilities

The Proposed Rezoning Area does not contain any community facilities. The Study Area contains a mix of community facilities, including several schools, religious centers, NYC-owned office buildings, and medical offices. Additionally, the Proposed Rezoning Area is served by libraries, police, and fire services.

Open Space

The Proposed Rezoning Area does not contain any open spaces. The Study Area surrounding the Proposed Rezoning Area contains several open space resources, including Rock Garden Park, Starlight Park, Concrete Plant Park, and Daniel Boone Playground.

These open spaces contain a variety of amenities. Rock Garden Park includes playgrounds, benches, a basketball court, and spray showers. Starlight Park includes the Bronx River Alliance headquarters, baseball fields, soccer fields, basketball courts, a kayak/canoe site, dog-friendly areas, and playgrounds. Starlight Park Phase 2 was recently constructed and added greenway paths, restored wetlands, installed seating areas and river overlooks, and created a dog run. New bicycle and pedestrian bridges were installed across the Bronx River and the Amtrak right-of-way to connect the park. Concrete Plant Park contains dog-friendly areas, a kayak/canoe site, waterfront promenade, reading circle, and links to multi-use pedestrian greenways. Daniel Boone Playground contains a playground and spray showers.

Shadows

The Study Area is a mature urban neighborhood with buildings of varying height. Buildings range from 1 to 15 stories in the Shadows Study Area. These existing buildings cast shadow onto various open space resources throughout the year.

Shadow is also cast onto the Bronx River by existing buildings in the Proposed Rezoning Area. The Bronx River, a 23-mile long intertidal body of water, runs throughout southeast New York. It is home to a number of insects, fish, and other wildlife and offers Bronx residents a connection to nature.

Historic and Cultural Resources

There are three historic and cultural resources within the Study Area, including the Amtrak Northeast Corridor Line Bascule Bridge and the IRT No. 6 Subway Truss Bridge. These resources are eligible for the State/National Register (S/NR) of historic places. The Westchester Avenue Bridge is also within the Study Area and is considered an S/NR-undetermined resource. The two S/NR-eligible resources in the Study Area are both steel bridges constructed in the early 20th century. These resources meet the criterion for listing in the National Register of Historic Places because they are considered a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction in the area of engineering. These resources are defining features within the Study Area.

Urban Design and Visual Resources

The Urban Design and Visual Resources Study Area is a mature urban neighborhood with buildings of varying heights and sizes. The area is predominantly residential with commercial corridors along Westchester Avenue. The Study Area's industrial uses are mainly along the Bronx River waterfront, and vacant land is in scattered locations throughout the Study Area. The street pattern is generally regular except when it is interrupted by the Bronx River. The Bronx River Avenue runs parallel to the river, creating an irregular street pattern near the waterfront. The Bronx River, Amtrak right-of-way, and Starlight Park are defining urban design features of the neighborhood.

Transportation

The key roadways in the Study Area include Sheridan Boulevard, Edgewater Road, Westchester Avenue and Whitlock Avenue; however, the highest trafficked roads are Westchester Avenue and Sheridan Boulevard. The Study Area is generally characterized by relatively light pedestrian flows during peak periods, with the greatest demand typically along Whitlock Avenue and Westchester Avenue near the subway station and bus stops. There is little pedestrian activity along Sheridan Boulevard. Additionally, within the Study Area parking is underutilized in the existing conditions.

Noise

The Proposed Rezoning Area is proximate to Sheridan Boulevard and the dominant noise sources in the area include vehicular traffic along Sheridan Boulevard, the elevated number 6 subway along Westchester Avenue, and the Amtrak right-of-way. The existing parking lot activity on Projected Development Site 2 also contributes to ambient noise conditions.

17.5 No-Action Condition

In the No-Action Condition, the existing conditions would continue. The three development sites in the Proposed Rezoning Area would remain a mix of light industrial uses, parking, and a hotel on Potential Development Site A. Public access to the Bronx River waterfront would continue to be unavailable within the Proposed Rezoning Area.

In the Study Area, the defining features of each subarea would remain. The Bronx River Waterfront Subarea would continue to be defined by the Bronx River, Starlight Park, and Sheridan Boulevard. The Western Subarea would continue to be characterized by its predominately medium-density residential land uses with scattered institutional uses. The Southern Subarea would continue to be characterized by its proximity to the Whitlock Avenue No. 6 Subway Station and the Amtrak-right-of-way. The Eastern Subarea would continue to be characterized by commercial uses along Westchester Avenue, the Elder Avenue No. 6 Subway Station, and by medium-density residential uses on the side streets.

The businesses on Projected Development Sites 1 and 2 would remain in the No-Action Condition, sustaining the estimated 22 jobs generated by these existing uses. No residential units or access to the Bronx River waterfront would be developed on the development sites. The Proposed Rezoning Area would not contain any community facilities uses and would not generate public school students or households that would be eligible for publicly funded daycare. Shadows generated by the existing structures on the development sites would continue to cast shadow on the Bronx River and Starlight Park. Additionally, noise levels would remain similar to existing conditions.

In the No-Action Condition, changes to traffic signal timings and the travel lane, bicycle lane and curbside parking configurations on Westchester Avenue are ongoing. These improvements are being implemented by DOT as part of the Westchester Avenue, Southern Boulevard to Whitlock Avenue Safety Improvement Plan. Traffic volumes, pedestrian flows, subway demand, and parking demand are expected to grow absent the Proposed Actions. This would result in an increase in demand for all major modes of transportation in the No-Action Condition.

17.6 With-Action Condition

In the With-Action Condition, the Proposed Development would not result in significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character. Overall, the technical areas that contribute to a neighborhood's character would not – either individually or in combination – result in moderate adverse impacts on neighborhood character. The defining features of the neighborhood, including the Bronx River, Starlight Park, and several historic resources, would not be significantly impacted by the Proposed Development.

The Proposed Development would be similar to the surrounding land uses, and the new zoning district would allow for greater flexibility to develop residential, community facility, or commercial development. The Proposed Development would provide affordable residential units within the Study Area and would increase the socioeconomic diversity of the neighborhood. The Proposed Development would not result in significant adverse impacts to public open space or natural resources, and shadow cast on these resources would not significantly impact their quality or usability. While the Proposed Development would alter views of some historic and visual resources, short-range views of these resources would remain available to the public. Additionally, the Proposed Development would require a noise E-Designation, which would preclude the potential for significant adverse noise impacts.

The Proposed Development has the potential to result in a significant adverse impact in the contributing technical area of transportation, particularly in the areas of vehicular traffic and pedestrian circulation. However, these impacts can be mitigated and are further discussed in Chapter 20, "Mitigation." Accordingly, the Proposed Development is not anticipated to result in a significant adverse unmitigated impact related transportation.

Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy

The Proposed Actions would allow the construction of three mixed-use buildings on Projected Development Sites 1 and 2. Projected Development Site 1 would be developed with one mixed-use building containing ground floor retail and residential space above. Including mechanical bulkheads, the building would rise to a height of 240 feet. Projected Development Site 1 would also contain additional open space in the form of a shore public walkway and an upland connection/visual corridor. The shore public walkway would be at least 40 feet wide along the site's waterfront. A 35-foot-wide upland connection/visual corridor would be developed along the site's southern boundary, connecting Sheridan Boulevard to the shore public walkway. These open space resources would introduce new active and passive waterfront recreational space that would complement the existing facilities at Starlight Park and the 20-mile-long Bronx River Greenway.

Projected Development Site 2 would be developed with two buildings that would contain ground floor retail and residential space above. Both buildings, including mechanical bulkheads, would also rise to heights of 240 feet. Projected Development Site 2 would contain 100 accessory parking spaces and additional open space. The open space on Projected Development Site 2 would contain a shore public walkway, an upland connection and visual corridor along the site's northern lot line, a supplemental access area, and an additional non-waterfront open space in the area between the two proposed buildings on this site.

Potential Development Site A is not currently owned by the Applicant and there are no specific development plans to redevelop this site. If redeveloped, the site would likely be developed into a mixed-use building containing ground floor retail and residential space above. The building would rise to a maximum height of 240 feet including the mechanical bulkheads. If redeveloped, Potential Development Site A would be required to provide a shore public walkway along the waterfront. This shore public walkway would connect to the shore public walkways on Projected Development Sites 1 and 2. Based on the underlying zoning, an upland connection would also be required on this site.

Overall, the development allowed by the Proposed Actions would be similar to the surrounding land uses and would allow mixed-use buildings with active street frontage along Sheridan Boulevard. With an already varied neighborhood context, the Proposed Actions would further expand affordable housing within the Study Area and complement similar recent infill development along Sheridan Boulevard. At 240 feet tall, Projected Development Sites 1 and 2 would be the tallest buildings in the Study Area. However, the height of the Proposed Actions would be similar to the Compass Residences, which are at a higher elevation because of the slope upland from the Bronx River to areas farther west. Visual and physical access to the waterfront would be available in the With-Action Condition that would not otherwise be available to the Study Area's users.

The Proposed Actions would establish a new R7-3/C2-4 zoning district in the Crotona Park East neighborhood, allowing greater flexibility to develop residential, community facility, and commercial uses in the Proposed Rezoning Area. The Proposed Actions would require new developments along the Proposed Rezoning Area's waterfront to provide public access areas pursuant to Section 62-50 of the New York City Zoning Resolution (ZR). The rezoning would complement recent rezonings such as the Crotona Park East/West Farms Road Rezoning - which rezoned several blocks from an M1-1 to R6A, R7A, R7X, and R8X residential districts with C2-4 commercial overlays in targeted locations – and the Compass Residences project, which included a Large-Scale General Development (LSGD) Special Permit and rezoning from the CPC that was approved in October 2011 (Land Use Application C100312 ZSX).

The Proposed Actions would allow the development of new housing, including affordable options, and would be consistent with goals of multiple public policies such as *OneNYC 2050; Housing New York 2.0; Rebuild, Renew, Reinvent: A Blueprint for New York City's Economic Recovery; Where We Live NYC*; FRESH; and the NYC Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP). Further, the Proposed Actions would support local policy goals in the *Southern Boulevard Neighborhood Study* and the recent Sheridan Boulevard improvements by connecting people to the Study Area's defining resources, opportunities, and assets.

Accordingly, the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse impact to the Study Area's neighborhood character in the area of land use, zoning, and public policy.

Socioeconomic Conditions

The RWCDS for this project established that the Proposed Actions would allow the development of three buildings on two projected development sites and one building on a potential development site. Development on Projected Development Sites 1 and 2 would not result in the direct displacement of any residential uses and would not displace any residents, but would displace an existing automobile mechanic training facility on Projected Development Site 1 and a public parking facility, accessory office buildings, and a garage on Projected Development Site 2. If redeveloped, the hotel on Potential Development Site A could be displaced. However, as a potential site it is less likely to be redeveloped in the With-Action Condition.

The Proposed Actions would not prohibit the relocation of these displaced businesses to other locations within Crotona Park East. Neighborhoods proximate to Crotona Park East also include various types of manufacturing uses and districts where the displaced businesses could relocate without additional discretionary land use actions. The businesses that are projected to be displaced are not dependent on their current location

and could be relocated elsewhere in the community district or borough. The parking facility that would be displaced on Projected Development Site 2 would partially be offset by the proposed parking facility at 1280 Westchester Avenue that is being developed independent of the Proposed Actions and by others.

The Proposed Rezoning Area is an area of the Bronx where both the mean and median household incomes are less than other areas of the Bronx and incomes citywide. The Proposed Actions would require affordable housing pursuant to the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) program, which requires a minimum of 20 percent of new housing units be permanently affordable. The Applicants intend to exceed the minimum affordable requirements by developing three mixed-use buildings with fully affordable residential components. Up to 970 affordable units would be developed across the Applicants' sites.

The Proposed Actions are expected to introduce households that earn annual incomes higher than both the average and median of the Socioeconomic Conditions Study Area. Based on guidance in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the project-generated population would not be expected to affect real estate market conditions. The Proposed Actions may increase the socioeconomic diversity of a neighborhood where both the mean and median household incomes are less than other areas of the Bronx and incomes citywide.

The new residential uses would be supported by local retail uses. The Proposed Actions are expected to increase the number of jobs within the Proposed Rezoning Area. Accordingly, by introducing additional jobs and affordable housing, the Proposed Actions would not have a significant adverse neighborhood character impact in the area of socioeconomic conditions.

Community Facilities

The Proposed Actions would not directly affect a community facility. While the Proposed Actions would introduce additional public school students and children that would be eligible for publicly funded child care, the Proposed Actions would not affect the neighborhood character of the Study Area's community facilities, such as Fannie Lou Hammer Freedom High School, P.S. X811, the Samara Community School, and P.S. 066, which are west of the Proposed Rezoning Area. The Proposed Actions would not have an indirect impact to public libraries, health care facilities and fire/police protection within the Study Area, which support the overall function, character and quality of life in the neighborhood. Accordingly, the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse neighborhood character impact in the area of community facilities.

Open Space

The Open Space Study Area's OSR is below the City's optimal guideline of 2.5 acres of open space per 1,000 residents, and the open space analysis indicates that the Study Area is particularly deficient for active open space. The Proposed Rezoning Area is adjacent to Starlight Park – part of the 20-mile-long Bronx River Greenway – and across Sheridan Boulevard from Daniel Boone Playground. The Study Area has a variety of open spaces with programming available for a variety of age groups and users.

While the Proposed Actions would decrease the overall OSR by 0.001 points (less than 0.2 percent reduction), the Proposed Actions would not directly displace or alter any existing open space resource, and therefore would not affect the character of any of the Study

Area's open space resources. With the proposed new open spaces, the Proposed Actions are expected to increase the Study Area's active OSR. The proposed development would provide additional open space for passive and active uses on the projected development sites that would be designed, constructed, and maintained by the Applicant. Accordingly, the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse neighborhood character impact in the area of open space as a result of availability and utilization of open space resources.

Shadows

The Proposed Actions would allow the development of three buildings up to 240 feet tall. The detailed shadow assessment shows that incremental shadow has the potential to be cast on open space resources and the Bronx River on the December 21, March 21, May 6, and June 21 analysis days. During times of project-generated shadow on the open space resources, most shadow would occur in the mornings for fewer than 2 hours.

While the Proposed Actions would result in incremental shadow cast on the Bronx River, the constant movement of the waterbody from upstream water and daily tides would have a negligible effect on the conditions of the waterbody. Existing buildings, topography, and vegetation in areas outside of the Proposed Rezoning Area cast shadows along portions of the river throughout the day. In-water recreation would similarly be nominally affected by project-generated incremental shadow because of the overall length of the waterbody and other areas of the river that would continue to receive direct sunlight.

Project-generated shadow would be cast on Daniel Boone Playground in the early morning period across the four analysis days. All incremental shadow on the playground would be confined to the early morning period, and no incremental shadow would occur on the playground after 9:24AM on any analysis day.

PS X811's blacktop would receive incremental shadow in the early morning period across the four analysis days. All incremental shadow on the playground would be confined to the early morning period, and no incremental shadow would occur on the playground after 9:55AM on any analysis day.

PS 66's schoolyard is part of the Schoolyards to Playgrounds program. Incremental shadow would be cast on the schoolyard for less than one hour during the early morning period across the four analysis days. The incremental shadow would not affect its usability as a track and playground or completely eliminate the schoolyard's sunlight at any point during the analysis days. With the Proposed Actions, the schoolyard would continue to receive over seven hours of direct sunlight on the March, May, and June analysis days.

Throughout the year, incremental shadow on the portions of Starlight Park that are west of the Bronx River would largely be confined to the area that is between the prolongation of East 172nd Street and the Bronx River House's parking lot. This area contains some seating and walking paths, but overall is used less frequently than other areas of the park such as the turf soccer field, basketball courts, and playground.

In the portions of Starlight Park that are east of the Bronx River, project-generated shadow would be cast on portions of the newly constructed Starlight Park Phase II on all four analysis days in the late afternoon periods. Project-generated shadow would only occur for less than two to three hours towards the end of the analysis period. This area would continue to experience direct sunlight in the morning and early to mid-afternoon.

Throughout all analysis days, areas of Starlight Park will continue to be in direct sunlight, including the northern end of the park near East 174th Street, including the park's playground. Overall, project-generated shadows would not have the potential to affect the neighborhood character of Starlight Park.

Accordingly, the Proposed Actions do not have the potential to result in a significant adverse neighborhood character impact in the area of shadows on any of the four analysis days.

Historic and Cultural Resources

To assess potential direct and indirect impacts to architectural resources, architectural resources were inventoried using the State Historic Preservation Office's (SHPO) Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS) database and LPC's Discover NYC Landmarks Map. There were two resources identified in the Study Area that are State and National Register (S/NR) eligible resources: The AMTRAK Northeast Corridor Line Bascule Bridge and the IRT No. 6 Subway Truss Bridge. The Westchester Avenue Bridge is also within the Study Area and is an S/NR-undetermined resource – a resource that has not had its historic significance determined by SHPO.

Correspondence with the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) confirmed that there are no architectural or archaeological resources on Projected Development Sites 1 and 2. Thus, there would be no potential to result in significant adverse impacts to archaeological resources or eligible and/or designated architectural resources. However, project-generated construction would occur within 90 feet from an architectural resource; therefore, the Proposed Development would follow the Department of Building's Technical Policy and Procedure Notice #10/88 (TPPN #10/88), which provides procedures to avoid significant adverse construction impacts to historic resources from construction. The implementation of TPPN #10/88 would be a Project Component Related to the Environment (PCRE). While the Proposed Actions would introduce new buildings with the potential to be within the viewing context of the Study Area's two architectural resources, views of the resources would continue to be available from publicly accessible areas and would not result in changes to the character of a historic or cultural resource. With the PCRE in place, the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character in the area of historic and cultural resources.

In the With-Action Condition, new views from the proposed network of open spaces along the Bronx River waterfront would become available to the area's historic resources that would not be available in the No-Action Condition.

Urban Design and Visual Resources

Like the Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy Study Area, the Urban Design and Visual Resources Study Area was divided into four subareas: the Bronx River Waterfront, Western, Eastern, and Southern subareas. The Bronx River Waterfront Subarea contains the Proposed Rezoning Area. The urban design of this subarea centers on the Bronx River, the Amtrak right-of-way, and Starlight Park. Its visual resources include Starlight Park, the Bronx River, Daniel Boone Playground, the Amtrak Bascule Bridge, the IRT No. 6 Subway Truss Bridge, and Westchester Avenue Bridge.

The Proposed Actions would introduce up to four new buildings across the two projected development sites and one potential development site. New visual connections to the

Bronx River from upland areas would be introduced along the southern boundary of Projected Development Site 1, along the northern boundary of Projected Development Site 2, and between proposed Buildings 2 and 3 on Projected Development Site 2. These new visual connections do not exist today and would not be available in the No-Action Condition.

Project-generated development would be required to comply with the applicable bulk requirements of the R7-3/C2-4 district within the waterfront area. These provisions generally yield taller and more slender towers above a broader base. The slender towers minimize the area that could potentially obstruct views from locations farther upland.

The Proposed Actions may obstruct some long-range views towards Starlight Park from Westchester Avenue and Daniel Boone Playground from discrete areas, however, such obstructions are typical of new development in mature urban areas, and short-range views of the park would continue to be available from other locations in the Study Area. Short-range views of the Study Area's historic resources would also continue to be available from a variety of locations in the Study Area.

With 24 stories and a roof height of 225 feet (240 including the mechanical bulkheads), the project-generated buildings would be the tallest buildings in the Study Area. The second-tallest buildings would be the Compass Residences, which are across Sheridan Boulevard from the Proposed Rezoning Area. The Compass Residences rise to a height of 99 feet within 50 feet of Boone Avenue, and then step up to a roof height of 164 feet (or an elevation of 190 feet as measured in the North American Vertical Datum [NAVD]) within 50 feet of West Farms Road and Sheridan Boulevard. The Compass Residences are located upland from the Proposed Rezoning Area at a higher elevation than the Proposed Development, and thus would appear to be at a similar height as the project-generated development. Project-generated development would continue the pattern of increased building heights near the Bronx River, and would not substantially alter the urban design character of the neighborhood. New development would also incorporate modern construction materials into the design of the building. A mix of passive and active recreational elements including landscaping would be developed in the proposed additional open space, creating new opportunities for visual interest. Physical connections would also be made to the Bronx River waterfront creating publicly accessible views that would not exist in the No-Action Condition.

Project-generated development would alter the views experienced by users in Starlight Park. The greatest changes to these views would be from the portions of Starlight Park that are east of the Bronx River, and where panoramic views of the Proposed Rezoning Area are in the viewing context of the Bronx River. Because the Proposed Rezoning Area's waterfront would replace existing industrial uses with a shore public walkway that would contain a mix of landscaping and recreational uses, views across the Bronx River from Starlight Park are expected to be improved in the With-Action Condition when the waterfront project is reviewed and approved. Accordingly, the Proposed Actions do not have the potential to result in a significant adverse neighborhood character impact in the area of urban design and visual resources.

Transportation

While the Proposed Actions would generate additional volumes of pedestrian and vehicular trips, the Proposed Actions do not involve the mapping, demapping, or realigning of streets. The Proposed Actions would similarly not require changes to traffic

flow directions or geometric changes, and would not change the neighborhood's access to transit. With local retail and additional open space generated from Projected Development Sites 1 and 2, the Proposed Actions are expected to generate additional trips to the waterfront. These new trips would activate the waterfront with new recreational and retail activity, consistent with the vision of the *Southern Boulevard Neighborhood Study*.

Based on the analysis performed in Chapter 12, "Transportation," the Proposed Actions have the potential to result in significant adverse impacts in the areas of vehicular traffic and pedestrian circulation. The analysis identified five traffic intersection/approach lanes and eight pedestrian elements that have the potential to experience a significantly adverse impact. However, these impacts could be mitigated based on the mitigation measures proposed in Chapter 20, "Mitigation," subject to approval by DOT. Accordingly, the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse neighborhood character impact in the area of transportation.

Noise

The Proposed Rezoning Area is near the elevated No. 6 subway line, an Amtrak right-of-way, and vehicular traffic along both Sheridan Boulevard and Westchester Avenue. The Proposed Actions would not introduce a noise source that is atypical of new mixed-use residential development in an urban setting, and new mechanical equipment would be required to comply with the New York City Mechanical and Noise codes. The Proposed Actions also would not double existing peak-hour traffic volumes in the Study Area.

New development within the Proposed Rezoning Area would be required to provide façade attenuation to meet the CEQR-recommended interior noise environment of 45 dB(A) for residential and community facility uses. To achieve the CEQR-recommended criteria, an E-Designation would be mapped across the Proposed Rezoning Area with façade-specific window-wall attenuation requirements for each building. Project-generated development may also shield some portions of Starlight Park and other uses in the north of the Study Area from noise generated by the elevated No. 6 subway and Westchester Avenue. Accordingly, the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse neighborhood character impact in the area of noise.