A. INTRODUCTION

The 2021 *City Environmental Quality Review* (CEQR) *Technical Manual* states that the urban design components and visual resources determine the "look" of a neighborhood – its physical appearance, including the street pattern, the size and shape of buildings, their arrangement on blocks, streetscape features, natural resources, and noteworthy views that may give an area a distinctive character. Pursuant to CEQR methodology, actions that would allow a project to potentially obstruct view corridors, compete with icons in the skyline, or make substantial alterations to the streetscape of a neighborhood by noticeably changing the scale of buildings may warrant a detailed urban design and visual resources analysis. Since the Proposed Action would facilitate development that would be different in bulk, type, and use from the urban design of the Project Site and the surrounding area, a detailed urban design and visual resources analysis was prepared.

The Proposed Actions include: (1) a zoning map amendment that would rezone the 2.65-acre Project Site from M3-1 to M1-5; (2) a waterfront bulk special permit pursuant to ZR 62-837 to modify various bulk requirements in sub-sections of ZR 62-341, including (i) ZR 62-341(a)(2) - initial setback distance; (ii) ZR 62-341(c)(1) - maximum base height; (iii) ZR 62-341(c)(2) - maximum building height; and (iv) ZR 62-341(c)(5) - maximum width of walls facing shoreline; (3) a special permit pursuant to ZR 74-512 to allow a 234-space public parking garage; and (4) Waterfront zoning authorization to permit modification of certain otherwise applicable waterfront zoning regulations. The project also requires one non-discretionary ministerial action by the City Planning Commission (CPC): (1) Waterfront zoning certification pursuant to ZR 62-81 to demonstrate compliance with other applicable waterfront zoning regulations not modified pursuant to the authorization.

As discussed in **Chapter 1, "Project Description,"** the Applicant is proposing to improve the Project Site with a 23-story (approximately 352 feet tall, roof height) commercial building containing approximately 598,442 gsf of office space and 21,233 gsf of retail space, built at 5.0 floor area ratio (FAR) with 576,220 zoning square feet (zsf) of floor area (the "Proposed Project"). It would also contain 234 public parking spaces (64,567 gsf) and approximately 49,453 sf of waterfront public open space, including a shore public walkway, supplemental public access areas, and additional public access areas.

As detailed in the project's land use application, public open spaces would consist of several components. The largest of these is the required 20,466-sf shore public walkway (SPW) along the entire 40-foot wide length of the Project Site coincident with the East River. Adjoining the SPW, there would be 2,584 sf of supplemental public access area (SPAA) located in an open area formed by a setback from the SPW of the proposed building footprint, which is necessary to provide the minimum required waterfront public access area (WPAA) of 20 percent of the lot area (23,180 sf). Besides the minimum required public open space, the Proposed Project would have two additionally provided, public open spaces. One would be 12,350 sf, designated Public

Access Area (PAA) 1, which would link the SPW and SPAA with the corner of the site at Kent Avenue and Division Avenue through the middle portion of the site between the building's two bases. The other additionally provided public open space area would be 14,053 sf coinciding with the required visual corridor along the southern edge of the site, designated PAA 2. These public open spaces would provide a continuous corridor extending from Kent Avenue and the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway through the site to Division Avenue and the planned shore public walkway to the north at 470 Kent Avenue. In addition, this waterfront open space would connect with a potential future shore public walkway on the Brooklyn Navy Yard property to the south.

This chapter considers the potential for the Proposed Action to affect the urban design characteristics and visual resources of the Project Area and the surrounding secondary study area. The technical analysis presented below follows *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance and addresses each of the characteristics listed above in the first paragraph for existing conditions, the future without the Proposed Action (the No-Action condition), and the future with the Proposed Action (the With-Action condition) for a 2026 analysis year.

B. PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

Urban Design

The Proposed Action would allow development that differs from what is permitted as-of-right. However, the Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse impacts on urban design as determined by guidance for determining impact significance set forth in the *CEQR Technical Manual*. In the future with the Proposed Action, the visual appearance within the Project Area would be enhanced and thus the pedestrian experience of the Project Area would change. However, this change would not meet the *CEQR Technical Manual* threshold for a significant adverse urban design impact in that it would not alter the arrangement, appearance, or functionality of the Project Area such that the alteration would negatively affect a pedestrian's experience of the area.

Visual Resources

Visual resources in the secondary study area would be unaffected by the Proposed Project. Though the Proposed Project would be visible from different parts of the secondary study area, it would not obstruct any views of visual resources, and rather enhance views of key visual resources. As such, the Proposed Action would not result in any significant adverse impacts to visual resources.

C. METHODOLOGY

In accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual*, this assessment considers the effects of the Proposed Action on the following elements that collectively form an area's urban design:

- ***Street Pattern and Streetscape*** – The arrangement and orientation of streets define location, flow of activity, street views, and create blocks on which buildings and open spaces are

arranged. Other elements including sidewalks, plantings, streetlights, curb cuts, and street furniture also contribute to an area's streetscape.

- ***Buildings*** – Building size, shape, pedestrian and vehicular entrances, lot coverage and orientation to the street are important urban design components that define the appearance of the built environment.
- ***Open Space*** – Open space includes public and private areas that do not include structures, such as parks and other landscaped areas, cemeteries, and parking lots.
- ***Natural Features*** – Natural features include vegetation, geologic and aquatic features that are natural to the area.
- ***View Corridors and Visual Resources*** – Visual resources include significant natural or built features, such as important view corridors, public parks, landmark structures or districts, or otherwise distinct buildings.

In general, an assessment of urban design is needed when a proposed project may have effects on one or more of the elements that contribute to the pedestrian experience, described above. As the Proposed Action could result in physical changes to the Project Area beyond the bulk, form, and height currently permitted as-of-right, they have the potential to result in development that could alter the arrangement, appearance, and functionality of the built environment and, therefore, change the experience of a pedestrian in the Project Area. The following urban design analysis follows *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance.

Wind Screening

Per criteria of Chapter 10, Section 230 of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a wind condition analysis is not warranted for the Proposed Action. Although the Project Site is a waterfront property, it is substantially removed from a major waterbody given that its 528-foot long shoreline is along Wallabout Channel, an artificial inlet of the East River, and faces portions of the Brooklyn Navy Yard approximately 300 feet across the channel where the land and structures attenuate wind from the waterfront. Thus, with these protective geographic features, the Project Site, which is located approximately 1,000 feet from the open waters of the East River, is more akin to an upland location. In addition, the Proposed Project would not be located in close proximity to other tall buildings that could form down-washed wind pressure in tandem with the Proposed Project.

Definition of Study Area

The study area for the assessment of urban design and visual resources corresponds to the area where the Proposed Action may influence land use patterns and the built environment and is consistent with that used for the land use analysis.

The urban design analysis considers both a primary study area, which is generally coterminous with the boundaries of the Project Area, and a secondary study area, which extends a quarter-mile from the primary study area's boundary. As shown in **Figure 7-1**, the secondary study area is roughly bound by Broadway on the north, Bedford Avenue on the east, Ross Street on the south, and the Wallabout Channel to the west. Southwest of the project area, a portion of the Brooklyn Navy Yard lies within the study area between Ross Street and Wallabout Bay. Lots with a minimum of 50 percent of their area within the secondary study area are included in the



Legend

Primary Study Area (Project Site)

Secondary Study Area (Quarter-Mile Radius)

(1) Photo Location (refer to Figures 7-2 and 7-4)

Figure 7-1
Aerial Map & Existing Conditions Photo Key

study area. The study areas have been established in accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance.

The following analysis is based on field visits, photographs, aerial views, and other graphic images of the Project Area and surrounding secondary study area. Zoning calculations, including floor area calculations, building heights, and lot coverage information are also provided for the Project Area and, where applicable, the secondary study area.

D. PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a preliminary assessment is appropriate when there is the potential for a pedestrian to observe, from the street level, a physical alteration beyond that allowed by existing zoning, including the following: (1) projects or actions that permit the modification of yard, height, and setback requirements; and (2) projects or actions that result in an increase in built floor area beyond what would be allowed as-of-right or in the future without the proposed action. Beyond a preliminary assessment, a detailed analysis may be needed for projects or actions that potentially obstruct view corridors, compete with icons in the skyline, or make substantial alteration to the streetscape of a neighborhood by noticeably changing the scale of buildings. Detailed analyses are generally appropriate for all area-wide rezonings and large-scale proposals that include an increase in permitted floor area or changes in height and setback requirements. Therefore, a detailed analysis is provided below.

E. EXISTING CONDITIONS

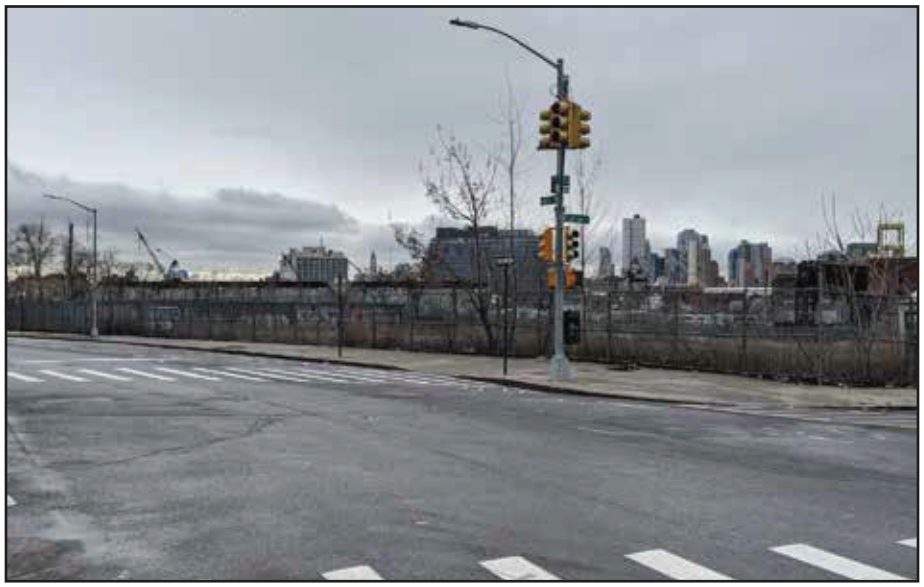
The following section discusses existing urban design components in the primary and secondary study areas. The assessment focuses on streets, buildings, open space, natural resources, and visual resources; a pedestrian wind condition analysis is not warranted, as noted above. The visual resources assessment considers important views of landmark structures and other distinct buildings within, or viewable from, the primary and secondary study areas, that may be obstructed due to the buildings developed under the Proposed Action.

Primary Study Area (Project Area)

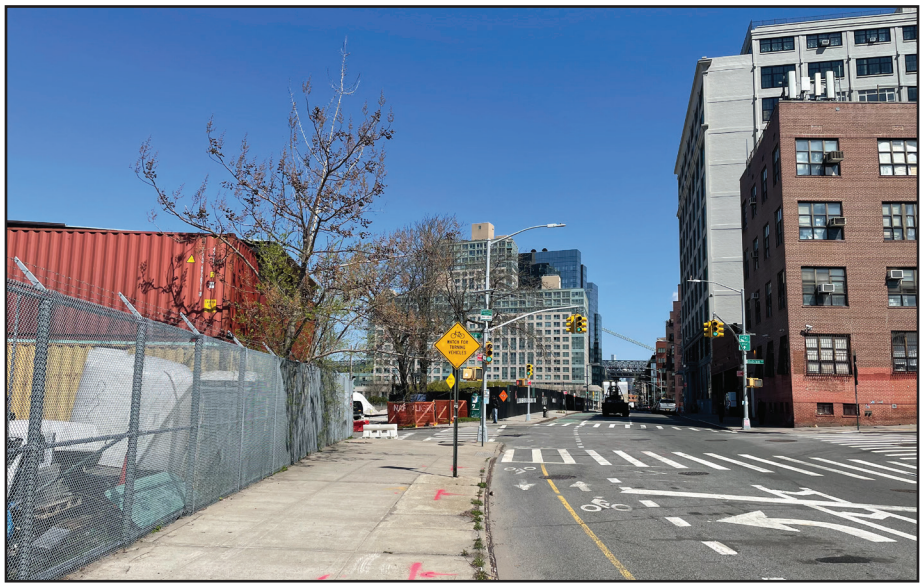
The Project Area encompasses Block 2023, Lot 10 in the South Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn Community District (CD) 2. In total, the Project Area encompasses approximately 115,244 sf of area on an irregularly shaped parcel with 371 feet of frontage on the west side of Kent Avenue and 227 feet of frontage on the south side of Division Avenue. Photographs of typical urban design elements in the primary study area are shown in **Figures 7-2a and 7-2b**.

Urban Design

Streets and Streetscape. The Project Site is bound by Division Avenue to the north, Kent Avenue to the east, the Brooklyn Navy Yard to the south, and the Wallabout Channel to the west (refer to **Figure 7-2a**).



1) Looking southwest from the intersection of Division and Kent Avenues.



2) Looking north from the east side of the Project Site, along Kent Avenue.



3) Looking west from the north side of the Project Site, along the dead-end portion of Division Avenue.



4) Looking east from the intersection of Division and Kent Avenues.



5) Views of the east side of the Project Site from Kent Avenue.



6) North side of the Project Site from Division Avenue.



7) Views of the Brooklyn Navy Yard from the Project Site.



8) View of the Manhattan Skyline.

Kent Avenue 60 feet wide, with an approximately 36–foot-wide roadway flanked by approximately 12-foot-wide concrete sidewalks.[1] Adjacent to the Project Site, Kent Avenue operates with one northbound vehicular moving lane, two-way bike lanes, and two parking lanes, except at the Division Avenue approach where the western parking lane is replaced by left-turn moving lane.

Division Avenue has a mapped width of 70 feet west of Kent Avenue adjoining the Project Site, with an approximately 46-foot-wide roadway flanked by approximately 10-foot-wide concrete sidewalk on the south and approximately 14-foot wide concrete sidewalk on the north. Adjacent to the Project Site, Division Avenue operates as a two-way, east-west street with two moving lanes and two parking lanes terminating at a dead end near the Wallabout Channel shoreline.

Buildings. There are no buildings at the Project Site. It was formerly used as a Consolidated Edison Power Plant, and has since been razed in 2009 and remains entirely vacant. The Project Area is vegetated, vacant, and enclosed with chain-link fencing (refer to **Figure 7-2b**).

Open Space. There are no parks or landscaped areas located within the Project Site, though, as a vacant and vegetated space, it is considered an open area for the purposes of this urban design assessment.

Natural Features. The topography of the project area is generally flat. Site elevations in the area generally range from approximately +9.5 feet to approximately +13.5 feet (North American Vertical Data of 1988). As it is an improved, urbanized location, there are no natural features on the Project Site.

View Corridors and Visual Resources

Visual Resources. The Wallabout Channel and East River can be seen from the Project Site. Due to the low scale of buildings surrounding the Project Site, wide view corridors exist, offering broad expanses to the north and south on Kent Avenue and the east and west on Division Avenue. Visual resources that can be seen from the publicly accessible sidewalks adjacent to the Project Site include views of the Freedom Tower and other skyscrapers on the Manhattan skyline and in closer proximity Dock 72 office building at the Brooklyn Navy Yard (refer to **Figure 7-2b**).

Secondary Study Area

Excluding the Project Site, the urban design and visual analysis study area encompasses approximately twenty-six blocks.[2] As part of this analysis, several site visits were made to the

[1] The segment of Kent Avenue between Division Avenue and Clymer Avenue, including adjacent to the Project Site, has a legal mapped width of 90 feet, however, the public roadway and sidewalks are only approximately 60 feet wide.

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

study area and extensive photo documentation has been utilized to aid the discussion and assessment of resources.

Sub-Areas

For the purposes of this analysis of urban design characteristics, the study area is divided into three distinct sub-areas.

- **Division Avenue South Sub-Area** – The Division Avenue South Sub-Area is bound by Division Avenue on the north, Kent Avenue on the west, Bedford Avenue on the east and Ross Street on the south.
- **Division Avenue North Sub-Area** – The Division Avenue North Sub-Area is a direct northward continuation of the previous sub-area and is bound by Broadway on the north, Wallabout Channel on the west, Bedford Avenue on the east, and Division Avenue on the south.
- **Brooklyn Navy Yard Sub-Area -** The Brooklyn Navy Yard Sub-Area is bound by Kent Avenue on the east, East River and Wallabout Channel on the north-west, and, generally, the intersection of Gee Avenue and Wallabout Road on the south. This sub-area encompasses Block 2023, which also includes the Project Site, and the northern portion of the BNY lying within a quarter-mile radius of the Project Site. In December 2021, the Special BNY District was adopted, which includes special use and public access area regulations and requirements to better integrate the Yard with the urban fabric of the surrounding communities, among other special rules. The Barge Basin Subarea of the Special BNY District is located immediately adjacent to the Project Site.

These sub-areas are identified in **Figure 7-3**. Photographs of typical urban design elements in these sub-areas are shown in **Figures 7-4a to 7-4d**.

Urban Design

Streets and Streetscape. The street pattern features and traffic of the three sub-areas are described below (refer to **Figure 7-4a and 7-4b**).

Division Avenue South Sub-Area – The street pattern south of Division Avenue is an irregular grid in which several of the streets are only roughly parallel and others have been discontinued for part of their full length. These streets and the patterns formed by the discontinuity of some segments form "superblocks" with lots that are larger than what is common in the larger surrounding neighborhoods: some of these lots encompass the entire block, containing multi-family buildings, mixed-residential and commercial buildings, and some contain open space and community facility uses. The irregular street grid creates block shapes of various sizes, and bends in Kent and Wythe Avenues create irregularly angled blocks. Lots in this sub-area range significantly in size, from roughly 2,000 sf (0.04 acre) to upwards of nearly 220,071 sf (5.05 acres). Most lots are approximately 40,000 square foot (0.91 acre) or more.

In other words, the streets of this sub-area do not follow a orthogonal street grid of standard-sized rectangular shaped blocks. Wilson Street, Tyler Street, and Morton Street terminate before they reach Wythe Avenue, resulting in an interrupted rectilinear grid pattern with irregularly-shaped



Legend

Primary Study Area (Project Site)

Secondary Study Area (Quarter-Mile Radius)

Sub-Areas

Brooklyn Navy Yard

Division Avenue North

Division Avenue South

Figure 7-3
Secondary Study Area - Sub-Areas



9) Looking east from the intersection of Division Avenue and Berry Street.



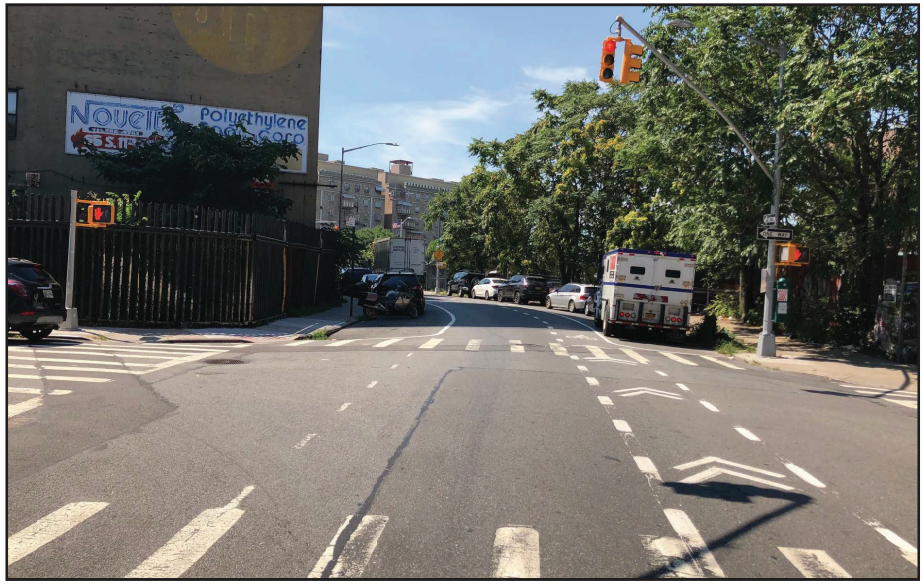
10) Looking northeast at the Cohn Triangle, located at the intersection of Bedford Avenue, Morton Street, and Division Avenue.



11) Looking north, at the bend on Kent Avenue and Clymer Street.



12) Looking northeast along Wilson Street.



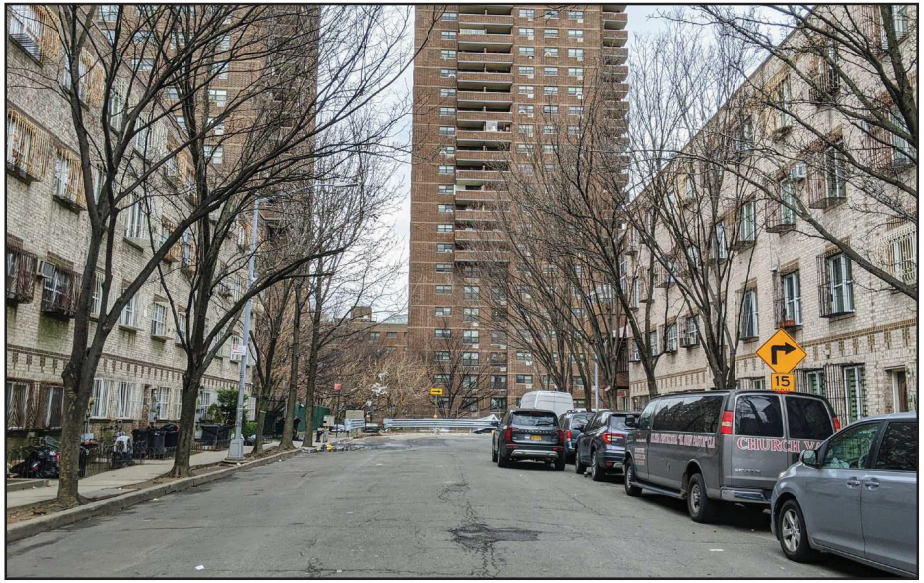
13) Looking south along a bend in Wythe Avenue.



14) Looking southeast along Wythe Avenue.



15) Looking west toward the street bend connecting Wilson Street and Wythe Place.



16) Looking north along Juliana Place at Morton Street.



17) Looking southwest from the intersection of Broadway and Wythe Avenue; the 420 Kent Avenue luxury condos are in the background.



18) Looking south along Kent Avenue at the Schaefer Landing mixed-use development.



19) Looking east along South 10th Street.



20) Looking east along Division Avenue at the Kent Village affordable housing complex. NYCHA Independence Towers can be seen in the far background.



21) Publicly accessible waterfront space at Schaefer Landing, creating a view corridor to the East River and Manhattan skyline.



22) Looking north along the East River waterfront to the Williamsburg Bridge.



23) Looking south along the Wallabout Channel waterfront to the Brooklyn Navy Yard.



24) Looking southwest at the intersection of Division and Kent Avenues at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

parcels of land. Adjacent to the Project Site, Kent Avenue is the primary northbound street in the study area, carrying both commercial and residential traffic. It is a DOT-designated Local Truck Route. Division Avenue is a major two-way arterial street, which runs perpendicular to Kent and Wythe Avenues, and operates with two moving lanes plus curbside parking in each direction.

Mapped street widths in this sub-area range between 60 and 90 feet. With the exception of Division Avenue, Kent Avenue[3], and Wythe Street, the streets the sub-area are narrow, one-way streets that primarily carry residential traffic. The B62 bus line operates along Wythe and Division Avenues and the B67 bus line runs through the Brooklyn Navy Yard, circling the adjacent block east to the Project Site.

Division Avenue North Sub-Area – North of Division Avenue, the street grid is reoriented due to bends on Kent and Wythe Avenues, with numbered streets running generally east-west and named avenues and streets running generally north-south. This sub-area is characterized by a rectilinear grid, wide blocks, and small and narrow lots, and have a similar land uses as Division Avenue South Sub-Area, described above. With the exception of Broadway on the north border and Division Avenue on the south border, which are 100 and 80 feet wide, respectively, and carry two lanes of traffic, all other streets in the sub-area are 60 feet wide and carry one-way, primarily residential traffic. The B32 and Q59 bus lines run through Broadway and continue north through Kent Avenue, outside the Secondary Study Area.

Of note is the waterfront section of this sub-area, which contains some new mixed-use developments, former industrial and manufacturing properties, and the South Williamsburg Ferry Landing. The streetscape of the area adjacent to the Project Site has a largely urban manufacturing character defined by blank brick walls, fencing, and parking ribbons. However, on the west side of Kent Avenue, the Schaefer Landing and 420 Kent residential developments provide a glazed streetscape along the Kent Avenue frontage. Curb cuts serve the entrances of the manufacturing buildings and larger residential developments are common in this sub-area.

Although the East River waterfront is a defining feature of the study area, there is only one location for public access to the shoreline. The Schaefer Landing development has a public waterfront esplanade with an entrance from Kent Avenue. Pedestrians can also get relatively close to the shoreline at the dead-end of Division Avenue, offering visual but not direct physical access.

Brooklyn Navy Yard Sub-Area – The Project Site is immediately northeast of the Brooklyn Navy Yard (BNY), which is now an industrial park with many adaptively reused older structures and some new buildings. The BNY has undergone a transformation and is now home to over 450 commercial and light industrial businesses, employing approximately 11,000 people with further growth anticipated. The roads within this sub-area bend along the shape of the existing docks and piers, and connect with other parts of the BNY beyond the sub-area boundary as part of an internal circulation network; within the secondary study area the BNY streets are accessible via a security gate, located at Clymer Street and Kent Avenue. The B67 bus line runs through this

[3] Kent Avenue operates two-way for motor vehicles, south of Clymer Street. NYC DOT converted Kent Avenue north of Clymer Street from two-way to one-way motor vehicle operation in 2009. It has two-way bike lanes throughout the secondary study area.

sub-area but not within the BNY. It is important to note that the Project Site is privately-owned and is not historically or now part of the BNY.

Buildings. As discussed below, across the study area's three sub-areas, there is variation in terms of building type and size (refer to **Figure 7-4c**). **Figures 7-5** and **7-6** indicate the range of building size and bulk found.

Division Avenue South Sub-Area – The Division Avenue South Sub-Area is primarily occupied by large size lots that contain residential buildings between three and twelve stories with built FARs of less than 4.0. Blocks 2165 and 2168 are the exception; they contain a few buildings with FARs greater than 8.0. As mentioned, this sub-area contains a variety of building forms and uses, including multi-family walk-up buildings, multi-family elevator buildings, and mixed-use residential buildings with commercial ground floor. Additionally, two open space resources, Roberto Clemente Ballfield and Jacob's Ladder Playground, are located on the adjacent block east of the Project Site, between Kent and Wythe Avenues. Lastly, one community facility, a Jewish synagogue, is located on the west side of the Bedford Avenue and Clymer Street intersection.

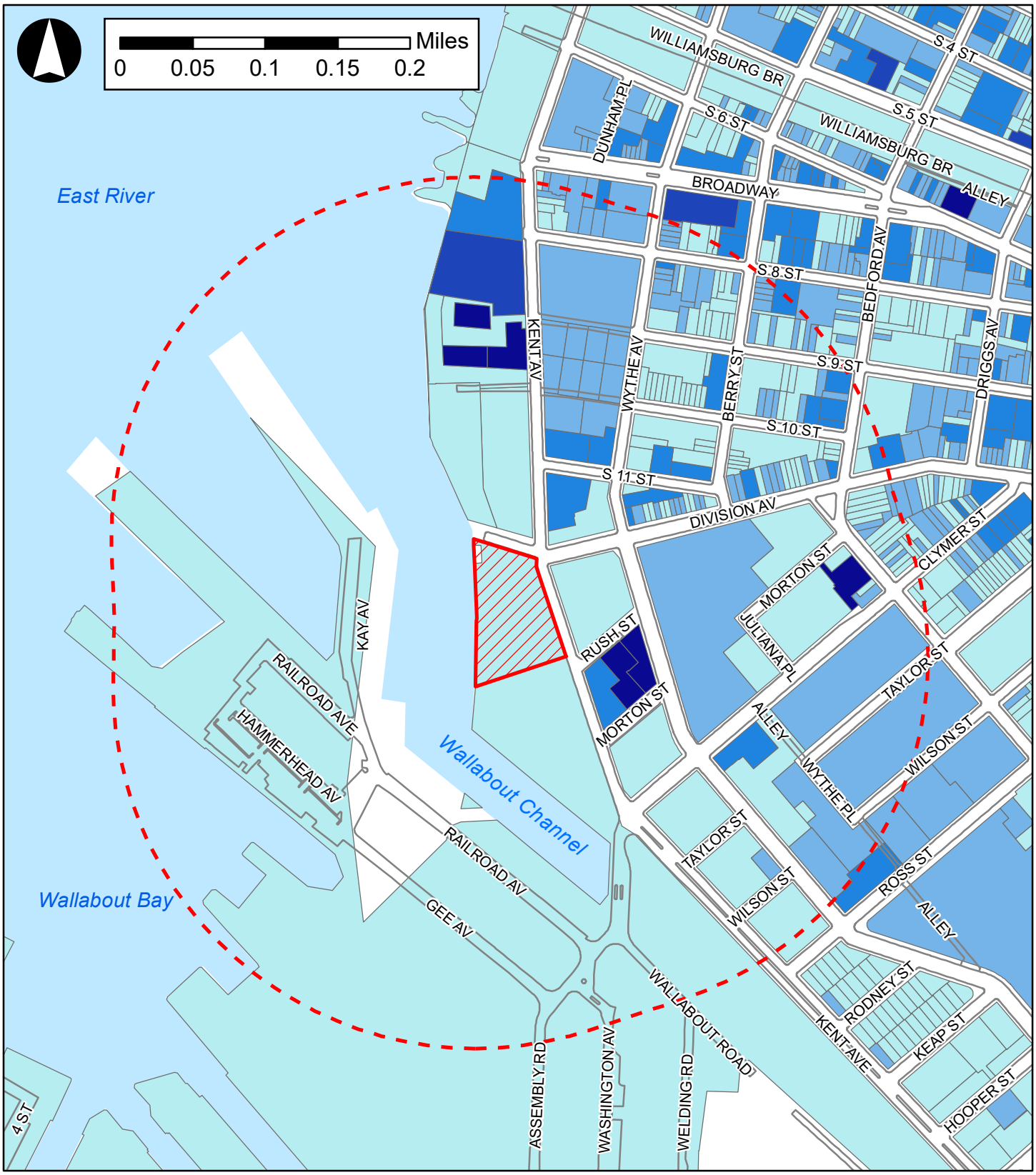
This sub-area is dominated by two New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) affordable housing development complexes, which occupy rectangular superblocks. NYCHA Independence Towers are located on two adjacent blocks between Clymer and Wilson Streets. Taylor-Wythe complex is located on the block between Wythe Place and Wythe Street. Kent Village Housing is another subsidized housing complex in the sub-area, located on a super block between Division Avenue and Clymer Street.

Division Avenue North Sub-Area – Traditional narrow lots that are mostly residential but also include a variety of other land uses (commercial, industrial and parking facilities) characterize the Division Avenue North Sub-Area. The majority of buildings are between one to twelve stories in height with built FARs of less than 6.0. Blocks 2159, 2130, and 2134 are exceptions, containing a few buildings that are more than 12 stories in height and have built FARs greater than 8.0. Of note is the waterfront area, which includes former industrial and manufacturing facilities on its south side (Block 2134) recently cleared in anticipation of a planned new mixed use development called 470 Kent, north of the Project Site. The waterfront section also contains the aforementioned newer high-rise, mixed-use developments like Schaefer Landing and 420 Kent. The Berry Street-S. 9th Street NYCHA housing complex, located across three blocks between S. 9th and S. 11th Streets, contains four building complexes and eight parking lots.

Brooklyn Navy Yard Sub-Area – As mentioned above, the BNY is now an industrial park with reused older structures and new buildings. In the sub-area, the buildings are low-rise, adapted manufacturing buildings with a built FAR of 2.0 or less. In December 2021, the Special BNY District was adopted, including special bulk, use, streetscape, public access area, and parking and loading regulations. It is expected that the district will facilitate the expansion of the BNY with 4.6 million sf of new manufacturing, commercial, and community facility spaces.

Open Space. There are eleven recreational open space resources in the secondary study area (refer to **Figure 4-3** in **Chapter 4, "Open Space"**).

Figure 7-5
Building Densities



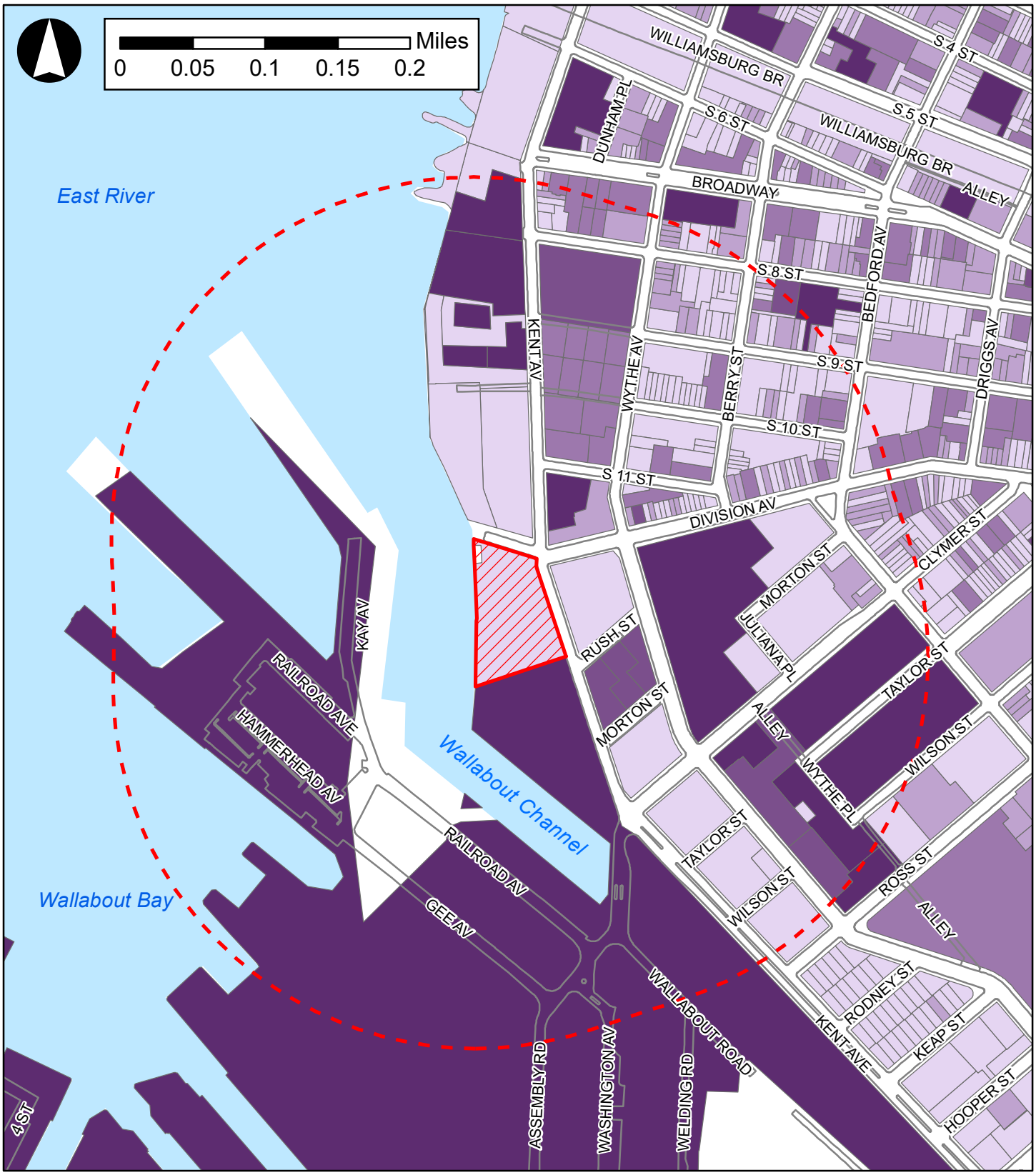
Legend

- Primary Study Area
- Secondary Study Area (Quarter-Mile Radius)

BuiltFAR

- Up to 2.0 FAR
- 2.1 - 4.0 FAR
- 4.1 - 6.0 FAR
- 6.1 - 8.0 FAR
- 8.1+ FAR

Figure 7-6
Building Heights



Source: NYCDCP (PLUTO 2021. Version I); DoITT (2020)

Legend

- Primary Study Area
- Secondary Study Area (Quarter-Mile Radius)

Number of Floors

- 1 - 3 Floors
- 4 - 5 Floors
- 6 - 7 Floors
- 8 - 10 Floors
- 11+ Floors

Division Avenue South Sub-Area – Publicly-accessible open space within the Division Avenue South Sub-Area includes the approximately two-acre Roberto Clemente Ballfield, located east of the Project Site, and the approximately one-acre Jacob's Ladder Playground, which occupies the block between Kent Avenue, Clymer Street, and Wythe Avenue.

Other open spaces include surface parking lots and privately owned public spaces. There are several parking lots located in the Division Avenue South Sub-Area, including the parking lots for the housing developments in the area. The Independence Towers and Taylor-Wythe housing developments contain several parking lots and recreational open spaces dispersed throughout the complexes, which is bound by Clymer Street to the northwest, Bedford Avenue to the northeast, Ross Street to the southeast, and Wythe Avenue to the southwest. Wythe Place between Clymer Street and Wythe Avenue serves as a publicly accessible open space, as do the privately owned spaces between the apartment buildings on the blocks bound by Clymer Street to the northwest, Wythe Avenue to the east, Ross Street to the southeast, and Kent Avenue to the south. A small, two building apartment complex located between Kent Avenue to the west, Wythe Avenue to the east, and Roberto Clemente Ballfield to the north and Jacob's Ladder Playground to the south contains two surface parking lots and a privately owned public space between the buildings.

Division Avenue North Sub-Area – Publicly-accessible open space within the Division Avenue North Sub-Area includes the 0.5-acre Epiphany Playground, located on Berry Street between S. 9th and S. 10th Streets, and the publicly accessible, 0.89-acre Schaefer Landing waterfront park, which can be accessed through an entrance on Kent Avenue, between S. 9th and S. 10th Streets.

Other open spaces include surface parking lots and privately owned public spaces. There are two parking lots located in the Division Avenue North Sub-Area. The largest is located on the block bound by Wythe Avenue to the west, S. 10th Street to the south, Berry Street to the east, and S. 9th Street to the north. The parking lot, which is owned by NYCHA provides parking for residents of the NYCHA houses nearby. It occupies approximately 15,790 sf on the corner of Wythe Avenue and S. 10th Street. The second parking lot is located on the block bound by Kent Avenue to the west, Division Avenue to the south, Wythe Avenue to the east, and S. 11th Street to the north. The parking lot is accessible from Division Avenue.

Privately owned recreational public spaces in the Division Avenue North Sub-Area include those areas for use by residents of housing developments in the area, including the private public space bound by Wythe Avenue to the west, S. 10th Street to the north, and Bedford Avenue to the east. Other privately owned spaces include the open space for the housing development bound by S. 9th Street to the north, Wythe Avenue to the east, S. 10th Street to the south, and Kent Avenue to the west.

Brooklyn Navy Yard Sub-Area – There are no publicly-accessible open space resources located within the Brooklyn Navy Yard Sub-Area.

In terms of types of open space, parking lots serve as the most abundant open space within the Brooklyn Navy Yard Sub-Area. Railroad Avenue is lined with parking lots for large vehicles such as tractor trailers. At the northern end of Railroad Avenue and Gee Avenue are several parking lots with a much larger parking lot located between Wilson Street and Assembly Road. Directly south of the Project Site is a large, vacant area part of the Brooklyn Navy Yard known

as the Nassau Gas Works site. While not a parking lot, it is a large, flat surface that is located between Kent Avenue to the east and Wallabout Chanel to the west.

Natural Features. The entire study area has a generally flat topography. As this is a highly urbanized area, there are no significant natural features. Green space in the area is limited to landscaped features such as parks and street trees. Of note is the Wallabout Channel, a small body of water that bounds the Project Site to the west. As mentioned, there is only one waterfront public open space, located at Schaffer Landing.

View Corridors and Visual Resources

Even though the street pattern in the secondary study area is an irregular grid, major view corridors tend to be long due to the relative straightness of many of the streets and the low-rise character of most buildings and open spaces along some waterfront properties (refer to **Figure 7-4d**).

Division Avenue South Sub-Area – Between Division Avenue and Ross Street, the north and south borders of the sub-area, respectively, Kent and Wythe Avenues bend at the intersection of Clymer Street. As a result, north-south views often terminate at this intersection. From Kent Avenue, and partially from different spots on Wythe Avenue, there are clear west-facing views of the East River, the Manhattan skyline, and the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Along Clymer Street, westbound views are terminated just before the waterfront by the BNY. Views east and west from Taylor and Wilson Streets terminate at Wythe Place and Bedford Avenue, respectively. There are clear views of the Project Site from Kent, Division, and Wythe Avenues. There are no designated historic resources in the sub-area.

Division Avenue North Sub-Area – Views north on Kent and Wythe Avenues continue for long distances, with views north passing under the Williamsburg Bridge. Views south on Kent Avenue are variable due to the bend in the street at Division Avenue, and the Schaefer Landing and 420 Kent developments that dominate the view corridor. Views south on Wythe Avenue also continue for long distances with tall modern apartment buildings visible in the distance. Division Avenue provides partial westward views of Wallabout Channel, the East River, and the Manhattan skyline, particularly west of Kent Avenue, while views diminish further east due to a shift in Division Avenue's alignment as it intersects Kent Avenue. Views west on S. 11th Street terminate at Kent Avenue, while views on S. 10th and S. 9th Streets terminate at the buildings located along Wythe Avenue. Eastward views on side streets continue for long distances with no prominent points of interest. There are clear views of the Project Site from Kent and Division Avenues. The Schaefer Landing and 420 Kent buildings are visible from multiple points in the study area, including north and south views along Kent Avenue, from Wythe Avenue over intervening buildings and open lots, and from the dead-end portion of Division Avenue.

Visual resources visible from the sub-area include the Williamsburg Bridge, located outside the study area to the north, and Wallabout Channel, the East River, and Manhattan skyline, located to the west. These resources are prominently visible from the streets adjacent to the Project Site and from the Schaefer Landing waterfront esplanade, which provides waterfront access to the public and extensive views. The Williamsburg Bridge is also visible from multiple additional locations within the study area, like the dead-end foot of Division Avenue and north-facing views

along Wythe Avenue. Wallabout Channel, the East River, and the Manhattan skyline are also visible from multiple locations within the study area, including the Schaefer Landing development and the Division Avenue view corridor, which also provides views of the Brooklyn Navy Yard to the southwest. There are no designated historic resources in this sub-area.

Brooklyn Navy Yard Sub-Area – The Brooklyn Navy Yard Sub-Area is located along the waterfront, with views of the Wallabout Channel, Wallabout Bay, and East River, as well as the Manhattan Skyline and Williamsburg Bridge. Within the BNY industrial park, views from the sub-area include existing, low-rise manufacturing buildings and new publicly accessible, high-rise buildings. Of note is the Dock 72 building, a 16-story office space with a glass façade, which shares Pier 72 with the Brooklyn Navy Yard ferry landing. Public access to the Brooklyn Navy Yard is subject to certain time and locational restrictions; for example, the gate at Clymer Street and Kent Avenue is open 5 AM to 9 PM weekdays and 5 AM to 1 PM weekends.

F. FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTION

Primary Study Area (Project Area)

Absent the Proposed Action, it is anticipated that the Project Site would be developed as-of-right under the existing M3-1 zoning. The No-Action development would have an FAR of 2.0 (1.5 FAR of warehouse use and 0.5 FAR of office space) and be 74 feet tall (roof height) with four stories. The Project Site would be occupied by approximately 312,599 gsf, including 58,000 gsf of office space, 181,401 gsf of warehouse space, and 73,198 gsf of accessory parking. In terms of zoning floor area, it would have 57,622 zsf of office space and 172,866 zsf of warehouse space. As the No-Action development would predominantly have warehouse uses (Use Group 16d), the Project Site would be exempt from waterfront public access area and visual corridor requirements, and therefore no on-site public open space would be provided. The Project Site would provide 279 accessory parking spaces on the first and mezzanine floors, meeting minimum requirements. As a result, the Project Site would change notably from its existing conditions.

Secondary Study Area

The Future without the Proposed Action—also known as the "No-Action Condition"—assumes the future without approval of the Proposed Action. There are three known and anticipated No-Action developments within the secondary study area (refer to **Table 2-3** in **Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy"**). These No-Action developments include residential and community facility space.

One of these, Phase 1 of the 470 Kent Avenue development, will be on the waterfront property immediately across Division Avenue from the Project Site to the north. This first phase, anticipated to be completed in 2024, will consist of 225-foot tall (roof height) apartment buildings identified by the house numbers 480 and 490 Kent Avenue, with ground floor retail and accessory parking in the building base and residential units on the upper floors. There also will be 0.75 acres of waterfront public open space, including a continuous shore public walkway connecting with Schaefer Landing on the north and Division Avenue and the Project Site's northwest boundary on the south, in compliance with waterfront zoning regulations. A second phase will

be constructed at a later date, after the Proposed Action's build year but all of the required public open space will be provided in tandem with the first phase. This will replace the existing former industrial properties at this location and extend the trend of waterfront development from sites to the north, Schaefer Landing and 420 Kent, further south and thereby provide public access along the waterfront and an activated pedestrian corridor along Kent Avenue, where it does not currently exist.

The other study area two No-Action developments are medium-scale residential, mixed-use and community facility buildings will comply with building bulk, use and density set forth by their respective zoning districts. They will not significantly alter the existing urban design or visual resources in the area, but instead improve the area's urban design elements by replacing vacant and underutilized properties with new buildings at a scale and massing compatible with existing occupied buildings in the area.

Collectively, these new developments will contribute to creating a more cohesive urban fabric in portions of the secondary study area where residential development is permitted and infill development sites are available. These No-Action developments are not anticipated to alter existing street hierarchy or block forms in the study area.

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

Urban Design

Project Area

The Future with the Proposed Action—also known as the "With-Action Condition"—assumes the Project Site would be redeveloped as proposed by the Applicant, pursuant to the Proposed Action. As a result, the With-Action development scenario for the Project Site would include 598,442 gsf of commercial office uses, 21,233 gsf of retail uses, and 64,567 gsf of below-grade public parking area comprising 234 spaces. Approximately 49,453 sf of waterfront public open space would also be provided, including a shore public walkway, supplemental public access areas, and additional public access areas. Refer to the description in the Introduction section of this chapter for more information.

Assessment

The Proposed Project would change the urban design of the Project Site, but this would be a beneficial effect as the new two-wing building would be a visual improvement in comparison to the existing vacant lot and the low-rise No-Action development which would not provide waterfront public open space. The Proposed Project would provide a transitional land use and building typology between two distinct areas: the commercial-industrial BNY to the south and the redeveloping, predominantly residential waterfront corridor to the north. As such, it would infill a vacant site at a density similar to other nearby developments (as compared to the lower density No-Action development), buffering residential uses from the BNY and light industrial uses from residential developments across the street to the north and east. Moreover, the Proposed Project would contribute to the vitality of Brooklyn's East River waterfront and its new public

waterfront open space by attracting new workers and visitors to the site. New trees would be planted along Kent Avenue, the waterfront esplanade, and the open space in the center of the site.

As for the modifications to various bulk zoning requirements being sought pursuant to a waterfront bulk special permit, the applicant believes these would result in a better site plan than could be achieved in compliance with all applicable bulk regulations. Without the proposed waivers, most of the floor area on the Project Site would be distributed evenly across the proposed building segments. This would result in shorter but much bulkier building that would appear as a "wall-of-buildings" from the waterfront, on Division Street, and Kent Avenue. The applicant believes that this would be imposing and cumbersome to pedestrians and residents of the surrounding neighborhood. The proposed waivers, however, would allow for most of the Project Site's floor area to be concentrated in three building segments, which permits two building portions to be reduced in size. This would allow for the interspersing of shorter and taller building portions which would break up the bulk of the development on the site, remove the "wall-of-buildings" condition, and allow for a better pedestrian experience. For example, the building portions that facing the waterfront esplanade would consist of a twenty-three-story building structure flanked by much smaller six and four-story building portions. This arrangement would reduce the bulk, and enhance the pedestrian experience, on the waterfront esplanade.

Given the size of the Project Site and the spacing from adjoining lots, which include: 470 Kent Avenue development site to the north, across Division Avenue; Roberto Clemente Ballfield, to the east across Kent Avenue; and Brooklyn Navy Yard's currently vacant Nassau Gas Works Site immediately to south, the applicant believes that the modifications would not adversely affect access to light and air on surrounding waterfront public access areas, streets, and properties.

Overall, it is expected that the Proposed Action on 500 Kent Avenue would be a beneficial addition to the streetscape and an improvement over the existing empty lot or a lower density as-of-right development pursuant to existing zoning under No-Action conditions. The building itself, along with the waterfront esplanade, would provide visual interest and pedestrian activity, and would be in keeping with recent developments and expected future built environment in the surrounding study area. As such, the Proposed Action would not result in any significant adverse urban design impacts in the Project Area, but, rather, would improve the pedestrian experience within the area. Massing diagrams showing views of the Proposed Project from publicly accessible locations are presented in **Figure 7-7** to **Figure 7-12** (building envelopes are shown consistent with the Waterfront zoning special permit drawings and requested bulk waivers while façade depictions are illustrative).

Secondary Study Area

Assessment

The Proposed Project would be built on a vacant lot on an existing block. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not alter the street pattern, any block shapes, or natural features in the study area, and there would be no adverse impacts to these features.

Illustrative Street View, Looking West on Division Ave



NO-ACTION CONDITION



WITH-ACTION CONDITION

Illustrative Street View, Looking West on Wythe Ave



NO-ACTION CONDITION



WITH-ACTION CONDITION

Illustrative Street View, Looking North on Kent Ave



NO-ACTION CONDITION



WITH-ACTION CONDITION

Illustrative Street View, Looking North on Railroad Ave



NO-ACTION CONDITION



WITH-ACTION CONDITION

Illustrative Street View, Looking South on Kent Ave



NO-ACTION CONDITION



WITH-ACTION CONDITION

Figure 7-12

Illustrative Street View, Looking North on Kent Ave



NO-ACTION CONDITION



WITH-ACTION CONDITION

The Proposed Project would be similar to other existing buildings in the study area's waterfront in terms of their bulk characteristics. Although the Proposed Project would change the existing view of the Williamsburg waterfront by placing a 23-story building on the shoreline, it is not expected that this change would have an adverse impact. Moreover, the building, with its landscaped lawns and shorefront public walkway, would be an improvement over both the existing vacant lot and the low-rise No-Action development lacking waterfront public open space.

Although the 23-story Proposed Project would be taller than existing buildings in the study area, it would be generally similar in number of stories to nearby high-rise waterfront buildings, including the 14- to 24-story buildings at Schaefer Landing, the planned 21- to 22-story buildings at the 470 Kent Avenue development (the specific addresses of these are 480 and 490 Kent Avenue), and the upland 25-story Kent Village Housing (60 Division Avenue) residential complex. The taller height of the Proposed Project compared to these residential developments is due to 15-foot floor heights for office use, as contrasted with approximately 10 feet for residential, which is attributable to design requirements and market conditions. The applicant believes that the proposed waivers would create continuity within the varied height profile of the surrounding neighborhood with a heterogeneous range from low- to middle- to high-rise.

The Proposed Development would provide new links to the existing street grid with new publicly accessible open spaces, a pedestrian pathway, and additional covered and open spaces. The proposed site plan, which includes east-west mid-block pedestrian pathway and visual corridor, as well as north-south shore public walkway, would extend access to the waterfront from the 470 Kent Avenue waterfront open space and facilitate a future connection to a possible Brooklyn Navy Yard shore public walkway, publicly accessible to both building's occupants and neighborhood residents. On Kent Avenue the north and south base segments step back at grade to provide open landscaped areas.

As noted, the secondary study area and nearby blocks have been experiencing a trend of changing land uses that is expected to continue in the future. No additional changes to land use are anticipated because of the Proposed Action, as ongoing trends would be expected to continue with or without the Proposed Action.

As such, the Proposed Action is not anticipated to result in any significant adverse impacts to urban design in the secondary study area surrounding the Project Area, nor would they result in significant adverse impacts to the experience of the pedestrian.

Visual Resources

The Project Area does not contain any visual resources and this would not change in the future with the Proposed Action. The Project Site would accommodate a building that would rise to a maximum roof height of 352 feet (392 feet tall with bulkhead) under With-Action conditions. However, no view corridors of significant visual resources would be obstructed because of these height and density increases in the Project Area. In fact, the Proposed Project would provide new extensive and unobstructed public views of the Williamsburg Bridge, East River, Manhattan

Skyline, and BNY from the shore public walkway and the visual corridor. All new development would occur within an existing block.

In summary, the Proposed Action would not change urban design features such that the context of natural or built features are adversely altered and would not partially or fully block any significant public views to a visual resource. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in significant adverse impacts to study area visual resources.