RIVER RING
Chapter 8: Urban Design & Visual Resources

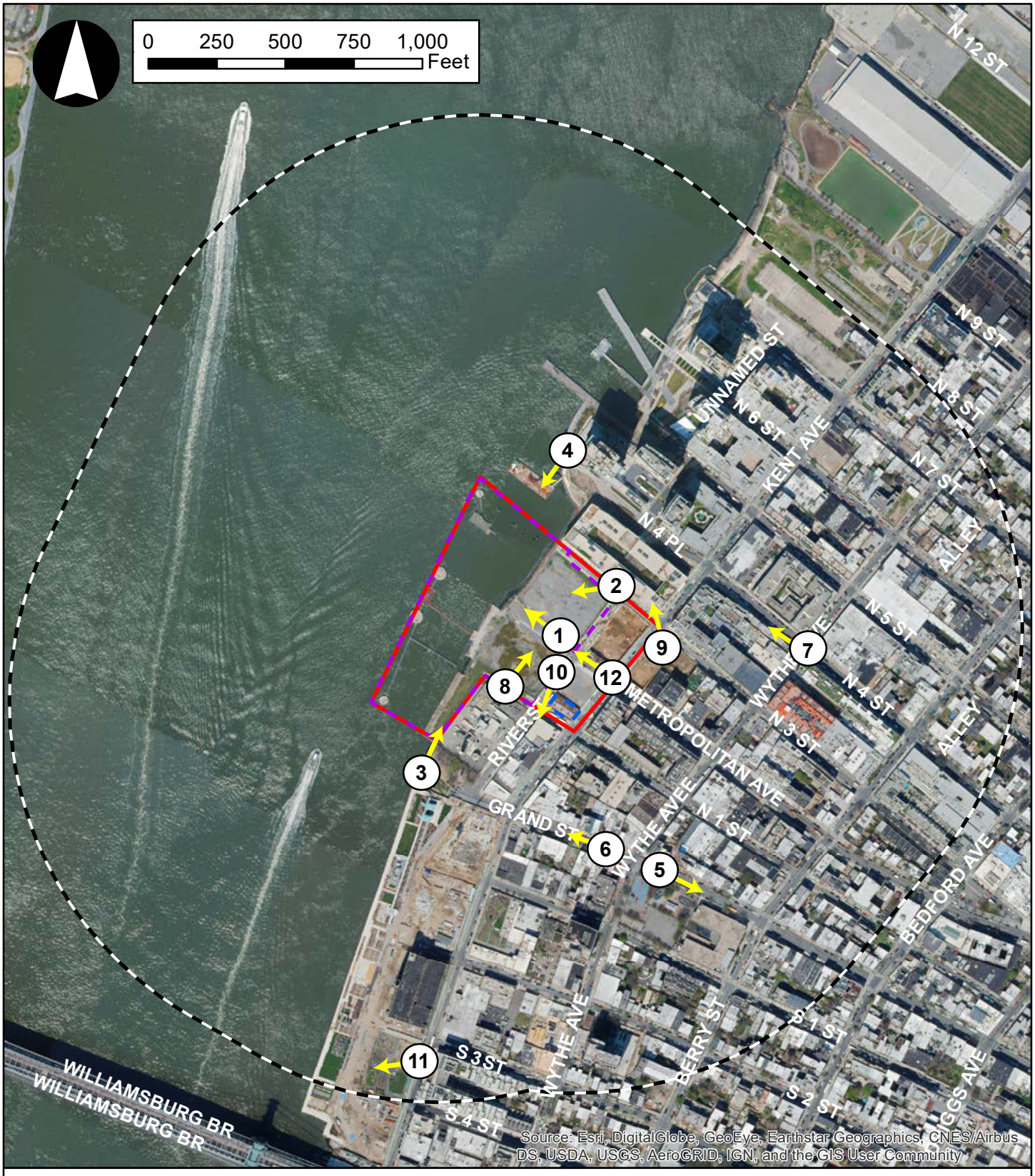
A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter assesses the Proposed Actions' potential effects on urban design and visual resources. Per the 2020 *City Environmental Quality Review* (CEQR) *Technical Manual*, urban design is defined as the total of components – including streets, buildings, open spaces, wind, natural resources, and visual resources – that may affect a pedestrian's experience of public space. A visual resource is defined as the connection from the public realm to significant natural or built features, including views of the waterfront, public parks, landmark structures or districts, otherwise distinct buildings or groups of buildings, or natural resources. In an urban design and visual resources assessment pursuant to CEQR, one considers whether and how a project may change the visual experience of a pedestrian, focusing on the components of the project that may have the potential to significantly and adversely affect the arrangement, appearance, and functionality of the built and natural environment.

As discussed in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the Proposed Actions are a series of land use actions including a zoning map amendment, City Map change, landfill, zoning text amendment, zoning authorizations, a zoning certification, and zoning special permits that would facilitate the redevelopment of a site in the Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn. The Project Area includes Block 2355, Lots 1 and 20; Block 2361, Lots 1, 20, and 21; Block 2376, Lot 50; and portions of Metropolitan Avenue and North 1st Street (collectively, the Applicant's Proposed Development Site), as well as two non-Applicant-owned blocks to the east (Blocks 2356 and 2362) (see **Figure 8-1**). Compared to No-Action conditions, the Proposed Actions would facilitate an incremental (net) increase of approximately 1,250 dwelling units (DUs), of which 313 units would be affordable units pursuant to the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) program, 56,741 gross square feet (gsf) of community facility space, 5,500 gsf of office space, and 2.9 acres of publicly accessible open space.[1] The Proposed Actions would also result in a net decrease, compared to No-Action conditions, of approximately 94,750 gsf of warehouse uses, a 102,100 gsf last-mile delivery facility, 68,000 gsf of light manufacturing/maker space, 60,100 gsf of destination retail, and 349 parking spaces. Construction of the Proposed Development is expected to begin in 2023, with all components complete and operational by 2027.

A detailed analysis of the potential impacts of the Proposed Actions on urban design and visual resources was prepared in conformance to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, and is provided below. This analysis describes existing conditions and compares conditions in the future with and without the Proposed Actions to determine potential urban design and visual resource impacts. The urban design and visual resources analysis is based on field visits, photography, and computer imaging, detailed below.

[1] As discussed in **Chapter 1, "Project Description,"** the 2.9 acres of public open space is composed of 85,475 sf of WPAA and 40,833 sf of PAA. This area includes all upland park area, seaward breakwater trails, and Ring boardwalk.



Legend

- Applicant's Proposed Development Site
- Projected Development Site
- Project Area
- 1/4-Mile Secondary Study Area
- 1 Photo Location (see Figures 8-2a. 8-2b, & 8-2c

B. PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

A detailed analysis was conducted based on the methodology set forth in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, and determined that the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse impact related to urban design or visual resources. The Proposed Actions would facilitate development that is not currently permitted as-of-right in the Project Area, which would create a notable change in the urban design character of the area. Compared to the future without the Proposed Actions, the visual appearance, and thus the pedestrian experience of the Project Area, would change considerably. However, this change would not constitute a significant adverse urban design impact as it would not alter the arrangement, appearance, or functionality of the Project Area, thus not negatively affecting a pedestrian's experience. Rather, development anticipated in the Project Area in the future with the Proposed Actions is expected to positively affect the urban design of the area and improve the pedestrian experience, through the redevelopment of a former industrial site (the Proposed Development Site) with a mixed-use development. The Proposed Development would consist of two towers (49 stories/560 feet and 64 stories/710 feet in height) comprising approximately 1.12 million gsf of residential space, 50,000 gsf of community facility space, 83,000 gsf of commercial space, and up to approximately 250 accessory attended parking spaces, with the ground floor of each tower providing entrance lobbies to the various components as well as local retail uses that would enliven the adjacent street frontages. The Proposed Development would reactivate this portion of the East River waterfront, with physical and visual connections to 2.9 acres of newly developed, publicly accessible waterfront open space, including intertidal and in-water recreation and aquatic, upland, and wetland vegetative communities that would promote fish and wildlife habitat development.

The Proposed Actions would revitalize the Proposed Development Site, a currently inaccessible portion of the East River waterfront that would largely continue to be publicly inaccessible, absent the Proposed Actions. With connections to the North 5th Street Pier and Park to the north and Grand Ferry Park to the south, the proposed waterfront open space in the Project Area would result in a continuous link of open spaces along the East River waterfront from Bushwick Inlet Park to Domino Park, enhancing the pedestrian experience of the East River waterfront. It would also provide additional views of significant visual resources such as the Manhattan skyline to the west, and the Williamsburg Bridge to the south. Streets within and adjacent to the Project Area include the westernmost portions of Metropolitan Avenue, North 1st Street, and North 3rd Street, as well as River Street and Kent Avenue between North 1st and North 3rd streets. The portions of Metropolitan Avenue and North 1st Street within the Project Area do not currently carry pedestrian or vehicular traffic, as they are blocked off by a tall, chain-link fence that surrounds the Proposed Development Site, making them inaccessible to the public. The Proposed Actions would demap Metropolitan Avenue and a portion of North 1st Street west of River Street, creating a pedestrian-only walkway to connect the upland community with the newly developed waterfront open space. Moreover, the waterfront open space of the Proposed Development would introduce a greater breadth of recreational activities not currently available to study area residents, including, but not limited to, a public beach[2], nature trails and educational habitat preservation programming, manmade freshwater wetlands, breakwaters to protect the cove and the habitats created, new walkways above open water that would connect the breakwaters, a ramped boat launch, and waterfront stepped seating. Through the development of this open space, the Proposed Actions would result in a vibrant and walkable East River waterfront in the vicinity of the Project Area, expanding public access and enhancing the pedestrian

[2] Per NYS Department of Health regulations, swimming will be prohibited.

experience as compared to No-Action conditions, where the waterfront of the Project Area would continue to be inaccessible to the public.

In order to facilitate the proposed open space design, the existing combined sewer outfall along Metropolitan Avenue would be relocated to North 3rd Street, outside of the protected cove area. In addition to the newly created public open space, the Proposed Development would establish a stable and resilient waterfront, and would create aquatic, upland, and wetland vegetative communities that would promote fish and wildlife habitat development in the East River. The Proposed Actions would result in an overall enhancement to the aquatic habitat and shoreline conditions of the East River, a significant natural resource in the primary and secondary study areas.

In the upland portion of the Proposed Development Site, the Proposed Actions would facilitate the development of two mixed-use towers of 49 stories/560 feet and 64 stories/710 feet in height, comprising approximately 1,250 DUs, of which 313 units would be affordable units pursuant to the MIH program, 50,000 gsf of community facility space, and 83,000 gsf of commercial space (including office and local retail uses). These zoning changes would be compatible with the ¼-mile radius surrounding the Project Area. The removal of the M3-1 district from the Project Area would ensure that heavy industrial uses incompatible with adjacent residential and commercial uses would not be constructed in the Project Area. Based on the increasingly residential character of the secondary study area, the Proposed Development would constitute a substantial improvement with respect to land uses as compared to a No-Action development of commercial and industrial uses, which wouldn't provide community facility space, affordable housing, or public open space to the surrounding neighborhood. The Proposed Development would activate the streetscape adjacent to the Proposed Development Site by adding ground-floor commercial and community facility space as well as significant amounts of open space areas, as opposed to No-Action conditions where the Proposed Development Site would be occupied entirely by building footprints, and parking garages and loading berths would occupy most of the buildings' ground floor frontages. Moreover, the adjacent sidewalks would be planted with street trees under With-Action conditions. As such, the Proposed Development would activate the streetscape around the Proposed Development Site, further enhancing the pedestrian experience along North 1st Street, River Street, Metropolitan Avenue, and North 3rd Street, as well as along the waterfront corridor.

The proposed Large-Scale General Development (LSGD) special permits would facilitate a design that the Applicant believes is superior in terms of function and design to what can be achieved as-of-right under existing zoning regulations, and allow for a provision of parking at a level commensurate to the site-generated demand. The Proposed Actions would rezone the Proposed Development Site to C6-2 (R8-equivalent density). Within a C6-2 (R8 equivalent) zoning district, and on a waterfront block within an MIH area, a development may be built up to maximum permitted FAR of 7.2; including up to 7.2 FAR of residential use and 6.5 FAR for commercial or community facility uses. On a waterfront block and within the C6-2 district a building may rise to a maximum base height of 70 feet and a maximum building height of 210 feet, although tower portions may rise to 250 feet if a penthouse and setback are provided. Above the maximum base height, setbacks of 10 feet are required along a wide street frontage, 15 feet along a narrow street frontage, and 30 feet from the boundaries of a Shore Public Walkway.

The Proposed Development seeks to improve waterfront conditions through a non-traditional approach to building lot coverage within the proposed LSGD. By compressing the allowable floor area into very small footprints that occupy less than 35% of the total development upland lot area, the Proposed Development is able to maximize the open space and public ground plane experience, resulting in taller and much more slender building profiles compared to the traditional R8 massing that is prominent along the Williamsburg and Greenpoint waterfront, which uses maximum lot area coverage for the building podiums and comply

with the waterfront shore public walkway requirements, but do not offer much more open space within their buildable lot area. The proposed open space plan for Proposed Development creates a new open water cove by cutting out upland area in order to provide an enhanced shoreline experience in the public open space. The Proposed Development's towers at 560 feet and 710 feet tall have been designed in a manner that shifts bulk away from the proposed public open space, allowing the allocation of floor area upland. Along River Street, both buildings incrementally set back until they reach a minimum of 15 feet from the property line. Along North 1st and North 3rd streets, the buildings gradually set back to 3'-10" and 10'-6" respectively. The proposed buildings are not designed as "podium plus tower" configurations, and as such, do not have a distinctive "base" or setback beyond the building's base. In lieu of this podium-to-base relationship, the buildings are designed to gradually set back along their three frontages at the ground plane and transition from a triangular footprint to a rectangular tower. This configuration allows for more ground plane to be dedicated to open space. In order to transition to their tower floor plates, the buildings gradually cantilever – the North Tower cantilever occurs at the southwest corner of the tower and the South Tower cantilever occurs at the northwest corner. The graduated cantilevering begins at the ground floor and grows at an increment of approximately 5" per floor in the South Tower and approximately 8" per floor in the North Tower until the top of the towers.

The setback of the North Tower base from the North 3rd Street side is 3'-7". As the envelope gradually moves away from the edges, it reaches its maximum setback of 11'-0" at the top of the building. On the River Street side, the setback of the building base is 2'-7" and in a similar manner like its Northern edge, it reaches 13'-0" setback at the top of the building.

The North corner of the South Tower base has a 10'-6" setback from River Street as the building's base opens towards the Metropolitan entrance. The maximum setback of 13'-7" is reached at the top of the building. On the North 1st Street side, the South Tower has a consistent setback of 2'-7" throughout. While at the perimeter of the buildings 15'-0 wide sidewalks are provided throughout, it should be noted that by having a non-parallel street setback, the South Tower sidewalks expand from 15'-0 at the corner of River Street and North 1st Street to a width of 23'-8" at the intersection with Metropolitan Avenue as a gesture to the main public entrance to the park.

Although the 49- and 64-story towers on the Proposed Development Site, at 560 feet and 710 feet tall, respectively, would be denser and taller than the as-of-right No-Action buildings on the site, the additional density and height in the Project Area would not result in significant adverse urban design impacts. The secondary study area is a dense urban environment with multiple existing high-rise buildings along the East River waterfront, including the 40-story building at 2 North 6th Street (11.4 floor area ratio [FAR]), the 30-story building at 164 Kent Avenue (8.25 FAR), the 41-story building at 1 North 4th Place (7.3 FAR), and the 42-story building just south of the Project Area at 10 Grand Street (effective FAR of 7.8 for the overall Domino Sugar Refinery redevelopment). The proposed towers on the Proposed Development Site would be in keeping with the heights and densities of these nearby waterfront developments, while allowing for a greater portion of the Proposed Development Site to be transformed into publicly accessible open space.

Additionally, the Proposed Development would not obstruct any significant view corridors in the primary or secondary study areas, or otherwise adversely alter the context of surrounding visual resources. Although the Proposed Development would alter the backdrops of some historic architectural resources in the surrounding area, such as the S/NR-listed and NYCL-eligible Austin, Nichols & Co. Warehouse when looking south on North 4th Place and southwest on Kent Avenue; the S/NR-listed Metropolitan Avenue Warehouse when looking west along Metropolitan Avenue; and when looking north in the S/NR-listed Grand Street Historic District. These changes would not be significant or adverse, as the study area is a

dense urban environment with multiple high-rise buildings that currently form the setting and context of these historic resources.

As the proposed and projected With-Action buildings in the Project Area would be constructed on existing blocks, the current viewsheds of the East River and Manhattan skyline when looking west along east-west streets in the secondary study area, such as Metropolitan Avenue, would not be obstructed. However, as under No-Action conditions, views south, west, and north of the East River, Williamsburg Bridge, and Manhattan skyline from North 1st, River, and North 3rd streets would be obstructed by the Proposed Development. However, through the introduction of publicly accessible waterfront open space, the Proposed Development would create new, expansive, and uninterrupted views of these resources. Although views of some visual resources would be obstructed from certain vantage points, more proximate views of these significant visual resources would remain on public streets and sidewalks in the vicinity of these resources under With-Action conditions, and the proposed waterfront open space in the Project Area would provide additional publicly accessible views of these visual resources, which are currently not available from the Project Area and would not be available under the No-Action condition. These new vantage points would enhance the pedestrian experience in the Project Area, creating new and expansive viewsheds of surrounding visual resources.

As the Proposed Actions are area-specific, no significant adverse impacts to urban design or visual resources in the ¼-mile secondary study area are expected. The proposed waterfront open space is expected to be a significant new visual resource visible from public vantage points in the secondary study area, such as when looking south from the 5th Street Park and Pier or when looking north from Grand Ferry Park. The Proposed Development would also be visible when looking east across the East River from public vantage points in Manhattan. As such, the Proposed Development facilitated by the Proposed Actions is expected to improve the pedestrian experience in the secondary study area, through the creation of a new visual resource in the Project Area and the enhancement of the East River waterfront, a significant natural resource in the primary and secondary study areas.

The results of the wind study found that no regions exceeding wind safety criteria to the general or frail members of the public were found within the vicinity of the Proposed Development, and determined that the Proposed Development would satisfy respective comfort criteria. As such, outdoor trafficable areas within and around the Proposed Development would be suitable for their intended uses.

C. METHODOLOGY

In general, an assessment of urban design is needed when a project may have effects on one or more of the elements that contribute to a pedestrian's experience of public space. These elements, the totality of which defines the concept of urban design, are described below:

- *Streets.* For many neighborhoods, streets are the primary component of public space. The arrangement and orientation of streets define the location and flow of activity in an area, set street views, and create the blocks on which buildings and open spaces are organized. The apportionment of streetscape between cars, bicycles, transit, and sidewalk is critical to making a successful streetscape, as is the careful design of street furniture, grade, materials uses, and permanent fixtures, including plantings, street lights, fire hydrants, curb cuts, and newsstands.
- *Buildings.* Buildings support streets. A building's streetwalls form the most common backdrop in the city for public space. A building's size, shape, orientation, height, setbacks, lot coverage, density and placement on the zoning lot and block, the orientation of active uses, and pedestrian and vehicular

entrances all play major roles in the vitality of the streetscape. The public realm also extends to building facades and rooftops, offering more opportunity to enrich the visual character of an area.

- *Visual Resources.* A visual resource is the connection from the public realm to significant natural or built features, including, but not limited to, views of the waterfront, public parks, public art, statues, or sculptures, landmark structures or districts, otherwise distinct buildings or groups of buildings that may be iconic or historic, and natural resources.
- *Open Space.* For the purposes of urban design, open space includes public and private areas, such as parks, yards, cemeteries, parking lots, playgrounds, community gardens, and privately owned public spaces.
- *Natural Features.* Natural features include vegetation (i.e., trees, shrubs, grasses, etc.), geologic, topographic, and aquatic features. Rock out-croppings, street slopes, or varied ground elevation, beaches, or wetlands may help define the overall visual character of an area.
- *Wind.* Channelized wind pressure from between tall buildings and downwashed wind pressure from parallel tall buildings may cause winds that jeopardize pedestrian safety. "Downwashed" wind is wind that is propelled downward by an intervening structure, such as a high-rise building, that causes high wind speeds at the street level.

The Proposed Actions would enable development that would differ from existing zoning envelopes and would result in physical changes beyond the bulk and form currently permitted as-of-right in the Project Area. This may have the potential to change the pedestrians' experience of public space. Therefore, it is appropriate to assess the Proposed Actions' potential impacts to urban design and visual resources.

A pedestrian wind condition analysis is warranted for the Proposed Actions pursuant to CEQR methodology. As stated in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, construction of large buildings at locations that experience high wind conditions may result in an exacerbation of wind conditions due to "channelization" or "downwash" effects that may affect pedestrian safety. The need for a wind analysis is based on a number of factors, including whether a location is exposed to high wind conditions, such as along west and northwest-facing waterfronts, as well as the size and orientation of the buildings that are proposed to be constructed. As the Project Area is located on a west/northwest-facing shore of the East River waterfront, which is exposed to high wind conditions, and the Proposed Actions would facilitate the construction of 49- and 64-story buildings along this waterfront, a pedestrian wind condition analysis is warranted pursuant to *CEQR Technical Manual* methodology, and is provided below. The wind analysis is derived from Windtech Consultants' *Pedestrian Wind Environment Study* for the Proposed Development dated June 16, 2020 and subsequent *Pedestrian Microclimate CFD Study* dated April 14, 2021 (provided in **Appendix D**).

Study Areas

The study area for the assessment of urban design and visual resources corresponds to the area where the Proposed Actions may influence land use patterns and the built environment and is consistent with that used for the land use analysis in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, & Public Policy." For visual resources, the view corridors within the study area from which such resources are publicly viewable have been identified. The urban design analysis considers both a primary study area, which is coterminous with the boundaries of the Project Area (Brooklyn Block 2355, Lots 1 and 20; Block 2361, Lots 1, 20, and 21; Block 2376, Lot 50; Block 2356, Block 2362, and portions of Metropolitan Avenue and North 1st Street), and a secondary study area, which extends a ¼-mile from the Project Area's boundary. As illustrated in **Figure**

8-1, the ¼-mile secondary study area is generally bounded by North 8th Street to the north, lots fronting Bedford Avenue to the east, South 4th Street to the south, and the East River to the west.

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 project or 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. The Proposed Actions would facilitate the construction of two buildings with bulk and densities that would not be permitted as-of-right in the Project Area. Therefore, a detailed analysis for the Proposed Actions is warranted, and is provided below.

E. DETAILED ASSESSMENT

Existing Conditions

The following section discusses existing urban design components and visual resources in the primary and secondary study areas. The assessment focuses on streets, buildings, open space, natural resources, visual resources, and wind. The visual resources assessment considers important views of landmark structures and other distinct buildings within, or viewable from, the study areas, that may be obstructed due to buildings developed as a result of the Proposed Actions. Two figures are referenced throughout the existing conditions discussion below: **Figure 8-3** shows the existing density (FAR) of buildings in the study areas, and **Figure 8-4** illustrates existing building heights in the study areas.

Primary Study Area (Project Area)

The primary study area is coterminous with the Project Area. As shown in **Figure 8-1**, it is bounded to the north by North 3rd Street, to the east by Kent Avenue and a property owned by New York Power Authority (NYPA), to the south by North 1st Street and Grand Ferry Park, and to the west by the U.S. Pierhead Line in the East River.

STREETS

As shown in **Figure 8-1**, the Project Area contains the westernmost portions of Metropolitan Avenue and North 1st Street, which run east-west[3] through the primary and secondary study areas, and terminate at the East River waterfront in the Project Area. Metropolitan Avenue is an 80-foot-wide thoroughfare (wide street per the NYC Zoning Resolution), and North 1st Street is 50 feet wide (narrow street). The portions of Metropolitan Avenue and North 1st Street in the Project Area do not currently carry pedestrian or

[3] As shown in **Figure 8-1**, most streets in the study area carry traffic in either a southeast-northwest direction (like Metropolitan Avenue) or in a northeast-southwest direction (like River Street). However, this chapter refers to these directions as "east-west" and "north-south" for clarity.

vehicular traffic, as they are blocked off by a tall, chain-link fence that surrounds the Proposed Development Site, making them inaccessible to the public (see photos 1, 2, and 12 in **Figure 8-2a**).

The Project Area also includes the section of River Street between North 1st and North 3rd Streets (all narrow streets). River Street is a 50-foot-wide road that runs north-south through the primary and secondary study areas between South 5th and North 3rd Streets. In the vicinity of the Project Area, River Street carries vehicular traffic in both directions, and contains parallel parking lanes on both sides of the street. South of Grand Street, River Street has been newly extended between Grand Street and S.5th Street as part of the redevelopment of the Domino Sugar Factory and only has southbound vehicular lanes. For the time being there is limited street parking due to the ongoing construction of the Domino redevelopment. The vast majority of River Street is lined with concrete sidewalks for pedestrians with a width of approximately 10 feet.

BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES

The vacant Proposed Development Site does not contain any buildings, with the upland portion covered in compacted sand and gravel, and as noted above, is surrounded by a tall, chain-link fence (see photos 1, 2, and 12 in **Figure 8-2a**). It has been occupied by industrial uses since the 1830s, and was most recently used as a No. 6 fuel storage complex for the Con Edison North 1st Street Terminal. As shown in **Figure 8-1**, structures in the Project Area include a wharf, a bulkhead, an apron walkway, a pile-supported fuel service pier and pile-supported fuel service platform, a portion of the North 1st Street Pier, and a pile-supported timber platform at the end of the former North 3rd Street Pier. Additionally, about 200 feet waterward of the shoreline are four cellular caissons, ranging in diameter from about 28 to 47 feet. The southern three caissons and the fuel service platform are connected by pile-supported catwalks, and a catwalk extends from the former North 3rd Street platform to the northernmost caisson (see **Figure 8-1**).

Block 2356 in the eastern portion of the Project Area is comprised of a six-story (83-foot-tall) mixed commercial building with approximately 22,000 gsf of destination retail (Trader Joe's) below grade, 21,000 gsf of ground floor retail, 24,000 gsf of office space, 176 accessory parking spaces, and a 1,600 gsf roof garden. To the south, Block 2362, Lot 3 is a vacant, approximately 13,378 sf lot owned by Con Edison, and Lot 1 is an approximately 5,862 sf site which appears to be undergoing environmental remediation.

OPEN SPACE & NATURAL RESOURCES

There are no publicly accessible open space resources in the Project Area. As shown in **Figure 8-1**, the Project Area extends into the East River (bounded by the US Pierhead Line). The East River is a salt-water tidal estuary that separates the island of Manhattan from Long Island, connecting north to the Harlem River and south to the Upper Bay, and is a major natural resource in the area. There are no freshwater wetlands, freshwater vegetation, or tidal wetland vegetation within the Project Area. The upland portion of the Proposed Development Site and Block 2362 contain weeds and grass, as shown in photos 1 and 2 in **Figure 8-2a** and photo 8 in **Figure 8-2b**. There are also some street trees adjacent to Blocks 2356 and 2362 in the Project Area.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The Proposed Development Site is not publicly accessible, and therefore does not contain any views connecting the public realm to significant natural or built features. The upland portion of the Proposed Development Site is vacant, and does not contain any significant visual resources. Additionally, the eastern blocks in the Project Area (Blocks 2356 and 2362) detailed above do not contain any significant visual resources. However, there are partially obstructed views of the East River, Manhattan skyline, and



1. View looking west in the Project Area along Metropolitan Avenue from River Street, with the Manhattan skyline in the background.



2. View looking southwest across the Project Area from River and North 3rd Streets, with the Williamsburg Bridge and Manhattan skyline in the background.



3. View looking north from Grand Ferry Park at the Project Area, Manhattan skyline, new waterfront towers, and NYPA stacks.



4. View looking south from North 5th Street Park at the Austin, Nichols & Co. Warehouse, Project Area, Ten Grand Street, and the Williamsburg Bridge.



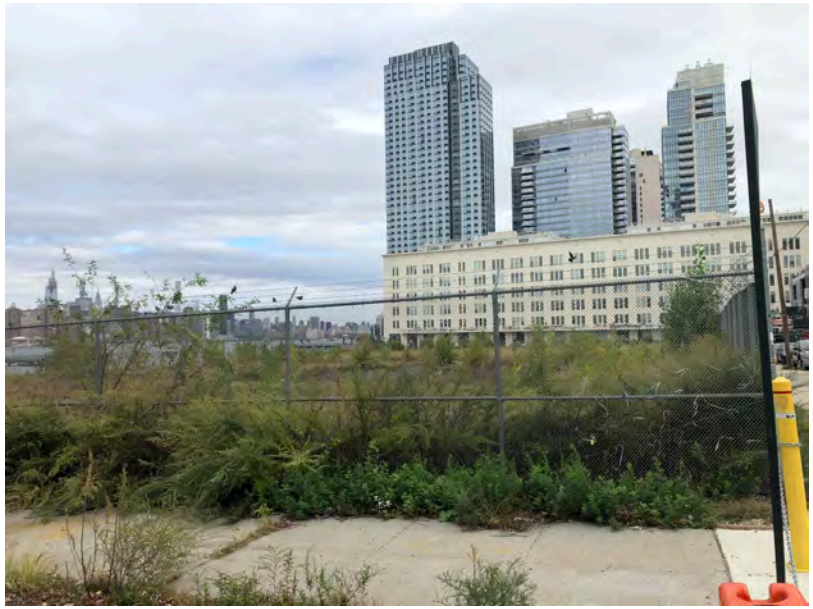
5. View west of the Grand Street Historic District.



6. View east of the Grand Street Historic District, with Ten Grand Street, the East River, and the Manhattan skyline in the background.



7. New mid-rise buildings on North 4th Street, with a new waterfront tower in the background.



8. View north across the Project Area from North 1st Street, with the Austin, Nichols & Co. Warehouse and new high-rise waterfront developments in the background.

Williamsburg Bridge from the public streets and sidewalks of River Street and Metropolitan Avenue in the eastern portion of the Project Area (see photos 10 and 12 in **Figure 8-2c**).

The western portion of the Project Area encompasses a portion of the East River, an important natural feature in western Brooklyn. This significant visual resource can be seen from the publicly accessible Grand Ferry Park to the south of the Project Area (illustrated in photo 3 in **Figure 8-2a**), as well as from North 3rd Street, North 4th Place, and the North 5th Street Pier and Park to the north of the Project Area (see photo 4 in **Figure 8-2a**).

WIND

A detailed analysis of pedestrian wind conditions in the Project Area was conducted by Windtech Consultants to determine whether the Proposed Development might result in accelerated ground-level winds (see **Appendix D**). As detailed therein, existing wind conditions in the Project Area were determined by a regional wind model derived from an analysis of measured directional mean wind speeds obtained at John F. Kennedy International Airport and LaGuardia Airport. Data was collected from 1973 to 2014 and corrected to represent wind speeds over standard open terrain, like the vacant Proposed Development Site, at a height of 33 feet above ground for each wind direction. From this analysis, directional probabilities of exceedance and directional wind speeds for the New York Region were determined, indicating that the strongest winds are mainly from the northwest, which is also the most frequently occurring winds for the region. Northwesterly winds have an annual maximum speed of 30.8 miles per hour (mph) for the region, and west-northwesterly winds have an annual maximum speed of 30.1 mph. In contrast, the lowest annual maximum wind speeds in the region are east-southeasterly winds and southwesterly winds (both 21.6 mph). The prevailing winds and wind conditions in the Proposed Development Site are similar to those at comparable locations in Brooklyn and Manhattan along the East River.

¼-Mile Secondary Study Area

STREETS

As shown in **Figure 8-1**, two rectilinear grid patterns converge at Grand Street in the secondary study area. In both grids, River Street, Kent Avenue, Wythe Avenue, and Berry Street generally parallel the curve of the shoreline in a north-south direction. With the exception of River Street, these 60-foot-wide thoroughfares traverse the entire ¼-mile study area; River Street is a 50-foot-wide thoroughfare only located to the south of North 3rd Street (see **Figure 8-1**). Kent Avenue and Berry Street carry northbound vehicular traffic, while Wythe Avenue and River Street carry southbound vehicular traffic. Berry Street is considered a major thoroughfare in Brooklyn, but there are no designated truck routes in the secondary study area. Bike lanes in the secondary study area are located in the western portion of Wythe Avenue and Berry Street, and a protected bike path that is part of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway is located in the western lane of Kent Avenue, connecting Williamsburg to Bridge Plaza and Downtown Brooklyn. Citi Bike stations are located on Wythe Avenue just north of Metropolitan Avenue and on South 4th Street just west of Wythe Avenue.

The remainder of streets traverse the ¼-mile secondary study area in an east-west direction, largely creating standard, rectilinear blocks in the area (see **Figure 8-1**), and providing access to the waterfront open space network along the East River. Most of these east-west streets are 50- or 60-feet-wide, and carry local, one-way vehicular traffic. Grand Street is 70 feet wide and Metropolitan Avenue is 80 feet wide; each of these thoroughfares carries eastbound and westbound vehicular traffic. A bike lane is located in the northern portion of North 5th Street in the secondary study area.



9. The Austin, Nichols & Co. Warehouse on North 3rd Street and Kent Avenue, with new waterfront high-rises in the background.



11. View of Domino Park and the Williamsburg Bridge from River Street, with the Manhattan skyline in the background.



10. View looking south along River Street in the Project Area towards the Green Desk office building, Ten Grand Street, Williamsburg Bridge, and NYPA stacks.



12. View west along Metropolitan Avenue from midway between Kent Avenue and River Street in the Project Area, with the East River and Manhattan skyline in the background.

Most roads in the secondary study area have parallel parking lanes on one or both sides of the street, and most are also lined with concrete sidewalks that accommodate a variety of permanent fixtures such as streetlights, traffic lights, traffic signs, and fire hydrants, as well as street furniture, including garbage cans, bike racks, mailboxes, food trucks, and LinkNYC kiosks. There are also a number of sidewalk tables and seating areas for adjacent restaurants, cafés, and coffee shops in the area. Street trees are typically located adjacent to new developments or renovated buildings; there are also numerous curb cuts located around industrial buildings and parking garage egresses in the area. Streets in the secondary study area currently accommodate a substantial amount of construction scaffolding and jersey barriers, highlighting the significant amount of redevelopment occurring in the area (discussed further in "The Future Without the Proposed Actions" section below).

BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES

The ¼-mile study area includes a variety of residential, commercial, and manufacturing zoning districts, including R6, R6A, R6B, R8, C6-2, and M3-1, as well as mixed-use districts and several commercial overlays. The zoning districts in the secondary study area allow for a broad range FARs, from 2.0 to 7.2, with the highest allowable FARs typically found along the waterfront. Contextual zoning districts (those with a letter suffix) have maximum building height limits, whereas a development's maximum height in non-contextual zoning districts is governed by the sky exposure plane. The ¼-mile secondary study area contains a variety of building types, bulks, and heights (see **Figures 8-3** and **8-4** as well as **Figure 2-1** in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, & Public Policy"). As shown in **Figure 8-1**, buildings in the secondary study area are typically built out to the lot lines, creating continuous streetscapes along most thoroughfares in the area, and have heights ranging from 1 to 40 stories. Consistent with the higher density zoning designations along the waterfront, the tallest buildings in the ¼-mile study area are concentrated along the waterfront.

As discussed further in Chapter 2, the secondary study area is mostly residential and mixed residential/commercial. Low-rise residential rowhouses with ground-floor retail spaces from the 19th century are predominately located along Grand and South 1st Streets in the secondary study area (see photos 5 and 6 in **Figure 8-2b**). Early 21st century construction in the study area is comprised of mid-rise residential developments generally located north of North 1st Street (as illustrated in photo 7 in **Figure 8-2b**), as well as a substantial number of high-rise, high-density residential developments along the waterfront to the west of Kent Avenue. Examples of these recently constructed waterfront towers include Level, a 40-story building at 2 North 6th Street (11.4 FAR) completed in 2017; Two Northside Piers, a 30-story building at 164 Kent Avenue (8.25 FAR) built in 2010; One North Fourth, a 41-story building at 1 North 4th Place (7.3 FAR) completed in 2016; and One South First (also referred to as Ten Grand or 260 Kent Avenue), a 42-story building (effective overall FAR of 7.8) in the Domino Sugar Refinery redevelopment that is almost complete (see photos 6, 7, and 8 in **Figure 8-2b**).

The study area also retains low-rise, low-density commercial, industrial, manufacturing, transportation, and utility buildings and structures from the 20th century. Examples include the NYPA natural-gas plant immediately south of the Project Area at 49 River Street, which has an FAR of 0.02 (see photos 3 and 10 in **Figures 8-2a** and **8-2c**); 292 Kent Avenue/29 Grand Street, which is a three-story industrial/manufacturing building built in 1930 (1.13 FAR) that houses the Lau N. Son Produce Company; and the four-story commercial building at 240 Kent Avenue (3.47 FAR), a former warehouse from circa 1900 that has since been converted to Green Desk shared office space (see photo 10 in **Figure 8-2c**).

Figure 8-3
Built Density

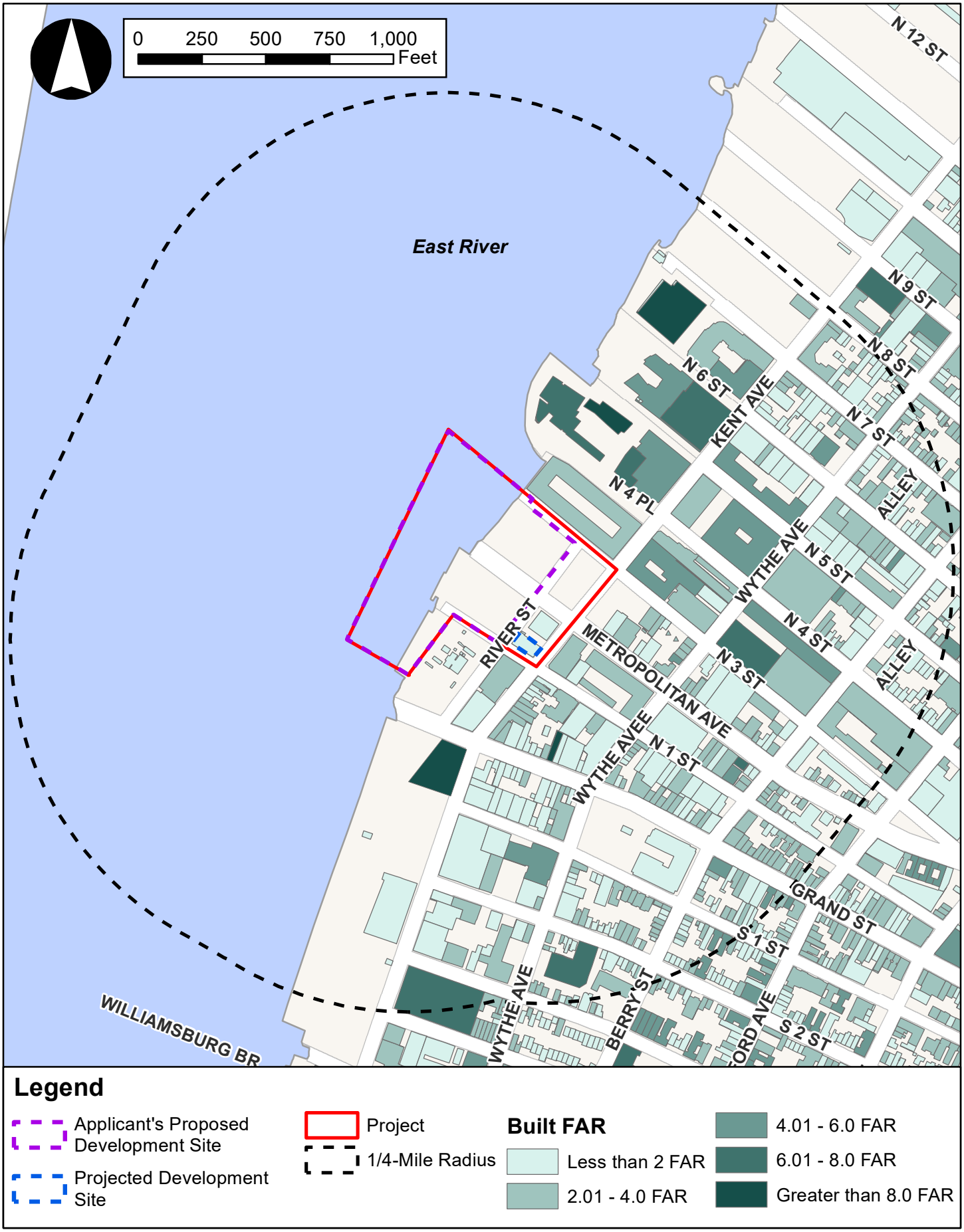
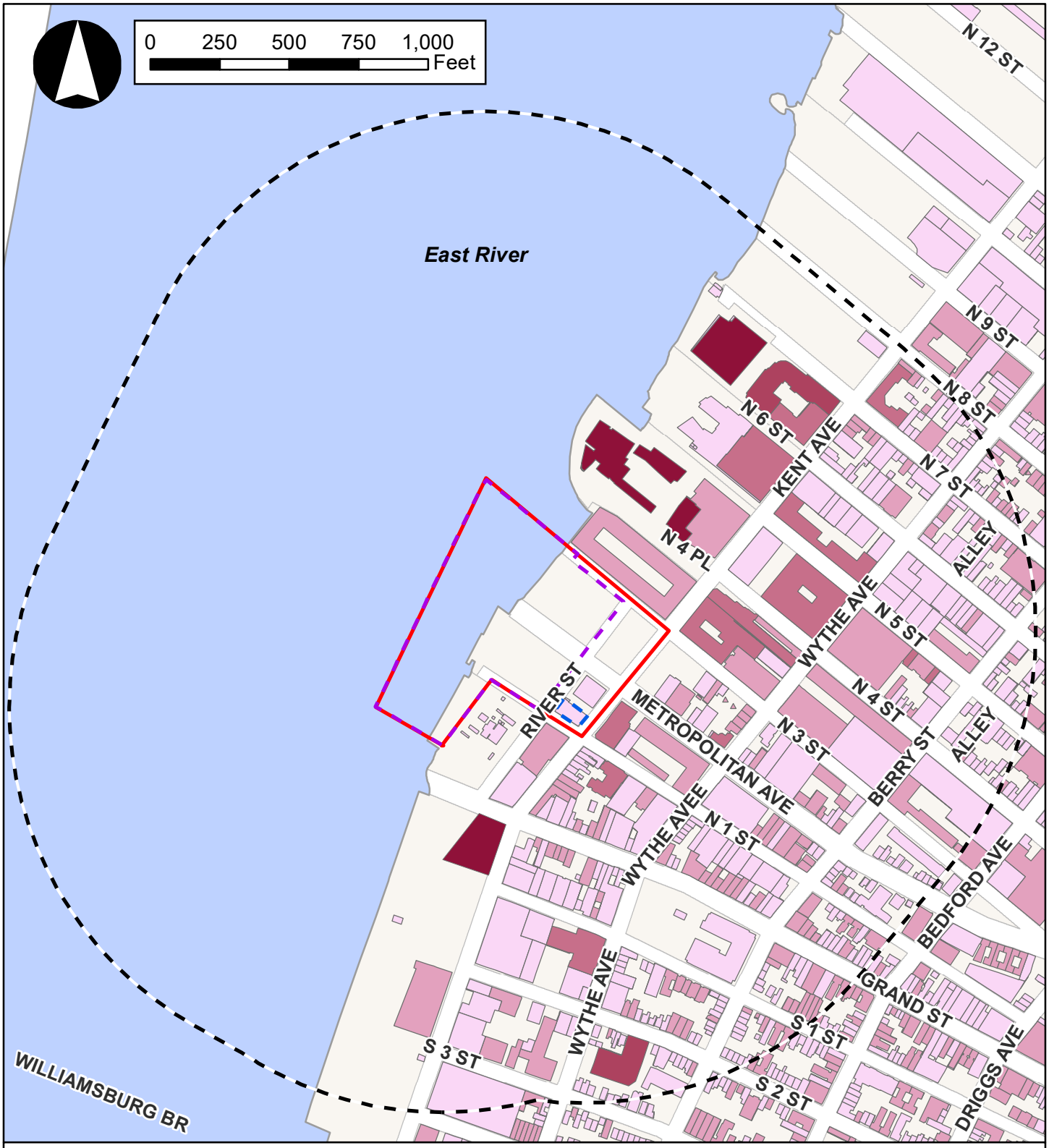


Figure 8-4
Building Heights



Legend

- Applicant's Proposed Development Site
- Projected Development Site
- Project Area
- 1/4-Mile Radius

Number of Floors

- 1 -3 Stories
- 4 -6 Stories
- 7- 10 Stories
- 11 - 20 Stories
- Greater than 20 Stories

OPEN SPACE & NATURAL RESOURCES

The topography of the secondary study area is relatively flat, with a gradual slope towards the waterfront along the east-west streets between Wythe and Kent avenues. The western portion of the study area is comprised of the East River which, as noted above, is a salt-water tidal estuary that separates the island of Manhattan from Long Island, and is a major natural resource in the area. As detailed further in Chapter 5, "Open Space," there are multiple open space resources in the neighborhood of Williamsburg. Open spaces in the ¼-mile secondary study area include the southern portion of the seven-acre East River State Park; the 0.85-acre North 5th Street Pier and Park immediately north of the Project Area; the 1.8-acre Grand Ferry Park immediately south of the Project Area; the northern portion of the six-acre Domino Park (illustrated in photo 11 of **Figure 8-2c**); and the 0.79-acre William Sheridan Playground.

VISUAL RESOURCES

There are a number of visual resources in the secondary study area, including the East River and its waterfront, which is partially located in the Project Area (see photos 3 and 4 in **Figure 8-2a**); the S/NR-listed and NYCL-eligible Austin, Nichols & Co. Warehouse just north of the Project Area at 184 Kent Avenue (see photos 4, 8, and 9 in **Figures 8-2a** through **8-2c**); the S/NR-eligible Metropolitan Avenue Warehouse at 67-73 Metropolitan Avenue; the S/NR-eligible Rokeach & Sons Warehouse, and the S/NR-eligible Grand Avenue Historic District (see photos 5 and 6 in **Figure 8-2b**), which encompasses most of Grand Avenue to the east of Kent Avenue in the secondary study area (refer to Chapter 7, "Historic & Cultural Resources" for more information). Just south of the Project Area is One South First/Ten Grand (260 Kent Avenue), a newly-constructed building in the Domino Sugar redevelopment, which, along with the NYCL-designated and S/NR-eligible Domino Sugar Refinery at 292-314 Kent Avenue, are other prominent visual resources in the secondary study area (see photos 4, 6, and 10 in **Figures 8-2a** through **8-2c**).

There are also a number of view corridors within the ¼-mile secondary study area of significant visual resources located beyond the study area, such as the Williamsburg Bridge to the south and the Manhattan skyline and East River to the west. The Williamsburg Bridge, a suspension bridge that connects Delancey Street in Manhattan to South Williamsburg, has two tall steel support towers and a steel roadway span. It can be seen when looking south from most points along the East River waterfront public spaces (see photos 4 and 11 in **Figures 8-2a** and **8-2c**) as well as from points along River Street, Kent Avenue, and North 3rd Street (see photo 2 in **Figure 8-2a**). The Manhattan skyline and East River waterfront can be seen when looking west along most east-west streets in the secondary study area, as well as from River Street and the East River waterfront open spaces (see photos 1, 6, 11, and 12 in **Figures 8-2a** through **8-2c**).

The Future without the Proposed Actions (No-Action Condition)

Primary Study Area (Project Area)

Under the No-Action Scenario, the upland portion of the Project Area would be developed on an as-of-right basis pursuant to the existing M3-1 zoning district. Existing conditions would remain along the waterfront and in the waterward portions of the Project Area under No-Action conditions. **Figures 8-7b** through **8-7n** show comparative No-Action and With-Action massings in illustrative views of the primary and secondary study areas. These views are keyed to the map shown in **Figure 8-7a**.

STREETS

In the future without the Proposed Actions, Metropolitan Avenue and North 1st Street would remain mapped City streets. The portion of Metropolitan Avenue to the west of River Street in the Project Area would be opened to vehicular traffic with 19- to 20-foot public sidewalks under No-Action conditions.

Additionally, the portion of North 1st Street to the west of River Street would be opened to vehicular traffic, and the 13-foot sidewalk on the north side of North 1st Street would be continued to the western terminus of the street under No-Action conditions. The streets would terminate just before the East River waterfront, providing public views of the Manhattan skyline (illustrated in **Figure 8-7d**). However, as the reopened portions of Metropolitan Avenue and North 1st Street would be dead-end streets in the No-Action scenario, they would not provide vehicular or pedestrian access to any surrounding streets or sidewalks.

BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES

In the future without the Proposed Actions, the Applicant would maximize the permitted as-of-right FAR of 2.0 on the Proposed Development Site, constructing two buildings with a combined total floor area of approximately 621,500 gsf, including approximately 54,500 gsf of office uses, 60,100 gsf of destination retail uses, 23,000 gsf of local retail uses, 68,000 gsf of light manufacturing maker space, 94,750 gsf of warehouse uses, and an approximately 102,100 gsf last-mile distribution facility, as well as approximately 579 accessory parking spaces. As shown in **Figure 8-5a**, each building would set back at the fourth story (60 feet). The northern building would then rise two more stories to a height of approximately 100 feet to the building roof line (140 feet to the top of the mechanical bulkhead), while the southern building would rise four more stories to a height of approximately 110 feet to the roof line (approximately 150 feet to top of the mechanical bulkhead).

Under No-Action conditions, destination retail uses would occupy the cellar level of the northern building, and the ground floor would be occupied by destination retail and office lobbies fronting North 3rd Street, local retail fronting River and North 3rd streets and Metropolitan Avenue, a parking garage with a vehicular entrance/exit on Metropolitan Avenue, and a last-mile distribution facility fronting mostly on Metropolitan Avenue with loading docks accessible from Metropolitan Avenue (see **Figure 8-5b**). The southern building would contain accessory parking in the cellar and portions of the ground and second floors, fronting North 1st Street and Metropolitan Avenue on the ground floor level with a vehicular entrance/exit on Metropolitan Avenue. A loading dock for the warehouse space would also be located on Metropolitan Avenue. Local retail space on the ground floor of the southern building would front on River and North 1st Streets and Metropolitan Avenue, and office and maker space lobbies would front Metropolitan Avenue (see **Figure 8-5b**).

Additionally, under No-Action conditions it is assumed that the non-Applicant-owned Projected Development Site would be developed with a two-story (30-foot-tall), approximately 13,482 gsf building, comprised of 6,741 gsf of local retail space and 6,741 gsf of warehouse space, as well as 20 accessory parking spaces.

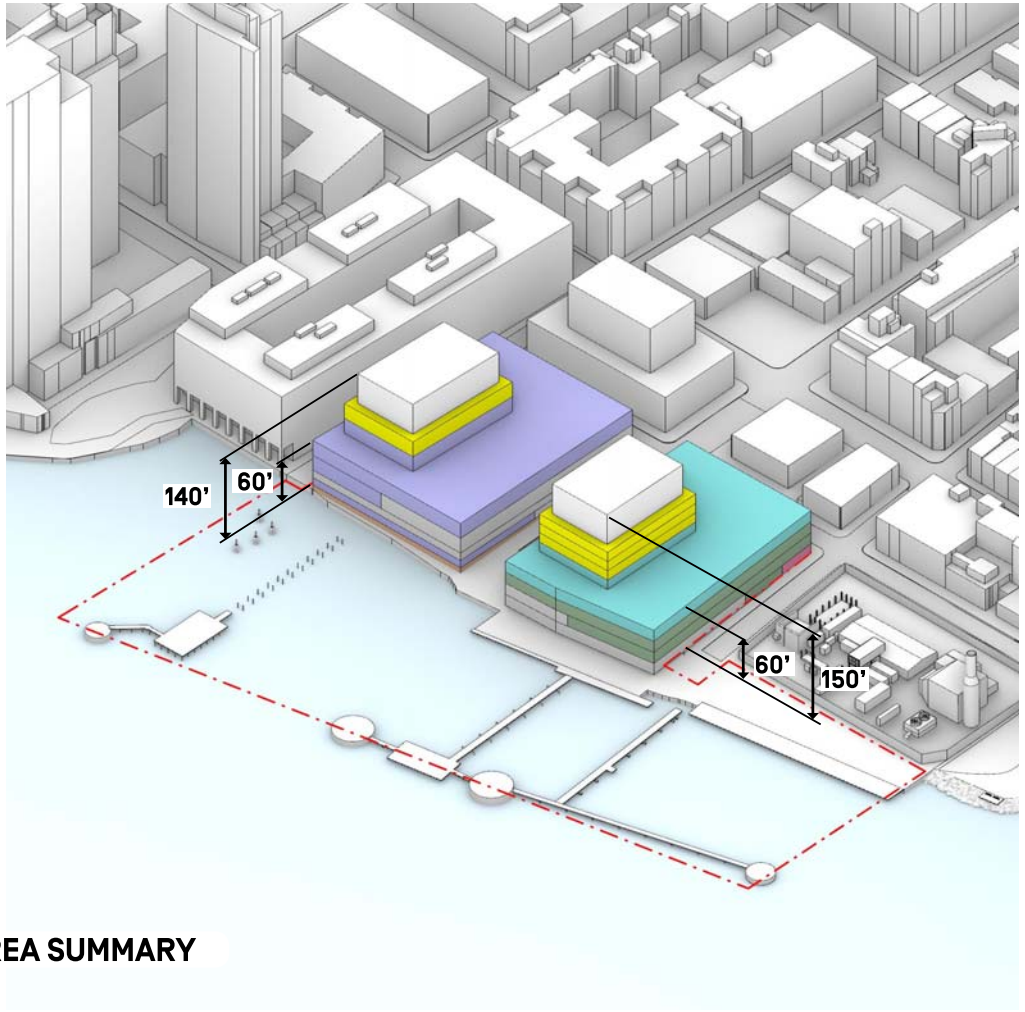
Additionally, the structures in the East River (including the piers and caissons described above and shown in **Figure 8-1**) would remain the same in the No-Action Scenario, as observed in the Existing Conditions.

OPEN SPACE & NATURAL RESOURCES

No changes to open space or natural resources are expected in the Project Area absent the Proposed Actions. As the No-Action development detailed above would be comprised predominantly of Use Group 16, the Proposed Development Site would be exempt from waterfront public access area and visual corridor requirements in the future without the Proposed Actions. As such, no publicly accessible open space would be developed, and the waterfront of the Project Area would continue to be inaccessible to the public. Additionally, no changes to the East River portion of the Project Area would occur under No-

PROPOSED USE	AREA (GSF)	AREA (ZFA)*
OFFICE	54,500	49,050
LOCAL RETAIL	23,000	21,850
DESTINATION RETAIL	60,100	2,700
WAREHOUSE	94,750	85,300
LAST MILE DISTRIBUTION	102,100	91,900
MAKER SPACE	68,000	61,250
MECHANICAL SPACE	16,500	-
PARKING PROVIDED PARKING SPACES: 579 (350 SF/PARKING SPACE)	202,550	-
TOTAL PROPOSED	**621,500**	**312,050**

*Subgrade floor area is not floor area for the purposes of calculating total zoning floor area.

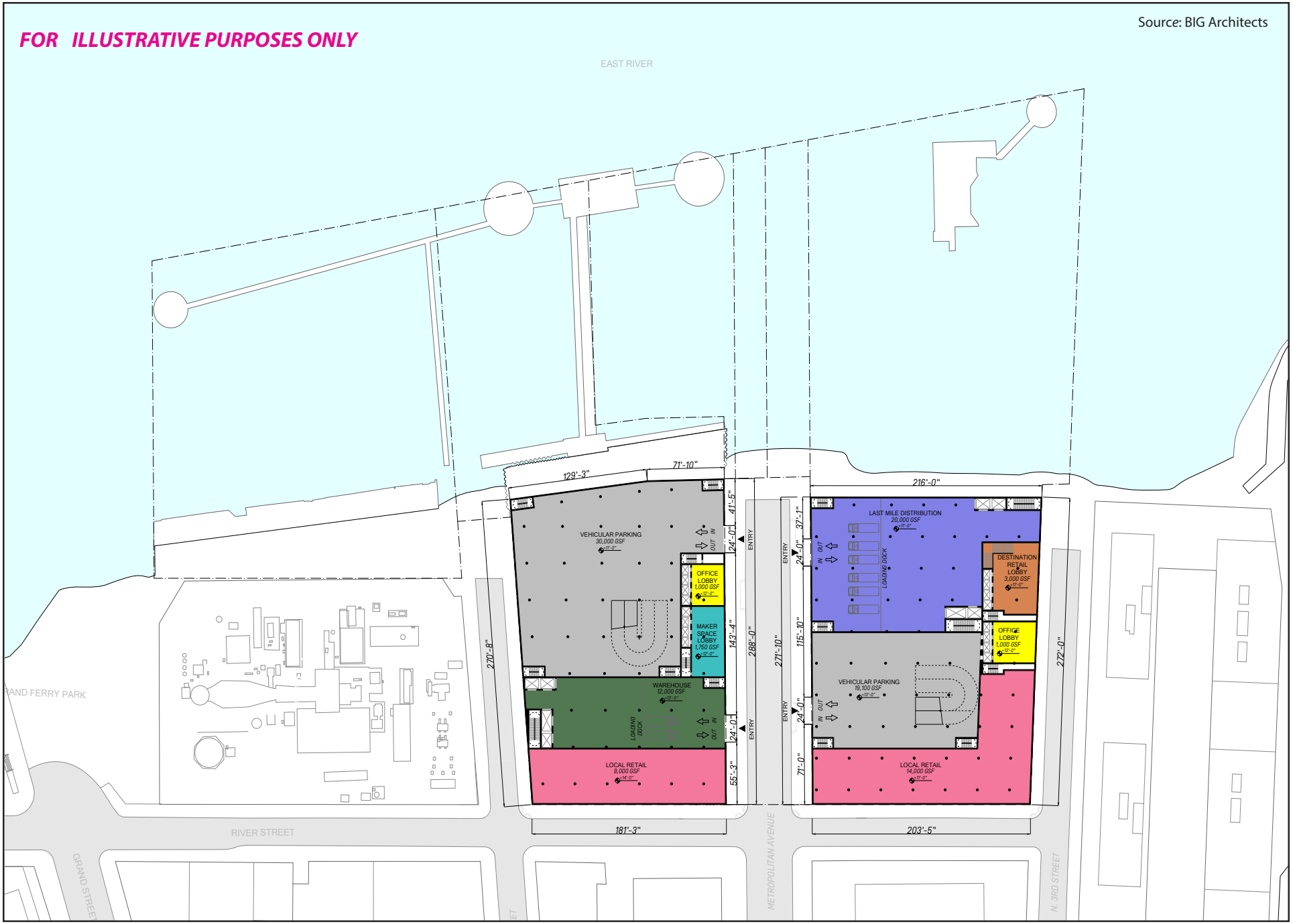


BUILDING AREA SUMMARY

Source: BIG Architects

FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

Figure 8-5a
No-Action RWCDS for Proposed Development Site - Illustrative Massing



River Ring

Figure 8-5b

No-Action RWCDS - Preliminary Ground Floor Plan

Action conditions. As detailed further in Chapter 10, "Natural Resources," no significant changes to natural resources conditions would occur within the Project Area in the future without the Proposed Actions.

VISUAL RESOURCES

As detailed above, the northwestern portion of the Project Area contains the East River, a significant visual resource. Under No-Action conditions, Metropolitan Avenue and North 1st Street would be publicly accessible, allowing pedestrians additional views of the East River from the Project Area (see **Figure 8-7d**).

The two, as-of-right, six- and eight-story buildings that would be constructed on the Proposed Development Site under No-Action conditions would obstruct existing views of the East River, Manhattan skyline, and Williamsburg Bridge when looking west from River Street. However, as shown in **Figure 8-7d**, the opening of Metropolitan Avenue and North 1st Street to vehicles and pedestrians would provide additional views of these significant visual resources from within the Project Area.

¼-Mile Secondary Study Area

STREETS

No changes to streets in the ¼-mile secondary study area are expected to occur in the future without the Proposed Actions. It should be noted that the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) has proposed safety and capacity improvements at the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway (BQE) Exit Ramp (Exit 31) and Wythe Avenue, just south of the ¼-mile study area. The proposed No-Action development includes separating BQE Ramp traffic from Williamsburg Street West (Service Road) by jersey barriers and delineators, providing two travel lanes for the ramp, prohibiting turns from Service Road, installing a painted neckdown, and revising parking regulations and street changes on Wythe Avenue in order to shorten queues on the ramp, simplify traffic movements, and improve pedestrian safety.

BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES

As presented in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, & Public Policy," there are seven known projects within the ¼-mile secondary study area that are anticipated to be completed in the 2027 future without the Proposed Actions (refer to **Figure 2-5** in Chapter 2). These new developments are predominately mixed-use residential and commercial buildings, with several commercial-only buildings. These seven projects would introduce a total of approximately 1,174 DUs, approximately 166,738 gsf of commercial space, approximately 18,859 gsf of community facility space, and approximately 46,200 gsf of light manufacturing space into the secondary study area. The majority of these buildings are anticipated to be two- to nine-floors tall, with the exception of the 36- and 42-story residential buildings slated for 350 and 280 Kent Avenue, respectively.

OPEN SPACE & NATURAL RESOURCES

In the 2027 future without the Proposed Actions, no changes to open spaces or natural resources are expected in the ¼-mile secondary study area. As detailed in Chapter 5, "Open Space," under the No-Action condition, the William Sheridan Playground is expected to be reconstructed. The renovated open space will contain a multi-use synthetic turf field, walking track, play area, spray shower, handball and basketball courts, sitting area, adult fitness equipment, and a seating plaza. The project is currently in procurement, which is anticipated to be completed in August 2021, at which point construction of the new playground will commence. However, no timeline or completion date for the reconstruction project have been finalized, so it is not certain that this project will be complete by the Proposed Actions' 2027 build year. Nevertheless, when completed, the reconstruction of the William Sheridan Playground is expected to significantly improve the conditions of this open space resource in the secondary study area.

Additionally, as detailed further in Chapter 10, "Natural Resources," no significant changes to natural resources conditions would occur in the future without the Proposed Actions.

VISUAL RESOURCES

As detailed above, the three, as-of-right, buildings that would be constructed in the Project Area in the future without the Proposed Actions would obstruct existing views of the East River, Williamsburg Bridge, and Manhattan skyline from River Street when looking west. However, the opening of Metropolitan Avenue and North 1st Street to vehicles and pedestrians would provide public views of these significant visual resources from within the Project Area, as shown in **Figure 8-7d**. Additionally, the three No-Action buildings in the Project Area would obstruct views of One South First/Ten Grand (260 Kent Avenue) and the Williamsburg Bridge when looking south across the Project Area from North 3rd Street west of River Street, and would obstruct views of the S/NR-listed and NYCL-eligible Austin, Nichols & Co. Warehouse when looking north across the Project Area from North 1st Street west of River Street. However, more proximate views of these significant visual resources would remain on public streets and sidewalks in the vicinity of these buildings under No-Action conditions.

The Future with the Proposed Actions (With-Action Condition)

Primary Study Area (Project Area)

As discussed in further detail in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the Applicant is proposing a series of land use actions to facilitate the redevelopment of the Proposed Development Site with mixed-use buildings and innovative waterfront public spaces designed to promote resiliency and programmed for in-water activities, passive recreation, and educational programs for the community. The Proposed Actions consist of the following:

- City Map Change to demap, discontinue, close and, as necessary, dispose of segments of Metropolitan Avenue and North 1st Street to the west of River Street;
- Landfill action to add approximately 6,319 sf of landfill as part of the waterfront public open space plan;
- Zoning Map Amendment to rezone the Project Area from an M3-1 district to C6-2 and M1-4 districts;
- Zoning Text Amendment to a) establish the Project Area to the west of River Street as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) Area; b) amend Zoning Resolution Section 74-742 to allow a large scale general development ("LSGD") that does not meet the ownership requirements of Section 74-742 under certain circumstances; and c) amend Zoning Resolution Section 74-743 to permit, as part of the LSGD, (i) the lot area of a new platform seaward of the bulkhead line to be part of the upland lot area of the waterfront zoning lot, provided that the amount of lot area so incorporated is less than the lot area of shoreline seaward of the bulkhead line to be removed in connection with the LSGD, (ii) additional new piers or platforms to be included as lot area for purposes of floor area, dwelling unit and other bulk regulations, provided that the amount of floor area generated by such new piers or platforms does not exceed the floor area generated by existing piers or platforms, and (iii) such new piers or platforms to be exempt from certain requirements otherwise applicable to piers and platforms provided as part of a waterfront public access areas;
- Zoning Authorizations to a) modify the Zoning Resolution's requirements for location, area, and minimum dimensions of waterfront public access areas pursuant to Section 62-822(a); b) modify requirements within waterfront public access areas pursuant to Section 62-822(b); and c) allow for phased development of waterfront public areas pursuant to Section 62-822(c);

- Zoning Certification pursuant to Section 62-811 with respect to compliance with waterfront public access area and visual corridor requirements, as modified by the proposed Zoning Authorizations;
- Zoning Special Permit pursuant to Zoning Resolution Section 74-743(a)(2) and 74-743(a)(13), as modified under the proposed zoning text amendment, to allow construction of new piers and platforms in the seaward portion of the LSGD that are accessible and enjoyable by the public; allow such piers or platforms to generate floor area, provided that the total distribution of floor area is limited to the floor area generated by existing land seaward of the bulkhead line to be removed and existing piers and platforms; and to modify certain bulk regulations; and
- Zoning Special Permit pursuant to 74-533 to reduce the minimum required accessory off-street parking spaces for market rate units in a Transit Zone from 40% to 20%.

With respect to each of the special permits and authorizations, the Applicant is also requesting an extension of term of such approvals to a period of ten years during which substantial construction of the phased project would be completed.

In addition, a Joint Permit Application from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDC) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is being sought in conjunction with the publicly accessible open space proposed along the waterfront. Also in conjunction with the Applicant's Proposed Development, the existing sewer infrastructure (combined sewers, intercepting sewer, regulator, and combined sewer overflow outfall) located between the East River and River Street in Metropolitan Avenue would be relocated, subject to review and approval by NYSDEC, USACE and the NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), as applicable. The Applicant may also seek additional actions related to financing for the affordable housing component of the Proposed Development (see Chapter 1 for further discussion).

STREETS

In the future with the Proposed Actions, a City Map change would demap, discontinue, close and, as necessary, dispose of segments of Metropolitan Avenue and North 1st Street to the west of River Street in the Project Area (approximately 23,116 sf and 3,374 sf, respectively). This would facilitate the development of this area as a publicly accessible pedestrian corridor, allowing vehicle-free pedestrian access from River Street to the proposed waterfront open space. As illustrated in **Figure 8-7d**, under With-Action conditions, this former portion of Metropolitan Avenue would be transformed into a pedestrian walkway, including pedestrian paths, landscaping including lawn areas, and a water play area. Along the easternmost portion of the proposed cove, there would also be a beach area, salt marsh and tidal pools (see **Figure 8-6d**).

As under No-Action conditions, in the future with the Proposed Actions, the sidewalk on the north side of North 1st Street would be continued to the western terminus of the street. However, unlike in the No-Action scenario, under With-Action conditions, street trees would be planted on the sidewalks adjacent to the Project Area on North 1st, River, and North 3rd streets, enhancing the streetscape along these thoroughfares. These thoroughfares would all have 15-foot sidewalks providing sufficient space for movable café seating if desired. As noted previously, the sidewalk along River Street between North 1st Street and Metropolitan Avenue would expand from 15'-0 at North 1st Street to 23'-8" at the corner of Metropolitan Avenue. Moreover, a zoning map amendment would demap the westernmost portion of North 1st Street (approximately 3,374 sf), allowing for the development of publicly accessible open space (see **Figure 8-6b**).

BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES

As detailed above, the Proposed Actions consist of zoning text and map amendments and LSGD special permits to increase the permitted density in the Project Area and modify bulk regulations, among other actions. The Proposed Actions would facilitate the development of two mixed-use towers on the Proposed Development Site. In total, the Proposed Development would contain approximately 1.336 million gsf, including approximately 1.12 million gsf of residential space[4] (approximately 1,250 rental DUs, of which 313 units would be affordable pursuant to the MIH program), 50,000 gsf of community facility space, 83,000 gsf of commercial space (including 60,000 gsf of office and 23,000 gsf of local retail), and up to approximately 250 accessory below-grade parking spaces. The proposed LSGD special permits would facilitate a project and public waterfront open space that the Applicant believes is superior in terms of function and design to what can be achieved as-of-right under the proposed zoning, by permitting the proposed towers to be located with modifications of underlying height and setback regulations in a manner that shifts bulk away from the proposed public open space, and allowing the allocation of floor area to the upland lot. In order to facilitate the proposed site plan and grading strategy and create the amount of proposed open space, the Applicant has reduced the ground floor footprint of the buildings to approximately 35% of the upland lot area. Therefore, the remaining buildable area is accommodated through the proposed height of the buildings' towers. All of the street frontages maintain a 15-foot wide sidewalk at a minimum.

As shown in **Figure 8-6a**, under With-Action conditions, the North Tower of the Proposed Development (fronting River and North 3rd Streets) would rise 49 stories to a height of approximately 560 feet, and the South Tower of the Proposed Development (fronting River and North 1st Streets) would rise 64 stories to a height of approximately 710 feet. The North Tower's community facility use would be accessible from North 3rd Street, and local retail uses would front on River Street as well as onto the proposed open space (see **Figure 8-6b**). The South Tower's local retail uses would front on River Street as well as onto the proposed open space and arcade, and the accessory parking garage would be accessible from an entrance/exit on North 1st Street.

The arcade is a roofed open space spanning the first two stories of both the North and the South Towers. It is a transitional area between the park and the interior of the buildings, allowing for a seamless blending of the programs and the transition from public to semi-public space. The open arcades will provide shelter from the elements and are anticipated to be used by the ground floor retailers for outdoor seating and informal gathering spaces.

Along North 1st and North 3rd streets, the buildings gradually set back to 3'-10" and 10'-8" respectively. The proposed buildings are not designed as "podium plus tower" configurations, and as such, do not have a distinctive "base" or setback beyond the building's base. In lieu of this podium-to-base relationship, the buildings are designed to gradually set back along their three frontages at the ground plane and transition from a triangular footprint to a rectangular tower (see **Figure 8-6c**). This configuration allows for more ground plane to be dedicated to open space. As illustrated in Figure **8-6c**, in order to transition to their tower floor plates, the buildings gradually cantilever – the North Tower cantilever occurs at the southwest corner of the tower and the South Tower cantilever occurs at the northwest corner. The graduated cantilevering begins at the ground floor and grows at an increment of approximately 5" per floor in the South Tower and approximately 8" per floor in the North Tower until the top of the towers.

[4] Residential gsf includes an approximately 70,000 sf amenity space as a combined total for both towers.

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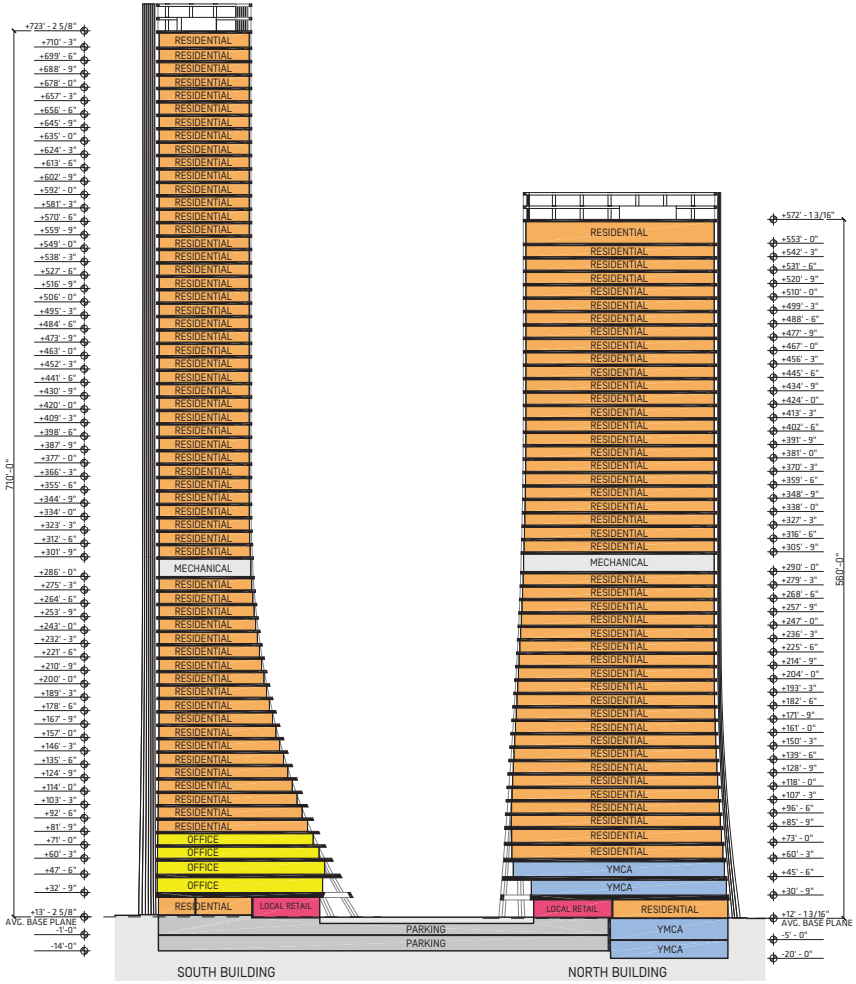
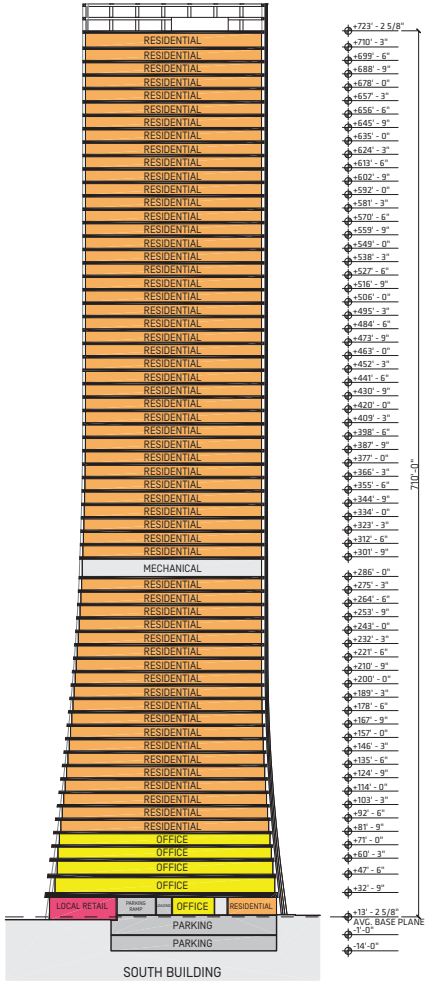


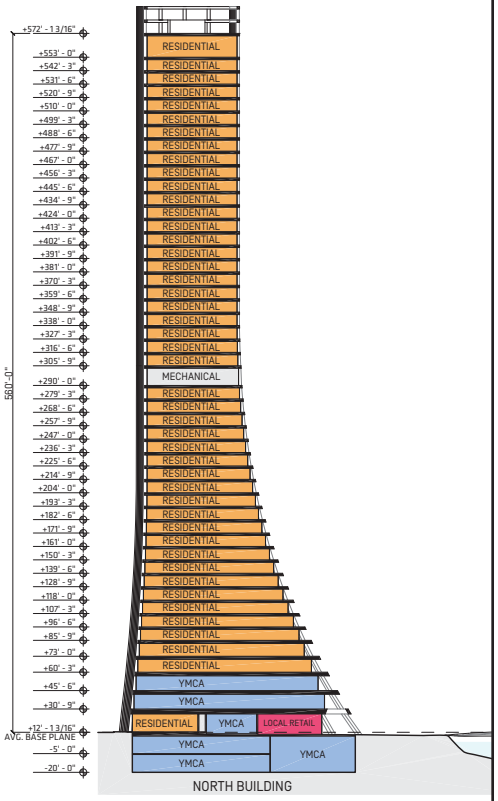
SECTION A-A

Section Looking West (South Tower to the left and North Tower to the right)



SECTION B-B

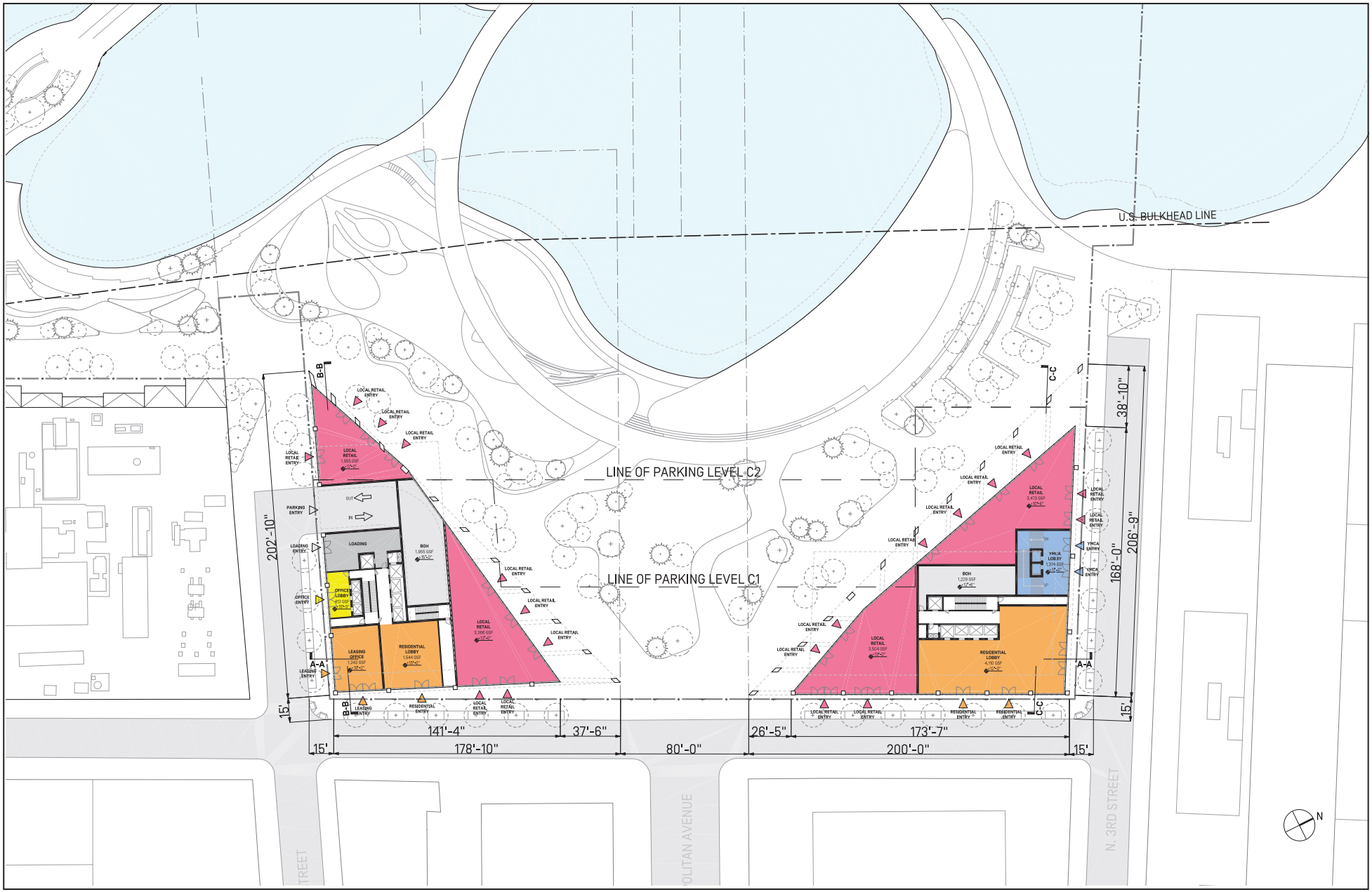
South Tower - Section Looking North



SECTION C-C

North Tower - Section Looking South

Source: BIG Architects

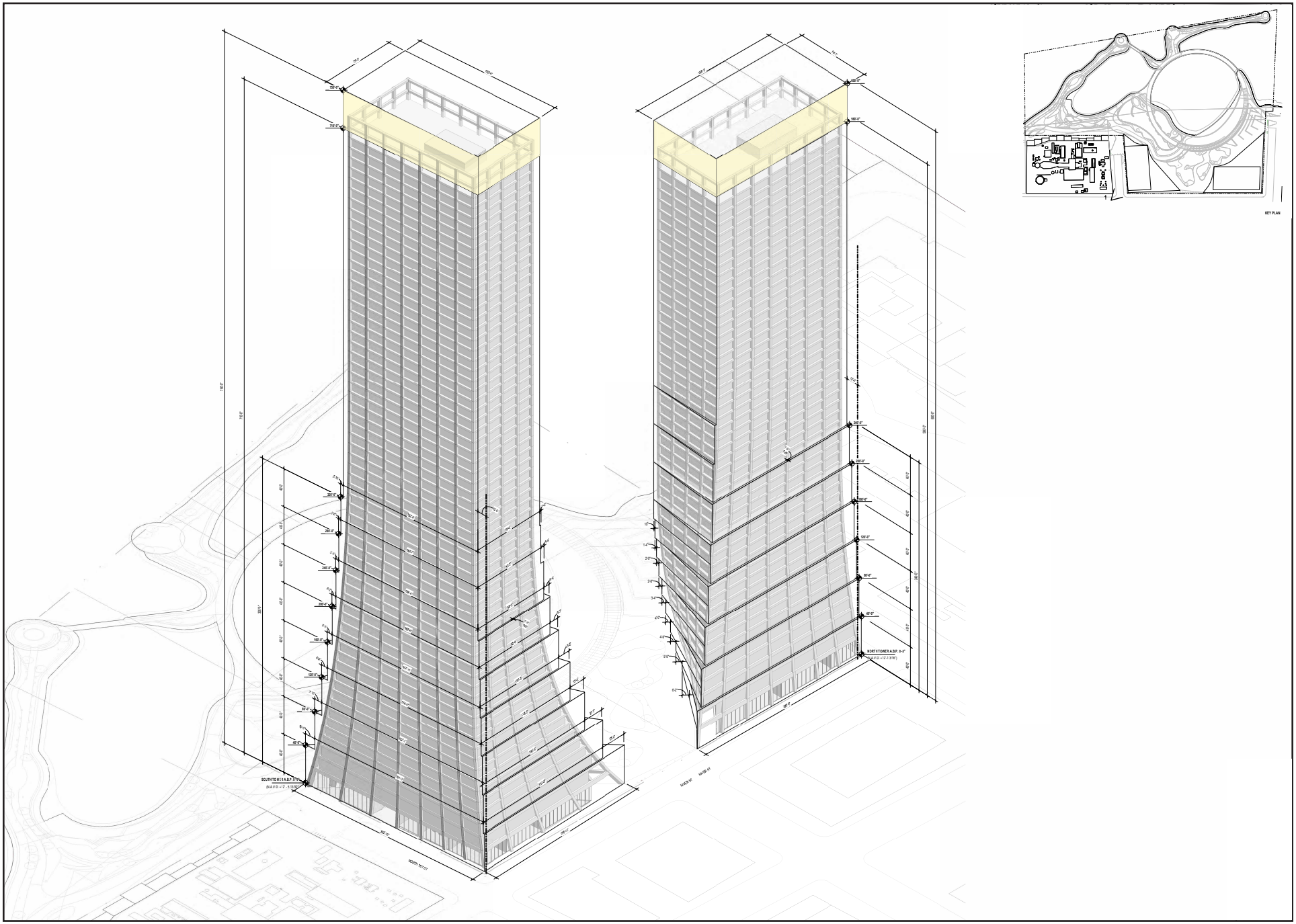


FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

Source: BIG Architects

River Ring

Figure 8-6b
Proposed Development - Preliminary Ground Floor Plan



River Ring

Figure 8-6c
Proposed Development - Southeast Axonometric

All existing in-water structures in the Project Area, except for three of the existing caissons, would be removed in the future with the Proposed Actions. Additionally, new shoreline measures (e.g., bulkhead, revetment) would be created along with new open space walkways and features, as detailed further below.

On the non-Applicant-owned Projected Development Site, the With-Action RWCDS assumes that the Proposed Actions would facilitate the development of a three-story (approximately 45-foot-tall), approximately 20,223 gsf mixed-use building with approximately 6,741 gsf of local retail space, 6,741 gsf of warehouse space, and 6,741 gsf of community facility (medical office) space. As shown in **Figure 8-7h**, the With-Action building on the Projected Development Site would be approximately one-story (15 feet) taller than the No-Action building on the site.

OPEN SPACE & NATURAL RESOURCES

As shown in the illustrative waterfront open space plan presented in **Figure 8-6d,** the Proposed Development would include approximately 2.9 acres (approximately 126,308 sf) of publicly accessible open space in the Project Area (plus 2.32 acres of secondary contact accessible in-river space for secondary contact only, which refers to the river space that becomes protected by the proposed breakwaters, allowing it to be safe for non-motorized boat programming[5]) and 0.86 acres of intertidal area). The proposed open space would provide public access to the East River which, as discussed above, is a major natural resource in the primary and secondary study areas. This new open space in the Project Area would create a continuous link of waterfront areas along the East River waterfront running from Bushwick Inlet Park to the north to Grand Ferry Park and Domino Park to the south (see **Figure 8-1**). The waterfront public space (in total 6.08 acres) would be accessible to the public and would offer water-based recreation (i.e., a kayak launch), educational programming, and a variety of other opportunities for enjoyment of the waterfront by the community at large.

The Proposed Development would reshape the shoreline by excavating historic fill soils to create a protected cove and intertidal shallows. The proposed breakwaters and groin would help shape the cove and provide additional shoreline protection measures, which would preserve the habitats created inside the breakwaters, including upland vegetative habitats (e.g., reefs, salt marsh, coastal scrub shrubs, tide pools, and tidal shallows) while creating new habitats for native plant and animal species. These breakwaters and groin would result in disturbance within open water and littoral zones of the East River; however, the Proposed Development would create new water habitats consisting of littoral zone and manmade reefs. The proposed habitat creation in the littoral zone would be approximately four times the area of disturbance and would offset the effects of the proposed in-water disturbance and result in an overall enhancement to the aquatic habitat and shoreline conditions.

Strategies for a soft shoreline and seaward structures aim to significantly reduce risk to upland areas from flood, wave run- up, and retreat caused by extreme events and coastal hazards. They also sustain habitat, keep the beach in place, and create calmer waters for safe secondary contact in-water recreation, such as kayaking, etc.[4]. Through strategic cut and fill strategies, the Proposed Development expands the shoreline, adding 170 feet along the original shoreline and 1,580 feet of nature walks built on seaward structures (see illustrative renderings in **Figures 8-6e** through **8-6h**). The open space's breakwaters are not only functional as resiliency infrastructure but would also be used as nature trails that lead to a

[5] Per NYS Department of Health regulations, swimming will be prohibited. In-water recreation would be limited to non-motorized boating.



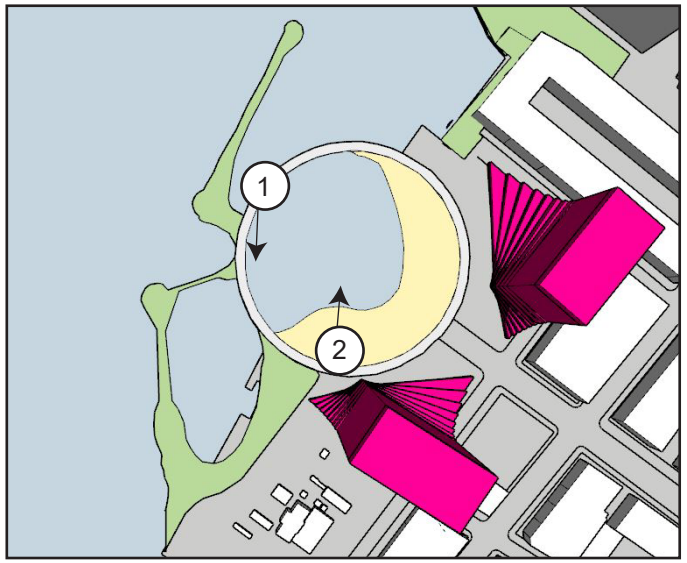
Source: James Corner Field Operations



1) Facing south from the proposed waterfront open space towards the existing Domino Park.



2) Facing north from within the proposed waterfront open space.



For illustrative purposes only

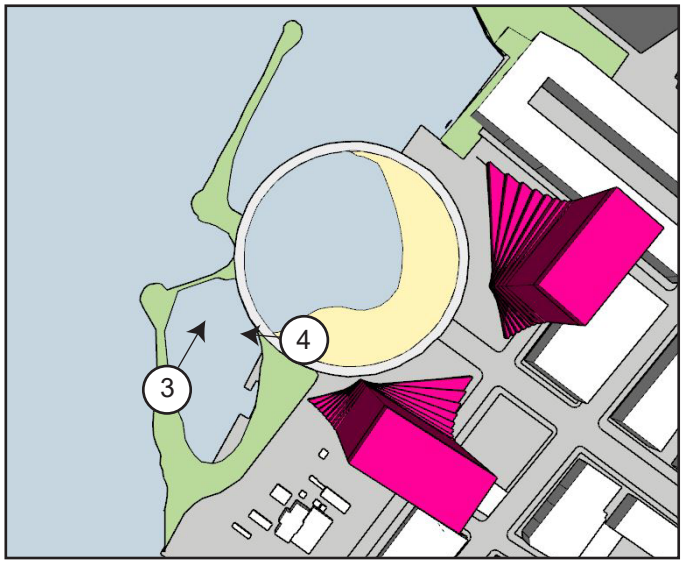
Courtesy of BIG & James Corner Field Operations



3) Facing north towards North 5th Street Pier and Park.



4) Facing west towards the East River from within the proposed ring.



For illustrative purposes only

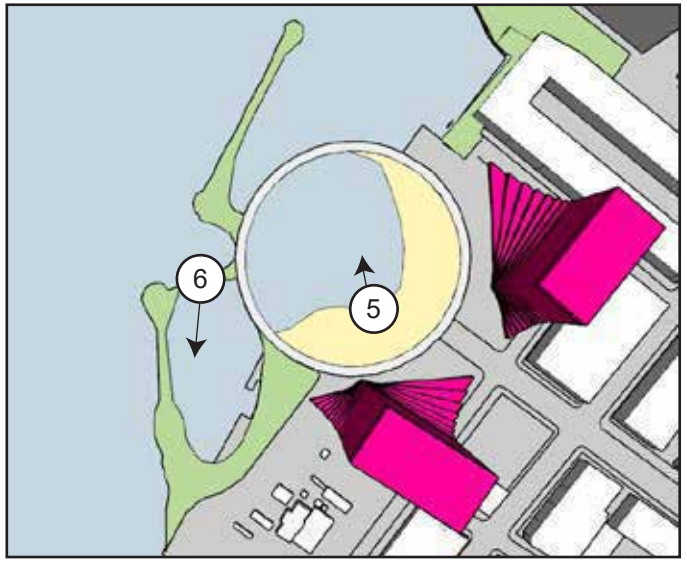
Courtesy of BIG & James Corner Field Operations



5) Facing north towards the East River from within the proposed waterfront open space.



6) Aerial view facing south towards the proposed waterfront open space.



For illustrative purposes only

Courtesy of BIG & James Corner Field Operations

River Ring

Figure 8-6g

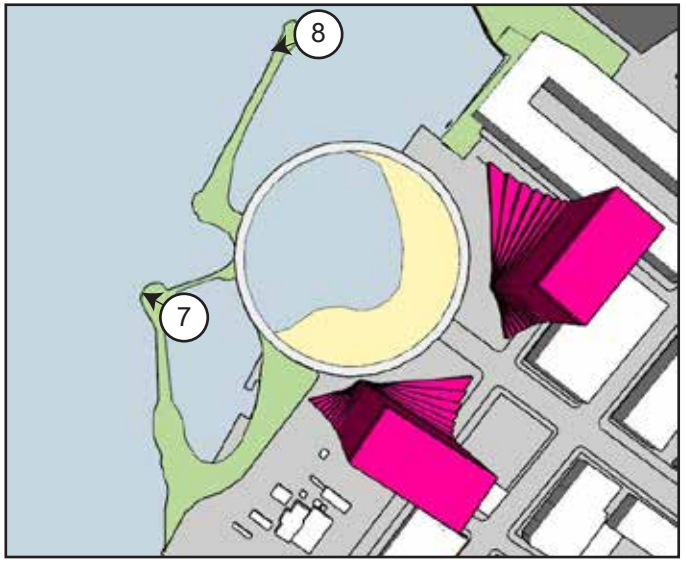
Proposed Development's Waterfront Open Space - Illustrative Renderings



7) Facing west towards the East River from within the proposed Outpost 1.



8) Facing south towards the East River from within the proposed Outpost 3.



For illustrative purposes only

Courtesy of BIG & James Corner Field Operations

series of outposts retrofitted from existing concrete caissons. These features would also support educational programming and partnerships with local schools and organizations.

The Proposed Development has been designed, engineered, and analyzed through studying a series of key performance parameters—including wave energy reduction, amount of reduction in terms of force and impact of waves, wave run-up reduction, and distance upland waves are able to reach. These parameters were modeled in order to understand the degree of risk reduction for the Proposed Development Site and its immediate vicinity and to inform the location and orientation of the breakwater structures. Based on preliminary modeling and methods outlined in the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Coastal Engineering Manual, a 60%–70% reduction in wave energy is observed due to the proposed breakwater structures and shoreline design, underscoring the effectiveness of the proposed resilience strategies.

As shown in the illustrative waterfront open space plan presented in **Figure 8-6d** and the illustrative renderings in **Figures 8-6e** and **8-6f**, active and passive recreation facilities to be provided in the Proposed Development's open space include a public beach[6] on the new cove, stepped seating area facing the beach with granite block seating, a ramped boat launch for non-motorized watercraft (i.e., kayaks and paddleboards), a nature play area and nature trails, a water play area, a picnic and hammock grove, a fishing pier, outdoor classroom space, a bird hide, landscaped plantings, and community kiosks, including kayak kiosks. Man-made freshwater wetlands would also be created upland of the shoreline. In accordance with waterfront zoning requirements, an approximately 900-foot-long shore public walkway would be provided along the East River; a portion of the shore public walkway would extend over a portion of the new salt marsh and tide pools that would be created along the south end of the cove (refer to **Figure 8-6d**).

Additionally, as detailed in Chapter 10, "Natural Resources," the Proposed Development would not result in significant adverse impacts on terrestrial resources, wetlands, or threatened and endangered species. Rather, the Proposed Development would create a stable and resilient waterfront with aquatic, upland, and wetland vegetative communities that would promote fish and wildlife habitat development.

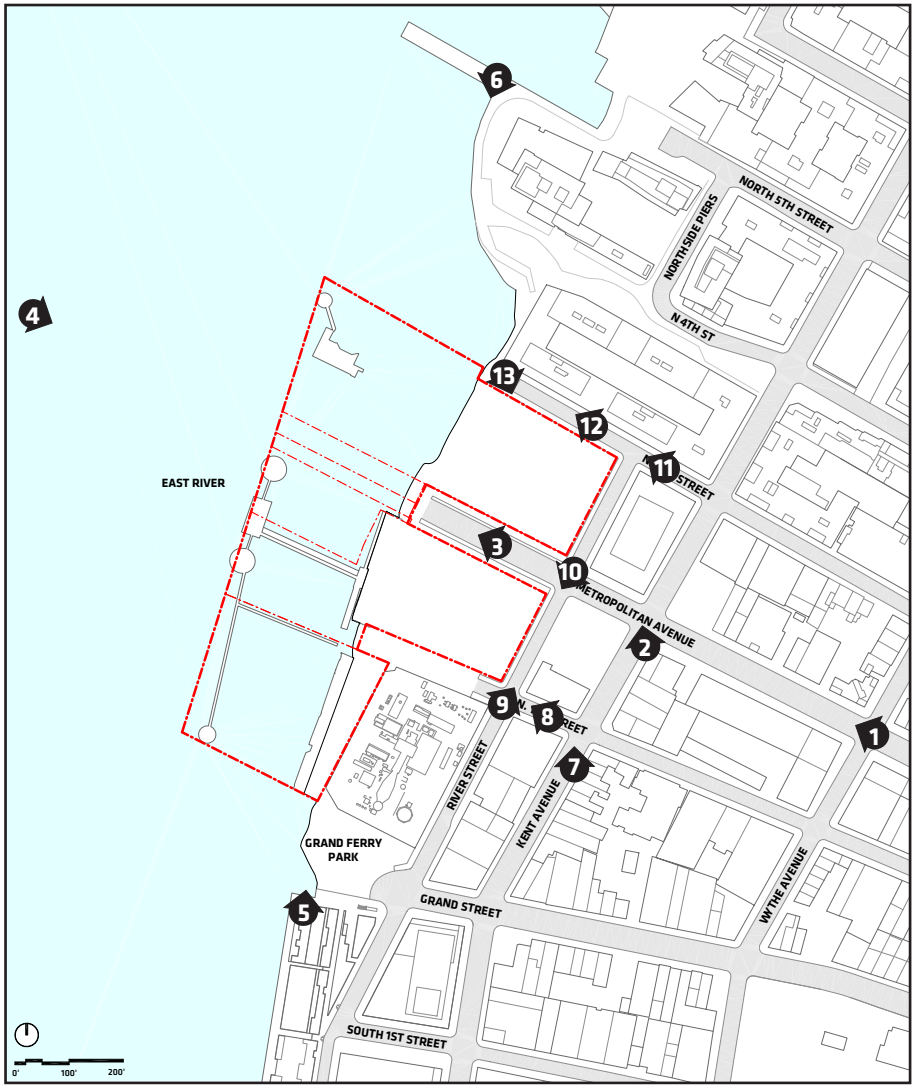
VISUAL RESOURCES

As detailed above, the northwestern portion of the Project Area contains the East River, a significant visual resource, which would be accessible to the public as a result of the Proposed Actions. The proposed waterfront open space that would be developed in the Project Area in the future with the Proposed Actions would provide expansive and unobstructed views of the East River and the Manhattan skyline to the west, as well as views north of the S/NR-listed and NYCL-eligible Austin, Nichols & Co. Warehouse and the North 5th Street Pier and Park, and views south of the Grand Ferry Park, Williamsburg Bridge, One South First/Ten Grand (260 Kent Avenue), and Domino Park that would not be available under No-Action conditions (see **Figure 8-7d**).

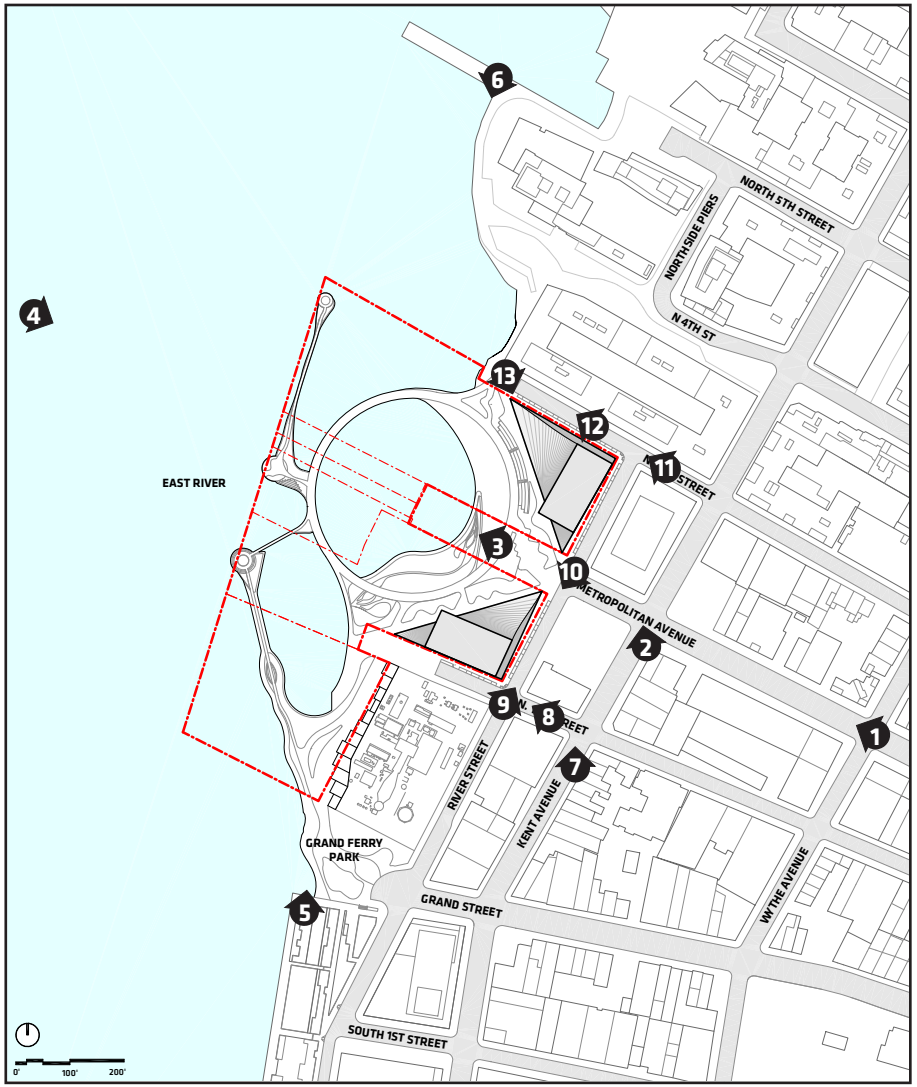
Additionally, the proposed waterfront open space that would be developed in the Project Area as a result of the Proposed Actions is expected to be a new significant visual resource in the area that would be visible when looking south from the North 5th Street Pier and Park, when looking north from Grand Ferry Park, and when looking east across the East River from Manhattan (see **Figures 8-7e**, **8-7f**, and **8-7g**).

[6] Per NYS Department of Health regulations, swimming will be prohibited.

Courtesy of BIG Architects



No-Action Condition



With-Action Condition

Figure 8-7a
Locations of No-Action and With-Action Illustrative Views

Figure 8-7b

Illustrative Comparison of the No-Action vs. With-Action Conditions
View #1: Looking west along Metropolitan Avenue from Wythe Avenue



No-Action Condition



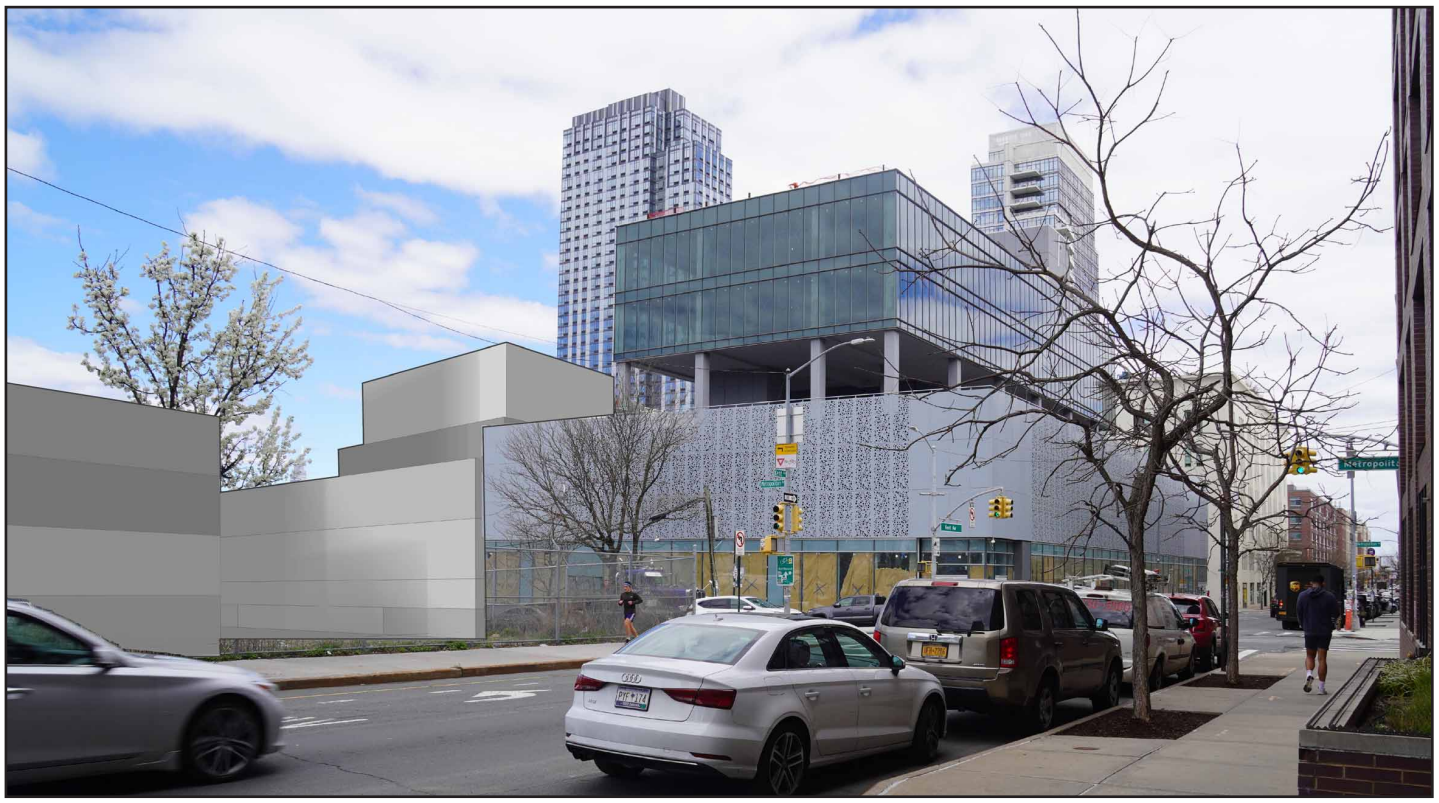
With-Action Condition

For illustrative purposes only

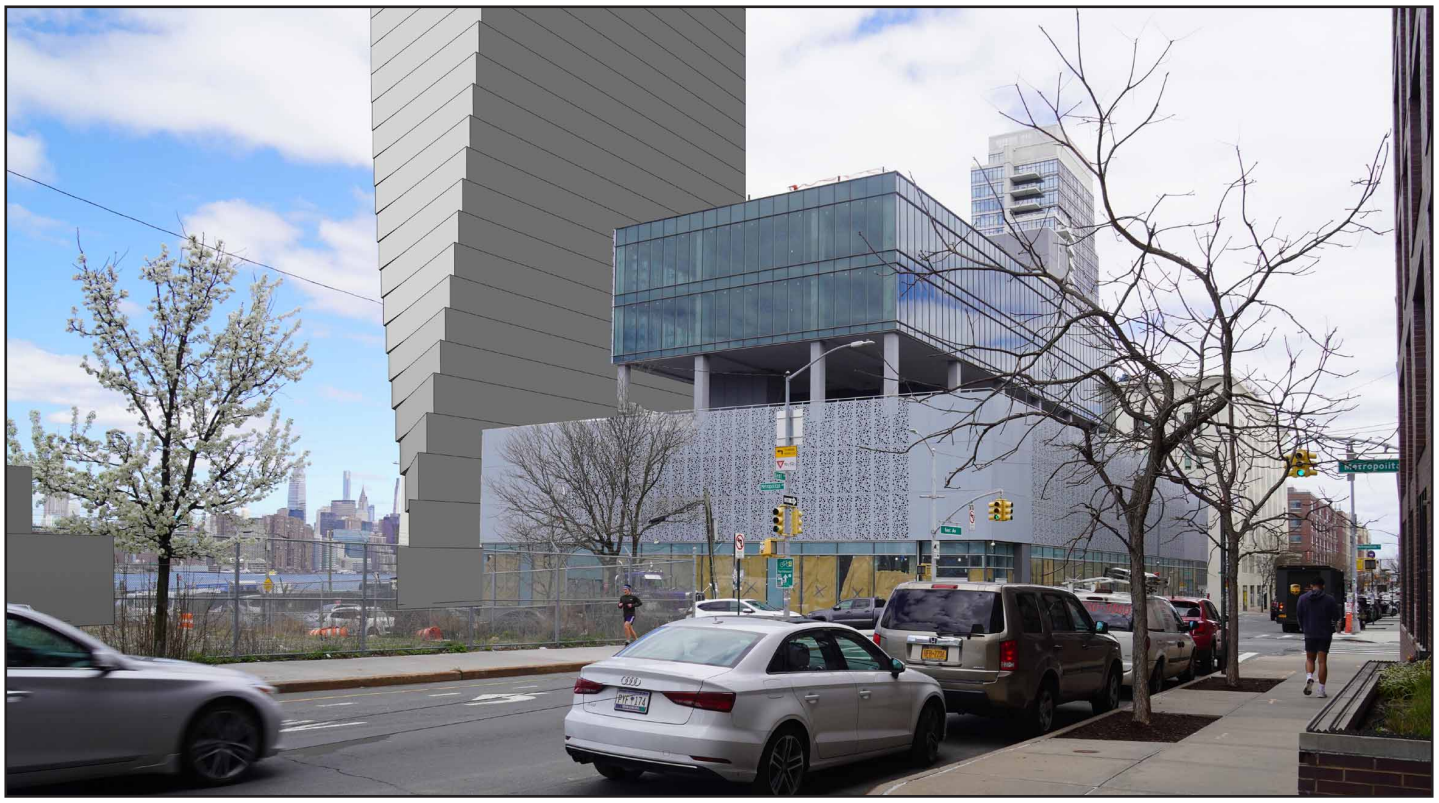
Courtesy of BIG

Figure 8-7c

Illustrative Comparison of the No-Action vs. With-Action Conditions
View #2: Looking north from the intersection of Metropolitan and Kent Avenues



No-Action Condition



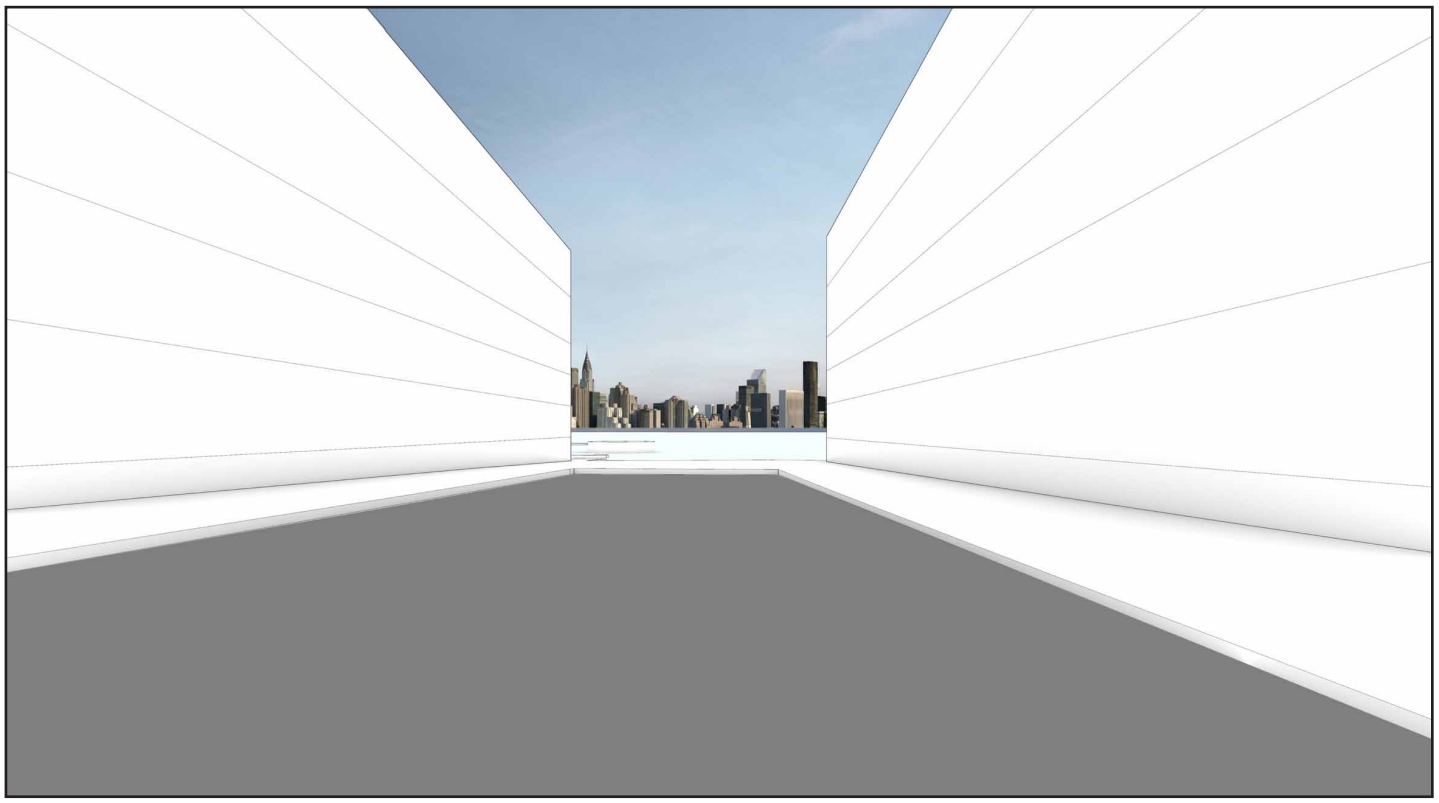
With-Action Condition

For illustrative purposes only

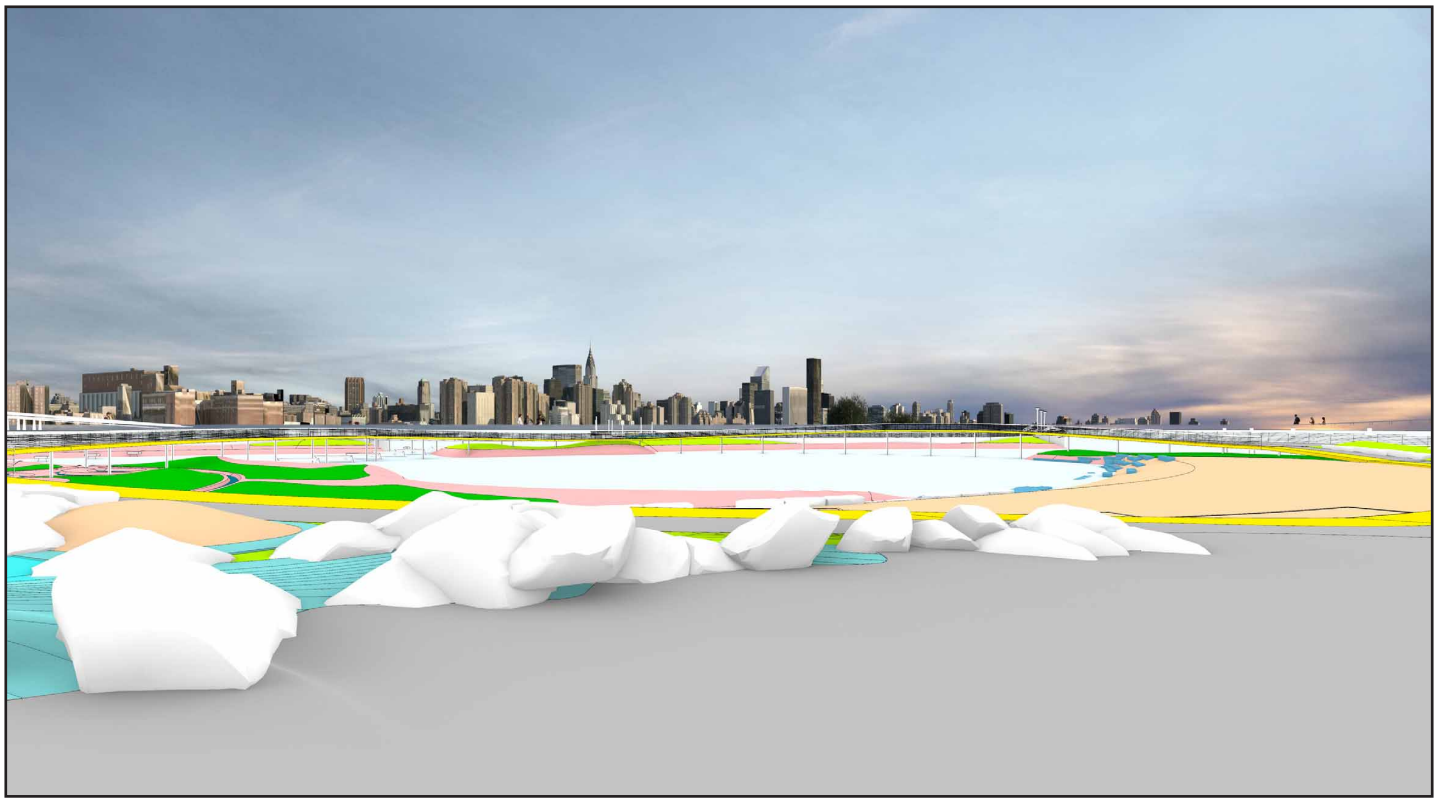
Courtesy of BIG

Figure 8-7d

Illustrative Comparison of the No-Action vs. With-Action Conditions
View #3: Looking west from the Terminus of Metropolitan Avenue



No-Action Condition



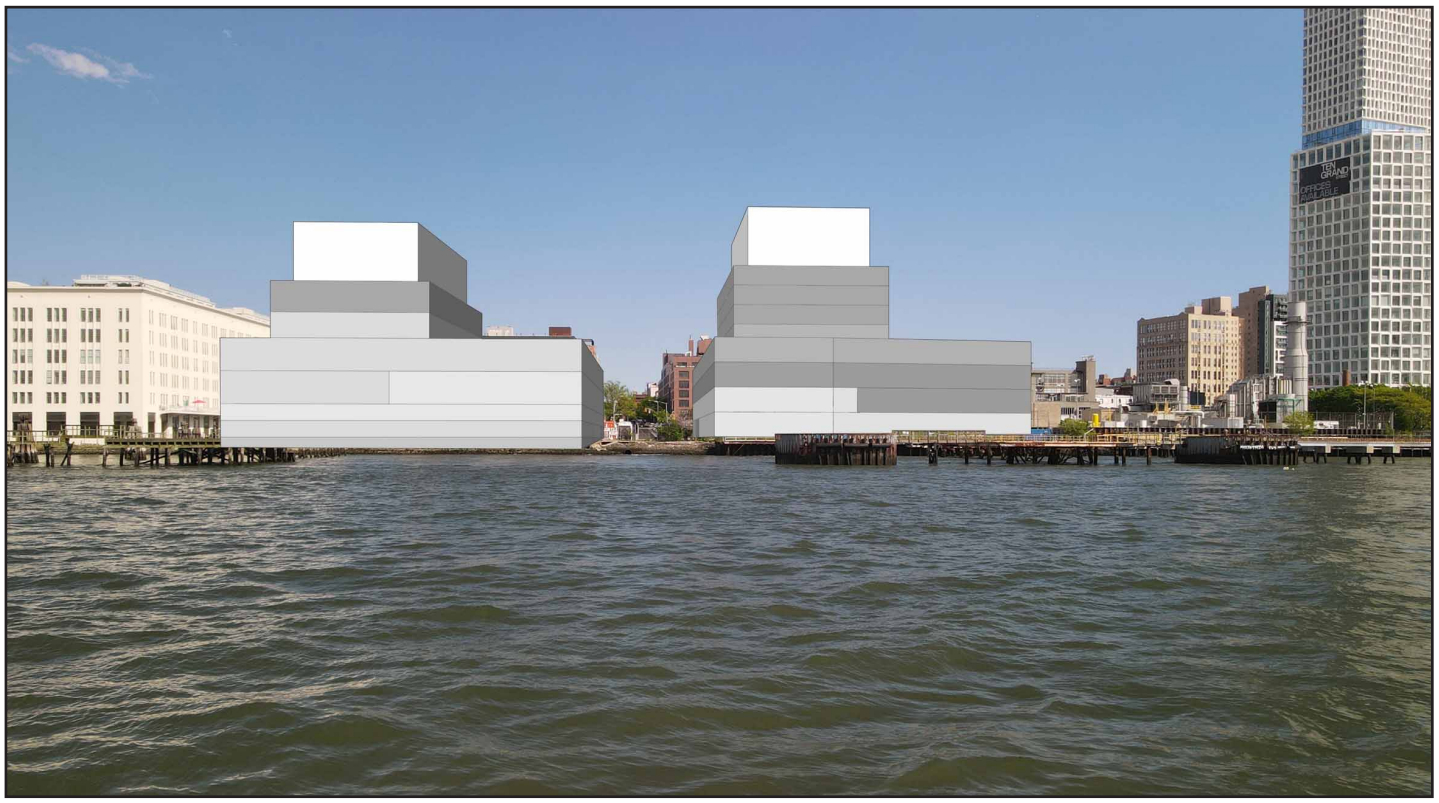
With-Action Condition

For illustrative purposes only

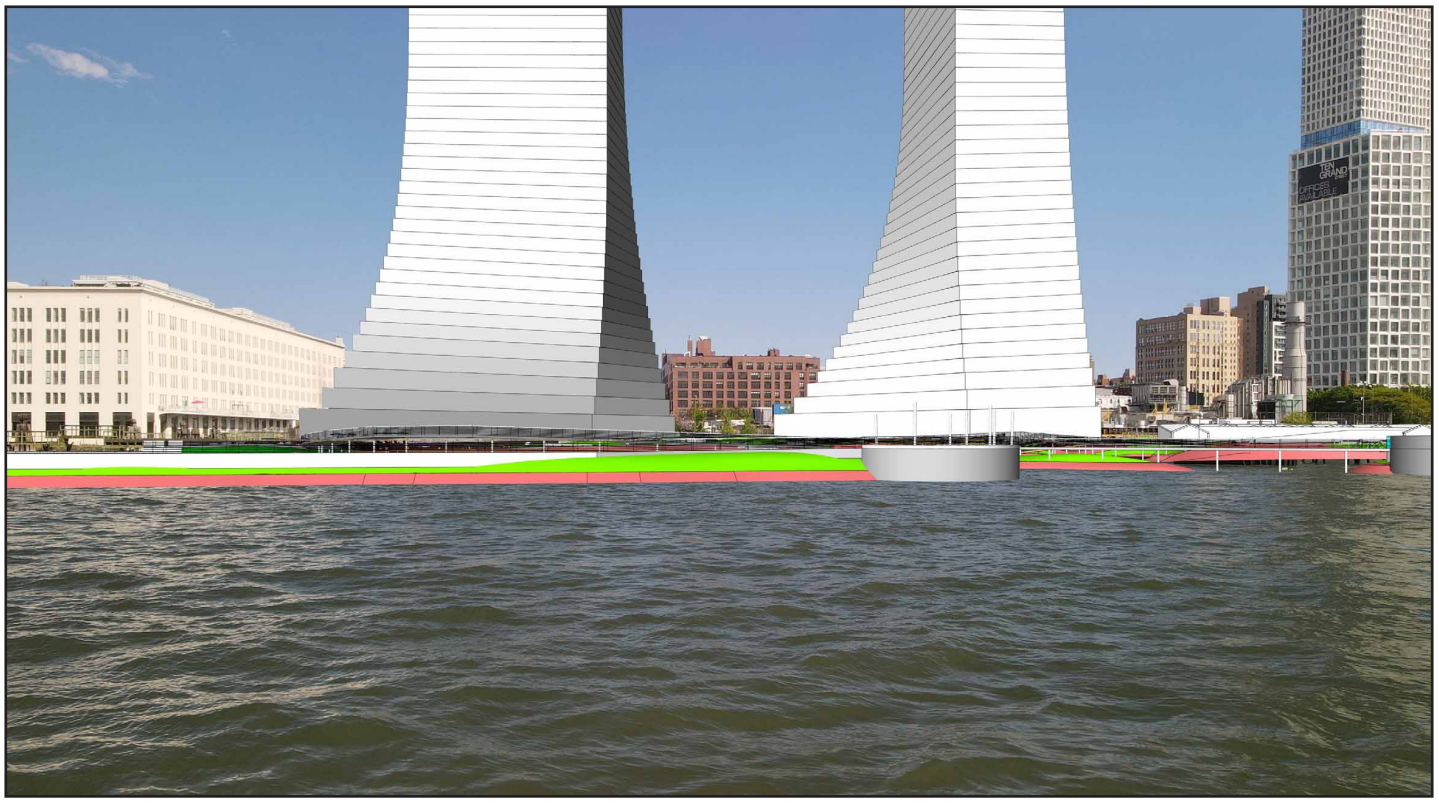
Courtesy of BIG

Figure 8-7e

Illustrative Comparison of the No-Action vs. With-Action Conditions
View #4: Looking east across the East River from Manhattan



No-Action Condition



With-Action Condition

For illustrative purposes only

Courtesy of BIG

Figure 8-7f

Illustrative Comparison of the No-Action vs. With-Action Conditions
View #5: Looking north from Domino Park/Grand Ferry Park



No-Action Condition



With-Action Condition

For illustrative purposes only

Courtesy of BIG

Figure 8-7g

Illustrative Comparison of the No-Action vs. With-Action Conditions
View #6: Looking south from Northside Piers



No-Action Condition



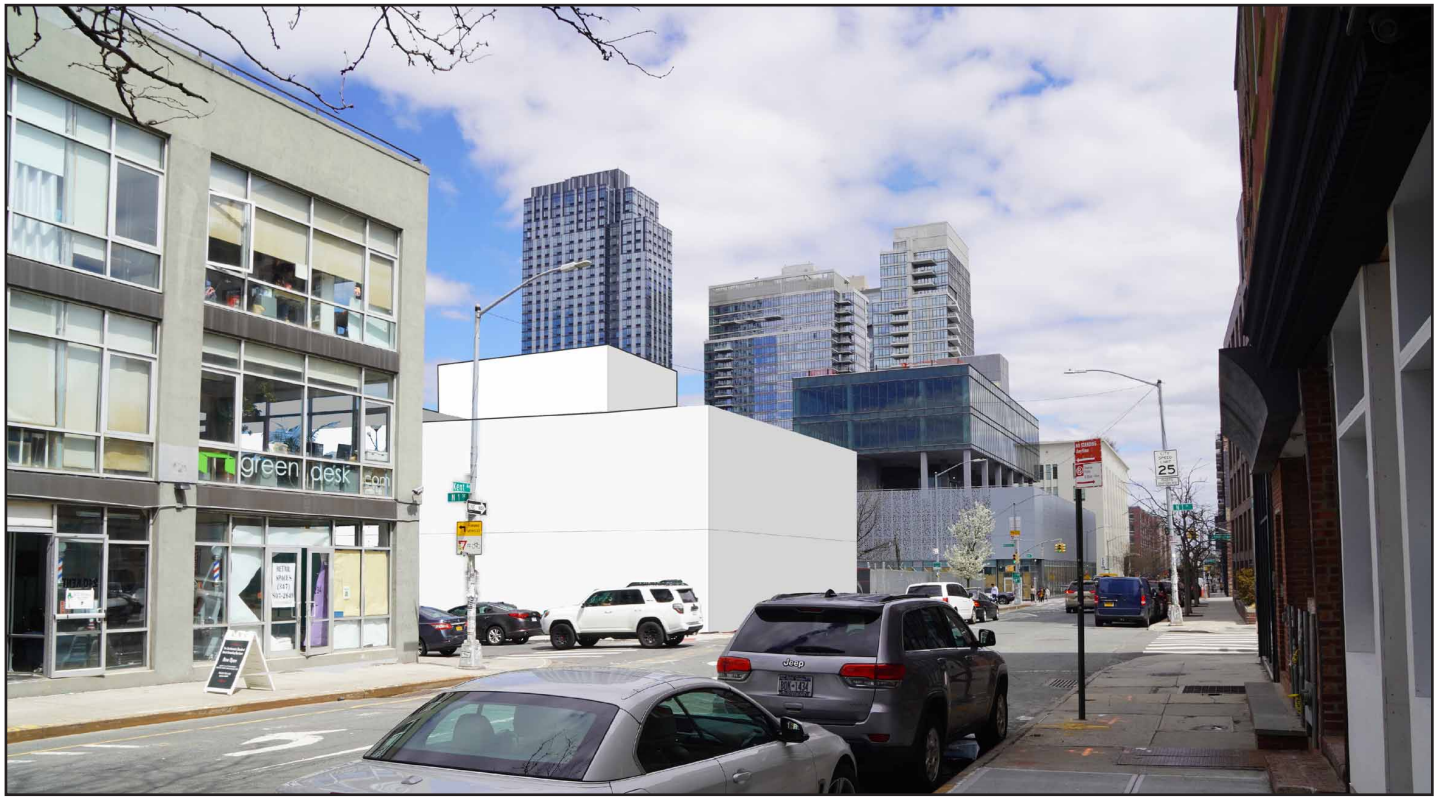
With-Action Condition

For illustrative purposes only

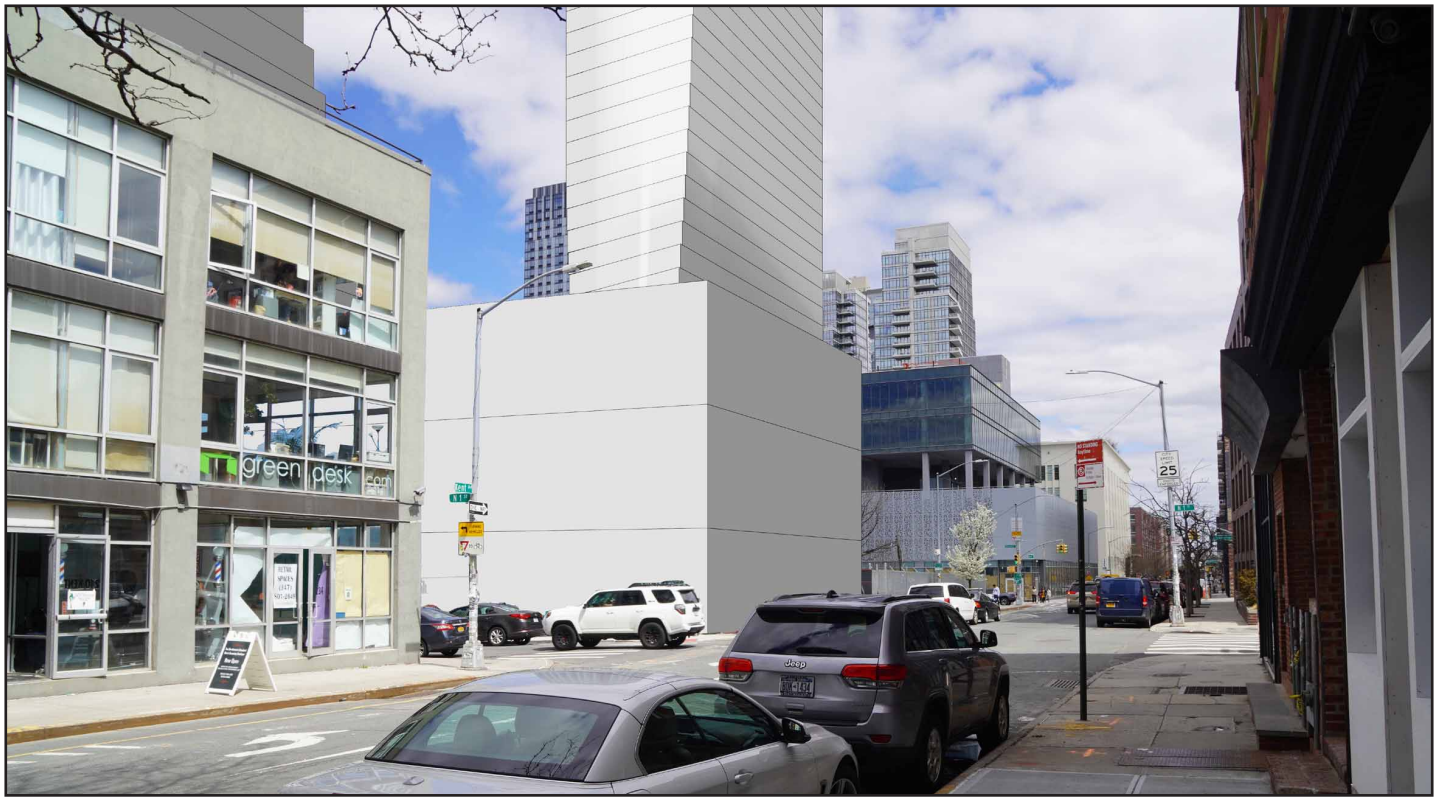
Courtesy of BIG

Illustrative Comparison of the No-Action vs. With-Action Conditions

View #7: Looking northwest from just south of the intersection of North 1st Street and Kent Avenue



No-Action Condition



With-Action Condition

For illustrative purposes only

Courtesy of BIG

Figure 8-7i

Illustrative Comparison of the No-Action vs. With-Action Conditions
View #8: Looking west from the intersection of North 1st Street and Kent Avenue



No-Action Condition



With-Action Condition

For illustrative purposes only

Courtesy of BIG

Figure 8-7j

Illustrative Comparison of the No-Action vs. With-Action Conditions
View #9: Looking north along River Street from the intersection of North 1st Street



No-Action Condition



With-Action Condition

For illustrative purposes only

Courtesy of BIG

Figure 8-7k

Illustrative Comparison of the No-Action vs. With-Action Conditions
View #10: Looking south along River Street from Metropolitan Avenue



No-Action Condition



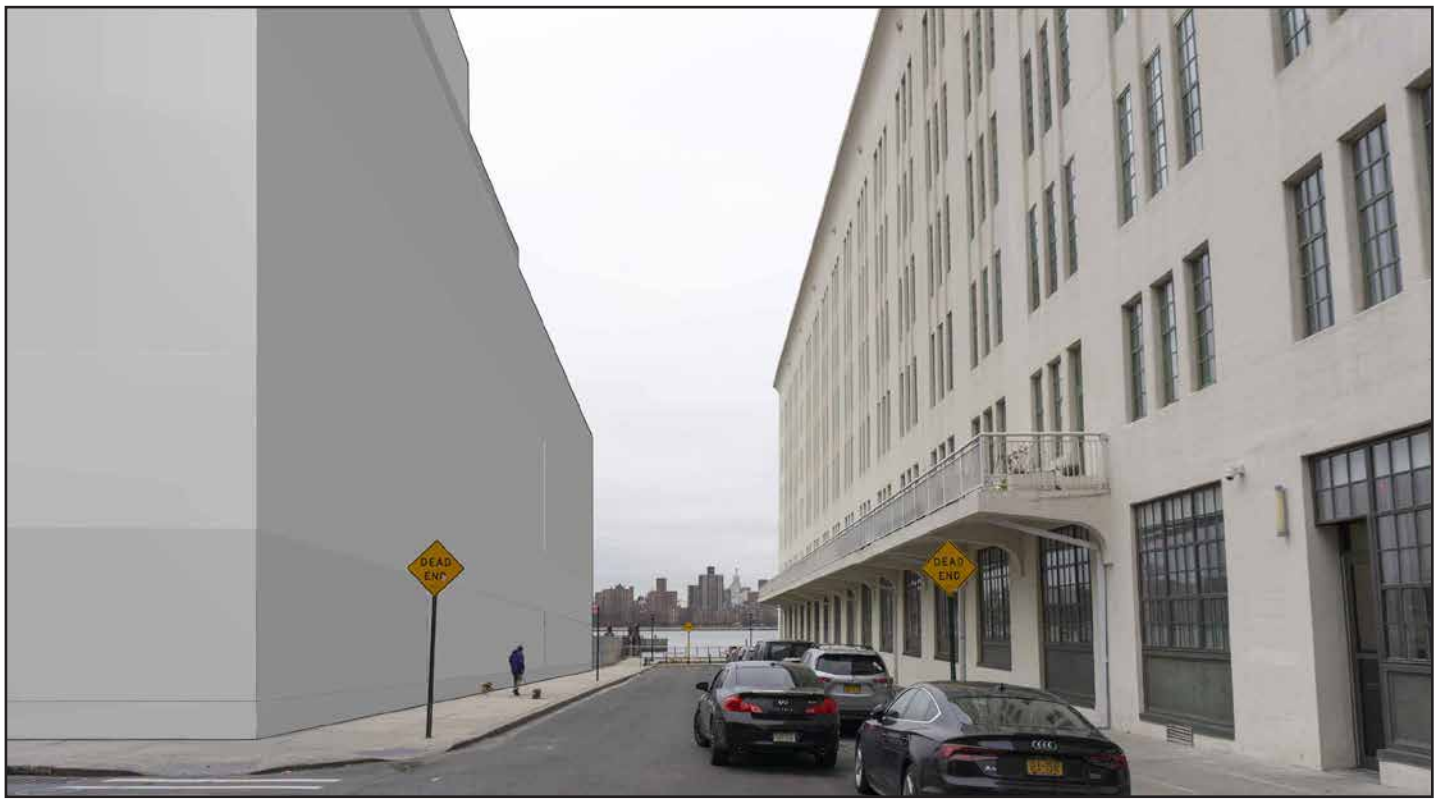
With-Action Condition

For illustrative purposes only

Courtesy of BIG

Figure 8-7l

Illustrative Comparison of the No-Action vs. With-Action Conditions
View #11: Looking west from intersection of River Street and North 3rd Street



No-Action Condition



With-Action Condition

For illustrative purposes only

Courtesy of BIG

Figure 8-7m

Illustrative Comparison of the No-Action vs. With-Action Conditions
View #12: Looking west along North 3rd Street from west of River Street



No-Action Condition



With-Action Condition

For illustrative purposes only

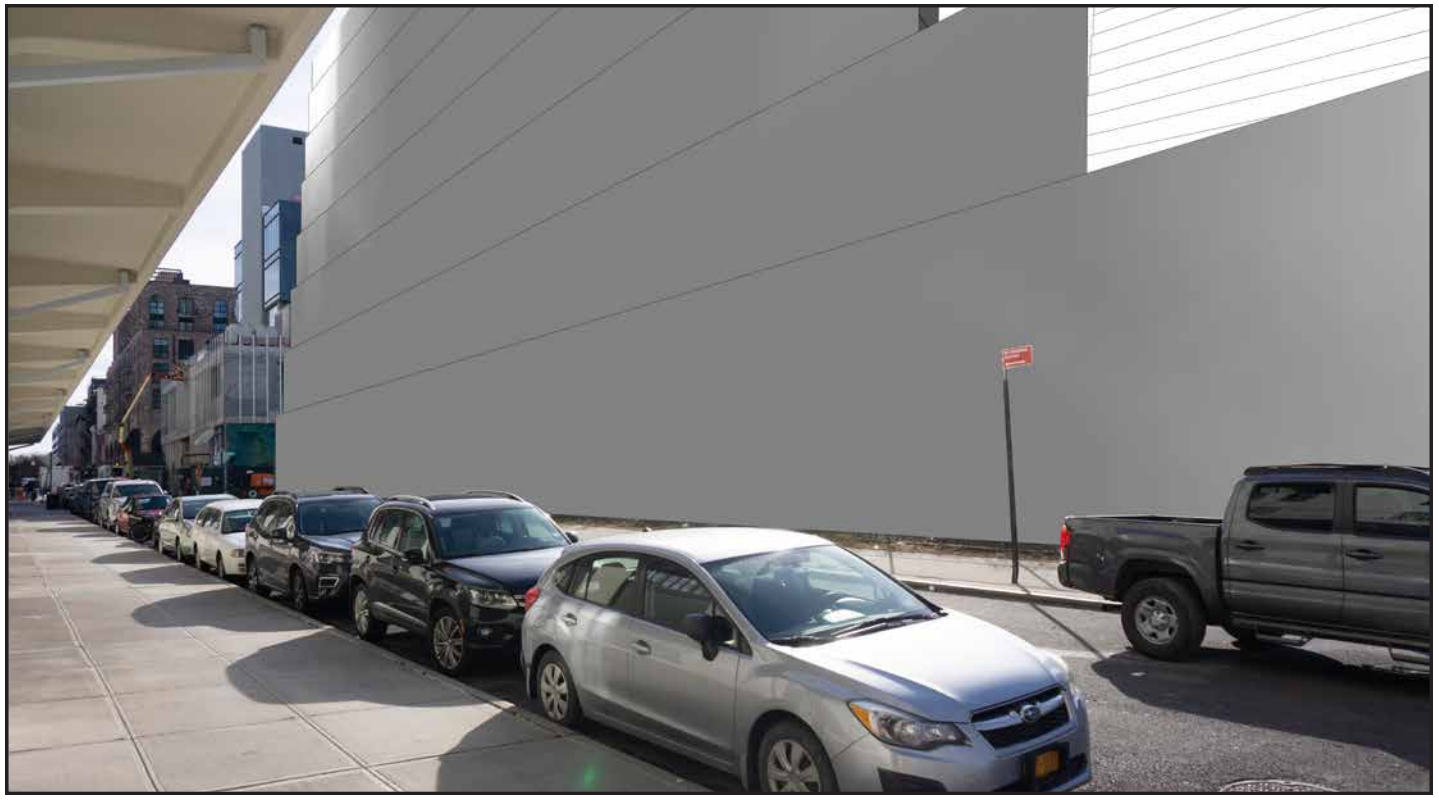
Courtesy of BIG

Figure 8-7n

Illustrative Comparison of the No-Action vs. With-Action Conditions
View #13: Looking south along North 3rd Street towards the Project Area



No-Action Condition



With-Action Condition

For illustrative purposes only

Courtesy of BIG

WIND

As stated in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the construction of multiple tall buildings at locations that experience high wind conditions, such as along west and northwest-facing waterfronts like the Project Area, may result in an exacerbation of wind conditions that may affect pedestrian safety. Large buildings have the potential to intercept the flow of wind at high elevations along the building façades and redirect wind down to ground level. Such "downwash flow" can cause accelerated wind speeds at the pedestrian level, which typically occurs at the corners of tall buildings where the downwashed wind passes around the edge of the building. When two or more buildings are situated side by side, winds tend to accelerate through the gap between the buildings, known as a "channeling effect." If these conditions occur for prevailing winds, and especially for strong winds, there is an increased potential for the creation of accelerated winds at ground level, which can disrupt pedestrian comfort and/or safety.

As the Proposed Actions would facilitate the construction of two high-rise buildings on the East River, there is the potential for downwash and channeling effects and consequent elevated pedestrian-level wind conditions in the future with the Proposed Actions. Therefore, as discussed above, a detailed analysis of pedestrian wind conditions was conducted by Windtech Consultants to determine whether the Proposed Development might result in accelerated ground-level winds (see the *Pedestrian Wind Environment Study* for the Proposed Development dated June 16, 2020 and subsequent *Pedestrian Microclimate CFD Study* dated April 14, 2021 in **Appendix D**). In the initial 2020 study, testing was performed using Windtech's boundary layer wind tunnel facility, which has a 10-foot-wide working section and a fetch length of 46 feet. Measurements were from 16 wind directions at 22.5 degree increments and testing was carried out using a 1:400 scale model of the Proposed Development. The effects of nearby buildings and land topography were accounted for through the use of a proximity model representing an area with an approximately 1,600-foot radius. In the subsequent 2021 report, a study was conducted using Computational Wind Engineering (CWE), which uses Computational Fluid Dynamic (CFD) Techniques for refined building massings.

In the 2021 study, measurements were made in the conducted simulations at selected critical outdoor trafficable locations in and around the Proposed Development from 16 wind directions using a 1:1 scale detailed model. Similar to the 2020 report, the effect of nearby buildings and land topography was accounted for through the use of a proximity model, representing an area within an approximately 1,600-foot radius. Additionally, the model was tested without the effect of any forms of wind ameliorating devices such as screens, balustrades, etc. that were not already included in the design of the Proposed Development.

The results of Windtech's 2021 study found that no regions exceeding wind safety criteria to the general or frail members of the public were found within the vicinity of the Proposed Development. A region exceeding the frail safety criterion was found, outside of the proposed development area, to be a result of existing buildings and not due to the Proposed Development. The report also noted that the majority of the area surrounding the Proposed Development adheres to the conditions suitable for strolling or better, and therefore was deemed suitable for their intended use.

The 2021 study also found that the Proposed Development would show some quantifiable effects where airflow would be accelerated and funneled, most noticeable between the two proposed towers and their outer corners. However, the comfort criteria in these areas was still found to be suitable for the planned uses. In the future, if the program uses were to change and a reduction in wind were desired, planned vegetation would act to mitigate the majority of wind speeds across the Proposed Development Site.

Overall, Windtech's 2021 study determined that the Proposed Development would satisfy respective comfort criteria, and as such, outdoor trafficable areas within and around the Proposed Development would be suitable for their intended uses. The report provided optional mitigation measures in some areas should further reductions of wind speeds be desired, including the introduction of vegetation, moveable planters, and trellises close to the site and balustrades for the waterfront areas.

¼-Mile Secondary Study Area

STREETS

The Proposed Actions are area-specific, and would not result in any alterations to streets or streetscapes in the ¼-mile secondary study area.

BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES

The Proposed Actions are Project Area-specific, and would not alter building uses, bulk, or arrangements in the surrounding area, or result in any changes to streets, blocks, topography, open spaces, or natural features in the secondary study area under With-Action conditions. The Proposed Development would be visible from the surrounding secondary study area, as discussed further in the "Assessment" section below.

OPEN SPACE & NATURAL RESOURCES

The Proposed Actions are area-specific, and as such, no alterations to open spaces or natural resources in the ¼-mile secondary study area would occur as a result of the Proposed Actions.

In the future with the Proposed Actions, the two buildings that would be constructed on the Proposed Development Site would continue to obstruct existing views of the East River and Manhattan skyline from River Street when looking west, similar to development under No-Action conditions. However, under With-Action conditions, the proposed waterfront open space would provide unobstructed views of the East River and the Manhattan skyline to the west that would not be available under No-Action conditions (see **Figures 8-6e** and **8-6f**). Additionally, the existing viewshed of the East River and Manhattan skyline when looking west along the Metropolitan Avenue and North 1st Street corridors would not be obstructed as a result of the Proposed Actions (see **Figures 8-7b** and **8-7d**).

As under No-Action conditions, the With-Action buildings on the Proposed Development Site would obstruct views of the Williamsburg Bridge and One South First/Ten Grand (260 Kent Avenue) when looking south across the Project Area from North 3rd Street west of River Street, and would obstruct views of the S/NR-listed and NYCL-eligible Austin, Nichols & Co. Warehouse when looking north across the Project Area from North 1st Street west of River Street. However, more proximate views of these significant visual resources would remain on public streets and sidewalks in the vicinity of these buildings under With-Action conditions, and the proposed waterfront open space in the Project Area would provide additional publicly accessible views of these visual resources that would not exist under No-Action conditions.

Additionally, the proposed waterfront open space that would be developed in the Project Area as a result of the Proposed Actions is expected to be a new significant visual resource in the area that would be visible when looking south from the North 5th Street Pier and Park, when looking north from Grand Ferry Park, and when looking east across the East River from Manhattan (see **Figures 8-7e**, **8-7f**, and **8-7g**).

Assessment

The Proposed Actions would facilitate development that is not currently permitted as-of-right in the Project Area, which would create a notable change in the urban design character of the area. Compared to the future without the Proposed Actions, the visual appearance, and thus the pedestrian experience of the Project Area, would change considerably. However, this change would not constitute a significant adverse urban design impact as it would not alter the arrangement, appearance, or functionality of the Project Area, thus not negatively affecting a pedestrian's experience. Rather, development anticipated in the Project Area in the future with the Proposed Actions is expected to positively affect the urban design of the area and improve the pedestrian experience, through the redevelopment of a former industrial site (the Proposed Development Site) with a mixed-use development that would reactivate this portion of the East River waterfront, with physical and visual connections to 2.9 acres of newly developed, publicly accessible waterfront open space (see **Figures 8-6e** and **8-6f**).

The Proposed Actions would revitalize the Proposed Development Site, a currently inaccessible portion of the East River waterfront that would largely continue to be publicly inaccessible absent the Proposed Actions. With connections to the North 5th Street Pier and Park to the north and Grand Ferry Park to the south, the proposed waterfront open space in the Project Area would result in a continuous link of open space along the East River waterfront from Bushwick Inlet Park to Domino Park, enhancing the pedestrian experience of the East River waterfront. It would also provide additional views of significant visual resources such as the Manhattan skyline to the west and the Williamsburg Bridge to the south. As shown in **Figures 8-6e** and **8-6f**, the Proposed Actions would also demap Metropolitan Avenue and a portion of North 1st Street west of River Street, creating a pedestrian-only walkway to connect the upland community with the newly developed waterfront open space along Metropolitan Avenue, and providing a connection for the proposed shore public walkway. Moreover, the waterfront open space of the Proposed Development would introduce a greater breadth of recreational activities not currently available to study area residents (see **Figures 8-6d** through **8-6h**). Through the development of this open space, the Proposed Actions would result in a vibrant and walkable East River waterfront in the vicinity of the Project Area, expanding public access and enhancing the pedestrian experience.

In order to facilitate the proposed open space design, the existing combined sewer outfall along Metropolitan Avenue would be relocated to North 3rd Street, outside of the protected cove area. In addition to the newly created public open space, the Proposed Development would establish a stable and resilient waterfront, with waterward improvements that would protect the cove and the habitats created inside the breakwaters. The proposed breakwaters and groin would shape the cove and provide additional shoreline protection while creating new habitats for native plant and animal species. Although the breakwaters and groin would result in disturbance within open water and littoral zones of the East River, the Proposed Development would create new water habitats consisting of littoral zone and manmade reefs. As detailed further in Chapter 10, "Natural Resources," the proposed habitat creation in the littoral zone would be approximately four times the area of disturbance in this area, and would offset the effects of the proposed in-water disturbance. As such, the Proposed Actions would result in an overall enhancement to the aquatic habitat and shoreline conditions of the East River, a significant natural resource in the primary and secondary study areas.

As detailed further in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, & Public Policy," the requested zoning changes would be compatible with the ¼-mile radius surrounding the Project Area. The removal of the M3-1 district from the Project Area would ensure that heavy industrial uses incompatible with adjacent residential and commercial uses would not be constructed in the Project Area. Based on the increasingly residential character of the secondary study area, the Proposed Development would constitute a substantial improvement with respect to land uses as compared to a No-Action development of commercial and

industrial uses. As shown in **Figures 8-5b** and **8-6b**, the Proposed Development would activate the streetscape adjacent to the Proposed Development Site by adding ground-floor commercial and community facility space as well as significant amounts of open space areas, as opposed to No-Action conditions where the Proposed Development Site would be occupied entirely by building footprints, and parking garages and loading berths would occupy most of the buildings' ground floor frontages. Moreover, the adjacent sidewalks would be planted with street trees under With-Action conditions.

The proposed LSGD special permits would facilitate a design that the Applicant believes is superior in terms of function and design to what can be achieved as-of-right under existing zoning regulations, and allow for a provision of parking at a level commensurate to the site-generated demand. Although the 49- and 64-story towers (560 feet and 710 feet tall, respectively) on the Proposed Development Site would be denser and taller than the as-of-right No-Action buildings on the site, the additional density and height would not result in significant adverse urban design impacts.

The triangular footprint and orientation of the towers comprising the Proposed Development have been designed to maximize views and access to the public waterfront, reduce shadow impacts, and create a gateway along the Metropolitan Avenue corridor. By blending the towers with their podiums, a softer relationship is achieved between the buildings and the open space. Open-air arcades along the park-facing facades of both towers strengthen the public access to the waterfront. The Proposed Actions would rezone the Proposed Development Site to an R8-equivalent density, which is the same as what is designated to the North and South of the site. However, the Proposed Development seeks to improve waterfront conditions through a non-traditional approach to building lot coverage. The more traditional massing – which is prominent along the Williamsburg and Greenpoint waterfront, uses maximum lot area coverage for the building and provides the minimum open space requirement – a 40-foot-wide shore public walkway. While at the same density, by compressing the R8 floor area into very small footprints that occupy less than 35% of the total development upland lot area, the Proposed Development is able to maximize the open space and public ground plane experience, resulting in taller and much more slender buildings. Above the pedestrian plane, the towers are oriented to provide maximum light and air to adjacent lots. The northern tower is oriented north-south to minimize obstruction for the northern neighboring developments. The southern tower is oriented east west to open up sky plane and in an effort to allow each building to be architecturally distinct. The Proposed Actions facilitate a design that adds important benefits to the community including increased open space in both quantity and quality, improved connectivity to the water, access and strengthened coastal resilience – that would not be achievable under the traditional R8 massing and minimal shore public walkway scenario.

As discussed above, the secondary study area is a dense urban environment with multiple existing high-rise buildings along the East River waterfront. The proposed towers on the Proposed Development Site would be in keeping with the heights and densities of these nearby waterfront developments, while allowing for a greater portion of the Proposed Development Site to be transformed into publicly accessible open space. Similar to these recently-developed waterfront towers, the upper levels of the Proposed Development would be visible when looking in the direction of the East River from various pedestrian vantage points in the secondary study area, several of which are shown in **Figures 8-7b** (view west along Metropolitan Avenue), **8-7c** (view north from Metropolitan and Kent Avenues), **8-7f** (view north from Domino Park/Grand Ferry Park), **8-7h** (view northwest from North 1st Street and Kent Avenue), and **8-7k** (view south along River Street). As illustrated, the two towers of the Proposed Development would not be out of character within the existing context and pedestrian experience of the secondary study area. Additionally, the Proposed Development would not obstruct any significant view corridors in the primary or secondary study areas, or otherwise adversely alter the context of surrounding visual resources. As detailed in Chapter 7, "Historic & Cultural Resources," although the Proposed Development would alter

the backdrops of some historic architectural resources such as the S/NR-listed and NYCL-eligible Austin, Nichols & Co. Warehouse and the S/NR-listed Metropolitan Avenue Warehouse, these changes would not be significant or adverse, as the study area is a dense urban environment with multiple high-rise buildings that currently form the setting and context of these historic resources (see **Figures 8-2a** through **8-2c**).

As the proposed and projected With-Action buildings in the Project Area would be constructed on existing blocks, the current viewsheds of the East River and Manhattan skyline when looking west along east-west streets in the secondary study area, such as Metropolitan Avenue, would not be obstructed (see **Figures 8-7b** and **8-7d**). As under No-Action conditions, views of the East River, Williamsburg Bridge, and Manhattan skyline, as well as One South First/Ten Grand (260 Kent Avenue), the Williamsburg Bridge the S/NR-listed and NYCL-eligible Austin, Nichols & Co Warehouse and the North 5th Street Pier and Park would be obstructed from certain vantage points by the Proposed Development. However, through the introduction of publicly accessible waterfront open space, the Proposed Development would create new, expansive, and uninterrupted views of these resources, and more proximate views of these significant visual resources would remain on public streets and sidewalks in the vicinity of these resources under With-Action conditions. The new vantage points created by the Proposed Actions would enhance the pedestrian experience in the Project Area, creating new and expansive viewsheds of surrounding visual resources.

As the Proposed Actions are area-specific, no significant adverse impacts to urban design or visual resources in the ¼-mile secondary study area are expected. The proposed waterfront open space is expected to be a significant new visual resource visible from public vantage points in the secondary study area, such as when looking south from the 5th Street Park and Pier or when looking north from Grand Ferry Park (see **Figures 8-7f** and **8-7g**). The Proposed Development would also be visible when looking east across the East River from public vantage points in Manhattan (see **Figure 8-7e**). As such, the Proposed Development facilitated by the Proposed Actions is expected to improve the pedestrian experience in the secondary study area, through the creation of a new visual resource in the Project Area and the enhancement of the East River waterfront, a significant natural resource in the primary and secondary study areas.

The results of the wind study found that no regions exceeding wind safety criteria to the general or frail members of the public were found within the vicinity of the Proposed Development, and determined that the Proposed Development would satisfy respective comfort criteria. As such, outdoor trafficable areas within and around the Proposed Development would be suitable for their intended uses.