THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

NOTICE OF COMPLETION

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT for the QUEENS FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Lead Agency:	The New York City Office of the Deputy Mayor for Housing, Economic Development, and Workforce 100 Gold Street, 2nd Floor New York, NY 10038
CEQR No.:	23DME006Q
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SEQRA Classification:	Type I
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Location:	Adjacent Community Districts 3,4,6, 7, 8, 9 Borough of Queens

Pursuant to City Environmental Quality Review, Mayoral Executive Order 91 of 1977, as amended, and the City Environmental Quality Review Rules of Procedure found at Title 62, Chapter 5 of the Rules of the City of New York (CEQR), and the State Environmental Quality Review Act, Article 8 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law and its implementing regulations found at Part 617 of 6NYCRR (SEQRA), a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) has been prepared for the actions described below. The FEIS is available electronically for public inspection on the website provided at the end of this notice.

A public hearing was held on the Draft EIS in conjunction with the City Planning Commission hearing on the land use applications on January 8, 2025, to afford all interested parties the opportunity to submit oral and written comments. To allow for broad public participation, the public hearing was held both in-person and remotely via the teleconferencing application Zoom. Notices notifying the public of the hearing and providing the call-in information were published in the *City Record* and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation *Environmental News Bulletin* on December 18, 2024, and was also placed in the following local newspapers on December 18, 2024—*New York Daily News, El Diario NY, Korea Times, Sing Tao,* and *Chinese World Journal*. This information was also provided on the NYC Engage website. The comment period remained open through 5:00 pm on January 31, 2025. A total of 43 speakers provided comments at the hearing, and 1,940 written comments on the DEIS were received. The FEIS incorporates responses to the public comments received on the Draft EIS and additional analysis conducted subsequent to the

completion of the Draft EIS. The FEIS is available electronically for public inspection on the website provided at the end of this notice.

A. INTRODUCTION

Queens Future, LLC (the Applicant) proposes to redevelop approximately 78 acres of underutilized, largely asphalt surface parking areas located west of Seaver Way and adjacent to Citi Field with a major mixed-use development (the Queens Future Project, or the Proposed Project).

The Queens Future Project is anticipated to comprise up to approximately 3.7 million square feet (sf) of new construction, with destination entertainment that includes a music hall, hotel, a gaming facility, convention and meeting space, restaurant and retail space, and office and community facility space. The Proposed Project would also include public park space—at least 20 acres of the Development Site would be improved with landscaping and other amenities for public recreation—and other public realm improvements as well as structured parking facilities to accommodate up to 13,750 spaces.

The parking areas that compose the majority of the Development Site are located in Flushing Meadows Corona Park, which is mapped parkland. They provide parking for the adjacent Citi Field baseball stadium. The property is owned by the City of New York (the City) and predominantly leased to Queens Ballpark Company, LLC. (Ballpark, LLC), pursuant to state law enacted in 1961 in connection with the construction of Shea Stadium. Shea Stadium was later demolished and replaced with Citi Field.

The Proposed Actions require review under City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR). CEQR provides a means for decision makers and other government agencies to consider environmental effects, along with other aspects of project planning and design; identify and mitigate (where practicable) any significant adverse environmental impacts; and evaluate reasonable alternatives. As a disclosure document, the Draft EIS will afford stakeholders and the community the opportunity to provide comments on the potential for significant adverse impacts. The New York City Office of the Deputy Mayor for Housing, Economic Development, and Workforce (DMHEDW), formerly the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic and Workforce Development (DMEWD), is the lead agency for the environmental review.

B. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Project Area, which is primarily part of Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, is located west of a tidal expanse along the Flushing River and south of Flushing Bay. Before the 1900s, the Development Site and the surrounding area were primarily undeveloped marshland with a rail line that transected the southern portion of the Development Site. For most of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Project Area was an industrial dumping ground and landfill.

In the 1920s and 1930s, a period when the City was investing in major municipal parks projects, the landfill was targeted for development as a large recreation area (NYC DPR, 2001).[1] In addition, the area was planned as the venue of the 1939 World's Fair (NYC DPR, 2001). The Development Site served as a parking lot in 1938 for the World's Fair and has remained in continuous operation as surface parking ever since. The construction of the World's Fair also acted as a catalyst for the construction of other municipal projects in the surrounding area, such as the development of the Bronx-Whitestone Bridge, the Whitestone Expressway, the Grand Central Parkway (GCP) and a new No. 7 Flushing line station at Willets Point Boulevard (NYC DPR, 2001).

[1] New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC DPR), (2001). "Shea Stadium Redevelopment FEIS." (CEQR No: 02DPR001Q). Dated December 17, 2001. (p. S-2)

From 1946 to 1951, the United Nations convened at the New York City Pavilion, now the Queens Museum, one of the few remaining structures from the 1939 World's Fair (NYC DPR, 2001). The 1964 World's Fair was also held on the fairgrounds park site. On June 3, 1967, Flushing Meadows-Corona Park was established, encompassing the fairgrounds, the Development Site and the current site of Citi Field. (NYC DPR, 2001).

In 1961, the State enacted legislation (codified in Section 18-118 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York) that authorized the City to enter into agreements with private parties for the use of a stadium and parking lots on the Development Site and the current site of Citi Field. Shea Stadium opened on April 17, 1964, on the western portion of the Development Site, where the Citi Field parking lots are located today (NYC DPR, 2001). The stadium contained 56,000 seats for baseball and surrounding parking fields and was designed to be capable of converting from baseball to football use (NYC DPR, 2001).

In 2001, an FEIS was published by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC DPR) to allow for the construction of a new stadium for use by the New York Mets baseball team on a portion of the parking field adjacent to the existing Shea stadium (NYC DPR, 2001). The stadium was demolished in 2008, and the 42,000-seat baseball stadium that exists today was built on an adjacent portion of the site previously used for parking. The parking spaces were redistributed to the eastern and southern portions of the site.

In 2008, a Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS) for the Willets Point Development Plan was issued, with the City's Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development (ODMED) as lead agency, in order to rezone, create an Urban Renewal Area, and redevelop the Willets Point Area east of Citi Field (ODMED, 2008).[2] The Willets Point Development Plan proposed a Willets Point Development District with residential, retail, hotel, a convention center, entertainment, commercial office, community facility, open space, and parking uses as well as a connection to the Van Wyck Expressway within the District. The plan was approved by the City Planning Commission on September 24, 2008, and the City Council on November 13, 2008.

A supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS) was published in 2013 by ODMED to modify the previously approved Willets Point Development Plan and include a proposed Willets West development on a portion of the Development Site located on the surface parking lot west of the Citi Field baseball stadium (ODMED, 2013).[3] Subsequently, in 2017, the New York State Court of Appeals held that the Willets West portion of the Plan analyzed in the 2013 FSEIS required State legislation authorizing parkland alienation. Following the Court of Appeals Decision, neither the Willets West program that was invalidated by the New York State Court of Appeals nor the overall 2013 plan moved forward. Most recently a Final Second Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSSEIS) for the Willets Point Development (Phase 2) was published in February 2024 (CEQR 23DME005Q).

In 2018, Flushing Meadows Corona Park was determined to be eligible on the State and/or National Register of Historic Places (S/NR) as the Flushing Meadows Corona Park Historic District by the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NYSHPO).

C. DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT SITE

The Development Site is approximately 78 acres of land bounded by Seaver Way to the east, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Corona Yard to the south, Grand Central Parkway to the west, and Northern Boulevard to the north. The majority of the Development Site is part of Flushing Meadows Corona Park. A 1.1-acre portion on the northwest corner of the Development Site is located within the boundary of the Grand Central Parkway and a 0.44-acre portion on the northeast corner is located within the mapped boundary of

[2] Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development (ODMED). 2008. "Willets Point Development Plan Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement" (CEQR No 07DME014Q). Dated September 2008.

[3] Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development (ODMED). 2013. "Willets Point Development Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement" (CEQR No 07DME014Q). Dated September 2008.

Northern Boulevard. Approximately 53 of the 78 acres consists of asphalt surface parking lots; the remaining acres include roadways and other circulation areas. Development is anticipated to commence construction in 2026 and completion 2030.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SURROUNDING AREA

The area surrounding the Development Site includes Flushing Bay, the World's Fair Marina, and the neighborhood of College Point to the north; Flushing Creek and the neighborhood of Downtown Flushing to the east; Flushing Meadows-Corona Park to the south, including the aquatic center and the United States Tennis Association (USTA) Billie Jean King Tennis Center in closest proximity. The Whitestone Expressway and Northern Boulevard extend through the surrounding area near the waterfront; the Van Wyck Expressway extends from College Point south through the surrounding area along the eastern edge of Flushing Meadows-Corona Park; and the Grand Central Parkway extends from the waterfront south through the surrounding area along the western edge of Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. The New York City Transit (NYCT) No. 7 (Flushing Local and Express) train line extends through the area on a viaduct above Roosevelt Avenue, with the Mets-Willets Point station and the Corona Maintenance Facility directly south of Citi Field. The LIRR Port Washington Branch line also extends east–west through the area between Roosevelt Avenue and the U.S. Tennis Association's (USTA) Billie Jean King Tennis Center, with a Mets-Willets Point station that has full LIRR service as of April 2023. The area along both sides of Flushing Creek is generally zoned for manufacturing use (M3-1, M2-1, and M1-1); Flushing Meadows-Corona Park is zoned parkland, with the exception of the MTA maintenance facility area parallel to the NYCT No. 7 line, which is zoned M1-1; and the area along the Whitestone Expressway and Grand Central Parkway is zoned for residential use (R3-2). A portion of Downtown Flushing that extends west to Flushing Creek is zoned for commercial use (C4-2).

SPECIAL WILLETS POINT DISTRICT / WILLETS POINT DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

The Special Willets Point District (WP) is mapped for an area that is part of a comprehensive redevelopment strategy aimed at transforming a largely underutilized 61-acre site into a mixed-use community and a regional retail and entertainment destination. The Special District is located to the east of Citi Field baseball stadium, separated from the Development Site by Seaver Way. Special District regulations ensure the achievement of the master plan for the site by specifying the location of uses, including retail, office, and cinema uses, as well as a convention center. Site planning and design provisions specify maximum block dimensions, minimum street and sidewalk dimensions, building heights and setbacks, roof design requirements, and minimum amounts and locations of publicly accessible open space.

The Special Willets Point District has an underlying C4-4 zoning designation. C4 districts are areas that permit large commercial uses such as department stores and theaters. These retail uses serve regions outside of central business districts and generate more traffic than neighborhood shopping areas. C4-4 districts are mapped in more densely built areas. The maximum FAR in the Special Willets Point District ranges from 2.0 to 5.0.

WILLETS POINT PHASE 1

Willets Point Phase 1 is part of the larger Willets Point Development Plan, which was first approved in 2008 and modified in 2021. The development is located southwest of the Development Site at Willets Point Boulevard and Roosevelt Avenue. Willets Point Phase 1 would result in the construction of approximately 892,635 gross square feet (gsf) of residential space containing 1,100 affordable units, of which 220 units would be allocated to seniors; 23,756 gsf of retail space; 3,159 gsf community facility space; and a 128,000-gsf public school with 650 seats. The site for Willets Point Phase 1 will also include 0.87 acre of open space and accessory parking. Remediation activities for the site are anticipated to be completed in Spring 2023 and full build out and occupation of Willets Point Phase 1 is anticipated by 2026.

WILLETS POINT PHASE 2

As mentioned previously, a Final Second Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for Willets Point Phase 2 was published on February 23, 2024, for a 17-acre parcel adjacent to the Willets Point Phase 1 project site discussed above located at Seaver Way and Willets Point Boulevard. Willets Point Phase 2 would result

in the construction of approximately 1,190,000 gsf of residential space containing an additional 1,400 affordable residential units; 60,000 gsf of retail space; 215,000 gsf of hotel space (with 250 rooms); and a 500,000 gsf soccer stadium (with 25,000 seats). It will also include 2.77 acres of open space. Phase 2 is anticipated to be completed by 2027.

Together Willets Point Phases 1 and 2 will transition the Willets Point peninsula from an industrial area into a mixed-use neighborhood and entertainment destination. The stadium included in Phase 2 will be the City's first soccer-specific stadium.

D. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Applicant is proposing to replace the underutilized parking lots on the Development Site with a mixture of commercial and other uses, structured parking, and public park to create a vibrant entertainment destination and provide to the local community needed amenities—including opportunities for recreation, work, dining, and entertainment in the area immediately surrounding Citi Field. The Queens Future Project is anticipated to comprise up to approximately 3.7 million square feet of new construction, with destination entertainment that includes a gaming facility, music hall, a hotel with up to 2,300 rooms, convention and meeting space, restaurant and retail space, and office and community facility space across Areas of Development A and B. The Proposed Project would also include at least 20 acres of public park space, amenity space for the hotel, and structured parking facilities to accommodate up to 13,750 spaces located across Area of Development C and D. **Table 1** summarizes the total development projected for the Development Site and reflects the reasonable worst-case development scenario (RWCDS). The areas of proposed parkland demapping and those areas remaining parkland. The Proposed Project would provide approximately 7,400 new, full-time equivalent jobs to support the commercial, open space, and entertainment uses on site. Additionally, the Proposed Project would generate approximately 17,000 full-time equivalent construction jobs over the approximately five-year construction period.

AREA OF DEVELOPMENT A

Area of Development A is situated on the western portion of the Development Site, which would be improved with a development including a hotel with up to 2,300 rooms, gaming, retail, restaurants, amenities for the hotel and gaming facility (e.g., pool, gym, spa, and entertainment space), a music hall, and convention and meeting space. Area of Development A, along with the roadways serving such development, would be demapped as parkland. The western portion of the Development Site would be improved with a development including a hotel with up to 2,300 rooms, gaming, retail, restaurants, amenities for the hotel and gaming facility (e.g., pool, gym, spa, and entertainment space), a music hall, and convention and meeting space. The first two levels would include parking for cars and buses. The uses above the parking would rise to a range of heights. The tallest portions of the development would range in height from 280 to 344 feet and contain hotel rooms, which would be located from level 2 to level 25 of the building towers.[4] A section of Area of Development A would also include a six-level parking structure that would rise to a height of approximately 120 feet. Area of Development A would further include back-of-house space to support the gaming facility, hotel, entertainment, and convention and meeting space in addition to mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and infrastructure space such as a central utility facility. Three private outdoor spaces are planned within Area of Development A—one activated commercial balcony covered with a canopy structure on the first occupied floor at an elevation of 38 feet and another activated commercial balcony on the rooftop of the building podium at a height of approximately 72 feet. The remainder of the rooftops of Area of Development A would be largely covered with photovoltaic solar panels.

[4] All heights are given in NAVD88/Above Mean Sea Level (AMSL). At the location of the Development Site, the minimum ground elevation is AMSL 8'.

AREA OF DEVELOPMENT B

Just south of Citi Field, a development is proposed to contain uses geared towards Mets fans and local visitors. It would contain restaurant space, including a "Taste of Queens" local food hall, and local retail, community facility, and administrative office space (ancillary offices to support the Area of Development B and stadium uses). The buildings within Area of Development B would be approximately 114 feet tall inclusive of up to nine levels of parking.

PARKING

The 13,750 parking spaces are required to accommodate both the parking needed by the Mets to continue operating at Citi Field and the parking needed to support the new development. The parking would be located primarily within structures in Areas of Development A, B, C, and D as well as on a surface parking lot within Area of Development C. This parking includes the full replacement of existing Mets parking within the Development Site necessary to satisfy operational and visitor needs. It also includes parking to support the proposed commercial development.

In Area of Development A, parking and loading areas within the new building would be located at the first two building levels. Parking on the ground level would be accessed through three entrances along Shea Road. This ground level parking would contain areas designated for buses and rideshare. The parking on the second level would be accessed via internal vertical circulation in the podium structure. In addition, valet parking would be provided via two access points on the port cochere, a covered elevated entrance intended to facilitate drop offs. Area of Development A would also include a six-level parking structure on the south side of the building. This parking would be accessed through a separate entrance on Shea Road. The roof of this parking structure would contain photovoltaic solar panels as well as private open space for visitors to Area of Development A. The parking within the building in Area of Development B would also be located at the first two building levels, as well as within a connected parking structure to the east. This structure would have one access point along the existing curb cut off of Seaver Way. In Areas of Development C and D, the parking would be located in new standalone elevated parking structures.

Area of Development C, located south of Roosevelt Avenue and north of the MTA Corona Yard, includes one parking structure with up to ten levels of parking rising to approximately 100 feet in height and one surface lot. The parking within the structure would be accessed from entrances along the southern edge of the structure, where a new internal roadway will provide access from both Stadium Place South and from Shea Road. The parking structure roof would contain photovoltaic solar panels. The surface lot would also be accessed via the new internal roadway along the south edge of the site. The existing MTA buildings in the Area of Development C would remain. Area of Development D, located just north of Citi Field, includes a parking structure with up to twelve levels of parking rising to a height of approximately 142 feet. The parking in this structure would be accessed from entrances along Shea Road, which would pass through the parking structure at ground level. An additional exit from the parking structure will be provided on Seaver Way. The roof of the structured parking in Area of Development D would contain photovoltaic solar panels.

Patrons of the new development at Area of Development A would use the structured parking within Area of Development A on both gamedays and non-gamedays. Patrons of the new development at Area of Development B would use the structured parking within Area of Development B and Area of Development C on non-gamedays and the structured parking within Area of Development A on gamedays. On non-gamedays, the structured parking at Area of Development C would be open to commuters (continuing the use of commuter parking currently in the Southfield Lot in existing conditions). On gamedays, Mets patrons would park in the structured parking in Areas of Development B, C, and D.

Throughout the construction period, parking for existing uses such as Mets games would be accommodated.

OPEN SPACE

The Proposed Project would include at least 20 acres of new public park space. The public park space would include passive open space, landscaped areas, walking paths, and active open space such as athletic fields and other sports facilities. The park space would replace portions of the Development Site that are comprised almost entirely of paved parking and associated circulation spaces which are not accessible to the public. These proposed open spaces include:

- **OS-1:** The proposed open space identified as OS-1 would be located between Citi Field and the east side of Area of Development A in an area that is currently a surface parking lot. There would be a collection of multipurpose areas within OS-1. Although the details of the proposed design have not been finalized at this time, it is anticipated to include an outdoor event space, gardens, moveable seating, picnic areas, open lawns, promenades, and landscaped pathways. OS-1 is approximately 10.5 acres.
- **OS-2:** The proposed open space identified as OS-2 would be located at the north side of Area of Development A in an area that is currently covered with an asphalt bus parking lot and trees. OS-2 would maintain many of the existing trees. The existing paved bus parking lot would be removed and OS-2 would be improved with a dog run, passive recreation spaces, picnic areas and seating, and bike and pedestrian connections, amounting to 1.70 acres.
- **OS-3:** This open space would be located along the perimeter of the Area of Development B and would feature landscaping, walkways, eating areas, event space, and seating amounting to 1.60 acres of passive open space. An open plaza space at the corner of Seaver Way and Roosevelt Avenue would support events throughout the year, such as farmers' markets, community events, and gatherings in conjunction with events at Citi Field. Pathways would provide additional connections to OS-1 and Areas of Development A and C.
- **OS-4:** Roosevelt Avenue would be lined with a combination of passive and active recreation space amounting to 1.20-acres. This would include sports courts, walkways, seating, planting, bike lanes, and bike parking. Amenities to facilitate pedestrian circulation and transit access would also be included within this area.
- **OS-5:** Located to the north of Area of Development D, OS-5 would be a 1.20-acre space that would connect pedestrians from Seaver Way to the Project Area and Boat Basin Place. The open space would feature passive recreation spaces, seating, and bike and pedestrian connections.
- **OS-6:** Located south of Roosevelt Avenue to the west of the surface parking area of Area of Development C, would be a 3.80-acre space dedicated to active recreation with a variety of activities and attractions. It is anticipated to include spaces for sports such as basketball, racket sports, soccer, playgrounds, and fitness areas.

Table 1 With-Action Condition

Area of Development	Use	Maximum (up to) GSF	Percent Floor Area	Percent Total Development	Notes
Area of Development A	Hotel[1]	2,118,000	57.8%	20.4%	Up to 2,300 hotel rooms
	Convention and Meeting Space[1]	150,000	4.1%	1.4%	-
	Gaming Facility[2]	352,000	9.6%	3.4%	-
	Gaming Facility Back of House	93,000	2.5%	0.9%	-
	Music Hall[1]	290,610	7.9%	2.8%	5,655 seats
	Retail	102,330	2.8%	1.0%	-
	Restaurants	198,790	5.4%	1.9%	-
	Amenities	149,270	4.1%	1.4%	Including spa, gym, pool, and entertainment spaces
	Area A Total	3,454,000	**94.2%**	**33.2%**	-
Area of Development B	Restaurants	118,000	3.3%	1.1%	-
	Retail	32,000	0.9%	0.3%	-
	Office	37,000	1.0%	0.4%	-
	Community Facility	25,000	0.7%	0.2%	-
	Area B Total	**212,000**	**5.9%**	**2.0%**	-
Parking	**Area A Total**	-	-	-	Up to 5,500 parking spaces
	Area B Total	-	-	-	Up to 899 parking spaces
	Area C Total	-	-	-	Up to 3,151 parking spaces
	Area D Total	-	-	-	Up to 4,200 parking spaces
Commercial Total		**3,641,000**	**99.3%**	**35.0%**	-
Community Facility Total		**25,000**	**0.7%**	**0.2%**	-
Mixed-Use Total		**3,666,000**	**100.0%**	**35.3%**	-
Parking/Loading/Mechanical Total		**6,726,785**	-	**64.7%**	**Up to 13,750 parking spaces[3] and central utility facility**
Public Park		**20 acres**			

[1] Includes associated back of house space

[2] The potential gaming use would require a license from the New York State Gaming Commission

[3] There are currently 7,423 parking spaces on the existing Development Site parking lots and therefore there would be an incremental increase of 6,327 parking spaces.

E. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

The surface parking surrounding Citi Field is used only on game days during baseball seasons (generally April through October), for other private events held at Citi Field, and for certain other scheduled events in Flushing Meadows Corona Park, including the U.S. Open. Up to 1,795 spaces are designated for commuter parking on business days. Otherwise, this approximately 53 acres of asphalt parking is underutilized and not available to

the public.[5] As a result, the site currently provides limited amenities to the local community, with few opportunities for recreation, dining, or entertainment in the area immediately surrounding Citi Field. Beyond attending events at the existing stadium, the site provides visitors with few options to remain in the area, failing to deliver on the tourism and economic development potential a major sporting facility offers to Queens.

The Queens Future Project is an opportunity to transform these underutilized parking lots into a unique mixed-use recreational, commercial, and entertainment hub with extensive, landscaped public park space and other amenities for public recreation. The redevelopment would promote economic development, enhance the visitor experience, increase tourism, and create thousands of quality jobs for area residents. Furthermore, the Proposed Project would include the many infrastructure improvements described above that would facilitate public enjoyment of the new development and complement the existing major public and private investment in Willets Point and surrounding neighborhoods. New public park space, transit and highway improvements, and other public amenities proposed as part of the Queens Future Project are made possible with the creation of the mixed-use recreational and entertainment hub.

Furthermore, the Applicant would partner with local suppliers and vendors to maximize positive spillover effects into the local and regional economy from visitors to the Queens Future Project. The Applicant would also work to maximize local hiring for the over 7,000 jobs created by the project and prioritize opportunities for unemployed or underemployed individuals from the surrounding communities, including through outreach and partnerships with local organizations. In addition, the Proposed Project may contribute to the growth of small businesses in adjacent neighborhoods through business-to-business interactions and by providing access to expanded clienteles and spillover visitor spending, including through partnerships and promotion of local businesses.

In addition, the creation of significant new public open spaces would provide a major new amenity to visitors and local residents alike, including residents of Flushing, Corona, Jackson Heights, Elmhurst, and the Willets Point neighborhood. The replacement of impermeable surface parking with a mix of at-grade landscaped open space as well as photovoltaic solar panels and softscape on top of floodplain-compliant structures would also help reduce stormwater runoff and improve the site's resiliency by enhancing biodiversity and mitigating the heat-island effect. The proposed realignment of roadways, traffic management measures, and improvements to waterfront pathways would enhance connections to the surrounding neighborhoods and other resources. Replacing an expanse of asphalt surface parking with new open space, dining, and entertainment uses would create jobs and benefit local residents, workers, sports fans, the broader Queens neighborhoods, and New York City as a whole.

F. DISCRETIONARY AND OTHER APPROVALS

To facilitate the Proposed Project, a number of approvals are required pursuant to the City's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), including discretionary actions that are subject to CEQR. The proposed actions consist of:

1. City map amendments, including:
    - Demapping of approximately 25 acres of parkland corresponding to Area of Development A, which would be leased to the Applicant, and a relocated ramp to the westbound Grand Central Parkway. The other areas in the Development Site currently mapped as parkland would remain as such.

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

- Demapping of approximately 1.4 acres of streets corresponding to site access improvements (which would be leased to the Applicant) and park improvements within the existing boundary of the Grand Central Parkway.
- Mapping of approximately 0.7 acres of streets corresponding to a relocated ramp to the westbound Grand Central Parkway.
- Mapping of approximately 0.8 acres of parkland corresponding to park improvements within the existing boundary of Grand Central Parkway.

2. A zoning map amendment to map a C8-4 zoning district on the property bounded by the centerline of Northern Boulevard to the north, a line 970 feet parallel with and southwesterly of Seaver Way to the east, the centerline of Roosevelt Avenue to the south, and the centerline of the Grand Central Parkway to the west. This rezoning area encompasses the western portion of the Development Site.
3. City approval of amendments to the stadium lease, project agreements, and other project documents including approval of business terms related thereto, relating to the Citi Field parking areas and new agreements in connection with the Proposed Project;
4. Approvals by the NYC Department of Transportation (NYCDOT), NYC Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) and NYC Department of Parks and Recreation (NYCDPR) and other city agencies for public improvements, as applicable; and
5. Authorization of potential financing by the NYC Industrial Development Agency or other agency.

The Applicant is also seeking several approvals from the State:

1. Approval of State legislation authorizing the alienation of portions of parkland to allow for the Proposed Project. State legislation is not subject to SEQRA.
2. NYSDOT approval for highway access improvements along westbound Grand Central Parkway Exit 9E to and from Shea Road and to the Whitestone Expressway. Additional NYSDOT and NYCDOT approvals as may also be required in connection with the roadway and other improvements. [6]
3. Approval by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) for improved connections to the Mets-Willets Point No. 7 Train NYCT Subway Station.
4. Approval by the Gaming Facility Location Board and a license from the New York State Gaming Commission.

In addition, a State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit from NYSDEC will be required for stormwater discharges during the construction period. The Proposed Project would also include various ministerial actions, including design approval by the Public Design Commission, and additional approvals as may be necessary. The Development Site is located within the Notice Criteria area for LaGuardia International Airport; all proposed buildings fall within the jurisdiction of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and require approval of building heights.

[6] The proposed highway ramp (reviewed by New York State Department of Transportation) is necessary to enhance the safety and overall capacity of the ramp system. The National Park Service has determined that the construction of the proposed highway ramp would result in a conversion under the requirements of the Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program. To satisfy the requirements of a conversion, the Applicant proposes providing as replacement property an area that is currently mapped street (within the Grand Central Parkway) that would be mapped as parkland under the Proposed Project and improved as part of the Open Space 2 (OS-2) passive recreational area. The determination whether the new parkland comprising part of OS-2 would satisfy requirements for replacement property will be subject to review by the National Park Service, with the involvement of the New York State Office of Parks and Recreation.

G. ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

The *2021 CEQR Technical Manual* will serve as guidance on the methodologies and impact criteria for evaluating the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Project that would result from the required approvals. As the Proposed Project would be complete and operational in 2030, the environmental setting for analysis is not the current environment, but the future environment. To the extent that the Proposed Actions allow for a range of possible scenarios that are considered reasonable and likely, the scenario with the worst environmental consequences is chosen for CEQR analysis. This is considered to be the reasonable worst-case development scenario (RWCDS), the use of which ensures that, regardless of which scenario actually occurs, its impacts would be no worse than those considered in the environmental review. The CEQR assessment examines the incremental differences between the RWCDS of the future without the proposed actions in place (No-Action condition) and the future with the proposed actions in place and the associated development operation (With-Action condition).

For the purpose of the environmental analyses, the No-Action condition represents the future absent the proposed actions and serves as the baseline by which the proposed project (or With-Action condition) is compared to determine the potential for significant environment impacts. The difference between the No-Action and With-Action conditions represents the increment to be analyzed in the CEQR process.

BUILD YEAR

It is assumed that all elements of the Proposed Project would be completed and operational in 2030. It is anticipated that the Proposed Project would be constructed in several stages, during which time Citi Field would remain operational. The staged construction approach would allow for the availability of parking for Citi Field patrons during the baseball seasons throughout the entire construction program. The new developments at Areas of Development A and B would not open to the public until 2030. The structured parking and development within Development A would be constructed between 2026 and 2030 and operational in 2030 when the full development is open to the public. The structured parking and development within Development B would be constructed between 2028 and 2030 and operational in 2030 when the full development is open to the public. The balance of the parking on site would be constructed and delivered in phases prior to 2030. It is anticipated that the parking structure within Development D would be constructed between 2026 and 2028, and operational beginning in early 2028. The parking structure within Development C would be constructed between 2026 and 2027 and operational beginning in late 2027.

NO ACTION SCENARIO

It is assumed that in the future without the Proposed Actions (the No Action scenario), the Development Site would continue operating under existing conditions; it would remain as a paved parking area for Citi Field under the current lease agreement with the City, which runs through 2105. The surface parking lots within the Development Site currently contain 7,423 parking spaces.

WITH ACTION SCENARIO

The Proposed Actions would establish the use, size, building location and other key features of the Proposed Project. The With-Action condition program is shown in **Table 1** and reflects the reasonable worst-case development scenario that can be developed in accordance with the Proposed Actions described above.

For purposes of analyzing a reasonable worst-case development scenario in terms of the proposed massing and heights, a maximum envelope for each Area of Development has been established. The maximum height would be 344 feet for the tallest portions of Area of Development A, 114 feet for Area of Development B, 100 feet for Area of Development C, and 142 feet for Area of Development D. The Proposed Actions would establish the use, size, building location, and other key features of the Proposed Project. The With-Action condition program is shown in **Table 1** and reflects the reasonable worst-case development scenario that can be developed in accordance with the Proposed Actions described above. In particular, this program represents the maximum amount of development that the Gaming Facility Location Board may authorize in its approval

of a gaming facility license application. A license issued by the New York State Gaming Commission to operate a gaming facility would be conditioned upon and require construction in accordance with the specific development program authorized in the application. As a result, the Applicant would not be permitted to exceed the amounts listed in **Table 1**.

As noted in Chapter 2, Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy, a soccer-specific stadium is proposed in the future No-Action condition as part of the Willets Point-Phase 2 Development. The Willets Point-Phase 2 Development Final Second Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (CEQR No. 23DME005Q) dated February 23, 2024, states that parking for attendees of events at the soccer-specific stadium would be on the Development Site via an agreement with Ballpark, LLC. Standards for the timing of events at the soccer-specific stadium and Citi Field will be established to ensure parking spaces are not required for both venues at the same time.

H. PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

LAND USE, ZONING, AND PUBLIC POLICY

The analysis presented in this chapter concludes that the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts on land use, zoning, or public policy.

The Proposed Project would result in a land use change on the Development Site, that would enhance land uses on the Development Site, transforming underutilized, largely asphalt surface parking areas into a major mixed-use development together with significant public park spaces. The Proposed Actions would not directly displace any land use other than paved parking lots, nor would they introduce new land uses that would be incompatible with surrounding land uses. The Proposed Project would fully replace the existing surface parking spaces that are accessory to Citi Field with structured parking garages and would not adversely affect the operation of the existing stadium use. The Proposed Actions would introduce new land uses on the Development Site—including commercial, entertainment, office, and community facility space—that are compatible with surrounding residential, commercial, and industrial uses as well as planned future residential development.

As described below, the Proposed Actions would not adversely affect or change surrounding land uses, including open space. The Development Site is within Flushing Meadows Corona Park and currently mapped parkland, but its existing use is surface parking, and it is therefore not used for active or passive recreation uses. While the Proposed Actions include a demapping action for portions of the mapped parkland on the Development Site, the Proposed Project would for the first time create public park spaces for active or passive recreation uses on the asphalt surface parking areas. These public park spaces would provide enhanced connectivity to adjacent open spaces by allowing visitors to walk directly from the waterfront and Malcolm X Promenade through the Development Site to the southern portion of Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Thus, the Proposed Project would enhance land use in the study area by activating the Development Site with land uses that support full-time, year-round activity.

Currently, the parking lots that comprise a majority of the Development Site are largely inactive, and closed to the public, except for when events are held at Citi Field. New buildings and public park spaces created as part of the Proposed Project would become a destination for New Yorkers and visitors alike and introduce a new population of workers to the area. Pedestrian improvements would enhance walkability, better connecting pedestrians to both the southern portion of Flushing Meadows Corona Park and the Malcolm X promenade. Proposed pedestrian, roadway, and transit improvements would also support the new neighborhood that will be developed to the east of the Project Area through the Willets Point Project.

The Proposed Actions are consistent with a number of strategies and goals set out in various citywide and neighborhood-level public policies. By providing new opportunities for employment and recreation, the Proposed Project would help to achieve goals laid out in New York City's Economic Recovery Blueprint, the Flushing West Neighborhood Planning Study, and OneNYC 2050. Installation of green infrastructure and

resiliency improvements would address local challenges called out in the Flushing Creek Study and Flushing Meadows Corona Park Strategic Framework Plan.

Overall, the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts to land use, zoning, or public policy.

SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The Proposed Project would introduce additional entertainment and recreational uses, retail uses, restaurants, parking, open space, and a hotel to the study area, which would be consistent with existing land use patterns and those being developed in the study area under future No-Action conditions. Existing and No-Action condition land uses in the study area include multiple major regional attractions, including the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, Citi-Field, and the NY Hall of Science.

The potential for direct displacement of businesses and residents, as well as retail market saturations, or adverse effects on specific industries, do not meet the thresholds established in the *CEQR Technical Manual.* A preliminary analysis of indirect business displacement was conducted for three analysis subareas surrounding the Development Site—Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Willets Point, and Corona. While the Proposed Project does not include new residential uses, it is likely to result in an increase of the residential population in the study area due to the relocation to the study area of a number of employees hired from external markets to work at the Development Site. Therefore, a preliminary analysis of indirect residential displacement was conducted for the quarter-mile study area.

The Proposed Project is intended to provide a year-round integrated entertainment use, comprising destination entertainment and recreational uses, including up to 2,300 hotel rooms, a music hall, gaming facility, convention and meeting space, 316,790 gross square feet (gsf) of restaurants, 134,330 gsf of retail, and 149,270 gsf of visitor amenities. It is therefore expected that visitor demand for accommodations and services would primarily be met on the Development Site. Some visitors would also patronize surrounding neighborhoods.

INDIRECT BUSINESS DISPLACEMENT IN SUBAREAS 1 AND 2

There are very few commercial uses to the north and south of the Development Site in Subarea 1 – Flushing Meadows Corona Park, though this subarea contains the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center and other regional attractions found in Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Therefore, Subarea 1 is not expected to be affected by the introduction of regional entertainment uses by the Proposed Project. Commercial uses to the east of the Development Site in Subarea 2 – Willets Point include the existing Citi Field stadium and the large Willets Point Project site that is planned to be redeveloped with residential, entertainment, and commercial uses in three phases of development. It is anticipated that any new demand created for accommodations or services from the Proposed Project would be readily absorbed in the With-Action condition in Subarea 2 – Willets Point because the subarea is proposed to be built to accommodate regional demand from the proposed soccer stadium and existing nearby regional uses.

INDIRECT BUSINESS DISPLACEMENT IN SUBAREA 3

The area to the west of the Proposed Development, Subarea 3 – Corona contains a well-established local commercial corridor along Roosevelt Avenue. This subarea has long been established with residential uses and neighborhood-level uses, which have coexisted alongside the existing major attractions in the study area. While the demand for accommodations-type services, such as hotel and restaurants, generated by visitors to the Proposed Project would generally be satisfied by the proposed uses on the Development Site, it is anticipated that the Proposed Project would create some additional demand for accommodations-type services in Subarea 3-Corona. Existing accommodations-type services, and other uses that serve regional visitors in the subarea, already serve visitors of the existing major attractions in the study area, and it is anticipated that these businesses would absorb some of this additional demand. If this new demand is stronger than anticipated, the Proposed Project could result in indirect displacement of businesses in the subarea that typically do not

serve regional visitors. However, these existing uses in Subarea 3 - Corona are not unique to the subarea and can be found elsewhere in the subarea, Queens Community District 4, and greater Queens. Potential indirect displacement of these businesses would not significantly alter economic conditions in the subarea—which would continue to be primarily characterized by services, retail, and food service uses that serve both the local population and visitors to regional attractions.

Therefore, it is not anticipated that the introduction by the Proposed Project of new regional entertainment uses to the study area would create significant adverse impacts to the socioeconomic character of the study area.

INDIRECT RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT

A preliminary analysis found that the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts to the socioeconomic conditions of the study area due to indirect residential displacement. The Proposed Project would introduce approximately 7,400 new workers to the Development Site. It is estimated that approximately 155 of those new workers would be hired from external markets, of which an estimated 79 would move to Queens. Although unlikely, to be conservative, it is assumed that those 79 employees and their households would move to the quarter-mile study area. The estimated average incomes of the new households would be higher than the average incomes of the study area populations. However, the estimated new population would represent an increase of approximately 2 percent over No-Action conditions, which would not be expected to introduce or accelerate a trend that would potentially lead to the displacement of vulnerable residential populations or create a significant indirect residential displacement adverse impact. Therefore, the Proposed Project does not have the potential to result in significant adverse impacts due to indirect residential displacement.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse impacts to community facilities and services as defined by the *CEQR Technical Manual.* Since the Proposed Project would not alter any existing community facilities, whether by displacement of the facility or other physical change, no significant adverse impacts would occur due to direct effects on community facilities and services and no further analysis of direct effects is warranted. An initial screening assessment of potential indirect impacts on public elementary and intermediate schools, early childhood programs, and libraries found no potential for indirect impacts to these services. Since the Proposed Project would not introduce a new residential population that would utilize existing public schools, early childhood programs, or libraries, no indirect impacts to these facilities would occur due to increased demand. Per *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance, analysis of police and fire services and health care facilities is warranted if a proposed action would introduce a sizeable new neighborhood where none existed before. While the Proposed Project would not introduce a new residential population, a preliminary assessment of potential indirect effects on police and fire services is included due to the size of the Proposed Project and the introduction of new worker and other non-residential populations. This analysis found no potential for significant adverse impacts to police and fire services.

OPEN SPACE

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a proposed project may result in a significant impact on open space resources if (a) there would be direct displacement or alteration of existing open space within the study area that would have a significant adverse effect on existing users; or (b) it would reduce the open space ratio (OSR) and consequently result in the overburdening of existing facilities or further exacerbate a deficiency in open space. The *CEQR Technical Manual* indicates that a decrease in the non-residential OSR below City guidelines of 0.15 acres of passive space per 1,000 non-residents could be considered significant.

Given that the Development Site is mapped as parkland and the Proposed Project would result in uses that are not considered to be park use, the Proposed Project thus requires parkland alienation legislation. However, the Proposed Project would not have a direct effect on open space resources in the study area as defined in

the *CEQR Technical Manual*. Although mapped as parkland, the Development Site contains surface parking lots leased to the Mets, is not available to the general public—except for Citi Field, United States Tennis Association, and Flushing Meadows Corona Park events and commuter parking—and is not otherwise used for recreational purposes. The Proposed Project would replace the existing surface parking with structured parking and introduce at least 20 acres of active and passive public park space with landscaping and open space amenities as well as private rooftop open space for visitors to the new entertainment uses. As noted in **Project Description**, portions of the Development Site are predominantly subject to a lease with the City. Hours of operation and detail regarding the operations of the public park space would be coordinated with the Applicant and NYC Parks, subject to approval by NYC Parks, and defined in future lease and operational agreements. It would also provide new connectivity between the Malcolm X Promenade and Flushing Meadows Corona Park. The Proposed Project would not have any significant adverse impacts on existing open space in terms of air quality, noise, or shadows (see Shadows, Air Quality, and Noise; for additional information). With the addition of the new public park space and no loss of existing open spaces (but rather a net increase in usable public open space), the Proposed Project would not result in a significant adverse direct impact to open space resources.

The Proposed Project is expected to introduce new non-residents. As such, pursuant to the CEQR Technical Manual, a detailed open space analysis was conducted for a quarter-mile study area to assess the potential for indirect effects. In the With-Action condition, there would be a passive OSR of approximately 1.092 acres per 1,000 non-residents. The passive OSR is well above the City's guideline of 0.15 acres of passive open space per 1,000 non-residents. Furthermore, the combined residential and non-residential passive OSR would be 0.892 and remain well above the project-specific weighted guideline of 0.214 acres of passive open space per 1,000 residents and non-residents.

As noted above, with the introduction of least 20 acres of active and passive public park space and no reduction in existing open space, the Proposed Project is creating a net increase in usable public open space as compared to existing and No-Action conditions. However, both open space ratios would be reduced from the No-Action condition due to the increase in the number of open space users (non-residents) resulting from the Proposed Project. As noted above, these ratios would remain well above City guidelines. For these reasons, there would be no significant adverse impact in the study area to open space resources as a result of the Proposed Project.

SHADOWS

A detailed shadows analysis determined that if the Proposed Actions are approved, the Proposed Project would cast incremental shadows on five resources identified in the Tier 3 analysis. Malcolm X Promenade and Flushing Bay would only receive incremental shading on the December 21 analysis day. Incremental shadow cast on Malcolm X Promenade would be short in duration and would neither detract from the enjoyment of the open space resource by park users nor negatively affect vegetation. Flushing Bay would receive incremental shadow for only 55 minutes on approximately 0.5 acres of surface waterbody and therefore would not negatively affect fish or wildlife species. The Proposed Project would cast incremental shadows on a small portion of Flushing Meadows Corona Park to the southwest on three analysis days (not December 21). However, this portion does not contain any active or passive recreation uses, and the affected area of the resource would receive nearly uninterrupted sunlight for the majority of those analysis days. Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are anticipated.

A collection of publicly accessible No-Action open spaces will be completed as part of Willets Point Phase 1 and Phase 2. These open spaces will serve primarily as landscaped pedestrian connections to facilitate access to the soccer-specific stadium from the Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station. These open spaces are located on the Northern Parcel, Stadium Parcel, and Triangle Parcel of the Willets Point Development Plan. The Northern Parcel open space, which will include a wide landscaped strip of publicly accessible space, would receive incremental shading from the Proposed Project on the December 21 analysis day only, for a period of 3 hours and 23 minutes from 11:30AM until the end of the analysis period at 2:53PM.

During this period, the open space entry plaza to the Stadium Parcel at its southwest corner would be mostly unshaded.

The open spaces that surround the Willets Point Phase 2 stadium building (the Stadium Parcel), which include an entrance plaza at the southwest corner of the stadium and landscaped strips along the west (126th Street/Seaver Way) and south (38th Avenue), would receive shading from the Proposed Project on the May 6/August 6 and June 21 analysis days. The landscaped strip on the east frontage of the stadium on 127th Street would not receive any incremental shading on any of the four analysis days. The Seaver Way frontage and the entrance plaza on the stadium's southwest corner, would receive 48 minutes of incremental shading from 4:30PM until the end of the analysis period at 5:18PM on the May 6/August 6 analysis day. This area would receive one hour and 30 minutes of shading on the June 21 analysis day from 4:31PM until the end of the analysis period at 6:01PM. However, when the Stadium Parcel open spaces would be partially in shadow during these two time periods, the Northern Parcel open space would be unshaded. Additionally, portions of the Triangle Parcel open spaces, described below, would also be unshaded, particularly on the western side of the parcel adjacent to Seaver Way.

The landscaped entry plaza located at the south end of the Triangle Parcel contains the largest open space that will be created in either Willets Point Phase 1 or Phase 2. The entry plaza and connected publicly accessible space on the Triangle Parcel would receive incremental shading on the greatest area at the end of the December 21 analysis day (2:53PM), when approximately 70 percent of this area would be shaded by the Proposed Project. The greatest incremental shadow area on the March 21/September analysis day would similarly occur at the end of the analysis period (4:29PM) when approximately 35 percent of this area of the resource would be shaded by the Proposed Project. However, during periods when the Triangle Parcel would receive incremental shadow from the Proposed Project, portions of open space on the Northern Parcel and Stadium Parcel would remain in sunlight as described above. The Northern Parcel would only be shaded on the December 21 analysis day and unshaded on the remaining days. During the periods when the Triangle Parcel would receive incremental shading, the landscaped strip of the Stadium Parcel on 127th Street would be unshaded on all four analysis days and the Seaver Way frontage, including the entry plaza on the stadium's southwest corner would be unshaded on the December 21 and March 21/September 21 analysis days. Additionally, the entry plaza would receive direct and unobstructed sunlight from approximately 11:00AM until approximately 12:12PM on the March 21/September 21 analysis day, until approximately 12:46PM on the May 6/August 6 analysis day, and until approximately 1:10PM on the June 21 analysis day.

The Willets Point Phase 1 and Phase 2 open spaces comprise narrow landscaped areas and walking paths that connect to larger open areas such as lawns and entry plazas at the southwest corners of the stadium building and the Triangle Parcel. Features of the open spaces include stepped terraces, stairs, walking paths, paved areas, and a wide flight of steps. The incremental shading from the Proposed Project would be experienced by users of these connective walking paths for brief periods as they traverse the space. According to the Willets Point Phase 2 Development FSSEIS, dated February 23, 2024, there are no benches planned for the space, where park users might linger for longer periods and thus be affected by incremental shadows for more time.

The shadows analysis in the Willets Point Phase 2 Development FSSEIS notes that, while the specific planting plan for these open spaces have not been planned at this time, it is anticipated that shade-tolerant-plantings would be planned for these open spaces because they would likely thrive best. Incremental shading from the Proposed Project would not affect such shade-tolerant-plantings. In addition, as noted above, when specific portions of the Willets Point Phase 2 Development open spaces are in shadow, substantial portions of the other open spaces would be in sunlight. For these reasons, the Proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse shadow impacts on the Willets Point Development Open Spaces.

Incremental shadow from Area of Development A would reach only a small portion of Flushing Meadows Corona Park (O4) to the southwest that contains no passive or active recreational amenities and would not be of sufficient duration to negatively impact vegetation. Malcolm X Promenade (O1) and Flushing Bay (N1)

would only receive incremental shading on the December 21 analysis day and for a short duration, which would not negatively impact sunlight sensitive features like surface waterbody, vegetation or active and passive recreational amenities.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts resulting from incremental shadows cast by the Proposed Project are anticipated to occur as a result of the Proposed Actions, and no mitigation is required.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

This chapter considers how the Proposed Project could impact archaeological and architectural resources.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

No archaeological sites have been previously recorded within the Development Site, which is the location where new ground disturbance is proposed. Additionally, extensive prior ground disturbance within the Development Site would have destroyed any potential archaeological resources in the No-Action condition. Consequently, there are no archaeological concerns for the With-Action condition.

ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

The Development Site, Project Area, and Study Area contain portions of the S/NR-eligible Flushing Meadows Corona Park Historic District, which has several contributing resources. Two of these contributing resources are within the Development Site and Project Area—the Mets-Willets Point Subway Station/IRT Interlocking Tower and the Passerelle Bridge. Six of the contributing resources (including the Porpoise Bridge, which also is individually S/NR eligible) are located within the Study Area, south of the Development Site and Project Area. The final architectural resource within the Study Area is the World's Fair Marina Pavilions/Candela Structures (S/NR-eligible), located north of the Development Site and Project Area.

In the With-Action condition, the Mets-Willets Point Subway Station and IRT Interlocking Tower, a S/NR-eligible resource, would be directly affected because the proposed station improvements would involve physical changes to the resources' existing conditions.

In their Effect Finding letter, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NYSHPO) found that the proposed Queens Future Project, including transit improvements, would have no adverse impact on historic and archaeological resources, provided certain conditions are met. These conditions include continued consultation with NYSHPO on the project design, the subway renovations, and the interaction with the Passerelle Bridge.[7]

During the construction period, the Proposed Project could also have an impact on the Mets-Willets Point Subway Station and IRT Interlocking Tower due to vibrations from the construction of the Proposed Project buildings, some of which would be located within 90 feet of the resource. In addition, the Proposed Project could have a direct impact on the Passerelle Bridge, which also is within 90 feet of the Proposed Project, due to vibrations during construction. In order to avoid or minimize impacts such as vibrations, NYSHPO also indicated that a Construction Protection Plan (CPP) will need to be implemented for the Mets-Willets Point Subway Station and IRT Interlocking Tower and/or the Passerelle Bridge.

Because of topography, distance, the elevated Whitestone Expressway, and intervening trees, views of the World's Fair Marina Pavilions/Candela Structures are limited from many locations within the study area. It is not expected that the new development would block or alter the views or the setting of these resources, and, as such, would not have any indirect impacts.

The proposed new parking structure immediately to the east of the Passerelle Bridge (Area of Development C parking garage) would be higher in elevation than the Passerelle Bridge and as such could have an indirect

[7] McIvor, Sara, New York State Historic Preservation Office Historic Site Restoration Coordinator. Letter to Ingrid Young, Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination, Queens Future Project. August 9, 2024.

impact on the resource because it may alter its setting. As the Proposed Project's designs move through the approval process, the project team will consult with LPC and NYSHPO, as well as other agencies as relevant, to minimize any potential indirect impacts on the Passerelle Bridge.

The remaining architectural resources within the Study Area are located within the Flushing Meadows Corona Park Historic District more than 200 feet from the Development Site and Project Area, and south of both the Mets-Willets Point Subway Station and the Mets-Willets Point Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) Station and LIRR tracks. Collectively, these transportation elements, which are raised above the ground level, form a visual barrier between those architectural resources and the Proposed Project location. It is not expected that the Proposed Actions would block views toward this portion of the historic district or block views of any of those architectural resources located within the district. As such, in the With-Action condition, there would be no indirect impacts to those architectural resources.

URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

URBAN DESIGN

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

VISUAL RESOURCES

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

NATURAL RESOURCES

According to Chapter 11 of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, disturbance to natural resources can result in effects that directly alter the condition of a resource during construction or indirectly alter the condition of onsite, adjacent, or nearby resources after construction is completed. The natural resources examined in this assessment include habitats and vegetation, wildlife, rare/protected species, and wetlands and surface waters.

Redevelopment of the Project Area as facilitated by the Proposed Actions would result in habitat replacement and removal of vegetation, both of which are identified as direct effects to natural resources in Chapter 11 of the *CEQR Technical Manual.* As compared to existing conditions, habitat replacement under the Proposed Project would result in an overall expansion of vegetated habitats and a reduction in unvegetated/impervious

surfaces, thereby improving habitat conditions and resulting in a net ecological benefit for the Project Area over time. As a result of proposed tree replacement measures that would increase the quantity and quality of trees within the Project Area, the direct effects of tree removals under the Proposed Actions would be fully mitigated over time as the replacement trees reach maturity.

As the quality and quantity of vegetated habitats and trees would increase significantly as compared to existing conditions, habitat conditions for resident wildlife in the post-construction Project Area would improve. Due to the overall expansion of vegetated habitat, the existing faunal assemblage of species adapted to landscaped settings within urban areas would continue to utilize the Project Area at increased species population densities. Therefore, direct effects on wildlife from habitat loss due to tree removal under the Proposed Project would not be permanent and would be fully mitigated over time through the maturation of replacement trees and expansion of vegetated habitats.

There are currently no records for New York State or federally listed plants, wildlife, or significant natural communities in the Project Area or vicinity, and the Project Area and vicinity do not provide suitable habitat for the four federally listed species known to occur regionally. Accordingly, the Proposed Project would not result in direct or indirect effects to rare/protected species.

In Jurisdictional Determination No. 2-6302-00857/00004, issued July 31, 2024, the NYSDEC determined that the Project Area is not located within jurisdictional areas regulated under the Tidal Wetlands Act (Environmental Conservation Law Article 25), the Freshwater Wetlands Act (Environmental Conservation Law Article 24), or under the Costal Erosion Hazard Area (CEHA) program (Environmental Conservation Law Article 34). Accordingly, NYSDEC Tidal Wetlands, Freshwater Wetlands, or CEHA permits would not be required for the Proposed Project. As there are no wetlands or surface waters located at or adjacent to the Project Area, the Proposed Project would not result in direct effects to same. Indirect effects to Flushing Bay (located approximately 120 feet (ft) to the north of the Project Area) due to shadows, stormwater generation, and sanitary flows would not result in significant adverse effects to this natural resource. Potential adverse impacts to Flushing Bay and other natural resources during construction will be avoided through best management practices and adherence to all conditions of an NYSDEC-approved Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Several Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) and subsurface investigations have been conducted at the Development Site and concluded that soil, groundwater, and soil vapor contamination is present. The contamination identified is attributed to historic fill, potential petroleum impacts, potential underground storage tanks, methane and VOCs in soil vapor, and potential impacts from off-site sources. While additional characterization of subsurface conditions will be necessary to supplement the existing data for addressing specific areas of ground disturbance, the findings of any supplementary investigation are not expected to change significantly from what is presented herein.

As indicated in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the hazardous materials (E)-Designation is an institutional control that may be placed on a site to establish a hazardous materials review and approval framework. It provides a mechanism to ensure that testing for and remediation of hazardous materials, if necessary, are completed prior to future development of an affected site, thereby eliminating the potential for a hazardous materials impact. (E)-Designated parcels are administered under the authority of the New York City Mayor's Office of Environmental Remediation (OER).

Based on the known contamination, an (E)-Designation (E-834) would be placed on the Development Site (Block 1787, Lot 1 & 20 and Block 2018, Lot 1500) to ensure that supplemental testing for and remediation of hazardous materials, if necessary, are completed prior to future development. The obligation and responsibility for any testing and remediation under the (E)-Designation will be assumed by the Applicant as set forth in a lease agreement. Under the (E)-Designation, OER would be authorized to require supplemental subsurface remedial investigation (RI) to further characterize specific areas of ground disturbance on the

Development Site for contaminants relating to soil, groundwater, and soil vapor conditions. Subsurface contaminants would subsequently be addressed through the development and implementation of an OER-approved Remedial Action Work Plan (RAWP) and Construction Health and Safety Plan (CHASP). This would mitigate potential risk and exposure relating to the presence of hazardous materials in the subsurface by implementing institutional and/or engineering controls, as necessary.

By implementing the OER-approved RAWP and CHASP, no potential exposure or significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials would be expected to occur during or after construction of the Proposed Project.

WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

The Proposed Project would result in a total daily water demand of approximately 0.91 mgd. Although the Proposed Project does not exceed the CEQR threshold of 1 million gallons per day that would require a preliminary infrastructure assessment of water supply or affect the 72-inch trunk water main, the Applicant coordinated with the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) regarding the local distribution system to the Queens Future Project. To provide redundancy and resiliency, the Proposed Project would include the construction of a new 20-inch watermain[8]. The Applicant will coordinate with NYCDEP, and other city agencies as appropriate, on the specifics of the new water infrastructure, including routing and connections (anticipated to be either to existing mains on Roosevelt Avenue or Shea Road), to the water distribution system that are acceptable to NYCDEP.

Because the With-Action condition exceeds the threshold of 100,000 sf of commercial development within a separately sewered area, an analysis of the Proposed Actions' potential impacts on the City's wastewater and stormwater conveyance and treatment system was provided.

Sanitary sewage generated by the Proposed Actions would discharge to the Bowery Bay Wastewater Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF), which has a State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES)-permitted dry weather flow capacity of 150 mgd. The average monthly flow to Bowery Bay WRRF over a 12-month period is 101 mgd. The Proposed Actions have the potential to result in a total generation of 0.68 mgd over the No-Action total sewage generation. This incremental increase in sanitary flow would represent approximately 0.45 percent of the Bowery Bay WWRF's SPDES-permitted capacity. The projected increase in sanitary sewage would not cause the Bowery Bay WWRF to exceed its operational capacity or SPDES-permitted capacity.

Since the publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), NYCDEP has coordinated with the Applicant regarding the sanitary sewer infrastructure. A Drainage Proposal Plan for the Willets Point Project Phase 2 Development was approved by NYCDEP; the Approved Drainage Plan included flows from the Willets Point Project Phase 1 and Phase 2 Developments, and flows from a previously proposed but now canceled infrastructure project. This infrastructure project had a projected flow of 1.75 cfs that will never be realized but was accounted for within the Approved Drainage Plan and NYCDEP's assessment of the capacity of the 24-inch sewer under the Grand Central Parkway and 37th Avenue Pump Station. Because the flow from the Proposed Project is 1.43 cfs, less than the 1.75 cfs from the canceled infrastructure project, the flow from the Proposed Project would not exceed the flow within the previously Approved Drainage Plan.

NYCDEP prepared a hydraulic analysis of the 24-inch sewer and the hydraulic model demonstrates that the 24-inch sewer is under surcharge conditions in the No-Action condition (with the approved flows from the Willets Point Project Phase 1 and Phase 2 Developments and canceled infrastructure project); the surcharge condition would continue in the With-Action condition. However, because of the decrease in flow from the Proposed Project, as compared to the flows in the NYCDEP Approved Drainage Plan noted above, the Proposed Project would decrease the surcharge condition relative to the surcharge under the NYCDEP

[8] Or an alternative proposed by the Applicant that is acceptable to NYCDEP.

Approved Drainage Plan. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not require modifications to the existing 24-inch sewer.

In the No-Action condition, NYCDEP is undertaking a FEMA resiliency project for the 37th Avenue Pump Station (preliminary design is anticipated to be completed in 12-14 months) which would evaluate a resiliency upgrade or replacement. If the Proposed Project is granted a gaming license by the NYS Gaming Commission, NYCDEP would evaluate the design for the Proposed Project as it relates to potential recommendations for the resiliency upgrade or replacement of the 37th Avenue pump station.

The Project Area is served by four storm sewer systems—two New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) outfalls and two separate New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) outfalls. All four outfalls serve the Flushing Bay. The *CEQR Technical Manual* indicates that a proposed development that increases total volume flows by 2 percent or more over existing conditions in a drainage area of concern could be subject to a review by NYCDEP. The total stormwater runoff volumes to Outfall #1 (NYSDOT outfall) and Outfall #4 (NYCDEP outfall) decrease between existing and proposed conditions and do not warrant further review. The total stormwater runoff volumes to Outfall #2 (NYCDEP outfall) and Outfall #3 (NYSDOT outfall) have the potential to result in a flow volume increase of over 2 percent and therefore the With-Action Flow Volume Calculation Matrix were reviewed by NYCDEP. Stormwater best management practices (BMPs) would be required in accordance with the NYCDEP Unified Stormwater Rule (USWR) guidelines, which includes requirements for bringing the Development Site into compliance with the allowable stormwater release rate. To achieve the release rate, stormwater could be managed by utilizing one or a combination of detention techniques. Green technologies and subsurface detention could be implemented to retain or release stormwater with slowed discharge rates to control peak runoff rates. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse water, wastewater, or stormwater impacts.

SOLID WASTE AND SANITATION SERVICES

The Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse impact on solid waste and sanitation services. The Proposed Actions would generate an increment above the No-Action condition of approximately 464.97 tons per week of solid waste, which would represent approximately 0.628 percent of the City's anticipated future commercial waste generation and would not directly affect a solid waste management facility. None of the additional solid waste generated by the Proposed Actions would be handled by the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY), and 100 percent would be handled by private carters.

Overall, the uses facilitated by the Proposed Actions would be expected to generate solid waste equivalent to approximately 31 commercial carter truck loads per week, according to *CEQR Technical Manual* Table 14-1. Although this would be an increase compared with conditions in the future without the Proposed Actions, it would not affect DSNY-managed services. Under the Commercial Waste Zone Program, there will be up to three private carters authorized to serve each designated zone and up to five carters authorized for citywide containerized collection by 2026. Commercial collection fleets are expected to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate this increased demand for solid waste collection. As such, the Proposed Actions would not result in an increase in solid waste that would overburden available waste management capacity. The Proposed Actions would also not conflict with, or require any amendments to, the City's solid waste management objectives as stated in the SWMP. The Applicant would also explore several measures to reduce solid waste generation from the Proposed Project. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse impact on solid waste and sanitation services.

ENERGY

Although the Proposed Actions would create an increased demand on energy systems, including electricity and gas, the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse impact related to energy systems. Development assumed in the With-Action condition would result in increased demand of approximately 793,815,800 thousand British thermal units (MBtus) of energy per year (according to Table 15-1 in the *CEQR*

Technical Manual), compared with the No-Action condition. This increase in annual demand represents less than 0.01 percent of the projected service demand for New York City in the 2030 build year and would not have a significant impact on energy transmission or services. The Proposed Actions would result in a negligible amount of annual energy consumption compared to the amount generated by New York City every year and would not place a significant burden on the Con Edison energy system. In addition, any new development resulting from the Proposed Actions would be required to comply with the NYCECC, which dictates performance standards of heating, ventilation, and air condition systems as well as the exterior building envelope of new buildings. Therefore, no significant adverse energy impacts would result from the Proposed Actions.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation analyses were prepared for nine peak hours: four analysis peak hours on days without Mets games at Citi Field, and five analysis peak hours on days with Mets games at Citi Field. Weekday AM (8 AM-9 AM), midday (1 PM-2 PM), PM (5 PM-6 PM), and Saturday PM (7 PM-8 PM) peak hours were considered on days without a scheduled Mets game at Citi Field. Weekday PM (5 PM-6 PM), Saturday PM Pre Game (6 PM-7 PM), Saturday PM Post Game (6:30 PM-7:30 PM), Sunday midday (1 PM-2 PM) and Sunday PM (5 PM-6 PM) peak hours were considered on days for which a Mets game is scheduled and would represent a worst-case scenario with patrons arriving for or departing from Mets games.

TRAFFIC

Local Roadway Network

The Proposed Project would generate a total of 1,330 vehicles per hour (vph) (899 "ins" and 431 "outs") during the non-gameday weekday AM peak hour; 3,441 vph (1,861 "ins" and 1,580 "outs") during the non-gameday weekday midday peak hour; 4,233 vph (2,226 "ins" and 2,007 "outs) during the non-gameday weekday PM peak hour; 4,082 vph (2,194 "ins" and 1,888 "outs") during the non-gameday Saturday PM peak hour; 4,217 vph (2,217 "ins" and 2,000 "outs") during the gameday weekday PM peak hour; 4,379 vph (2,217 "ins" and 2,162 "outs) during the gameday Saturday PM Pre Game peak hour; 4,079 vph (2,201 "ins" and 1,878 "outs") during the gameday Saturday PM Post Game peak hour; 2,987 vph (1,621 "ins" and 1,366 "outs") during the gameday Sunday midday peak hour; and 3,846 vph (2,157 "ins" and 1,689 "outs) during the gameday Sunday PM peak hour.

Of the 50 intersections analyzed in the With-Action condition, the Proposed Project would result in significant adverse traffic impacts at 11 intersections during the non-gameday weekday AM peak hour; 12 intersections during the non-gameday weekday midday peak hour; 19 intersections during the non-gameday weekday PM peak hour; 10 intersections during the non-gameday Saturday PM peak hour; 17 intersections during the gameday weekday PM peak hour; 17 intersections during the gameday Saturday PM Pre Game peak hour; 12 intersections during the gameday Saturday PM Post Game peak hour; 13 intersections during the gameday Sunday midday peak hour; and 14 intersections during the gameday Sunday PM peak hour. The identification and evaluation of traffic capacity improvements needed to mitigate potential significant adverse traffic impacts created by the Proposed Projected are presented in **Mitigation**.

HIGHWAY NETWORK

Of the 77 highway segments (including, basic, merging, diverging, and weaving segments) analyzed in the With-Action condition along the Grand Central Parkway west of the site, the Van Wyck and Whitestone Expressways north and east of the site, the Proposed Project would result in significant adverse traffic impacts to 13 highway segments during the weekday AM peak hour; 18 highway segments during the non-gameday weekday midday peak hour; 21 highway segments during the non-gameday weekday PM peak hour; 16 highway segments during the non-gameday Saturday PM peak hour; 17 highway segment during the gameday weekday PM peak hour; 11 highway segments during the gameday Saturday PM Pre Game peak hour; 19 highway segments during the gameday Saturday PM Post Game peak hour; 10 highway segments during the gameday Sunday midday peak hour, and 21 highway segments during the gameday Sunday PM peak hour.

PARKING

When completed, the Proposed Project would provide approximately 13,750 parking spaces between Area A Northfield parking structure, Southfield parking structure and surface lot, and Area B (including the player lot). On non-gamedays, the Proposed Project would provide enough spaces to accommodate project-generated parking demand. On gamedays, parking for Mets Patrons would be accommodated at the Northfield and Southfield parking structures, with Mets VIP parking at the Area B parking structure. In addition, Mets Patrons would be able to continue parking at the Stadium View East, Marina East, and Marina West surface parking lots to the north of the stadium, which are outside of the Development Site and are also utilized under Existing Conditions. Gameday trips destined for Area B would be fully accommodated between the Area A podium and tower parking structures on gamedays. Wayfinding signage would be provided in order to facilitate vehicle flow at the various parking facilities. As a result, all project-generated and Mets patron parking would be fully accommodated on both gamedays and non-gamedays, and no parking shortfalls are expected as a result of the Proposed Project. Therefore, there is no anticipated impact to the local area's parking supply under the With-Action condition.

SUBWAYS

The Mets-Willets Point subway station was analyzed during the weekday AM and PM peak commuter peak periods, as well as weekday game ingress, Saturday game ingress, and Saturday game egress conditions to address worst-case conditions that occur on gamedays. A Baseline Scenario without modifications to the station, as well as a With Improvements Scenario with proposed station enhancements were considered for the With-Action condition. The analysis determined that under the Baseline Scenario without modifications, all subway station elements would operate at acceptable levels of service during the non-gameday weekday AM, gameday weekday PM, Saturday PM Pre Game, and Saturday PM Post Game peak hours. One element, the Mezzanine Outside Fare Zone Passageway, would be significantly impacted during the non-gameday weekday PM peak hour. Under the With Improvements Scenario, all station elements would operate at acceptable levels of service during the analysis peak hours. Additionally, the With Improvements Scenario would add ADA accessibility to the station, including access to all platforms.

A subway line-haul analysis was conducted for the No. 7 subway line and determined that the subway line would operate at over-capacity conditions during the Saturday PM peak hour. However, the project would result in an increase of 4.60 passengers per car in the Flushing-bound direction during this peak hour, which is below the five subway passengers per car threshold that is considered a significant impact per the *CEQR Technical Manual* criteria. Therefore, significant subway line-haul impacts are not expected as a result of the project.

BUSES

Bus line-haul analyses were conducted for three bus routes in the vicinity of the Development Site (Q19, Q48, and Q66) based on the *CEQR Technical Manual's* screening assessment. The With-Action condition analysis determined that there would be adequate supply for the Proposed Project's projected demand for the Q19 and Q66 bus routes in both the eastbound and westbound directions, as well as the Q48 bus route in both the eastbound and westbound directions during the weekday AM peak hour. However, the Proposed Project would result in a capacity shortfall for the Q48 bus route in the eastbound and westbound directions during the weekday PM and Saturday PM peak hours; this bus route would be significantly impacted.

The identification and evaluation of bus service improvements needed to mitigate potential significant adverse bus impacts created by the Proposed Projected are presented in **Mitigation**.

PEDESTRIANS

Pedestrian analyses were performed for 16 sidewalk elements, 16 crosswalk elements, and nine corner elements at key intersections for the non-gameday weekday AM, midday, PM, Saturday PM, and gameday weekday PM, Saturday PM Pre Game, Saturday PM Post Game, Sunday midday, and Sunday PM peak hours. Of the 41 pedestrian elements analyzed, the Proposed Project would result in significant impacts at:

- Two pedestrian elements (two crosswalks) during the non-gameday weekday midday, PM and Saturday PM peak hours
- Three pedestrian elements (one sidewalk, two crosswalks) during the gameday weekday PM hour
- Five pedestrian elements (two sidewalks, two crosswalks, and one corner) during the gameday Saturday PM Pre Game peak hour
- Six pedestrian elements (two sidewalks, two crosswalks, and two corners) during the gameday Saturday PM Post Game peak hour
- Three pedestrian elements (one sidewalk, one crosswalk, one corner) during the gameday Sunday midday peak hour
- Nine pedestrian elements (three sidewalks, three crosswalks, and two corners) during the gameday Sunday PM peak hour

Mitigation measures that could be implemented to mitigate these significant adverse pedestrian impacts are discussed in Mitigation.

VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Eleven of the 50 traffic analysis locations have been identified as high-crash locations according to New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT) criteria. These intersections are considered Vision Zero priority intersections or have had at least five pedestrian/bicyclist injury crashes within a consecutive 12-month period. In addition, five traffic analysis locations are located along Vision Zero priority corridors and have had at least three pedestrian/bicyclist injury crashes within a consecutive 12-month period. Therefore, a total of 16 intersections are identified for a street user safety assessment. This assessment evaluates the number of crashes, prevailing contributing factors of the crashes, existing safety conditions and potential measures to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety at these intersections**.**

AIR QUALITY

The air quality analysis addresses mobile sources, parking facilities, emissions from the project's HVAC and hot water systems, and from nearby industrial sources. As discussed below, no significant adverse air quality impacts are anticipated from the Proposed Project's mobile sources, parking facilities, stationary sources, or industrial source emissions.

MOBILE SOURCES

The number of project generated trips would exceed the *CEQR Technical Manual* screening thresholds for carbon monoxide (CO) and particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) for all time periods considered in the traffic analysis including an alternative Saturday game start time. A mobile source screening assessment therefore indicated the need for additional analysis. Based on the screening results and in consultation with the NYC Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP), four intersections were selected for a microscale analysis. The selected intersections include three intersections at Shea Road that would be redesigned by the Proposed Project and the existing intersection of 114th Street and Roosevelt Avenue. The highest predicted 1 and 8-hour CO and 24-hour $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations were below the respective National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and the City's *de minimis* value. The annual $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations were below the NAAQS. A grid analysis was conducted to determine the potential for mobile source impacts from the project under the annual $PM_{2.5}$ on a neighborhood scale. This analysis demonstrated compliance with the *de minimis* criterion. Since the CO and $PM_{2.5}$ mobile source impacts are below relevant criteria, no further analysis is required, and no significant adverse air quality impacts are anticipated from the Proposed Project's mobile sources.

PARKING FACILITIES

The Proposed Project would introduce six parking facilities in Areas of Development A through D. These are five garages and one parking lot. The largest facilities are garages in Areas of Development A and D. The Area of Development D garage would be a 12-level, naturally ventilated parking facility. The garage in the Area of Development A would occupy the first two levels of the podium of the building. This garage would

be mechanically ventilated, with exhaust via louvers at each parking level. The louvers would be located on the Shea Road side of the building on each side of the Porte Cochere. For the purpose of this analysis, it was conservatively assumed that all traffic to this garage enters and exits through the entrance on the first parking level located under the Porte Cochere. The air quality analyses evaluated the impacts from these two largest garages and found that with respect to both CO and $PM_{2.5}$, the results were below CEQR *de minimis* thresholds and NAAQS. Accordingly, no significant adverse air quality impacts are expected from the Project's parking facilities.

STATIONARY SOURCES

The Proposed Project sponsor will commit to install electric HVAC and hot water systems. Therefore, no local emissions and no adverse air quality impacts are anticipated from these systems.

INDUSTRIAL SOURCES

No large or major facilities are located within 1,000 feet of the Development Site boundary. Therefore, no significant adverse air quality impacts are anticipated from such facilities.

Several commercial facilities/industrial sources were identified within a 400-foot radius from the Development Site boundary. Most of these facilities will be demolished before the Proposed Project opens in 2030. This demolition is part of Willets Point Phase 2, which plans to complete development in 2027. Three facilities will continue to operate until Phase 3 of the Willets Point Development project is built in 2039. However, the Proposed Project's sensitive land uses within the Development Site are located further than 400 feet from these remaining industrial sources. As such, no significant adverse air quality impact on the Proposed Project is expected from industrial source emissions.

GREENHHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The Proposed Project would be consistent with the City and State GHG emission reduction goals. There would not be any significant adverse GHG emission or climate change impacts as a result of the Proposed Project.

GHG emission analysis followed the *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance to estimate emissions resulting from the proposed development. The Proposed Project would result in 14,379 metric tons (MT) of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) a year from the project's operations (direct and indirect) and 48,952 MT of CO_2e annually from the mobile sources.

The Proposed Project would comply with the City's climate initiatives, including Local Law 97 and Local Law 154, the State's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, and the 2020 Energy Conservation Codes by State and City, and therefore contributes towards the NYC GHG reduction goals. The Proposed Project would apply a roster of energy-saving and GHG-reduction measures. The heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) and hot water systems in all Proposed Project buildings would be electric. The Proposed Project plans to install photovoltaic batteries on the roofs of its garage structures and use other GHG reduction measures.

Since the Development Site is located within the 1% annual chance flood hazard area, the potential effects of global climate change have been considered and are presented in Appendix B, Waterfront Revitalization Program Consistency Assessment. The assessment considers the effects of climate change on rising sea levels, storm surge, and coastal flooding resulting from the Proposed Actions. As detailed in the Appendix, it was determined that the Proposed Project would be supportive of Policy 6.2 of the New York City Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP). Therefore, adverse impacts to climate change are not anticipated as a result of the Proposed Actions.

NOISE

A noise assessment was conducted to determine whether: (i.) the Proposed Actions would significantly increase sound levels from mobile and stationary sources at existing noise receptors; and (ii.) the new noise

receptors that would be introduced by the Proposed Project would be in an acceptable ambient sound level environment. The principal conclusions of the noise assessment are based on the commitment that Citi Field stadium and the proposed New York City Football Club will not conduct concurrent events.

EXISTING NOISE RECEPTORS

The study area includes existing residential and community facility receptors. The Proposed Actions would introduce new stationary and mobile sources of noise.

The increase in noise due to mobile sources from the No-Action and With-Action conditions have been determined from proportional noise modeling at one intersection and one monitoring location within the study area. Mobile source noise levels would increase by up to 1.9 dBA in the With-Action condition as compared to the No-Action condition due to traffic generated by the Proposed Actions. Mobile source noise levels would increase up to 2.0 dBA for the With-Action condition compared to existing conditions due to forecast traffic growth in the No-Action condition and traffic generated by the Proposed Actions.

The closest existing noise-sensitive building is the proposed residential use that will be introduced by the Willets Point Development Plan in the No-Action condition, located east of the Project Area. No-Action noise levels at this receptor would range from 69.9 to 72.9 dBA (L_{eq}). The Proposed Actions would result in an increase up to 1.9 dBA (L_{eq}) in noise, such that With-Action noise levels at this receptor due to stationary and mobile sources would range from 71.8 to 74.8 dBA (L_{eq}). Since noise levels would not increase by 3 dBA or more at this receptor, the Proposed Project would not result in a significant adverse noise impact due to mobile and stationary sources.

NEW NOISE RECEPTORS

The noise analysis for new receptors evaluates whether receptors would be introduced into an environment with acceptable ambient noise conditions. With-Action noise levels have been evaluated at new receptors based on ambient noise measurements, mobile source proportional noise modeling, and detailed modeling of noise from the Proposed Project.

Area of Development A

The With-Action noise level at the southern facades of Area of Development A due to mobile and stationary sources would be up to 81.5 dBA (L_{dn}). Therefore, the southern façade exposed to Roosevelt Avenue would require a minimum Outdoor Indoor Transmission Class (OITC) rating of 31 to 42 for the composite window/wall construction, based on the distance setback from the center line of the elevated train tracks.

The With-Action noise level at the northern facades of Area of Development A due to mobile and stationary sources would be up to 66.9 dBA (L_{10}). Therefore, enhanced window/wall attenuation would not be required at the northern façade along Shea Road.

Both the western and eastern facades of Development A would require a minimum composite window/wall of 39 OITC at 50 feet to 100 feet from the center line of the elevated train tracks, 36 OITC at 100 feet to 200 feet from the center line of the elevated train tracks, 33 OITC at 200 feet to 400 feet from the center line of the elevated train tracks.

Area of Development B

The With-Action noise level at the southern facades of Area of Development B due to mobile and stationary sources would be up to 81.5 dBA (L_{dn}). Therefore, the southern façade along Roosevelt Avenue, and the western façade and the eastern façade within 50 feet of Roosevelt Avenue would require a minimum composite window/wall of 42 OITC.

The With-Action noise level at the northern facades of Development B due to stationary sources would be up to 69.1 dBA (L_{10}). Therefore, enhanced window/wall attenuation would not be required at the northern façade facing Citi Field.

Both the western and eastern facades of Development B would require a minimum composite window/wall of 39 OITC at 50 feet to 100 feet from the center line of the elevated train tracks, 36 OITC at 100 feet to 200 feet from the center line of the elevated train tracks, 33 OITC at 200 feet to 400 feet from the center line of the elevated train tracks.

These attenuation requirements for Area of Development A and B are based on proposed hotel use and community facility use, which have higher attenuation requirements (for comparison, commercial office use has a 5 dBA reduction in attenuation requirements).

Public Park Space

The Proposed Project would introduce at least 20 acres public park spaces consisting of various landscaped area and other recreational outdoor spaces, including both active and passive open space. Certain newly created active open spaces would not be considered a sensitive receptor, but rather as sources of sound, particularly those active open spaces that include sports facilities and playgrounds. With the addition of the proposed open space and no reduction in existing open space, the total passive open space acreage in the study area would increase to 45.17 acres. Future noise levels (L10) within the newly created passive open spaces would be above 55 dBA. This exceeds the 55 dBA (L10) guideline for outdoor areas requiring serenity and quiet contained in the *CEQR Technical Manual*. However, this relatively low noise level is often not achieved in outdoor areas at most New York City outdoor public open space areas and parks due to the level of nearby noise sources (e.g., nearby roadway, train and aircraft activity, as well as activities within the outdoor space itself). Furthermore, under Existing and No-Action conditions, noise levels at the location of the new public park space to be created by the Proposed Project currently exceed, and in the future, would exceed 55 dBA (L10). These levels of existing noise are comparable to noise levels in a number of passive open space areas that are within range of substantial noise sources, including Prospect Park, Brooklyn Bridge Park, and Fort Greene Park. Examining the proposed uses of the open spaces, they are not consistent with activities requiring serenity and quiet. Therefore, the proposed open spaces are not considered sensitive.

PUBLIC HEALTH

The Proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse public health impacts as defined by CEQR. The Proposed Project would not result in unmitigated significant adverse impacts in the areas of air quality, noise, water quality, hazardous materials, or construction noise. This chapter also discusses problem gambling.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

The Proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse impacts to neighborhood character. The study area has diverse characteristics due to the land use patterns and physical barriers surrounding the Development Site. Defining features of the study area comprise a mix of residential and industrial neighborhoods, sports and entertainment facilities, and natural features. These defining features are buffered from one another by highways and other significant transportation infrastructure.

The Proposed Project as a whole would represent an improvement in neighborhood character, as it would enable the transformation of underutilized parking lots into a unique mixed-use recreational, commercial, and entertainment hub with extensive public park space, landscaping, and other amenities for public recreation, that would be compatible and consistent with the surrounding land uses. While buffered from its surroundings by highways and physical features, the Proposed Project would result in a change in the character of the Development Site that would be more compatible with nearby neighborhoods and planned development projects than the No-Action condition.

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, transportation is one of the technical areas with the potential to affect neighborhood character. The Proposed Project would have an overall beneficial effect with respect to transportation. The Proposed Project would incorporate improvements to the transportation network infrastructure serving the Development Site and its surroundings, that would have beneficial effects on

transportation conditions in the study area. These include accessibility improvements to the Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station, highway access improvements for Grand Central Parkway, and other roadway improvements along Shea Road and Seaver Way. Additionally, the Proposed Project would include improvements to bike and pedestrian infrastructure, including new promenades, pathways, and bike lanes, a new pedestrian bridge over Shea Road, and a new pedestrian/bike bridge. The pedestrian experience along Roosevelt Avenue in particular would be improved with widened sidewalks and new landscaping.

The Proposed Project would result in significant adverse impacts on local and highway traffic, bus, and pedestrians, of which some of the traffic and pedestrian impacts would be unmitigable. There would be no other significant adverse impacts in other technical areas contributing to neighborhood character, nor would any of these other technical areas experience moderate effects (per *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance, effects that are reasonably close to the impact threshold), from the Proposed Project; therefore, a combination of moderate effects would not occur.

While the Proposed Project would lead to increased traffic on nearby highways and result in some significant adverse traffic impacts, this would not change the character of the study area. The arterial highways and highway network found within the study area are designed to and currently carry large numbers of vehicles and would continue to do so in the No-Action condition. The increase in utilization on arterial highways resulting from the Project would not alter the relationship of these highways to their surrounding context and their function in the study area. The anticipated traffic impacts to the local roadway network that would result from the Proposed Project would also not affect neighborhood character. Of the impacts that could not be fully mitigated, local traffic impacts would mainly occur on busy commercial thoroughfares (as opposed to residential streets), such as Roosevelt Avenue, which are characterized by high traffic volumes under existing conditions and would continue to do so in the No-Action condition. In particular, by the future analysis year, local traffic conditions would reflect major development projects (Willets Point Phase 1 and Phase 2). Accordingly, traffic congestion along local thoroughfares would be present even without the Proposed Project, due to background development in the No-Action condition that would generate substantial traffic volumes along these primary streets serving the local network. As such, traffic impacts on these intersections during one or more peak periods would not constitute changes in neighborhood character compared to the future No-Action condition.

The anticipated bus line capacity impacts to the Q48 route would be mitigated by increasing service frequency. Pedestrian impacts to between one and nine elements (depending on peak hour) are anticipated to occur; however, given the existing and anticipated future character of the study area, pedestrian conditions are not a defining feature of its character.

CONSTRUCTION

Governmental oversight of construction in New York City is extensive and involves a number of City, State, and Federal agencies, each with specific areas of responsibility. Construction at the Development Site would be subject to government regulations and oversight and would employ general construction practices typical of sites within New York City. The Proposed Project would also comply with the requirements of the New York City Noise Control Code.

TRANSPORTATION

Traffic

The peak quarter of construction activities would occur during the first quarter of 2029. Based on shift schedules and construction worker and truck arrival/departure patterns, the 6 AM – 7 AM hour was identified for the AM construction peak hour and the 3 PM – 4 PM hour was identified for the PM construction peak hour. The projected construction activities would result in less traffic volumes than traffic projected for the operation of the Proposed Project. However, significant traffic impacts could still occur at some of the study area locations during construction, similar to impacts identified in **Transportation**. In addition, construction worker trip patterns on gamedays when a Mets game is scheduled at the Development Site would vary from

patterns typical of the operational period. The construction analysis considers two scenarios for construction worker trips: a non-gameday scenario where construction worker parking would be accommodated on-site, and a gameday scenario in which construction workers are directed to nearby parking facilities in downtown Flushing.

Forty-five intersections were identified for analysis during the AM and PM construction peak hours for the With-Action with Construction condition. On non-gamedays, construction activities for the Proposed Project would generate 810 construction worker auto trips and 48 construction truck trips during the AM construction peak hour, and 920 construction worker auto trips and 26 construction truck trips during the PM construction peak hour. On gamedays, construction activities would generate the same number of worker auto trips as during the non-gameday AM and PM construction peak hours. In order to avoid overlap with gameday ingress and egress traffic, most truck deliveries would largely occur in the morning hours; 64 truck trips would occur during the AM construction peak hour and 14 truck trips would occur during the PM construction peak hour. Construction trucks would be required to use NYCDOT-designated truck routes to get to the project area and would then use local streets to access the construction site.

On non-gamedays, construction traffic impacts were identified at two intersections during the AM construction peak hour, and six intersections during the PM construction peak hour. On gamedays, construction traffic impacts were identified at six intersections during the AM construction peak hour, and 11 intersections during the PM construction peak hour. Where impacts during construction may occur, measures similar to the ones recommended in **Mitigation,** could be implemented prior to the commencement of the operation of the Project in order to alleviate congested traffic conditions. On non-gamedays, with these measures in place, all intersections would be mitigated during the AM construction peak hour, and four intersections would remain unmitigated (or partially unmitigated) during the PM construction peak hour. On gamedays, three intersections would remain unmitigated during the AM construction peak hour, and eight intersections would remain unmitigated (or partially unmitigated) during the PM construction peak hour. Details on mitigation measures recommended during the AM and PM construction peak hours are discussed in **Mitigation**.

Parking

Construction workers would generate an estimated maximum daily parking demand of 1,011 spaces during the Q1 2029 peak construction quarter. In the non-gameday scenario, this parking demand would be fully accommodated on-site, since workers would be able to utilize the Northfield Parking structure (Area of Development D) parking structure (with a capacity of 4,200 parking spaces) expected to be completed by the peak quarter. In the gameday scenario, this demand would be fully accommodated by off-street parking facilities in the downtown Flushing area. Overall, parking demand for construction workers would be accommodated by these facilities. Therefore, construction for the Proposed Project would not result in a parking shortfall.

Transit and Pedestrians

Based on U.S. Census data for the construction industry, it is anticipated that approximately 45 percent of construction workers would commute to the Development Site by public transportation or walking. During the first quarter of 2029 when construction worker volumes would be highest, construction would be expected to generate 2,407 daily construction workers with 1,083 workers expected to use public transportation. Similar to the traffic analysis, the 6 AM – 7 AM hour was identified for the AM construction peak hour and the 3 PM – 4 PM hour was identified for the PM construction peak hour. It is expected that the majority of construction workers (80 percent) would arrive during the AM construction peak hour and depart during the PM construction peak hour, and that they would generate approximately 866 construction worker trips by public transportation during the AM and PM construction peak hours.

On non-gamedays, construction workers would be able to park on-site, and workers traveling by public transportation or walk would enter the site along Roosevelt Avenue. As assessment of the level of service along key walking paths during construction was conducted. This analysis was conducted during the AM and

PM construction peak hours for the crosswalks and north and south sidewalks at the intersection of Roosevelt Avenue and 126th Street/Seaver Way. No significant pedestrian impacts would result from construction activities in the non-gameday scenario.

On gamedays, construction workers would be accommodated offsite at parking facilities in downtown Flushing. Construction workers parking at these facilities would continue via transit or walking to access the site. An assessment of the level of service along key walking paths to and from these facilities during construction was performed. This analysis was conducted during the AM and PM construction peak hours for the crosswalks and north and south sidewalks at the intersection of Roosevelt Avenue and 126th Street/Seaver Way, similar to the non-gameday scenario. Significant pedestrian impacts would be expected at the east crosswalk during both the AM and PM construction peak hours, and the west crosswalk during the PM construction peak hour.

AIR QUALITY

Construction of the Proposed Project would take five years to complete. The Proposed Project is comprised of several Development Areas, each with its own construction schedule. The future No- Action residential uses for the Willets Point Project Phases 1 and 2 Development are closest to Areas of Development B and D of the Proposed Project. Corona residences on the other side of the Grand Central Parkway are further away from the construction of Area of Development A. The construction schedule for Area of Development D is such that there would be a slight overlap of heavy construction while the nearby northern Willets Point Project Phase 2 Development residential uses would be open and occupied. Area of Development B construction would happen later when the Willets Point Project Phase 1 and 2 buildings across Seaver Way will be fully occupied. Construction practices in large-scale NYC construction projects include requirements from NYC Local Law 77 of 2003 (LL 77) and the NYC Air Pollution Control Code in order to reduce construction emissions. Specifically, As per LL77, the Proposed Project is committed to use the Best Available Technology (BAT) requirements on heavy diesel non-road equipment over 50 horsepower.

Based on the emission intensity analysis and in consultation with NYCDEP, construction of two Development Areas—Area of Development A with the highest emissions, and Area of Development B with the closest residential receptors—were selected for dispersion modeling. The results of the quantitative on-site construction analysis indicate that the Proposed Project would not exceed annual NO_2, 24-hour PM_{10}, and 1-hour and 8-hour CO NAAQS. In addition, the maximum predicted 8-hour CO concentration would be well below and incremental concentrations of $PM_{2.5}$ would not exceed the City's *de minimis* criteria. Construction-related trips at the off-site intersections would be less than the Project-generated trips under the With-Action operating conditions and would not be expected to significantly impact air quality levels. Therefore, no significant adverse construction air quality impacts are anticipated from the Proposed Project.

NOISE

Construction of the Proposed Project is predicted to result in elevated noise levels at several of the analyzed receptors. The screening shows that with the exception of one noise receptor, the predicted construction noise level would not be considered a significant adverse impact under the *CEQR Technical Manual*. While such increases in noise may be noticeable at times, predicted noise level increments would be moderate and would occur over a limited duration.

At one receptor located to the east of the Development Site, as part of the Willets Point Project Phase 2 Development (Receptor R04), detailed construction noise modeling was performed. Construction is predicted to result in noise level increases more than 5.0 dBA up to approximately 8.7 dBA for 9 months at residential receptors in the Willets Point Phase 2 development. This proposed residential building in the Willets Point Project Phase 2 Development will have insulated glass windows with OITC rating of 35 and alternate means of ventilation, thereby improving the window/wall attenuation provided by the building façade and allowing for the maintenance of a closed-window condition as presented in the Willets Point Phase 2 Development Project FSSEIS, February 23, 2024. Therefore, maximum interior noise levels during construction would be

in the mid- to high-40s dBA for the peak months of construction, and low-40s dBA during most of the construction period, which is no more than approximately 3 dBA greater than the recommended noise level threshold for residential use according to the *CEQR Technical Manual* noise exposure criteria. For most of the construction period, interior noise levels due to construction would be in the low-40s dBA in Willets Point Phase 2 development. Noise levels in the mid-40s dBA are comparable to typical noise levels in a residential building setting.

Per New York City Noise Control Code regulations, the Proposed Project would be required to prepare a Construction Noise Mitigation Plan, which may identify more control measures that would further reduce construction noise levels. Also, the construction management team has committed that no noise intensive equipment would be operating during a game time (for Citi Field and for the future soccer stadium) or after 10 PM. Therefore, the predicted levels of construction noise were determined not to rise to the level of a significant adverse impact at any noise receptors.

OTHER TECHNICAL AREAS

In terms of construction effects on land use, neighborhood character, socioeconomic conditions, community facilities, open space, and natural resources preliminary analyses found that no significant adverse impacts would occur due to construction of the Proposed Project.

In terms of historic resources, the Proposed Project could have an impact on the Mets-Willets Point Subway Station and IRT Interlocking Tower (eligible for listing in the State and National Registers of Historic Places [S/NR]) from construction vibrations from the Proposed Project buildings, some of which would be located within 90 feet of the resource. In addition, construction vibrations from the Proposed Project could have a direct impact on the Passerelle Bridge (S/NR eligible), which also is within 90 feet of the Proposed Project. In order to avoid or minimize impacts such as vibrations, the New York State Historic Preservation Office has indicated that a Construction Protection Plan would need to be developed and implemented for the Mets-Willets Point Subway Station IRT Interlocking Tower and the Passerelle Bridge. With the implementation of a Construction Protection Plan, no significant adverse impact as a result of construction vibration is expected on historic and cultural resources.

With respect to hazardous materials, the completion of a RAP and CHASP would be memorialized through the assignment of an (E)-Designation on the Development Site to ensure investigation, mitigation, and remediation of any hazardous materials would be completed in a safe, and comprehensive manner. Compliance with the (E)-Designation would preclude the potential for significant adverse hazardous materials impacts to occur during construction and operation of the Proposed Project.

With respect to water and sewer Infrastructure, the Proposed Project would require a State Pollutant Elimination System (SPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activity. In addition, the Applicant will be required to develop and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that meets criteria set forth by NYSDEC. With the implementation of a SWPPP, there would be no significant adverse impacts to water resources due to construction of the Proposed Project.

MITIGATION

This FEIS concludes that the Proposed Project has the potential to result in significant adverse impacts to water and sewer infrastructure and transportation[9] (operational and construction period). Potential mitigation measures to address those impacts, where feasible and/or practical, are proposed below. The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Housing, Economic Development, and Workforce (ODMHEDW), as the lead agency, will continue to coordinate with City agencies to further examine and refine these measures between the DEIS and

[9] As described in **Water and Sewer Infrastructure,** since the publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection has coordinated with the Applicant regarding the sanitary sewer infrastructure, and it has been determined that the Proposed Project would not result in a significant adverse impact to sewer infrastructure.

FEIS. Where no feasible and practicable mitigation can be identified, impacts would remain unavoidable significant adverse impacts of the Proposed Project. A future lease between the City and the Queens Future developer (the Applicant) would be executed and shall be the mechanism to enforce the mitigation measures for transportation impacts that are a result of the Proposed Project.

TRANSPORTATION

In accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual*, where significant adverse impacts are identified as discussed in Transportation, mitigation to reduce or eliminate the impacts to the fullest extent practicable is developed and evaluated. Where potential significant adverse impacts have been identified—in the areas of transportation measures are examined to mitigate the anticipated impacts.

Traffic

Local Roadway Network

Of the 50 intersections analyzed in the With-Action condition, the Proposed Project would result in significant adverse impacts at 11 intersections during the non-gameday weekday AM peak hour; 12 intersections during the non-gameday weekday midday peak hour; 19 intersections during the non-gameday weekday PM peak hour; 10 intersections during the non-gameday Saturday PM peak hour; 17 intersections during the gameday weekday PM peak hour; 17 intersections during the gameday Saturday PM Pre Game peak hour; 12 intersections during the gameday Saturday PM Post Game peak hour; 13 intersections during the gameday Sunday midday peak hour, and 14 intersections during the gameday Sunday PM peak hour. The majority of the 50 intersections analyzed would either not be significantly impacted or could be fully mitigated with readily implementable traffic improvement measures described below in this chapter.

On non-gamedays five of the 50 intersections would remain unmitigated during the non-gameday weekday AM peak hour; nine intersections would remain unmitigated during the non-gameday weekday midday peak hour; 16 intersections would remain unmitigated (or partially unmitigated) during the non-gameday weekday PM peak hour; and eight intersections would remain unmitigated (or partially unmitigated) during the non-gameday Saturday PM peak hour.

On gamedays, 15 of the 50 intersections would remain unmitigated (or partially unmitigated) during the gameday weekday PM peak hour; 15 intersections would remain unmitigated during the gameday Saturday PM Pre Game peak hour; nine intersections would remain unmitigated (or partially unmitigated) during the gameday Saturday PM Post Game peak hour; 11 intersections would remain unmitigated during the gameday Sunday midday peak hour; and 14 intersections would remain unmitigated (or partially unmitigated) during the gameday Sunday PM peak hour.

Mitigation measures identified later in the chapter, such as signal timing changes or installation of new traffic signals, are standard traffic capacity improvements that are typically implemented by the New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT).

Highway Network

Of the 77 highway segments (including, basic, merging, diverging, and weaving segments) analyzed in the With-Action condition along the Grand Central Parkway west of the site, the Van Wyck and Whitestone Expressways north and east of the site, the Proposed Project would result in significant adverse traffic impacts to 13 highway segments during the weekday AM peak hour; 18 highway segments during the non-gameday weekday midday peak hour; 21 highway segments during the non-gameday weekday PM peak hour; 16 highway segments during the non-gameday Saturday PM peak hour; 17 highway segment during the gameday weekday PM peak hour; 11 highway segments during the gameday Saturday PM Pre Game peak hour; 19 highway segments during the gameday Saturday PM Post Game peak hour; 10 highway segments during the gameday Sunday midday peak hour, and 21 highway segments during the gameday Sunday PM peak hour.

The identification of significant adverse impacts on the highway network is not unusual for projects of this scale. The Grand Central Parkway, Van Wyck and Whitestone Expressways are in immediate proximity to

the Development Site and are projected to be heavily used by visitors driving to the Proposed Project. Potential measures to provide more capacity along these facilities, such as widening of the highways to provide additional lanes is not practical, and would be cost prohibitive; therefore, this has been precluded as an option. However, transportation demand management measures and operational strategies comprising a comprehensive Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan can be effective in reducing vehicle usage along key segments of these highways as well as where they link to the local street network. The TDM plan would, if necessary, be refined and adjusted from time to time as real-time information becomes available through future monitoring of traffic conditions on gamedays.

The traffic analyses for the With-Action condition use a conservative approach in that they have assessed gameday peak hours along with trips associated with project land uses, with no reductions to levels of background traffic. As such, the With-Action analyses represent worst-case scenarios and would not typically occur during most days over the course of the year.

Subway

The Mets-Willets Point subway station was analyzed during the weekday AM and PM peak commuter peak periods, as well as weekday game ingress, Saturday game ingress, and Saturday game egress conditions to address reasonable worst-case conditions that occur on gamedays. A Baseline Scenario without modifications to the station was considered for the With-Action condition. The analysis determined that under the Baseline Scenario, all subway station elements would operate at acceptable levels of service during the non-gameday weekday AM, gameday weekday PM, Saturday PM Pre Game and Saturday PM Post Game peak hours. One element, the Mezzanine Outside Fare Zone Passageway, would be significantly impacted during the non-gameday weekday PM peak hour. Measures to mitigate the passageway would include the implementation of gameday subway station operations during the non-gameday weekday AM and PM peak periods, which would include the deactivation of the main control area on the mezzanine level, making it a free zone with access between the subway station and the Passerelle Bridge. With these measures in place, all subway station elements would operate at acceptable levels of service during all peak hours analyzed, and the Mezzanine Outside Fare Zone Passageway impact could be fully mitigated.

Buses

The Proposed Project would result in a capacity shortfall for the Q48 bus route during the weekday PM (23 spaces in the eastbound direction, 259 spaces in the westbound direction) and the Saturday PM peak hour (26 spaces in the eastbound direction, 126 spaces in the westbound direction).

Impacts to the Q48 bus route could be mitigated with the addition of one standard bus in the eastbound direction and five standard buses in the westbound direction during the weekday PM peak hour; and one standard bus in the eastbound direction and three standard buses in the westbound direction during the Saturday PM peak hour. The general policy of NYCT is to provide additional bus service where demand warrants, taking into account financial and operational constraints. Based on NYCT's ongoing passenger monitoring program and as new development occurs throughout the study area, a comprehensive service plan would be generated to respond to specific known needs with capital and/or operational improvements where fiscally and operationally practicable. NYCT's capital program is developed on a five-year cycle; through this program, expansion of bus services would be provided as needs are determined. It is therefore anticipated that NYCT would increase service frequency on the Q48 to address its capacity shortfalls.

Pedestrians

Of the 41 pedestrian elements analyzed, the Proposed Project would result in significant adverse impacts at two pedestrian elements (two crosswalks) during the non-gameday weekday midday, PM, and Saturday PM peak hours; three pedestrian elements (one sidewalk, two crosswalks) during the gameday weekday PM peak hour; five pedestrian elements (two sidewalks, two crosswalks, and one corner) during the gameday Saturday PM Pre Game peak hour; six pedestrian elements (two sidewalks, two crosswalks, and two corners) during the gameday Saturday PM Post Game peak hour; three pedestrian elements (one sidewalk, one crosswalk, and

one corner) during the gameday Sunday midday peak hour; and nine pedestrian elements (four sidewalks, three crosswalks, and two corners) during the gameday Sunday PM peak hour. Mitigation measures were explored, and it was determined that no mitigation measures could be implemented; therefore, the impacts at the locations described above would remain unmitigated.

Potential improvements that could mitigate the significant adverse impacts were explored and will be studied further in coordination with NYCDOT between the DEIS and FEIS. These impacted locations would remain unmitigated.

ALTERNATIVES

NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

The No-Action Alternative is the future without the Proposed Actions (the No-Action condition). Absent the Proposed Project, it is assumed that the Development Site would continue operating under existing conditions; it would remain as a paved parking area for Citi Field under the current lease agreement with the City, which runs through 2105. The surface parking lots within the Development Site currently contain 7,423 parking spaces.

Unlike the Proposed Project, under the No-Action Alternative, the significant adverse impacts related to transportation (operational and construction period) would not occur. However, the No-Action Alternative would not result in the development of destination entertainment facilities, restaurants and retail, community facility space, or 20-acres of public park space and other public realm improvements in areas currently occupied by surface parking. Therefore, the economic, infrastructure, and public realm benefits expected from the Proposed Actions, which include the public park space, an ADA-accessible renovated subway station, bike and pedestrian infrastructure and streetscape improvements, and highway improvements, would not be realized under the No-Action Alternative.

PHOENIX MEADOWS ALTERNATIVE

The Phoenix Meadows Alternative was created by Flushing for Equitable Development and Urban Planning (FED UP) Coalition in response to the Proposed Project and consists of a publicly released vision plan with limited design and technical detail. The Phoenix Meadows Alternative examines future conditions where a parkland restoration project would be undertaken to redevelop the mapped unimproved parkland on the Development Site, currently used as surface parking for Citi Field under a 1961 lease agreement with the City, into approximately 50 acres of new open space, while retaining the existing number of parking spaces.

The Phoenix Meadows Alternative would not include a substantial commercial component and therefore, would fail to realize the tourism and economic development goals of the Proposed Project. The Phoenix Meadows Alternative does not identify any mechanism to achieve either the development (three parking decks and two pedestrian bridges) associated with this Alternative or the many infrastructure improvements associated with the Proposed Project, which include at least 20 acres of public park space, an ADA-accessible renovated subway station, replacement of all the existing number of parking spaces, a Taste of Queens food hall and community space, bike and pedestrian infrastructure and streetscape improvements, and highway improvements that are made possible with the creation of the regional mixed-use recreational and entertainment hub that would be realized under the Proposed Actions. For these reasons, the Phoenix Meadows Alternative would not meet the Purpose and Need of the Proposed Project and is not considered a reasonable alternative

PROPOSED PROJECT WITH PASSERELLE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT ALTERNATIVE

The Proposed Project with Passerelle Bridge Replacement Alternative would involve the replacement of the Passerelle Bridge at the same time as the Proposed Project. This alternative would include all the components of the Proposed Project, as well as the replacement of the Passerelle Bridge. As a design for the replacement bridge has not yet been developed, for analysis purposes, the bridge replacement would include the following

components: replacement of the bridge structure substantially in the same location and with the same dimensions as the existing Passerelle Bridge; upgrades to achieve ADA compliance; and exterior improvements to the Passerelle Building, to provide weather-tight structures and extend the useful life of the building as the main gateway to Flushing Meadows Corona Park.

Since the only difference between the Proposed Project and the Passerelle Bridge Replacement Alternative would be the replacement of the Passerelle Bridge, the only impacts of this Alternative that would differ from those of the Proposed Project would be those associated with construction and operation of the reconstructed Passerelle Bridge. These include long-term (operation-related) impacts to historic and cultural resources and short-term (construction-related) impacts. Since this alternative entails demolishing and replacing the Passerelle Bridge, a S/NR-eligible contributing resource to the Flushing Meadows Corona Park Historic District, altering the bridge's current condition would result in a significant adverse impact to historic and cultural resources. The bridge replacement would require review by Parks, New York State Historic Preservation Office, and the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. Additionally, the potential for design changes and mitigation measures would need to be explored to the extent necessary. Since a construction staging plan is not yet available, it is conservatively assumed at this time that there would be significant adverse impacts during the construction period. Once a detailed construction staging plan is developed, potential mitigation measures will be explored with the New York State Historic Preservation Office.

NO UNMITIGATED SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS ALTERNATIVE

The No Unmitigated Significant Adverse Impact Alternative identifies those modifications to the Proposed Actions that would be required to eliminate all of the Proposed Actions' unmitigated significant adverse impacts. The Proposed Project would result in significant adverse impacts to traffic and pedestrian elements[10] that could not be fully mitigated.

While this alternative considers development that would not result in any unmitigated significant adverse impacts, to eliminate all unmitigated significant adverse impacts, the Proposed Actions would need to be so substantially modified that the project goals and objectives would not be realized.

Flows from the Proposed Project, which would contribute to an exceedance of the capacity of the 24-inch sanitary main and the 37th Avenue Pump Station, could result in a potential significant impact to sewer infrastructure. Additional analysis will be undertaken between the DEIS and FEIS of the hydraulic capacity of the 24-inch sewer and of the capacity of the 37th Avenue pump station. If it is confirmed that the flow levels in the With-Action condition would exceed available capacity to an extent considered significant consistent with *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance (taking into account capacity limitations resulting from developments under the No-Action condition), a significant adverse impact would occur, In that event, potential mitigations could include a replacement of the 24-inch sanitary main and/or infrastructure upgrades to increase the capacity of the 37th Avenue Pump Station. Should these measures be unable to fully address the capacity shortfall, the impact would be unmitigated.

The Proposed Project would result in significant adverse traffic impacts that could not be fully mitigated with standard traffic capacity improvement measures during non-gameday and gameday peak periods. These impacts would result from a minimal increase in vehicle trips because of prevailing background traffic conditions. Even a minimal increase in traffic and pedestrians above No-Action condition levels would be expected to result in traffic impacts that could not be mitigated. Based on a sensitivity analysis conducted at the intersection of Roosevelt Avenue and 114th Street, the addition of just two incremental vehicles at critical movements during the non-gameday weekday PM peak hour would create a significant adverse impact that

[10] As discussed in **Water and Sewer Infrastructure**, since the publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection has coordinated with the Applicant regarding the sanitary sewer infrastructure, and it has been determined that the Proposed Project would not result in a significant adverse impact to sewer infrastructure.

could not be fully mitigated. Therefore, any development increment larger than the No-Action development would be expected to result in unmitigated significant adverse traffic impacts.

The Proposed Project would result in significant adverse impacts at pedestrian elements during the non-gameday and gameday peak periods. Based on a sensitivity analysis performed at the east and west crosswalks at the intersection of Roosevelt Avenue and 126th Street/Seaver Way, it was determined that the Proposed Actions would require a 35 percent reduction in the development increment during the non-gameday Saturday PM peak hour to avoid unmitigated pedestrian impacts. Given the above, there is no Unmitigated Significant Adverse Impact Alternative to the Proposed Actions any larger than the No-Action Alternative.

UNAVOIDABLE SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, unavoidable significant adverse impacts are those that would occur if a proposed project or action is implemented regardless of the mitigation employed, or if mitigation is impossible. As described in Mitigation, the Proposed Project has the potential to result in significant adverse impacts on water and sewer infrastructure as well as traffic, transit, and pedestrian impacts[11] at certain locations. To the extent practicable, mitigation has been proposed for these identified significant adverse impacts. However, in some instances no practicable mitigation has been identified to fully mitigate the significant adverse impacts, and there are no reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Actions that would meet the purpose and need, eliminate potential impacts, and not cause other or similar significant adverse impacts.

GROWTH-INDUCING ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The Proposed Project would be limited to the Development Site, which would replace the Proposed Project would be limited to the Development Site, which would replace the underutilized portions of the Development Site with a mixture of commercial and other uses, structured parking, and public park to create a vibrant regional entertainment destination.

The Development Site is physically separated from surrounding neighborhoods by major highway infrastructure (the Grand Central Parkway and Whitestone Expressway) and rail infrastructure (the MTA Corona Rail Yard to the south). To the west is the planned and approved Willets Points Development Project (Phases 1 and 2) that will contain a mix of uses including all affordable housing. The Proposed Project does not include any residential uses. Additionally, the zoning map change introduced by the Proposed Actions is limited to the boundary of the Project Area, except to the west, where the boundary of the zoning map change falls within the Grand Central Parkway. Thus, the proposed zoning map change would not facilitate development beyond the Project Area and the potential for the Proposed Project to alter land use and economic patterns or induce substantial growth beyond the Development Site would be minimal.

As described in Socioeconomic Conditions, the Development Site is bounded to the north by the Whitestone Expressway and Flushing Bay and to the south by the MTA Corona Rail Yard and Flushing Meadows Corona Park, and the Proposed Project is therefore not expected to induce any new development in these areas. The project is a regional entertainment destination, and it is anticipated that restaurant, hotel and other uses located on the Development Site would satisfy most of the demand for accommodations and food services generated by the Proposed Project. The new uses in the Willets Point area to the east, which will include a 250-room hotel and 84,000 sf of retail space, are expected to be able to accommodate additional demand from regional visitors as well as the new residents of the proposed Willets Point development. The restaurants and the hotel in the Corona neighborhood to the west would continue to serve visitors to the existing regional uses and can be expected to also serve visitors to the Proposed Project, though visitors generated by the Proposed Project are anticipated to be limited. If demand for these services is greater than anticipated in Corona, the demand could also be absorbed in currently vacant commercial spaces or in the newly constructed mixed-use buildings

[11] As described in **Water and Sewer Infrastructure**, since the publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection has coordinated with the Applicant regarding the sanitary sewer infrastructure, and it has been determined that the Proposed Project would not result in a significant adverse impact to sewer infrastructure.

adjacent to the study area on Roosevelt Avenue which contain several commercial vacancies and could result in limited growth in the accommodations and food services business in the Corona neighborhood. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not add to a concentration of a particular sector of the local economy enough to significantly alter or accelerate a trend of changing socioeconomic conditions.

Further, while the Proposed Project would introduce a significant number of workers to the Development Site with approximately 7,534 new jobs, this would not be expected to affect real estate market conditions in Corona since the vast majority of employees are anticipated to continue to reside at locations outside of the study area and commute to the Development Site. The Proposed Project is therefore not expected to induce residential growth.

As discussed in Water and Sewer Infrastructure, improvements would be made to facilitate the Proposed Actions and are not expected to induce any additional growth.

Although the Proposed Actions would result in increased development on the Development Site itself, it is not anticipated that the Proposed Actions would generate significant secondary impacts resulting in substantial new development in nearby areas. Overall, the Proposed Actions would not induce any significant additional growth beyond that identified and analyzed in this EIS.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

The Proposed Actions would not result in an immediate or long-term loss of environmental resources, since the Proposed Project would not negatively affect any nearby natural resources, and the site has been previously developed. The long-term commitment of land resources needed for the Proposed Project would be balanced by the project's beneficial aspects including economic development, job creation, public realm improvements, and resiliency measures in accordance with City policy goals.

EFFECTS ON DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

The Proposed Project would not result in a significant adverse impact relating to effects on disadvantaged communities. While this EIS identifies significant adverse impacts to transportation, these impacts would not cause or increase a disproportionate pollution burden on areas identified as disadvantaged communities. The EIS identifies no other significant adverse impacts that could affect disadvantaged communities.

Section 8-0109(2)(k) of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law requires that future Environmental Impact Statements include a statement of the effects of the Proposed Actions on disadvantaged communities, including whether the action may cause or increase a disproportionate pollution burden. The assessment of effects on disadvantaged communities considers the impacts identified using *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance.

While the Development Site is not located in a DAC, Census Tracts identified as DACs are present within a half-mile study area surrounding the Development Site. While the majority of Census Tracts identified as DACs in the study area have comparatively lower burdens and vulnerabilities, there are three Census Tracts intersecting the study area boundary that were found to have comparatively higher burdens and vulnerabilities; these Census Tracts are located east of the Development Site in the Flushing neighborhood.

The Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse impacts in the following technical areas analyzed in this EIS: Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy, Socioeconomic Conditions, Community Facilities and Services, Open Space, Shadows, Historic and Cultural Resources, Urban Design and Visual Resources, Natural Resources, Hazardous Materials, Water and Sewer Infrastructure, Solid Waste and Sanitation Services, Energy, Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change, Noise, Public Health, and Neighborhood Character. Furthermore, the EIS does not disclose the potential for the Proposed Project to cause any combination of moderate effects which together result in an impact. As such, the Proposed Project would not cause a disproportionate effect on DACs with respect to any of these technical areas, including cumulative effects from multiple technical areas.

As discussed in **Transportation**, the EIS identified the potential for the Proposed Project to result in significant adverse impacts on local and highway traffic, bus, and pedestrians, of which some of the traffic and pedestrian impacts would be unmitigable, per *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance. It should be noted that the Proposed Project would not cause noise or air quality impacts, including impacts from mobile sources (i.e. vehicles). As traffic itself does not constitute pollution, the Proposed Project would not cause a pollution burden on DACs.

Impacted arterial highways are characterized by heavy utilization as they are regional networks designed to carry large numbers of vehicles between neighborhoods and cities, and by definition bypass local roads and traffic. A maximum of five highway segments would be impacted within a DAC during a given peak hour; most of the impacted segments are located entirely outside of a DAC for all of the peak hours analyzed. Thus, the identification of significant adverse impacts on the highway network and an increase in utilization on arterial highways would not have a disproportionate effect on DACs. Many of the local roadway impacts would be fully or partially mitigated through standard interventions, as discussed in **Mitigation**. Of the impacts that could not be fully mitigated, local traffic impacts would occur both in areas identified as DACs and outside of DACs. These impacts would be concentrated on streets characterized by high traffic volumes under existing conditions and would continue to do so in the No-Action condition. By the future analysis year, local traffic conditions would reflect other major development projects (Willets Point Phase 1 and Phase 2) in the area. Accordingly, traffic congestion along local thoroughfares would be present even without the Proposed Project. As such, traffic impacts on these intersections during one or more peak periods would not disproportionately affect DACs.

Bus and pedestrian impacts identified in the EIS would not have a disproportionate effect on DACs. The anticipated bus line capacity impacts to the Q48 route would be fully mitigated by increasing service frequency. Pedestrian impacts to between one and nine elements (depending on peak hour) are anticipated to occur; however, these impacts would occur entirely outside a DAC, and their effects would be further offset by project improvements.

The Proposed Project would incorporate improvements to the transportation network infrastructure serving the Development Site and its surroundings, that would have beneficial effects on transportation conditions in the study area. These include accessibility improvements to the Mets-Willets Point NYCT No. 7 Train Subway Station, providing ADA access, for the first time, to the No. 7 subway station as well as Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, highway access improvements for Grand Central Parkway, and other roadway improvements along Shea Road and Seaver Way. Additionally, the Proposed Project would include improvements to bike and pedestrian infrastructure, including new promenades, pathways, and bike lanes, a new pedestrian bridge over Shea Road, and a new pedestrian/bike bridge. The pedestrian experience along Roosevelt Avenue in particular would be improved with widened sidewalks and new landscaping. While these improvements would occur in an area not identified as a DAC, residents of the surrounding residential neighborhoods that are identified as DACs would benefit from transit upgrades and a general improvement to the pedestrian streetscape surrounding the Development Site.

While the EIS discloses transportation impacts, their effects would not disproportionately affect disadvantaged communities, and the Proposed Project would incorporate proposed pedestrian and transit improvements. In nearby DAC Census Tracts identified as having relatively higher burdens and vulnerabilities, located in flushing to the east of the Development Site, transit and pedestrian improvements introduced by the Proposed Development would benefit these communities by supporting infrastructure improvements to the No. 7 subway line and increasing connectivity between Flushing and Corona by way of the Development Site. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not cause a significant adverse impact due to effects on disadvantaged communities.

CONTACT OFFICE

Requests for copies of the Final EIS should be forwarded to the contact office, Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination, 100 Gold Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10038, or by email to hsemel@cityhall.nyc.gov or telephone at (212) 676-3273. The Final EIS is also available on the CEQR Access website: https://a002-ceqraccess.nyc.gov/ceqr. (Search CEQR # 23DME006Q)



February 7, 2025

Hilary Semel
Assistant to the Mayor
On behalf of the First Deputy Mayor
for Housing, Economic Development and Workforce

Date