Chapter 10: Neighborhood Character

A. INTRODUCTION

Neighborhood character is an amalgam of several elements that give an area its distinctive personality and help distinguish it from other neighborhoods. These components include: land use; street layout; scale, type, and style of development; historic features; patterns and volumes of traffic; noise levels; and any other physical or social characteristics. However, not all of these elements affect neighborhood character in all cases; a neighborhood usually draws its character from a few determining elements. Using information presented in other technical chapters of this EIS, this chapter examines neighborhood character at the three project sites and the associated surrounding study areas, and analyzes the effects of the Proposed Actions on neighborhood character in these areas.

PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

The Proposed Actions would have a beneficial effect on neighborhood character on the project sites and in the surrounding study areas. Development of Western Rail Yard would fulfill a long-standing public policy to promote productive use of the site with a lively mix of uses, open spaces, and streets that would complement and support the development in the Hudson Yards area and West Chelsea. Construction of permanently affordable housing on the Tenth Avenue and Ninth Avenue Sites would support the Clinton neighborhood by emphasizing its residential character and the mixed-income character of its residents.

DEVELOPMENT SITE

The Proposed Actions would change the character of the Development Site, and this change would be, on balance, decidedly beneficial. The site, which presents a blank wall to the surrounding neighborhood on two sides and transportation/maintenance uses where it can be seen, would be transformed with a mix of residential and commercial uses and open spaces, clearly visible and accessible to the public. Two publicly accessible roadways, on axis with West 31st and West 32nd Streets, would break up the perception of a formidable superblock, allowing vehicles and people to move into and through the site with ease. The approximately five acres of publicly accessible open space would draw people into and through the site as well, helping to make connections to other existing and planned parks and open spaces. The High Line would be preserved and adaptively reused as passive open space at the site and would help extend the experience of the High Line Park, now in development, west to Twelfth Avenue and north to West 33rd Street. The streetscape surrounding the site would be greatly improved, with street trees and views into and through the development. Moreover, with this change on the Development Site, the Proposed Actions also would advance long-standing policy goals of both the City and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) to encourage development above the Western Rail Yard.

Specifically, the analyses of land use, urban design and visual resources, historic resources, socioeconomic conditions, and traffic and pedestrian conditions, found no significant impacts that would adversely affect neighborhood character on the site. Noise levels at the site would be high, but noise attenuation in building design would ameliorate this condition. The levels within the new open spaces would also be high, but comparable to the levels in many other New York City parks and open spaces, such as Hudson River Park, Riverside Park, Central Park, and Bryant Park. Similarly, although the Development Site would experience high pedestrian-level winds on days when the prevailing winds are high and from the northwest and west. These conditions would be similar to those at comparable locations in Manhattan near the Hudson River and would not be considered a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character.

In summary, the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse neighborhood character impact on the Development Site and would significantly improve neighborhood character on the Development Site.

DEVELOPMENT SITE STUDY AREA

The decided change in neighborhood character on the Development Site would also have, on balance, a positive effect on neighborhood character in the Development Site Study Area. Instead of facing a large seemingly empty space on the western side of the neighborhood, surrounding development would benefit from the new, compatible land uses on the Development Site, by its urban form that would extend the grid into the site, by the level of density and building forms that would be similar to those on the Eastern Rail Yard site and several other developments anticipated in the future without the Proposed Actions, and by the Site's open spaces, which would provide an important link in a network of open spaces now emerging in the Study Area. In short, the Proposed Actions would complement the emerging developments in the Special Hudson Yards District and the Special West Chelsea District, as well as areas of Midtown, Clinton, and Chelsea more broadly.

Specifically, the land use analysis found that the development resulting from the Proposed Actions would be compatible and consistent with development trends in the Development Site study area. The urban design and visual resources analysis found that the building heights and forms, mix of uses, and plan of the Development Site would be compatible with building heights, forms and mix of uses of the new development anticipated in the future without the Proposed Actions. Although the tall buildings would rise on the Development Site, they would not block any views to visual or architectural resources in the study area. The context for historic resources in the study area would change under the Proposed Actions, but this context would already be altered by development in the future without the Proposed Actions. The socioeconomic analysis found that while the Proposed Actions would introduce a substantial amount of housing to the study area, this housing would not be more costly than the new housing currently in construction and anticipated in the future without the Proposed Actions.

The analysis of traffic and pedestrians identified a number of locations of significant adverse impacts in the study area. However, in the future without the Proposed Actions most of the study area is expected to be characterized by congested traffic and pedestrian conditions, particularly during peak periods of activity, so that even though these conditions would worsen, the general character of traffic and pedestrian conditions in the area would not change. Noise levels in the study area also would increase—from increased traffic, proposed playgrounds, and building mechanical equipment—but the magnitude of the increases would be generally imperceptible to most listeners and below the CEQR threshold for a significant adverse noise impact.

In summary, the change in character on the Development Site would be consistent with the character of the surrounding areas as they would be developed by 2019, and the Proposed Actions would help create a new 24-hour neighborhood that complements the emerging developments in the Hudson Yards and the West Chelsea neighborhoods. The Proposed Actions would not have a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character in the Development Site's study area.

TENTH AVENUE SITE

The proposed building on the Tenth Avenue Site would complement the mixture of densities and uses in the surrounding area, and would not have a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character. Moreover, by building over the rail cut and adding residential use, the proposed building would greatly improve the character of the Tenth Avenue Site.

The change in character on the Tenth Avenue Site would have a positive effect on neighborhood character in the Tenth Avenue Site Study Area. By providing a compatible residential use and removing the rail cut, thus reinforcing the grid on West 48th and West 49th Streets, the new development would support neighborhood character. Although the building would be taller than nearby structures, at 99 feet it would not be out of scale with the northern area of Clinton. Finally, by providing permanently affordable housing on the site, the Proposed Actions would greatly support the character of the Clinton neighborhood as one whose residents are characterized by a true mix of incomes.

NINTH AVENUE SITE

The proposed building on the Ninth Avenue Site would complement the mixture of densities and uses in the surrounding area, and would not have a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character. By replacing a gravel parking lot with a new residential mixed-use building, the Proposed Actions would improve the character of the Ninth Avenue Site.

The Proposed Actions would not have a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character in the Ninth Avenue Site study area. Similar to the Tenth Avenue Site, by providing compatible residential use, the new development would support neighborhood character. Although the building would be taller than nearby structures, at 115 feet it would not be out of scale with the surrounding area of Clinton. Finally, by providing permanently affordable housing on the site, the Proposed Actions would greatly support the character of the Clinton neighborhood as one whose residents are characterized by a true mix of incomes.

B. METHODOLOGY

According to the *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, an assessment of neighborhood character is generally needed when the action would exceed preliminary thresholds in any one of the following areas of technical analysis: land use, urban design, visual resources, historic resources, socioeconomic conditions, traffic, or noise. An assessment is also appropriate when the action would have moderate effects on several of those areas. Potential effects on neighborhood character may include:

- *Land Use.* When development resulting from the proposed action would have the potential to change neighborhood character by: introducing a new, incompatible land use; conflicting with land use policy or other public plans for the area; changing land use character; or resulting in significant land use impacts.

- *Urban Design and Visual Resources.* In developed areas, urban design changes have the potential to affect neighborhood character by introducing substantially different building bulk, form, size, scale, or arrangement. Urban design changes may also affect block forms, street patterns, or street hierarchies, as well as streetscape elements such as streetwalls, landscaping, curbcuts, and loading docks. The configuration of a building or buildings may also affect wind conditions at the pedestrian level at and adjacent to Development Site. Visual resource changes have the potential to affect neighborhood character by directly changing visual features such as unique and important public view corridors and vistas, or public visual access to such features.
- *Historic Resources.* When an action would result in substantial direct changes to a historic resource or substantial changes to public views of a resource, or when a historic resources analysis identifies a significant impact in this category, there is a potential to affect neighborhood character.
- *Socioeconomic Conditions.* Changes in socioeconomic conditions have the potential to affect neighborhood character when they result in substantial direct or indirect displacement or addition of population, employment, or businesses, substantial differences in population or employment density, or if the project results in changes to a unique industry.
- *Traffic and Pedestrians*. Changes in traffic and pedestrian conditions can affect neighborhood character in a number of ways. For traffic to have an effect on neighborhood character, it must be a contributing element to the character of the neighborhood (either by its absence or its presence), and it must change substantially as a result of the action. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, such substantial traffic changes can include: changes in level of service (LOS) to C or below; changes in traffic patterns; changes in roadway classifications; changes in vehicle mixes; substantial increases in traffic volumes on residential streets; or significant traffic impacts, as identified in that technical analysis. Regarding pedestrians, when a proposed action would result in substantially different pedestrian activity and circulation, it has the potential to affect neighborhood character.
- *Noise*. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, for an action to affect neighborhood character in regards to noise, it would need to result in a significant adverse noise impact and a change in acceptability category.

In summary, this chapter examines neighborhood character in the area surrounding the three project sites as it currently exists and in the Future without and the Future with the Proposed Actions. The analysis was performed for three study areas that generally form the basis of the land use analysis. The first, and largest, study area is generally located within a ½-mile of the Development Site (the "Development Site study area"). The second and third study areas encompass 400-foot radii around each of the Additional Housing Sites.

The chapter's impact analysis focuses on changes to neighborhood character resulting from changes in the technical areas discussed above, since changes in those technical areas are more likely to result in changes to neighborhood character.

C. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The character of the study area surrounding the Development Site varies depending on particular locations. The Development Site study area encompasses portions of several districts and neighborhoods, including the Large-Scale Plan subarea; the 34th Street, 42nd Street, Convention

Center, and Farley Corridors; the Garment Center District; the Hudson River waterfront; Hell's Kitchen; and Chelsea. As described below, a variety of conditions characterize these distinct neighborhoods. Both of the Additional Housing Sites, and their associated study areas, are located in the Clinton/Hells Kitchen section of Manhattan Community Board 4.

DEVELOPMENT SITE

The approximately 13-acre Development Site consists of a superblock bounded by West 30th and West 33rd Streets and Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues. The Development Site is on land that sits below the grade of the Eleventh Avenue viaduct as well as the grade of West 33rd Street as it descends from Eleventh Avenue to grade at Twelfth Avenue. Blank concrete walls prevent anyone on either of these streets from seeing the site. The site is at grade along West 30th Street and Twelfth Avenue and generally surrounded by a chain link fence. The Development Site connects below the Eleventh Avenue viaduct to the Eastern Rail Yard. Currently, vehicular access to the site is from West 33rd Street and Twelfth Avenue.

The Development Site is operated by Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) as a commuter train storage and maintenance yard. Along the Eleventh and Twelfth Avenue frontages, the site contains several small, 1- and 2-story buildings that house train maintenance operations and related offices. The southern portion of the Development Site, between West 30th Street and the approximate location of West 31st Street, includes land that is currently occupied on a month-to-month basis by a bus operator, the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY), and a New York City Transit (NYCT) enclosed storage area. Several one-story temporary trailers, which house the offices related to DSNY and the bus operators, occupying this portion of the site, are situated along the West 30th Street frontage of the Development Site. This southern portion of the site in the approximate location of West 31st Street is separated from the LIRR operations by chain-link fencing.

The historic High Line, an unused freight railroad viaduct, runs along the western and southern edges of the Development Site, crossing over West 30th Street and Eleventh Avenue on a trestle. The railroad creates a visual partition along the Development Site's West 30th Street and Twelfth Avenue frontages. The High Line, which extends between West 34th and Gansevoort Streets, has been determined eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places and is a visual resource in the surrounding area.

Other visual resources that can be seen from the sidewalks adjacent to the Development Site include the Hudson River, Hudson River Park, and the New Jersey skyline to the west, and the Daily News Building (the former Westyard Distribution Center) and the Empire State Building to the east. To the north, the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center ("Convention Center") can be seen from Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues, and to the south the Starrett-Lehigh Building is visible along the same view corridors. The Starrett-Lehigh Building is also visible to the south over the Development Site from West 33rd Street.

DEVELOPMENT SITE STUDY AREA

OVERVIEW

The Development Site study area is quite large, and the character of the neighborhoods it encompasses varies depending on particular locations. In general, the area west of Ninth Avenue and to the south of West 41st Street is characterized by transportation uses, including ramp access to the Port Authority Bus Terminal (PABT), the Lincoln Tunnel approach and exit roads,

and major rail infrastructure, which typically cross the landscape in open cuts. The areas south of West 29th Street, along Ninth Avenue, and north of West 41st Street are predominantly residential. The area to the east of Eighth Avenue is primarily characterized by commercial uses. While the Garment Center formerly had a concentration of small manufacturing uses, this subarea has been transitioning towards a mixed-use/residential and commercial area.

The land in the study area slopes downward from east to west toward the Hudson River. Due to the elevation of the Eleventh Avenue viaduct, which spans over the Amtrak Empire Line and the Caemmerer Rail Yard between West 30th and West 37th Streets, cross streets east of Eleventh Avenue ascend steeply to the height of the structure, and west of the avenue they descend steeply toward Twelfth Avenue and the Hudson River. The wide north-south avenues carry most of the traffic through the study area, as well as the three major east-west cross streets: West 23rd, West 34th, and West 42nd Streets.

The most prominent views in the study area, in the immediate vicinity of the Development Site, are of the Hudson River, Hudson River Park, and the New Jersey skyline, and most of the cross streets in the study area feature such views from as far east as the midblock between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. Views east within the study area along the cross streets between West 28th and West 34th Streets from as far west as Route 9A include views of the Empire State Building. The Empire State Building is also visible in the distance over the generally lower-rise buildings that still comprise much of the Hudson Yards area. It is seen in the distance over intervening buildings.

The Development Site study area has seen development of new housing, accompanied by a dramatic increase in household incomes, and an increase in the amount and cost of market rate housing over the past 18 years, particularly since 2000. Despite the increased desirability of the Far West Side residential neighborhoods, the study area continues to maintain a diverse income mix largely due to the high concentration of rent-protected units relative to other areas of Manhattan—most notably in single-room occupancy (SRO) units and affordable and public housing in the Chelsea subarea. Major concentrations of employment in the study area include transportation uses such as the NYCT Michael J. Quill Bus Depot, Amtrak, Greyhound, Federal Express, and DHL, as well as the U.S. Postal Service.

Currently, there are no NYCT subway lines on or within a ½-mile radius of the Development Site. Streets in the study area generally run east-west, most carrying one-way traffic; the exceptions are West 23rd, West 34th, and West 42nd Streets, which carry two-way traffic and are wider than other east-west streets. Avenues generally run north-south and are wider (and have wider sidewalks) than the typical east-west streets. Sixth, Eighth, and Tenth Avenues are one-way northbound and Seventh and Ninth Avenues flow one-way southbound. Eleventh Avenue operates one-way southbound between West 24th and West 34th Streets and West 40th and West 44th Streets, and two-way between West 22nd and West 24th Streets and between West 34th and West 40th Streets. Route 9A (Twelfth Avenue within the study area) is a two-way north-south roadway along the Hudson River waterfront extending from the Henry Hudson Bridge to South Ferry and the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel. This roadway, the westernmost arterial in Manhattan, serves as a principal route through the study area and connects with the Henry Hudson Parkway to the north. Traffic volumes in the study area are generally substantially higher along north-south avenues than along the east-west cross-town streets. In the vicinity of the Development Site, Route 9A carries considerably higher traffic volumes than other avenues.

There are several "through truck" routes within the study area, including: Eleventh Avenue (West 34th to West 42nd Streets), Twelfth Avenue (south of the study area to West 34th Street),

West 34th Street (Twelfth to Dyer Avenues, and east of Dyer Avenue except between 11 AM-6PM), West 42nd Street (Dyer to Eleventh Avenues), and Dyer Avenue (Lincoln Tunnel to West 34th Street). In addition, several of the streets surrounding the Development Site have been identified as bicycle routes through Manhattan, including: Eleventh Avenue (north- and south-bound between West 21st and West 72nd Streets); West 30th Street (eastbound between Route 9A and First Avenue); and West 33rd Street (westbound between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues).

The study area's parking demand is lowest overnight, and peaks during the weekday midday. In all periods, there is a residual supply of off-street parking spaces. Most of the study area's on-street/curbside parking regulations restrict weekday daytime usage to commercial loading and unloading activities, authorized vehicles or prohibit parking overall. Unrestricted parking, with the exception of street cleaning regulations, is permitted along a limited number of blocks southeast of the Development Site, such as along West 29th Street between Eleventh and Tenth Avenues, and West 26th, West 25th, and West 24th Streets between Ninth and Tenth Avenues.

Traffic is the dominant source of noise in the study area. Other notable noise contributors include helicopters from Liberty Helicopter Tours (see description below under "Waterfront"), subway-related noise discharged from the subway vents/emergency exits along Eighth Avenue, construction noise, sirens from police and other emergency vehicles, and the ubiquitous car/truck horns and squealing brakes characteristic of New York City streets. In general, with the exception of locations on Twelfth Avenue closest to the heliport, noise levels in the study area are within the typical range of ambient noise level conditions that occur in Midtown Manhattan, with lower levels typically occurring at night and on weekends.

Subareas are described in more detail below (see Figure 3-1 for boundaries of each subarea).

LARGE-SCALE PLAN SUBAREA

This subarea is characterized by its major transportation and infrastructure land uses. Transportation uses in this area include the Eastern Rail Yard, which like the Western Rail Yard serves as a storage yard and maintenance facility for LIRR. The Eastern Rail Yard forms a superblock between West 30th and West 33rd Streets and Tenth and Eleventh Avenues and is set below the grades of Tenth and Eleventh Avenues and West 33rd Street. It is not visible from those streets, being surrounded by a concrete wall. Its West 30th Street frontage is bordered by the High Line, beneath which are one-story brick warehouse buildings. LIRR facilities and operations occupy the portion of the superblock between West 31st and West 33rd Streets, none of which are visible or directly accessible from the street. A portion of the southern section of the Eastern Rail Yard is currently serving as a construction site for the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Water Tunnel No. 3 Project.

The eastern spur of the High Line crosses over Tenth Avenue along West 30th Street in a double-track platform, where it used to connect with the United State Postal Service (USPS) Morgan General Mail Facility. The High Line is particularly visible along West 30th Street between Tenth and Twelfth Avenues.

The below-grade Amtrak railroad cut, a defining streetscape element, slices through the subarea, curving east from the northeast corner of Eleventh Avenue and West 36th Street and then continues north through the midblocks between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. It is closed off from the street by both chain-link fencing and concrete walls, and results in long stretches of inactive streetwall along the midblock of these cross streets. In addition, large construction sites

for the No. 7 subway extension occupy entire block widths on the east side of Eleventh Avenue from West 33rd to West 36th Streets.

The Lincoln Tunnel's northern entrance occupies the block between West 39th and West 40th Streets and Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. Many cars, trucks, and buses queue to enter the tunnel in this area. The open access ramps to the entrance, including bus ramps from the PABT, cut beneath and above the City streets and are the most visible structures in the area. Other transportation-related uses in this area include auto repair facilities, taxi dispatch sites, gas stations, auto parts stores, and surface parking lots.

West 34th Street between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues is lined with commercial, warehouse, and storage buildings, parking garages and lots, and construction sites. The north side of the street contains four- to six-story brick and concrete warehouse buildings on the eastern half of the block, and a large construction site occupies the east side of Eleventh Avenue between West 34th and West 35th Streets. The south side of West 34th Street contains a large construction site on the east side of Eleventh Avenue between West 33rd and West 34th Streets, which is adjacent to a 12-story brick commercial loft building.

A number of former manufacturing buildings in the area between West 33rd and West 36th Streets and Tenth and Eleventh Avenues are now vacant and will be demolished to accommodate the future Hudson Park and Boulevard, which is discussed in detail below under "Future without the Proposed Actions." Residential uses in the subarea are limited to several small four-story walk-up buildings along the west side of Tenth Avenue, the northern side of West 33rd Street, and the southern side of West 35th Street. Limited commercial uses include an auto dealership on Eleventh Avenue between West 40th and West 41st Streets, and offices on the upper floors of buildings along West 33rd and West 40th Streets.

FARLEY CORRIDOR

The Farley Corridor subarea is defined by several large superblocks between West 31st and West 33rd Streets which accommodate Madison Square Garden, the former U.S. General Post Office (now called the Farley Complex), and the Daily News Building (the former Westyard Distribution building) on Tenth Avenue. These uses are located above a substantial transportation infrastructure that extends from the Development Site to Penn Station.

Madison Square Garden and its related theater occupy most of the superblock that extends from West 31st Street to West 33rd Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues. The arena is home to the New York Knicks and Liberty basketball teams and the New York Rangers hockey team, and also serves as the venue for a variety of sporting events and major concerts. Two Penn Plaza, facing Seventh Avenue, shares the Madison Square Garden superblock. The 30-story building fronts on a 0.4-acre urban plaza, which contains steps, planters, and lighting and serves as an entry and gathering place for the building and for Madison Square Garden and Penn Station.

Penn Station, which lies beneath Madison Square Garden, is the busiest rail passenger facility in the nation. It serves regional commuter lines (NJ TRANSIT and LIRR) and long-distance trains (Amtrak), and also provides access to several New York City subway lines. This well-used transportation hub creates congested pedestrian conditions on sidewalks along Seventh and Eighth Avenue between West 31st, West 33rd, and West 35th Streets, and on Ninth Avenue between West 33rd and West 35th Streets.

The Farley Complex covers the entire block between Eighth and Ninth Avenues between West 31st and West 33rd Streets. While not designated as public open space, the steps of the Farley Complex's main entrance on Eighth Avenue are utilized as a public seating and gathering area. Until recently, the building served as Manhattan's General Post Office, and it still contains offices for the USPS and retail postal services in the grand Eighth Avenue lobby. However, USPS has recently consolidated most of its operations at the Morgan Annex Facility, which is located between West 28th and West 30th Streets from Ninth to Tenth Avenues (within the Chelsea subarea). The Farley Complex is built above platforms and train tracks that service Penn Station.

Just to the west of the Farley Complex, active rail lines lie in an open cut between Ninth and Tenth Avenues. The Lincoln Tunnel approach roads (Dyer Avenue and the Lincoln Tunnel Expressway) run north-south above the rail lines, but below the street grade. Vehicles can access the Tunnel's approach roads via West 30th, West 31st, West 33rd, West 34th, West 35th, and West 36th Streets. In addition, West 31st Street west to Tenth Avenue is an identified bicycle route.

Other uses in this area include commercial uses on West 31st and West 33rd Streets between Ninth and Tenth Avenues. A 13-story office building occupies 430 West 33rd Street, and a building at 406-426 West 31st Street houses office and manufacturing uses. The New York Daily News' corporate headquarters and the public television broadcaster WNET are located at 450 West 33rd Street, referred to as the Daily News Building. The Daily News Building occupies a superblock bounded by West 31st and West 33rd Streets between Dyer and Tenth Avenues; this structure also has a unique massing, as each façade slopes down and outward to meet the lot lines. The Daily News Building is prominent along the Tenth and Eleventh Avenue view corridors, as well as nearby east-west cross streets.

The Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) recently renovated and converted a loft building on West 31st Street between Ninth and Tenth Avenues into a dormitory. Limited residential uses in this subarea include two small apartment buildings are located on the south side of West 31st Street between Ninth and Tenth Avenues.

34TH STREET CORRIDOR

The 34th Street Corridor subarea contains high-rise office and commercial uses, and these dense uses—as well as the corridor's proximity to Penn Station—create very busy sidewalks along Eighth and Ninth Avenues north of West 31st Street. Prominent buildings in the area include One Penn Plaza, a 57-story office tower flanked by one-story retail buildings on Seventh Avenue and Eighth Avenues, which together cover the entire block between West 33rd and West 34th Streets from Seventh to Eighth Avenues. One Penn Plaza is set in the center of a large paved plaza above the street level and has a through-block retail arcade and pedestrian thoroughfare at street level and a concourse parallel to the LIRR concourse beneath.

The blocks along West 34th and West 35th Streets toward Eighth Avenue include the Manhattan Theater Center, the Loews Theater, and the New Yorker Hotel, which occupies the western blockfront of Eighth Avenue between West 34th and West 35th Streets. An eight-story office building occupies the northwest corner of West 34th Street and Ninth Avenue. The north side of West 34th Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues includes continuous retail frontages consisting mainly of discount stores. The eastern end of this block contains two large office buildings: the 45-story Nelson Building at Seventh Avenue, and the 22-story Pennsylvania

Building at 225 West 34th Street. The western end of the block consists of low-rise commercial structures.

Residential uses are located throughout the 34th Street Corridor, but particularly along West 34th Street between Ninth and Tenth Avenues. This block includes five large apartment buildings, which range from 13 to 20 stories tall, creating a distinct urban neighborhood in an area otherwise defined by commercial development. Other residential uses include walk-up residential buildings that typically include ground-floor retail along Ninth and Tenth Avenues.

The only manufacturing uses within the 34th Street Corridor are located on the south side of West 35th Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues. There are also a few parking lots in the corridor, notably a through-block lot from West 34th to 35th Streets between Eighth and Ninth Avenues. The 34th Street corridor contains four community facilities: the New York Police Department's (NYPD) Midtown South Precinct, the West Side Jewish Center, Saint Michael's Roman Catholic Church, and St. Michael's Academy, an all-girls high school. Bob's Park, a community open space, is located on West 35th Street, just east of Tenth Avenue.

Dyer Avenue and the Lincoln Tunnel Expressway bisect West 34th and West 35th Streets between Ninth and Tenth Avenues in this subarea, and the Eighth Avenue northbound bicycle lane extends north through the area to West 39th Street. In addition, Dedicated Bus Lanes have recently been implemented on 34th Street from Eleventh Avenue to First Avenue. The intersection of West 34th Street and Eighth Avenue had the highest number of accidents (both pedestrian- and bicycle-related) of any intersection in the study area.

HELL'S KITCHEN

The character of the Hell's Kitchen subarea is distinctly different from that of the other study area subareas. North of West 38th Street, much of the subarea is dedicated to the Lincoln Tunnel approach roads, which starkly divide land use patterns. Throughout the area, there are also many parking lots for PABT buses and private automobiles. Ninth Avenue serves as both a residential and commercial spine through the neighborhood. Small-scale neighborhood-oriented retail shops and four- to six-story residences run the length of both sides of the avenue.

The residential character of Ninth Avenue differs markedly from the adjacent 42nd Street Corridor (described below), particularly in the scale of its residential buildings. The avenue contains primarily four- to six-story residential buildings with ground-floor retail. There are very few large residential towers, with two exceptions: the 13-story Hudson Crossing building, which fronts on West 37th Street between Ninth Avenue and Dyer Avenue, and the high-rise, glass and steel Rockrose building, which occupies the east side of Tenth Avenue between West 37th and West 38th Streets. Along the west side of Tenth Avenue between West 37th and West 38th Streets and extending to the midblock, two tall towers rising from a shared podium are currently under construction. While residential uses are on each side of the Lincoln Tunnel approach roads, they stop abruptly at West 38th Street. From that point north, the only residential uses are along Ninth Avenue.

There are two office buildings on Tenth Avenue between West 36th and West 37th Streets. A 50,000 square-foot (sf) theater building, located at 450 West 37th Street, includes the Baryshnikov Center for Dance, three theater spaces, and offices for non-profit organizations. A small amount of garment-related and other light industrial uses are concentrated near Tenth Avenue. The community facilities in this subarea include the New York City Fire Department's (FDNY) Engine 34/Ladder 21 on West 38th Street, Covenant House on West 40th Street, Metro

Baptist Church, and St. Raphael's Roman Catholic Church on West 41st Street between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. There are no publicly accessible open spaces in the subarea, but there is a dog run (Astro's Community Dog Run) along the south side of West 40th Street.

As the major gateway to Midtown Manhattan from New Jersey and points west, Lincoln Tunnel operations affect the Hell's Kitchen and other nearby subareas, especially during the weekday evening rush hours. The Lincoln Tunnel consists of three two-lane tubes. The north tube, located at West 39th Street and Eleventh Avenue, always operates in a westbound direction; the south tube, located at West 38th Street and Tenth Avenue, operates in an eastbound direction only; and the center tube, at West 39th Street and Tenth Avenue, is configured to allow each lane to operate in either a westbound or eastbound direction. The Lincoln Tunnel Expressway serves as an ingress/egress route to and from the Lincoln Tunnel's center and south tubes and access to the north tube. The Lincoln Tunnel also provides direct access to the PABT via a series of above- and below-grade ramps and tunnels. Dyer Avenue operates at-grade between West 34th and West 38th Streets and between West 39th and West 42nd Streets. West 39th Street between Ninth and Tenth Avenues is closed on weekends for street fairs, and West 39th and West 40th Streets east of Eleventh Avenue have been identifying as bicycle routes on the New York City Cycling Map.

CONVENTION CENTER CORRIDOR

The Convention Center is the dominant use within the Convention Corridor subarea. The Convention Center, 1.8 million sf in size, extends from West 34th to West 39th Streets. West 35th, West 36th, West 37th, and West 38th Streets do not continue west of Eleventh Avenue due to the superblock formed by the Convention Center. The building has a dense, boxy form that is clad in dark glass and steel in a lattice design. It is set far back from all of its frontages to provide space for loading and visitor drop-offs, and it is enclosed by a low concrete wall on portions of its West 34th Street and Eleventh Avenue frontages. The Convention Center is a prominent visual resource along Eleventh Avenue; views along this street, as well as views west from Tenth Avenue, are dominated by the Center's distinctive cubes of steel and dark glass.

There are two large parking lots directly north and south of the Convention Center. The southern parking lot is used by private automobiles and tractor trailer trucks for the Convention Center, and is enclosed by a tall concrete wall on its Eleventh Avenue and West 33rd Street frontages and chain-link fencing on its Twelfth Avenue and West 34th Street frontages. Other large-scale facilities within this subarea include the NYCT Michael J. Quill Bus Depot, which occupies an entire block between West 40th and West 41st Streets and Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues. There are no community facilities, public open spaces, or residential, manufacturing, or industrial uses within the Convention Corridor subarea. The No. 7 subway extension is under construction in this subarea.

42ND STREET CORRIDOR

The character of the 42nd Street Corridor is defined by three land uses: the PABT, the tourist-oriented commercial and entertainment uses along Theatre Row and in nearby Times Square, and large high-rise residential development farther west along West 42nd Street.

The PABT occupies the full block between West 40th and West 41st Streets from Eighth Avenue to Ninth Avenue. On the Eighth Avenue side, it has an upper level connection across West 41st Street to an additional section of the facility, which extends to West 42nd Street along the Eighth Avenue frontage of that block. Together the two Eighth Avenue frontages and the

large bridge across West 41st Street present as a unified, two-block façade. The PABT serves as the City's primary bus terminal for many suburban and inter-city bus lines, providing commuter access to upstate New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Buses enter and exit through approach roads that give direct access to various PABT levels. Together with the Lincoln Tunnel, the approach roads play a prominent role in shaping the landscape around the terminal, in the 42nd Street Corridor subarea as well as the Hell's Kitchen and Large-Scale Plan subareas.

The tourist-oriented land uses in this subarea include the six off-Broadway theaters of Theatre Row between Ninth Avenue and Dyer Avenue and two hotels, on the corner of West 43rd Street and Eighth Avenue and on West 42nd Street just west of Tenth Avenue.

The 42nd Street Corridor's residential development is concentrated in high-rise buildings generally west of Ninth Avenue. While there are a few low-rise, mixed-use residential buildings along Ninth Avenue and West 42nd Street, most of the residential buildings are more than 20 stories tall. The Manhattan Plaza Apartments, River Place, Ivy Tower, Riverbank West, Theater Row, Victory, Orion, and Atelier are notable examples. Each of these residential buildings is more than 40 stories tall and was constructed during the last ten to twenty years (except Manhattan Plaza, which dates from the mid-1970s). Most of the buildings along Ninth and Tenth Avenues include ground-floor retail uses.

The western portion of the 42nd Street Corridor includes a FedEx facility on West 42nd Street and the northern terminus of Dyer Avenue, which extends to West 42nd Street and distributes traffic from the Lincoln Tunnel. Lastly, Con Edison operates an electrical substation on the block of West 42nd Street between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues.

The community facilities within the 42nd Street Corridor include the Consulate for the People's Republic of China, on the corner of West 42nd Street and Twelfth Avenue; a U.S. Post Office adjacent to the bus terminal; Rescue Company 1 of the FDNY at 530 West 43rd Street; the Roman Catholic Church of the Holy Cross at 332 West 43rd Street; and the NYPD Manhattan South Task Force at 524 West 42nd Street. Open spaces in the area include a 0.74-acre public plaza with playground on the north side of West 41st Street that is part of the River Place development.

GARMENT CENTER

The Garment Center subarea is the most westerly portion of the City's Garment District, which lies primarily within the area bounded by Fifth Avenue on the east, West 35th Street on the south, Ninth Avenue on the west, and West 40th and West 41st Streets on the north.

While the Garment Center subarea shares many similarities with the overall Garment District, Eighth Avenue generally serves as a divider for uses within this district. By and large, the loft buildings west of Eighth Avenue are smaller than garment-related buildings to the east. The midblock areas between Seventh and Eighth Avenues have light industrial buildings associated with the apparel industry, as well as apparel showrooms. West of Eighth Avenue, low-rise buildings and vacant lots are much more prominent in the midblocks. Unlike the loft buildings in the midblocks between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, many of the loft buildings along the avenues have been entirely converted to office uses, which are typically occupied by fashion design companies, publishing houses, and design firms unrelated to the apparel industry, such as architects, engineers, and graphic designers. Ground-floor retail uses are concentrated along the avenues.

The limited residential uses within the Garment Center subarea are concentrated to the west of Eighth Avenue. Typical residential buildings are between 4 and 6 stories and include ground-floor retail uses. A few residential buildings higher than 10 stories are scattered throughout the area in the midblock area. There are a few parking lots in the subarea, particularly along West 37th and West 38th Streets. There are no publicly accessible open spaces in the Garment Center subarea. The only community facilities are the Fountain House, an outpatient facility for the mentally ill; the Post-Graduate Rehabilitation Center; and the NYPD Midtown South Precinct at 357 West 35th Street. The northbound bicycle lane on Eighth Avenue continues through the Garment Center subarea, and West 39th and West 40th Streets east of Eleventh Avenue have been identifying as bicycle routes on the New York City Cycling Map.

CHELSEA

The Chelsea subarea has the highest concentration of residential uses in the study area; these are predominantly located between Eighth and Tenth Avenues from West 21st to West 28th Streets, although there are some limited residential uses west of Tenth Avenue, particularly south of West 24th Street. The housing types range from brownstone row houses to 22-story apartment towers set in large open spaces. Brownstones and apartments occupy much of the area along West 24th and West 25th Streets from Ninth to Tenth Avenues; these buildings are typically three to six stories tall and range from one- to six-family units. Tenth Avenue within the study area contains a mix of four to five story brick tenement buildings. There are also two large multi-building New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments in the study area—the 11- and 12-story John Lovejoy Elliott Houses between Ninth and Tenth Avenues and West 25th and West 27th Streets, the adjacent 21-story Chelsea Houses, and the 14-story Chelsea Houses Addition. The private Penn Station South Cooperative Development includes four 22-story buildings and occupies the area between Eighth and Ninth Avenues and West 23rd and West 28th Streets. The NYCHA and Penn South developments have on-site open spaces and playgrounds.

The area of Chelsea between Tenth and Twelfth Avenues and West 24th and West 29th Streets contains many art galleries, studios, and artist spaces. Most of the buildings are brick and masonry loft and warehouse buildings, with gallery spaces on the ground floor and artist studios or offices above. The Starrett-Lehigh Building occupies the entire block between Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues between West 26th and West 27th Streets. This 2.2 million sf historic building provides office space for many fashion, media, and arts organizations. The massive building, with its horizontal bands of steel ribbon windows, is visible from nearly the entire study area; it is especially visible along the Eleventh Avenue and Twelfth Avenue north-south corridors. Nightclubs and entertainment uses are prevalent in the northern section of the area along West 27th and West 28th Streets between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. Ground-floor commercial uses are concentrated along Ninth and Tenth Avenues.

There are very few major manufacturing or industrial uses in the Chelsea subarea. A maintenance facility for the USPS and DSNY's Manhattan Borough Repair Facility form a superblock between West 24th and West 26th Streets and Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues. The USPS Morgan General Mail Facility between West 29th and West 30th Streets and Ninth and Tenth Avenues, and its more recently constructed Annex between West 28th and West 29th Streets and Ninth and Tenth Avenues, are structures occupying their full blocks. They are connected by a large bridge above West 29th Street.

Transportation uses in the Chelsea subarea are limited to parking lots and garages, which are particularly concentrated on the blocks between West 28th and West 30th Streets and Tenth and Twelfth Avenues. The block south of the Development Site is occupied by an open-air bus storage facility, enclosed by chain-link fencing on its Twelfth Avenue, West 29th Street, and West 30th Street frontages. Con Edison parks trucks and stores equipment behind its Manhattan Borough Operations Center at 281 Eleventh Avenue, a nondescript, one- and two-story concrete building spans the entire street frontage of the avenue between West 28th and West 29th Streets and extends to the midblock of West 28th Street. Greyhound has a bus parking lot on the block between West 29th and West 30th Streets from Eleventh to Twelfth Avenues. The north side of West 28th Street and West 29th Street between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues are characterized by low-rise parking and storage facilities, auto-repair shops, and construction sites enclosed by chain-link fencing.

A number of historic structures identified in the architectural resources study area (an 800-foot radius from the Development Site) that are also within the Chelsea subarea are listed or have been determined eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, as follows: the High Line; the 10-story brick Renaissance Revival brick building at 306-310 Eleventh Avenue/541-561 West 29th Street, which constitutes the former W & J Sloane Warehouse and Garage complex; a three-story Greek Revival building at 550 West 29th Street, built sometime before 1883; the former Charles P. Rodgers & Co. Building at 517-523 West 29th Street, a six-story stable and factory; another six-story, Romanesque Revival brick factory at 547-553 West 27th Street, built for the Berlin & Jones Envelope Company; the New York Terminal Warehouse Company's Central Stores, 25 seven- and nine-story storage buildings occupying the full block between Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues and West 27th and West 28th Streets; and the Starrett-Lehigh Building, described above. Some of these historic buildings are also within the boundaries of the West Chelsea Historic District, which is roughly bounded by West 25th and West 28th Streets and Tenth and Twelfth Avenues. The West Chelsea Historic District stands as a surviving example of Manhattan's industrial past and still contains many of the historic buildings of this era, including factories, warehouses, and industrial firms that have long been demolished elsewhere in the City. The portion of the High Line in Chelsea runs along Tenth Avenue, occasionally passing through buildings or connecting to adjacent buildings with private rail sidings.

There are four public open spaces within the Chelsea subarea. The 3.91-acre Chelsea Park, which runs the entire length of West 28th Street between Ninth and Tenth Avenues, includes baseball/softball fields, basketball and handball courts, and playground equipment. The Chelsea Recreation Center is located at 430 West 25th Street. This six-story, 56,000 sf facility includes a 25-yard pool, a full-size basketball court, exercise rooms, a game room, and space for aerobics and yoga classes. The 2.5-acre Chelsea Waterside Park, located between West 22nd and West 24th Streets, has a sports field, a dog run, a basketball court, and playground equipment with water features.

Below West 30th Street, the High Line turns south and runs along a right-of-way parallel to and slightly west of Tenth Avenue toward its southern end at Gansevoort Street. Along the way, this former unused rail line bisects and abuts buildings. The High Line is prominent in views along the cross streets south of West 30th Street between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues.

Within the Chelsea subarea, two streets offer dedicated bicycle lanes: Eighth Avenue north-bound between Dominick and West 39th Streets, and Ninth Avenue, southbound starting at West 31st Street. On Ninth Avenue, the bicycle lane is a completely protected path along the left curb

lane, isolated from Ninth Avenue traffic by adjacent parked vehicles, concrete islands or buffer areas. These protective buffers are currently being installed along Eighth Avenue from Bank Street to West 23rd Street, as well. Unrestricted parking, with the exception of street cleaning regulations, is permitted along a limited number of blocks in the Chelsea subarea; however, these spaces serve mainly for storage of area residents' vehicles.

WATERFRONT

The Waterfront subarea extends west of Route 9A to the Hudson River pier head line between West 21st and West 43rd Streets. The Hudson River is an important and scenic body of water with intermittent river traffic of large barges, tugboats, sightseeing boats, and small personal craft. Hudson River Park stretches along the length of the waterfront in this subarea, with continuous bikeways, walkways, and linear parks. It is lined with landscaped areas, including trees, flowers, and small shrubs and provides unencumbered views of the river and of the opposite cliffs and skyline of New Jersey. Additional open space and recreational features in this area include the landmarked Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Float Transfer Bridge at Pier 66a; Pier 66, which includes boat slips and non-motorized boat activities, and is located directly north of Pier 66a; and the Hudson River Skate Park located at West 30th Street. The Hudson River bulkhead within the subarea is also historic and has been determined eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Twelfth Avenue (Route 9A), which runs in a north-south direction through the Waterfront subarea, carries considerably higher traffic volumes than other avenues in the vicinity of the Development Site. When Twelfth Avenue/Route 9A was reconstructed, it was designed as a major urban boulevard—it contains a landscaped median with small trees and shrubbery, street trees on its eastern edge, and plantings and a two-way bicycle lane on its western edge.

Commercial uses along the waterfront are associated with tourism and entertainment and include the northern portion of Chelsea Piers, the World Yacht and Circle Line cruises, on Piers 82 and 83, respectively, which offer sightseeing and dining cruise packages in the New York Harbor. In addition, a privately owned ferry operator (New York Waterway) operates a commuter ferry service between Pier 78, located at West 39th Street, and seven New Jersey ports: Belford/Harbor Way, Edgewater Ferry Landing, Hoboken/14th Street, Lincoln Harbor/ Weehawken, Newport, Paulus Hook, and Port Imperial/Weehaken. New York Waterway also provides free shuttle buses that serve to transport passengers between the ferry terminal at Pier 78 and various locations in Midtown and Lower Manhattan. A heliport operated by Air Pegasus is located between West 29th and West 30th Streets. The noise from this heliport includes noise from helicopters idling on the ground and from helicopters hovering in the area between takeoffs and landings. The noise levels along Twelfth Avenue near the heliport are higher than in other portions of this subarea or the rest of the study area. The New York City Tow Pound on Pier 76 near West 34th Street is a vehicle violations storage facility for the NYPD; the NYPD Mounted Troop Unit is also located at Pier 76. There are no residential, community facility, manufacturing, or industrial uses within this subarea.

TENTH AVENUE SITE

The Tenth Avenue Site is located in the midblock between West 48th and West 49th Streets, approximately 100 feet west Tenth Avenue. Currently, the Tenth Avenue Site is occupied by a below-grade Amtrak railroad right-of-way for the Empire Line service between New York City and Albany. The rail line runs through a cut, continuing to the north and south in a series of tunnels or open air cuts. Rising from the level of the tracks are jagged rock outcroppings and

small trees and shrubbery on each side of the tracks. The right-of-way is separated from adjacent lots by concrete walls and fencing. Concrete wall and chain-link fencing also border the site on West 48th and West 49th Streets. There are no architectural or visual resources located on this site.

TENTH AVENUE SITE STUDY AREA

The study area surrounding the Tenth Avenue Site includes a mixture of residential, institutional, open space, hotel, commercial, and transportation uses. Many of the uses to the north and south of the Tenth Avenue Site are situated over or adjacent to the same below-grade Amtrak rail cut that runs through the site. The area directly east of the Tenth Avenue Site is currently a construction site for the DEP's Water Tunnel No. 3 Project and is enclosed by a combination of concrete walls and construction fencing.

Residential uses are found throughout the Tenth Avenue Site study area, with tenements on Tenth Avenue and small apartment buildings and brick- and brownstone-clad rowhouses on the cross streets. The residential buildings in the area are typically five- to six-stories tall and built to the lot line. The 38-story Hudson View Terrace, which occupies the western portion of Tenth Avenue between West 50th and West 51st Streets, is an exception to the generally low scale of residential buildings in this area. The group of five historic tenements at 520-528 West 47th Street, which date from the early 1880s, has been identified as potentially eligible for landmark designation. Along Tenth Avenue, residential buildings contain ground-floor retail below the residential uses. Institutional uses within the study area are concentrated to the west of Tenth Avenue and include the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Cathedral, a Postgraduate Center for Mental Health facility, the headquarters of the American Red Cross in Greater New York, the Clinton Family Inn Community of Opportunity, and the Salvation Army. Also in this subarea is the Park West High School, which occupies the majority of the midblock on West 50th Street between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. Transportation-related uses in the study area include auto body repair and parts supply shops.

Hell's Kitchen Park is located in the study area on the eastern blockfront of Tenth Avenue between West 47th and West 48th Streets. This park includes handball courts, volleyball courts, basketball courts, playgrounds, play equipment designed for toddlers, a spray shower, game tables, and extensive plantings and trees.

Tenth Avenue is the main traffic thoroughfare through the study area; cross streets in the study area are narrower and typically carry one lane of traffic. Views north and south along Tenth Avenue extend for long stretches due to the width of the avenue and the low height of buildings fronting on the avenue within the study area. Views east along the cross streets in the study area include the skyscrapers in Midtown Manhattan; views on the cross streets extend as far west as the Hudson River and cliffs of the New Jersey skyline.

NINTH AVENUE SITE

The Ninth Avenue Site is located on the southeast corner of West 54th Street and Ninth Avenue. This site is currently occupied by a gravel parking lot that serves employees of the adjoining four-story modern, brick and concrete NYCT building, which occupies the remainder of the Ninth Avenue Site's zoning lot. The site is enclosed by tall chain-link fencing on its West 54th Street and Ninth Avenue frontages. There are no architectural or visual resources located on this site.

NINTH AVENUE SITE STUDY AREA

The character of the study area surrounding the Ninth Avenue Site is defined by the commercial uses along Ninth Avenue itself. Ninth Avenue is a wide south-bound road with four lanes of traffic and parallel parking on both sides of the street. Both sides of Ninth Avenue are lined with buildings with retail on the ground floor and residential uses above. The residential and mixed-use buildings within the study area are primarily five to ten stories tall and include rows of attached tenement buildings primarily situated on the avenue, and taller, attached apartment buildings located on the cross streets and corner lots.

Residential development along Ninth Avenue includes the historic groups of tenements on the west side of Ninth Avenue between West 52nd and West 53rd Streets (781-795 Ninth Avenue), and at the northeast corner of Ninth Avenue and West 54th Street (347 West 54th Street/824-826 Ninth Avenue). These tenement groups, five and six stories in height, were constructed at the end of the nineteenth century by various architects and owners.

The cross streets in the study area are more narrow and generally only carry one lane of traffic with parallel parking on each side of the street. There is a steep downwards slope toward the Hudson River on the cross streets west of Ninth Avenue. One historic residential building within the study area's cross streets is the 14-story former National Bible Institute and Dormitory building, located on the south side of West 55th Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues, which has been converted to apartment use.

Several institutional buildings and commercial office buildings of varying heights, footprints, and density are spread throughout the study area. There is a two-story NYCT office building located immediately to the east of the Ninth Avenue Site, a two-story commercial building across West 54th Street from the Ninth Avenue Site, two commercial buildings on West 52nd Street, and an auto care center on West 54th Street. The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, which is located on the northwest corner of West 55th Street and Ninth Avenue, is the most prominent of the institutional uses in this subarea. The theater is housed in a 10-story, transparent glass building. The historic St. Benedict of the Moor Church at 342 West 53rd Street, a two-story brick church with a temple-front façade, was erected in 1869 and most famously served at the first black Roman Catholic Church north of the Mason Dixon line. Other institutions in the area include the School for Strings at 419 West 54th Street, and the historic courthouse at 314 West 54th Street, formerly the Eleventh District Municipal Court/Seventh District Magistrates' Court. This six-story limestone and brick building was constructed in 1896 in the Northern Renaissance style.

Other historic structures in the area include the former Second Church of the Evangelical Association of North America, located on the south side of West 55th Street west of Ninth Avenue. This neo-Gothic church building was built in 1898 and was converted into a theater in 1962; it is now occupied by the Julia Miles Theater. The historic six-story brick garage at 411-413 West 55th Street, west of Ninth Avenue, was built in 1909 and has some Classical-style ornament.

Due to the low scale of buildings fronting on Ninth Avenue, the avenue provides broad views to the north and south. These views include the triangulated steel frame of the Hearst Tower and the twin glass and steel towers of the Time Warner Center to the north, and Worldwide Plaza's copper-clad pyramidal crown to the south.

D. THE FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

DEVELOPMENT SITE

In the Future without the Proposed Actions, no changes would occur on the Development Site. The Development Site would remain in its current use as an open, below-grade rail yard with service facilities that support LIRR operations. The portion of the High Line that runs along the south and west frontages of the Development Site will remain vacant and inaccessible to the public. Therefore, the neighborhood character of the Development Site would not be altered.

DEVELOPMENT SITE STUDY AREA

The character of the study area will change in the Future without the Proposed Actions due to the development projects that have been announced, are in the planning or approval processes, or are under construction throughout the study area. In general, the study area will continue to shift strongly toward a denser, more mixed-use area that would include additional residential, retail, hotel, office, cultural, and open space uses, and will continue the current trend toward an increased, more affluent population. Industrial employment in the area will continue to decrease, and employment in non-industrial jobs will increase, changing the character of the worker population and customer base for local retail.

The expected increases in the residential population, improved economic opportunity through new commercial uses, and new retail constructed in the Development Site study area could create upward pressure on retail rents, but also would increase sales. There will be a substantial addition of primarily market-rate housing in the study area, maintaining the area's residential desirability. Finally, the creation of a new open-space network will enhance the character of the changing neighborhoods within the study area.

The development of the various No Build projects is anticipated to increase subway, bus, sidewalk, and bicycle facility usage in the study area. In addition, some of the projects described below would expand existing transit facilities in the study area. The new No. 7 subway line station at 34th Street and Eleventh Avenue and most of the subway station elements in the study area would operate at acceptable conditions, with certain elements operating with congested conditions. On most bus routes, existing levels of service would not provide adequate supply to meet the projected future demand during the morning and evening peak hours. Therefore, these routes will require additional capacity, which would be provided by NYCT where fiscally feasible and operationally practicable. Pedestrian usage in the study area is also anticipated to increase, leading to additional congestion at various sidewalks, corners, and crosswalks. Finally, the City is expected to implement bicycle-related infrastructure improvements in the study area as part of its bicycle master plan.

In 2019 in the Future without the Proposed Actions, numerous traffic intersections are projected to operate at congested levels (mid-LOS D, LOS E, or LOS F), particularly during the PM peak hour. As described above, the study area's roadways are already highly utilized and thus the development of the various No Build projects would intensify this condition. Traffic signal timings within the study area also may change based on NYCDOT's city-wide program to improve pedestrian safety conditions for senior citizens by providing additional walk time at crosswalks (among other measures). Some off-street parking facilities would be displaced by No Build projects, but some new facilities would be constructed as part of other No Build projects. Overall, there would be both a net increase of off-street parking spaces in the study area and an

increase in the demand for such spaces (approximately 1.3 percent between 2008 and 2019), leading to a shortfall in the weekday midday off-street parking supply. Overnight parking is expected to be available.

Noise levels in the study area would increase by 2019—mainly as a result of vehicular traffic associated with future development projects—but the magnitude of the increases would generally vary from imperceptible to barely perceptible to most listeners.

LARGE-SCALE PLAN SUBAREA

The anticipated projects within the Large-Scale Plan subarea would alter its land uses, density, and network of streets and open spaces, and thus its neighborhood character. Overall, these projects would be located between West 30th and West 36th Streets, and would include a new residential, commercial, retail, community facility, open space, and transportation uses.

Immediately adjacent to the Development Site, the Eastern Rail Yard is expected to be redeveloped with five mixed-use buildings with heights ranging from approximately 500 to 900 feet. The buildings are expected to include office, retail, community facility, residential, and hotel uses as well as accessory parking. Most of the commercial development and approximately a third of the residential units would be located in a building facing Tenth Avenue, the base of which will contain primarily retail uses. Another building would be located at the northwest corner of the site and would contain a hotel with ground-floor retail, and residential uses in the upper portion of the building. The southwest corner of this site is expected to be developed with a residential building with ground-floor retail. A cultural or community facility use would be located in a lower-scale, approximately 150- to 200-foot-tall building to be constructed to the east, adjacent to the mixed-use building. This new development would considerably change the character and density of this subarea, as well as its streetscape, as contemplated by the Hudson Yards rezoning.

The new buildings would be situated on the perimeter of the site bordering a new public open space. The site will have approximately seven acres of publicly accessible outdoor open space, most likely to include public square and public plazas, as well as enclosed public circulation areas. This new open space will anchor the southern end of Hudson Park and Boulevard (described below) and connect to the High Line Park to the south. West of the prolongation of Hudson Park and Boulevard, generally in line with West 31st and West 32nd Streets there will be roadways and pedestrian access. The two new east-west roadways (generally in line with West 31st Street operating one-way westbound and West 32nd Street operating one-way eastbound) will intersect with Eleventh Avenue and extend within the site to a new internal north-south roadway constructed along the extended alignment of Hudson Park and Boulevard. This north-south roadway will operate one-way north of, and one-way south of its intersection with the new roadway generally in line with West 32nd Street. Also, a southbound roadway will be constructed from West 33rd Street to the roadway generally in line with West 32nd Street. The new roadways will both provide access to buildings internal to the site and improve overall vehicular and pedestrian circulation.

In order to create the platform over the rail yard on this site, and to address the grades and elevations of the new Hudson Park and Boulevard and the 34th Street-Eleventh Avenue Station entrance for the extended No. 7 subway line, West 33rd Street will be raised by as much as 12 feet above existing grade at the site's midblock. This grade change will improve roadway conditions in this subarea by creating a level vehicular riding surface on West 33rd Street between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues.

In addition to the central open space areas on the Eastern Rail Yard site, the portion of the historic High Line that runs along West 30th Street on the Eastern Rail Yard will be adaptively reused to provide approximately 0.70 acres of passive open space and connect to the new 1.5-mile High Line Park to the South. The High Line Park will offer such amenities as walkways, benches, landscaping, kiosks, and elevator and stair access. The park is expected to enhance the character of the study area by adapting a currently vacant visual and historic resource into a unique public open space. In order to preserve the historic and architectural integrity of the High Line, there will be a five-foot-wide setback between all proposed development on the Eastern Rail Yard site and the High Line on West 30th Street. An entrance to the High Line Park will be located on the south side of West 30th Street in the middle of the block.

Hudson Park and Boulevard, a broad new open space and boulevard system to be created in the midblocks between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues, will extend north of the Eastern Rail Yard open space from West 33rd Street to West 39th Street. The tree-lined system will be built on platforms on top of the existing Amtrak railroad cut between West 36th and West 39th Streets. It will run at an angle between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues and will include a total of approximately 4 acres of open space. Hudson Park and Boulevard is expected to be built in two phases. The first segment would run from West 33rd to West 36th Streets and will be completed by 2013. The remaining segment between West 36th and West 39th Streets, and a pedestrian bridge connecting the northern terminus at West 39th Street with West 42nd Street, will be completed after 2019 and is not considered in this analysis. This new open-space network will greatly improve the character of the affected portions of the Development Site study area, by replacing inactive and inaccessible areas dominated by transportation uses with unique and varied open spaces providing both active and passive uses.

Views to the Daily News Building and Empire State Building from Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues between West 30th and West 33rd Streets would be altered due to the proposed development on the Eastern Rail Yard and sites to the north.

Directly north of the Eastern Rail Yard site, it is anticipated that a mixed-use building with approximately 1.5 million sf of office space and approximately 79,000 sf of retail space would be constructed on the east side of Eleventh Avenue between West 33rd and West 34th Streets. This building could be between 650 and 700 feet in height. Another high-rise mixed-use building is expected to be constructed one block north of that site, and will be located on the east side of Eleventh Avenue between West 34th and West 35th Streets. This building is projected to contain approximately 1.4 million sf of office space, 359 residential units, and approximately 75,000 sf of retail space, and will be up to 900 feet tall. Each tower will rise after setbacks from a podium occupying the entire building footprint, and will face onto Hudson Park and Boulevard. These projects will greatly increase the density of development along Eleventh Avenue.

NYCDOT is planning to convert West 41st Street between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues to two-way operation. In addition, supporting the dense new development, the No. 7 subway line will be extended from its current terminus at Times Square to a new terminal station at West 34th Street and Eleventh Avenue. Entrances to the station will be located on the two blocks directly north of the Eastern Rail Yard. One entrance is planned to be located within Hudson Park between West 33rd and West 34th Streets and the other on the south side of West 35th Street at its intersection with the northwestern corner of Hudson Park. In combination with the new subway extension, the land use character of the subarea is expected to change towards dense, transit-oriented development.

Overall, future developments within the Large-Scale Plan subarea will completely change the character of this neighborhood, from an underutilized, mainly industrial and transportation oriented area to one with a mix of residential, commercial, and retail uses. These new developments will differ in height and bulk from existing development in the study area, but will be expected to make the streetscape more vibrant and active.

FARLEY CORRIDOR

The Farley Corridor subarea is also expected to undergo a substantial transition by 2019. The actions associated with the Expanded Moynihan Station/Penn Station Redevelopment Project will account for much of the change. This project is anticipated to result in improvements to the existing Penn Station and renovation and reuse of the existing Farley Complex, as well as redevelopment of new mixed-uses at the Penn East and Penn West sites (located in the 34th Street Corridor and described below). Current plans call for the Farley Complex to be renovated with retail, office, and hotel space. In addition, the existing Post Office is projected to be transformed into a train station serving LIRR, NJ TRANSIT, and Amtrak.

The Access to the Region's Core (ARC) project will also change the character of the Farley Corridor subarea. The ARC will construct two new tunnels under the Hudson River and create a new rail station under West 34th Street called the New York Penn Station Expansion (NYPSE). The NYPSE will include street entrances along West 34th Street between Sixth and Eighth Avenues and will accommodate underground connections to existing subway and PATH lines as well as the existing Penn Station.

At the eastern edge of the subarea, NYCDOT is planning to implement pedestrian safety improvements on Seventh Avenue from West 31st to West 34th Streets, consisting of corner bulb-outs and curbline relocations.

West of the existing Farley Complex, the block between Ninth and Tenth Avenues and West 31st and West 33rd Streets is expected to be developed with more than 4 million sf of office space and a small amount of retail space, replacing two parking lots and a below-grade rail cut. Along the east side of Tenth Avenue between West 30th and West 31st Streets, a site is expected to be developed with a high-rise, containing a mixed-use building with hotel and residential.

As in the Large-Scale Plan subarea, these future developments will change the character of the Farley Corridor, by substantially increasing its density as well as the types of land uses found in this area.

34TH STREET CORRIDOR

Three development projects are slated for completion within the 34th Street Corridor by 2019. First, a 239-room hotel is projected to be constructed at 325 West 33rd Street. The Penn East and Penn West projects, which are associated with the Expanded Moynihan Station/Penn Station Redevelopment Project described above, greatly increase the density of the block between Seventh and Eighth Avenues and West 33rd and West 34th Streets. These projects will contain high-density commercial office, retail, residential, and hotel uses. The Penn East development will rise east of One Penn Plaza (which will remain) on the west side of Seventh Avenue between West 33rd and West 34th Streets with approximately 2 million gross square feet (gsf) of office use as well as a small amount of destination retail space. The Penn West development will be located west of One Penn Plaza on the east side of Eighth Avenue between West 33rd and West 34th Streets, and will contain up to 1 million sf of floor area, predominantly containing

hotel and residential uses, as well as a small amount of retail. The Penn West development also will entail the removal of the existing plaza/open space areas and retail uses on this site, although there is a proposed replacement of the current open space with a new covered pedestrian space. As currently contemplated, the Penn East development could be over 900 feet tall, and the Penn West development could be up to 733 feet tall. These projects will increase the density of development in the already busy 34th Street Corridor, and greatly intensify its character as a high density, mixed-use corridor.

HELL'S KITCHEN

Three development projects are expected to be completed within the Hell's Kitchen subarea. The western blockface of Tenth Avenue between West 37th and West 38th Streets would be developed with a high-rise residential building with 855 units and ground-floor retail. Further east on this block, the Hudson Mews I building is expected to be constructed over the Lincoln Tunnel ramps and is projected to contain residential, community facility space, parking, and open space uses. Both towers would have rectangular massing and will be set back from a base, which would rise from the lot line, maintaining the lower street wall typical of this neighborhood. The Hudson Mews II building is expected to be constructed in the midblock between Ninth and Tenth Avenues from West 36th to West 37th Streets and is projected to contain residential, retail, and open space uses. These future developments will support the character of the Hell's Kitchen subarea, by introducing new residential, retail, parking, and open space uses and covering a portion of the Lincoln Tunnel ramps and increasing development continuity. However, these developments will increase the density of development in the neighborhood.

CONVENTION CORRIDOR

The proposed expansion and renovation of the Javits Convention Center is the only project that will be completed within the Convention Corridor in the Future without the Proposed Actions. In addition to the renovation of the existing building, the Convention Center will undergo an approximately 100,000 square-foot expansion that will occupy the entire block bounded by West 40th Street to the north, Eleventh Avenue to the east, West 39th Street to the south, and Twelfth Avenue to the west. Proposed developments along the east side of Eleventh Avenue in the Large Scale Plan subarea, particularly on the blocks between West 33rd and West 35th Streets would alter the visual prominence of the Convention Center in views north along the avenue. The expansion of the Javits Convention Center would not notably change the character of this subarea, and no other significant changes are expected within the Convention Corridor in the Future without the Proposed Actions.

42ND STREET CORRIDOR

Six development projects are planned for completion within the 42nd Street Corridor by 2019. Among these projects, two high-rise office towers—11 Times Square and the Port Authority Office Tower—are planned to be completed at the intersection of West 41st Street and Eighth Avenue. The 11 Times Square Building would be located on the south side of West 42nd Street and Eighth Avenue and would contain almost 1 million sf of office use with ground-floor retail space. An approximately 1.3 million sf office tower is expected to be built above the PABT on the west side of Eighth Avenue between West 41st and 42nd Streets.

The four other projects within the subarea are projected to include residential, hotel, retail, and office space. A high-rise, mixed-use development containing residential, hotel, theater, health

club, parking, and retail space is expected to be constructed on the east side of Tenth Avenue between West 41st and West 42nd Streets. A residential building with ground-floor retail space is planned to be constructed at 515 West 41st Street, midblock between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. The high-rise River Place residential development (also known as the Silver Towers project) is anticipated to be located on the west side of Eleventh Avenue between West 41st and West 42nd Streets. Finally, two high-rise residential buildings are planned for the south side of West 43rd Street between Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues.

These projects will increase the density of development in the already busy 42nd Street Corridor.

GARMENT CENTER

Ten development projects are expected to occur within the Garment Center subarea. Of these projects, six are hotels proposed for construction in the area between Eighth and Ninth Avenues. The remaining projects include two high-rise residential buildings, one with ground-floor retail, at 310-328 West 38th Street through-block to West 37th Street (Tower 37). The final building is expected to be located in the midblock of West 38th Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues and is projected to contain office and ground-floor retail space. These projects will continue this neighborhood's transition away from a manufacturing character to that of mixed-use character.

CHELSEA

Most of the growth anticipated in the Chelsea subarea by 2019 would occur along Tenth and Eleventh Avenues between the Eastern Rail Yard and West 17th Street. While a total of 24 projects are planned for this subarea, only two are located to the east of Tenth Avenue. This growth is largely a result of the 2005 West Chelsea District rezoning, which allowed for residential development in an area that previously supported light industrial uses, and it will greatly change the neighborhood character of West Chelsea.

Closest to the Development Site, a new 355-foot-tall residential building with ground-floor retail is currently under construction on the southeast corner of West 30th Street and Eleventh Avenue. To its east, another mixed-use residential building with ground floor retail is planned midblock on West 30th Street. This development will occupy two buildings; the taller of the two would rise to approximately 325 feet in height and face onto West 30th Street, and the shorter building at approximately 125 feet in height would face onto West 29th Street.

Occupying the southwest corner of Tenth Avenue and West 30th Street, a mixed-use residential and hotel building would rise to approximately 300 feet after setbacks from a shorter base. On the east side of Eleventh Avenue between West 28th and West 29th Streets, a large residential tower would be developed. In the midblock on the south side of West 27th Street between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues two residential buildings with retail space are being developed, one of which would be located adjacent to the High Line. Another new mixed-use building with residential and hotel uses is planned for the northwest corner of Tenth Avenue and West 26th Street. A hotel with residential units is expected to be constructed on the eastern portion of the block on Tenth Avenue, and a high-rise residential building is planned for the northeast corner of Eleventh Avenue and West 28th Street. Additional new residential development in this area is expected to include buildings with ground-floor retail at 507 West 27th Street and 299 Tenth Avenue.

At 547-553 West 27th Street, on the east side of Eleventh Avenue, the former Berlin & Jones Envelope Company (S/NR-eligible) is expected to be converted to residential use with ground

floor retail. This historic resource is located within the West Chelsea Historic District. Although the conversion will affect the use of this architectural resource and contribute to the neighborhood's transition towards a more residential, mixed-use character, it will not result in any significant changes to the building's façade.

Ten development projects are anticipated to be completed in the portion of the subarea to the south of West 26th Street. The most significant of these include a residential building with retail at 507 West 25th Street, art galleries at 545 and 550 West 25th Street, and a hotel with retail that is planned for the midblock area between West 21st and 22nd Street.

Most of the anticipated development in West Chelsea will contribute to the renovation of the historic High Line as a new public open space, the High Line Park. As described above, the High Line Park will extend approximately 1.5 miles from its southern end at Gansevoort Street north to West 30th and Eleventh Avenue. The new park will result in the preservation of this architectural resource and its adaptive reuse. In combination with all the new projects, it will also contribute to a change in character away from industrial use towards a mixed-use residential neighborhood.

In general, the context of the historic Starrett-Lehigh Building as well as that of the low-rise buildings in the Chelsea subarea—a number of which are historic—will be altered due to the numerous high-rise buildings of modern material and design that are expected to be completed in the Future without the Proposed Actions.

WATERFRONT

In the Future without the Proposed Actions, portions of Segment 5 of Hudson River Park are projected to be completed. This segment is expected to include 9.2 acres of parkland along the Hudson River, within the Waterfront subarea. This project involves the construction of Chelsea Cove and encompasses Piers 62, 63, and 64. The new park is planned to feature a large lawn, garden, carousel, skate park, waterfront esplanade, tree grove, and walking and biking paths. This new open space would enhance the recreational character of the Waterfront subarea and provide new passive and active recreational opportunities to workers and residents of the surrounding area.

TENTH AVENUE SITE

In the Future without the Proposed Actions, the Tenth Avenue Site is expected to remain in its current condition as a railroad right-of-way for the Amtrak Empire Line located below the site. Therefore, the character of this site will not be altered.

TENTH AVENUE SITE STUDY AREA

There are two development projects expected to be completed in the Future without the Proposed Actions within the Tenth Avenue Site study area and three additional projects located just beyond the study area boundary. DEP is using the land directly east of the Tenth Avenue Site for the construction of the Water Tunnel No. 3 Project. When the Water Tunnel No. 3 is completed, an approximately 0.23-acre passive open space area is planned to be developed on the northern half of the block front between West 48th and West 49th Streets along the west side of Tenth Avenue, adjacent to the Tenth Avenue Site. DEP would keep a permanent easement for maintenance and operations of the Water Tunnel No. 3 on the southern half of the block front between West 48th and West 49th Streets.

South of the Tenth Avenue Site, between West 47th and West 48th Streets, a 7-story residential building is anticipated to be constructed over the existing below-grade rail cut. The new development would be located across West 47th Street from the historic tenements at 520-528 West 47th Street. Another residential building with accessory parking is planned for development on a through-block lot west of the Tenth Avenue Site. These projects would be similar in bulk, height, and massing to the existing attached six- to eight-story apartment buildings in the study area.

Three development projects are located just beyond the study area boundary. These projects include a new two-story Con Edison service facility located at 684 Eleventh Avenue, the conversion of an existing manufacturing building located at 653 Eleventh Avenue to a 42-room hotel with a ground-floor restaurant, and conversion of a manufacturing building at 628 Eleventh Avenue for office use.

These future developments will change the character of the Tenth Avenue Site's study area, by increasing its density, changing the land uses and introducing new construction in this area.

NINTH AVENUE SITE

In the Future without the Proposed Actions, the Ninth Avenue Site is expected to remain in its current condition as a gravel parking lot. Therefore, the character of this site would not be altered.

NINTH AVENUE SITE STUDY AREA

Two development projects are planned to be completed by 2019 within the Ninth Avenue Site study area. The Procida, a 7-story residential building, is under construction at 405 West 53rd Street and a two-story building at 345 West 54th Street is being converted to a four-story single-family house. These buildings would be similar in bulk, height, and massing to the existing attached low- to mid-rise apartment buildings located in the study area. These future developments would change the character of the Ninth Avenue Site's study area, by increasing its residential land uses and introducing new construction in this area.

E. PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTIONS–2019

DEVELOPMENT SITE

The Proposed Actions greatly improve the character of the Development Site by transforming it from an open rail yard surrounded by concrete walls into a mixed-use development that would include market-rate and affordable residential units, commercial office space or a convention style hotel, possible hotel uses, retail, a public school, accessory parking, and passive and active open spaces, with rail yard operations "hidden" below. Approximately two-thirds of the development would be constructed over the track area of the Western Rail Yard and would require the construction of a platform and a change in the grade of West 33rd Street, to provide better access from the surrounding streets. These actions would alter the perceived elevation of the site, making it visible and accessible from the surrounding street grid, and thus bringing its buildings and activities into the neighborhood. Overall, the Development Site would be redeveloped with approximately 6.3 million gsf of uses within up to eight buildings of varying bulk, massing, and height. The distribution of square footage by use would differ depending on the scenario chosen (either the Maximum Residential Scenario or the Maximum Commercial

Scenario), but the uses themselves would be the same, with the exception of the option for a hotel (instead of commercial office space) in the Maximum Residential Scenario.

While the transformation of the Development Site would substantially change its character and relationship to the surrounding neighborhoods, this change would mirror the study area's long-term trend toward a greater mix of uses, which will continue irrespective of the Proposed Actions through development within the recently established Hudson Yards Special District and West Chelsea Special District. The Proposed Actions also would advance long-standing policy goals of both the City of New York and MTA to encourage the mixed-use development above the Western Rail Yard. The Proposed Actions are intended to complement the emerging developments in the Hudson Yards Special District and the West Chelsea Special District, as well as areas of Midtown, Clinton, and Chelsea more broadly.

The Proposed Actions would add a substantial new population to the Development Site, increasing the Development Site study area's population by approximately 25 percent; however, the demographic characteristics of the resulting residential population would not differ substantially from that of the study area population in the Future without the Proposed Actions. Any demographic changes resulting from the Proposed Actions would mirror socioeconomic trends—population growth and increasing affluence—that have already taken hold in the area, but would not alter or substantially accelerate these trends. Due to the substantial amount of market-rate and affordable housing that has recently been built and that is planned for development in the Future without the Proposed Actions, the study area is expected to maintain its trends toward increasing residential population, household incomes, residential property values, and rents, while maintaining a strong component of lower- and middle-income residents. The Proposed Actions would reflect, rather than alter, these neighborhood trends.

The design for the Development Site as currently contemplated is intended to reflect a gradual decrease in height and mass descending from Eleventh Avenue and West 33rd Street to Twelfth Avenue and West 30th Street. It is anticipated that the tallest building (WC-1, at approximately 850-950 feet in height) would be situated at the northeast corner of the site near the intersection of West 33rd Street and Eleventh Avenue and would contain only commercial space (either office or hotel). Residential buildings (WR-6 and WR-7, between 650-810 and 550-710 feet tall, respectively) would be located in the northwest corner of the Development Site. Two additional residential buildings (WR-5 and WR-1, between 500-700 and 700-800 feet tall, respectively) with ground-floor retail would be located in the central portion of the Development Site. Finally, three buildings would be located along the southern edge of the Development Site. Two residential buildings with ground-floor retail would be located along West 30th Street at the intersection of Eleventh Avenue. These buildings (WR-2 and WR-3, between approximately 650-810 and 550-710 feet tall, respectively) would share a common base that would contain the proposed school. Residential development would be located above the common base. A residential building (WR-4) with community facility uses would be located to the west of these two buildings, in the southwestern portion of the Development Site. WR-4 would be the shortest building on the site and would rise to approximately 350 to 450 feet in height. The building would bridge over the High Line at about 60 feet above the structure and be supported by columns or podiums that would be located on the other side of the High Line. There would also be two accessory parking facilities on the Development site: an 850-space facility on the south side of the site with access provided via a driveway located on West 30th Street, and, subject to review and approval by MTA and LIRR, a 750-space facility on the north side of the site with access via a driveway on West 33rd Street.

All of the buildings would contain large footprints; buildings along the exterior of the site—WC-1, WR-2, WR-3, WR-6, and WR-7—would likely have rectilinear shaped footprints and buildings within the interior of the site—WR-4 and WR-5—would likely have less rectilinear footprints. WR-1's footprint would likely be more rectilinear along Eleventh Avenue and less rectilinear along the interior of the site. Two or three of the eight buildings would be freestanding, and the remaining towers would rise from podiums of varying footprint and height. All of the buildings would have entrances onto the open space network located within the interior and western portion of the site, which is described in detail below. The proposed site plan and building configuration of the Development Site were analyzed for potential effects of wind on and near the project using Computational Fluid Dynamic Analysis (CFD). The CFD assessment indicates that the proposed development could result in high pedestrian-level winds when the prevailing winds are from the northwest and west. The analysis identified several potential measures to reduce wind effects but it is noted that implementation of the measures is constrained by urban design considerations as set forth in the proposed zoning and the current proposed site plan. As a result, a characteristic of the Development Site and surrounding neighborhood would include the likelihood of high wind conditions at certain times under specific wind conditions. These would be similar to wind conditions at comparable locations in Manhattan near the Hudson River and would not be considered a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character.

Approximately five acres of publicly accessible open space would be located throughout the Development Site. This new open space would create a visual connection to Hudson River Park and would also provide passive and active open space resources. Pedestrian paths, ramps, stairs, and walkways would traverse the Development Site to connect the various open space areas and improve pedestrian access and connections throughout and across the site. The largest open space on the Development Site would be located in the central portion of the site. This open space is intended to be a large and rolling lawn that would include walking paths, seating areas, a café and a playground. As the highest point on the site, this open space would provide views west and southwest across the site to the Hudson River and Hudson River Park. North of this lawn, the site plan proposes an "Allée of Trees" located on the southern sidewalk of the roadway aligned with West 32nd Street. This allée would provide a continuous tree-lined pedestrian pathway that would extend west from Eleventh Avenue.

In the western portion of the Development Site, centered between the residential buildings to the north and south, a waterfront lawn is proposed that would provide for both active and passive recreation as well as outdoor special events. This lawn would feature walking paths, a seating area, and a plaza. The grade of the lawn would descend moving west toward the proposed amphitheater seating that would abut the High Line along its Twelfth Avenue frontage. A tiered open space is also proposed on the southwest corner of the site that would lead down from the grade of the roadway aligned with West 31st Street to the lower grade of the existing street level at West 30th Street and Twelfth Avenue through a series of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant ramps, hills, and stairs, providing street-level access from the Development Site. This open space area is anticipated to include hills, a playground, seating areas, and a plaza. On the north side of the Development Site, a small plaza and potential dog run would be located between the residential and commercial buildings along West 33rd Street, where this plaza would lead to a pedestrian connection between West 33rd Street and the Development Site.

The portion of the High Line located within the Development Site would be adaptively reused as passive open space. This open space would provide a pedestrian pathway that would run parallel to Twelfth Avenue before curving to the east and running parallel to West 30th Street. This

pathway would flow seamlessly into the western lawn on the site. The High Line open space would then connect to the portion of the High Line on the Eastern Rail Yard (to be developed in the Future without the Proposed Actions) to the east of the Development Site and then continue south to form one continuous open space resource from Gansevoort Street to West 33rd Street. The Proposed Actions would result in a new ramp and stair leading to the High Line along its Twelfth Avenue section, just north of WR-4. Underneath the High Line, it is anticipated that small neighborhood retail shops, residential lobby entrances, an entrance to the public school, and curb cuts for loading and parking would line the Development Site's West 30th Street frontage.

The proposed alterations to the High Line have not been fully developed at this time; therefore, to protect and preserve the historic and aesthetic integrity of this resource, a commitment has been made to work with relevant public agencies to coordinate the project design plans, as well as a restoration and maintenance plan and a Construction Protection Plan, for the section of the High Line on the Development Site (similar to the requirements for the reuse of the High Line south of 30th Street). The adaptive reuse of this portion of the High Line would preserve this historic resource and open it up to public access as a unique open space. In addition, a five-foot-wide setback would be located between the High Line and all new buildings fronting on the High Line in order to preserve the integrity of this resource. The High Line runs adjacent to and sometimes through large buildings constructed both recently and contemporary to the High Line; therefore, the construction of new buildings adjacent to or cantilevering over the structure would not change the High Lines' existing context. The context of views of the High Line from the sidewalks adjacent to the Development Site would be altered, through the construction of tall buildings on its north and east sides; however, future No Build projects south and east of the Development Site will similarly alter the context of this resource. In addition, new views of the High Line would be created from within the Development Site.

Some of the existing LIRR on-site facilities would be demolished and temporarily relocated within the Development Site to facilitate construction. These would be rebuilt subsequently within the Development Site. Development on the "terra firma" portion of the Development Site would displace a bus parking lot, a NYCT storage building and a storage area used by the Department of Sanitation (DSNY). Although the study area is characterized in part by transportation uses, this area for bus parking and storage is visible only from West 30th Street and Twelfth Avenue and thus is not a defining element of the neighborhood.

The Proposed Actions would alter the block form and street pattern of the Development Site. Between Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues, the alignments of former West 31st and West 32nd Streets would be designed with sidewalks and approximately 38-foot-wide paved roadways, which would terminate in cul-de-sacs near the western portion of the site. These on-site roadways would allow vehicular drop-offs to buildings within the interior of the site, provide access to parking garages, and improve pedestrian access to the site. In addition, the roadways would align with two similar roadways on the east side of Eleventh Avenue on the Eastern Rail Yard site. A north-south road proposed to be faced with paving stones would connect the two roadways to provide emergency-only vehicular access. The creation of these new roadways would partially "break up" the superblock on which the Development Site is located.

With the Proposed Actions, the streetscape of the Development Site would be improved with active uses along most of the site's street frontages. The proposed zoning controls would require ground-floor retail along specific portions of the Development Site. On the existing streets surrounding the Development Site, ground-floor retail would be required along Eleventh Avenue

and along West 30th Street. On the new interior roadways, ground-floor retail would be required on the northern side of the proposed northern roadway and along the southern side of the proposed southern roadway. There would be no active uses along the West 33rd Street frontage of the site or the Twelfth Avenue frontage underneath the High Line; due to the location and elevation of the LIRR tracks; in these locations, louvered openings are contemplated along the site's streetwall in order to provide ventilation for the LIRR tracks. Existing curb cuts on Twelfth Avenue and West 33rd Street would remain in order to provide LIRR access to the site, and a new curb cut would be located on West 33rd Street near Eleventh Avenue to provide access to the loading docks of WC-1 and a parking garage located underneath WC-1. The planting of street trees along the adjacent streets and creation of a five-acre open space network would enhance the pedestrian experience on the streets surrounding the Development Site and promote use of the site. It is anticipated that the sidewalk on Eleventh Avenue adjacent to the Development Site would be widened. Furthermore, there would be sidewalk width regulations for the proposed roadways within the Development Site. The sidewalk along the northern side of the proposed northern roadway would have to be 20 feet wide. The southern side of this roadway would have to be 25 feet wide. On the southern roadway, the northern sidewalk would have to be 15 feet wide and the southern sidewalk would have to be 20 feet wide.

The Development Site's publicly accessible open spaces, including the High Line, would create new east-west and north-south view corridors as well as new landscaped locations from which to view the Hudson River and Hudson River Park. Existing views of the Convention Center and the Starrett-Lehigh Building from the midblock of West 30th and West 33rd Streets over the Development Site would be obstructed with the proposed development. Views east on West 33rd Street of the Daily News Building and views east on West 30th Street of the Empire State Building would already be partially or entirely obstructed due to the development of the Eastern Rail Yard site in the Future without the Proposed Actions. Because the proposed development would be set back from adjacent streets, it would not alter these view corridors.

Within the Development Site, projected noise levels would be greatest along Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues and lower along West 30th and West 33rd Streets. Therefore, 40-decibel window wall building attenuation would be required along building façades on the Development Site facing Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues, with lower attenuation requirements on West 30th and West 33rd Streets and on the interior facades. With the required building attenuation, the users of the Development Site would not experience any noise-related impacts on neighborhood character. In addition, noise levels within the new open spaces on the Development Site would be above the *CEQR Technical Manual* noise exposure guideline for outdoor areas requiring serenity and quiet; however, they would be comparable to noise levels in several other New York City public open spaces, including the nearby Hudson River Park, Riverside Park, Central Park, Bryant Park, and Paley Park.

In summary, the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse neighborhood character impact on the Development Site and would significantly improve neighborhood character on the Development Site.

DEVELOPMENT SITE STUDY AREA

The decided change in neighborhood character on the Development Site would also have, on balance, a positive effect on neighborhood character in the Development Site Study Area. Instead of facing a large seemingly empty space on the western side of the neighborhood, surrounding development would benefit from the new, compatible land uses on the Development

Site, by its urban form, which would extend the grid into the site, by the level of density and building forms that would be similar to those on the Eastern Rail Yard site and several other developments anticipated in the future without the Proposed Actions, and by the Site's open spaces, which would provide an important link in a network of open spaces now emerging in the Study Area, as discussed below.

The Proposed Actions, by adding up to eight buildings of varying height, bulk, and use on the Development Site, would increase the density of the study area. This development would not greatly differ from the height, bulk, and use of the planned developments expected to be completed by 2019 in the Future without the Proposed Actions and would be compatible and consistent with development trends in the Development Site's study area. In the Future without the Proposed Actions, the subareas that surround the Development Site will continue to transition from a low-rise manufacturing, industrial, and transportation-dominated neighborhood to an area with a mix of medium- to high-density uses, including a considerable amount of residential and commercial space. By full build, that transition would have substantially progressed, such that the immediately surrounding subareas would be characterized by office, hotel, retail, residential, and cultural facility uses.

The location of the uses on the site—specifically concentrating the commercial development at the intersection of West 33rd Street and Eleventh Avenue—would complement the proposed commercial development along Eleventh Avenue to the north and on the adjoining Eastern Rail Yard. Additionally, situating the shorter buildings along the southern edge of the Development Site would be more compatible with the bulk and uses of buildings within the Chelsea subarea to the south. Finally, the inclusion of a new public school would be compatible with the residential component on the Development Site as well as the residential uses in the adjoining subareas.

While the Proposed Actions would introduce a substantial amount of housing to the study area, such housing is not expected to be more costly compared to recent housing and housing expected to be built in the study area by 2019. While many of the planned residential projects to be added to the study area by 2019 will have an affordable housing component, most would be market-rate units that will be offered at prices comparable to the market-rate units anticipated under the Proposed Actions.

As described above, the construction of the Development Site, which is currently enclosed by concrete walls and fencing, would be expected to enhance the streetscape of the study area. The provision of ground floor retail in most of the Development Site's buildings, and the proposed open space network would result in a lively, pedestrian-friendly experience for the surrounding area. Other streetscape elements of the proposed development—the location of curb cuts for service and garage entrances, breaks in the street wall, and paved plaza surfaces—would be in keeping with the urban design character of the study area.

The development of the Proposed Actions is anticipated to increase subway and bus usage in the study area. Some subway station elements at the 34th Street-Penn Eighth Avenue Station stop would experience adverse effects, but most of the subway station elements in the study area would continue operating at acceptable conditions. On most bus routes, existing levels of service would not provide adequate supply to meet the projected future demand during the AM and PM peak hours. These routes would require additional capacity, which would be provided by NYCT where fiscally feasible and operationally practicable. Pedestrian usage of sidewalks in the study area is also anticipated to increase, leading to more congested conditions at some locations. While these changes would intensify conditions for transit users and pedestrians in this area, they would not lead to a significant change in the character of the study area, which continue to be defined by its

busy, crowded nature. The Proposed Actions would not affect the existing bicycle routes in the study area.

As described above and in Chapter 17, "Traffic and Parking," numerous traffic intersections in the study area are already congested, and would become more so in the future both without and with the Proposed Actions, particularly in the PM peak hour. Although traffic conditions would worsen, they would not change the overall character of the neighborhoods within the study area. There also would be a modest (320-space) shortfall in the amount of off-street parking available in the weekday midday peak hour, compared to No Build levels. As stated above, this parking shortfall would not affect the overall character of the neighborhoods within the study area, and weekday overnight off-street parking spaces are projected to be available. In summary, the projected increases to transit, pedestrian, and traffic activity would not result in a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character.

While noise levels in the study area would increase in the Future With the Proposed Actions—from increased traffic, proposed playgrounds, and building mechanical equipment—the magnitude of the increases would be generally imperceptible to most listeners and below the CEQR threshold for a significant adverse noise impact.

Finally, the Proposed Actions would change the context of the historic resources in the study area, but the context of these resources is already expected to be altered with the completion of the various development projects in the Future without the Proposed Actions. Although the Proposed Actions would result in the development of taller buildings on the Development Site, they would not block any views to visual or architectural resources in the study area. It is expected that by 2019, views east on West 33rd Street of the Daily News Building and on West 30th Street of the Empire State Building would already be obstructed by various development projects.

In summary, the change in character on the Development Site would be consistent with the character of the surrounding areas as they would be developed by 2019, and the Proposed Actions would help create a new 24-hour neighborhood that complements the emerging developments in the Hudson Yards and the West Chelsea neighborhoods. The Proposed Actions would not have a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character in the Development Site's study area. The following section describes how the new construction on the Development Site would relate to the character of subareas and neighborhoods within the Development Site study area.

LARGE-SCALE PLAN SUBAREA

The Proposed Actions would create uses that would be compatible with the Large-Scale Plan subarea's transformation in the Future without the Proposed Actions towards mixed-use buildings with commercial, residential, and community uses with adjoining open space. Immediately to the east of the Development Site, the Eastern Rail Yard will be developed with high-density residential, commercial office, retail, hotel, community facility, and open space uses. A building with retail and commercial office space will be constructed on the block to the north of the Eastern Rail Yard. These developments will create a concentration of commercial uses at the intersection of West 33rd Street and Eleventh Avenue, which would be in close proximity to the new 34th Street-Eleventh Avenue Station of the No. 7 subway line. The proposed commercial building on the Development Site would also be located at this intersection; therefore, the Proposed Actions would create uses on the Development Site that

would support the future concentration of commercial uses near this intersection and within the Large-Scale Plan subarea generally.

Although the Proposed Actions would result in the development of up to eight tall buildings on the Development Site, the proposed development would be in keeping with the building arrangement and scale of the No Build projects planned for completion in this subarea, particularly the planned development of the Eastern Rail Yard site. The proposed buildings, which would range in height from approximately 350 to 950 feet, would be similar in height to the five mixed-use buildings planned for development on the Eastern Rail Yard site, which would range in height from approximately 500 feet to 900 feet. The massing of the buildings proposed for the Development Site also would be similar to that of the buildings planned for the Eastern Rail Yard site, including both freestanding and attached buildings, in particular the tower with podium massing. Further, the buildings on the Eastern Rail Yard site would be similarly set back from the adjacent streets and front onto a series of open spaces and public plazas, which, like on the Development Site, would connect to the High Line.

The Proposed Actions would be compatible with the street pattern in the Large-Scale Plan subarea, as the two new east-west roadways to be aligned with the formerly mapped West 31st and West 32nd Streets through the Development Site also would be generally aligned with the two roadways planned as part of the Eastern Rail Yard project, providing east-west connectivity between the two sites. The new roadways would increase pedestrian and vehicular access in this subarea by partially breaking up the existing superblocks and recreating two new roadways.

In the Future without the Proposed Actions, the new West 34th Street-Eleventh Avenue Station of the No. 7 subway line would provide future residents and workers with convenient transit access. This new station would benefit the residents and workers on the Development Site and surrounding area—particularly the Large-Scale Plan subarea—by providing new subway access to this neighborhood. Also by 2019, a substantial amount of open space will be developed within the Large-Scale Plan subarea, particularly on the Eastern Rail Yard and the southern part of Hudson Park and Boulevard. The five acres of proposed open space on the Development Site would create a western extension to and from these future open spaces, and would improve views from areas further east to the Hudson River, Hudson River Park, and the New Jersey skyline. Further, the proposed change in grade on West 33rd Street between Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues would be compatible with the planned re-grading of West 33rd Street between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. Thus, the Proposed Actions would not create any significant adverse neighborhood character impact in the Large-Scale Plan subarea.

FARLEY CORRIDOR

The proposed uses on the Development Site would complement the transition that will occur within this subarea in the Future without the Proposed Actions. As described earlier, the Expanded Moynihan Station/Penn Station Redevelopment project will introduce new office, retail, and hotel uses to the Farley Corridor subarea. Furthermore, the open rail cut located between Ninth and Tenth Avenues will be redeveloped with office buildings with ground-floor retail. The proposed uses on the Development Site, in combination with these No Build projects, would extend the Midtown central business district to the west and create new uses in an area defined by superblocks. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not create a significant adverse neighborhood character impact in the Farley Corridor subarea.

34TH STREET CORRIDOR

As described above, new office, retail, hotel, and residential uses will be added to the 34th Street Corridor subarea, all west of Ninth Avenue, in the Future without the Proposed Actions. The proposed uses for the Development Site would be consistent with this trend. The proposed uses would also be consistent with the existing residential and commercial uses in the western portion of the 34th Street Corridor. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would complement the character of the 34th Street Corridor subarea, and would not create a significant adverse neighborhood character impact there.

HELL'S KITCHEN

In the Future without the Proposed Actions, the Hell's Kitchen subarea would continue to be defined as a primarily low- to mid-rise predominately residential neighborhood. The Hell's Kitchen subarea is quite a distance away from the Development Site, separated by the uses and buildings within the Large-Scale Plan subarea and Farley Corridor subareas. This distance and separation would likely minimize any perceptible differences in bulk and scale. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not have a significant adverse impact on the neighborhood character of the Hell's Kitchen subarea.

CONVENTION CORRIDOR

The Proposed Actions would create uses on the Development Site that would support and enhance the existing Convention Center. In particular, the potential convention-style hotel on the Development Site would be compatible with and support convention uses. Additionally, the proposed open space would provide Convention Center users with publicly accessible passive and active open space in an area that is largely devoid of this resource. Views north of the Convention Center from Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues would be partially obstructed due to the height, density, and scale of the proposed development on the Development Site; however, this resource would still be visible to the north of the Development Site along these view corridors. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not create a significant adverse impact on the neighborhood character of the Convention Corridor subarea.

42ND STREET CORRIDOR

The 42nd Street Corridor contains existing and future developments that include a mix of high-rise residential and commercial buildings; these will occupy virtually all the available land area in the corridor by 2019. In addition, the development in this corridor is similar in use, bulk and size to that proposed on the Development Site. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not create a significant adverse impact on the neighborhood character of the 42nd Street Corridor subarea.

GARMENT CENTER

In the Future without the Proposed Actions, new hotel, commercial, and residential development is expected to occur within the Garment Center strengthening an existing trend towards a change from an industrial/manufacturing neighborhood character to one of a greater mix of uses. The Development Site's proposed uses would be similar to these uses, although at a higher density and scale. Any perceptible differences in scale would be minimized by the Garment Center's location in relation to the Development Site; the Garment Center is separated from the Development Site by the Large-Scale Plan subarea, the Farley Corridor, the 34th Street Corridor, and Hell's Kitchen subareas. Furthermore, the Proposed Actions would not affect existing

socioeconomic trends in the Garment Center area. The apparel industry is likely to continue its current pattern of consolidation towards the showroom, design, wholesale, and retail focus, while apparel manufacturing is expected to continue to diminish throughout the City, including activities within the Garment Center and in the study area. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not have a significant adverse impact on the neighborhood character of the Garment Center subarea.

CHELSEA

As described above, a substantial amount of development is expected to occur within the Chelsea subarea, and particularly within the West Chelsea section, in the Future without the Proposed Actions. Most of this development would occur along Tenth and Eleventh Avenues between the Eastern Rail Yard and West 17th Street, largely as a result of the 2005 West Chelsea rezoning. This subarea is transitioning towards medium- to high-density, mixed-use development, particularly in the area closest to the Development Site, and by 2019 the subarea is expected to contain significant residential and retail uses. The Proposed Actions would be consistent with this trend. The proposed open space would provide a new recreational opportunity for both existing and new residents and workers in this subarea. The proposed High Line open space on the Development Site also would connect to the High Line open space at the Eastern Rail Yard and from there to the High Line Park to the south in Chelsea; thus, the Proposed Actions would provide the northernmost link in a continuous open space resource that extends through the Chelsea subarea, from the start of the High Line Park at Gansevoort Street in the south to West 33rd Street in the north.

The Proposed Action's site plan has been arranged to be compatible with West Chelsea. The commercial building would be located in the northern portion of the Development Site, farthest away from Chelsea. The residential buildings and public school at the southern portion of the Development Site, closer to Chelsea, would be compatible with the existing and future residential uses in West Chelsea.

The Proposed Actions would partially obstruct views of the Starrett-Lehigh Building from north of West 30th Street along the Eleventh and Twelfth Avenue view corridors; however, views of the building along the avenues from south of West 30th Street would not be altered, and the building would be visible from multiple other locations in the study area. By 2019, visual resources along the Eleventh Avenue view corridor would already be less visually prominent due to the many No Build projects planned along the east side of the Avenue between West 28th and West 36th Streets, which will add a considerable amount of bulk and density to Eleventh Avenue.

Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not create a significant adverse impact on the neighborhood character of the Chelsea subarea.

WATERFRONT

The Proposed Actions, in particular the proposed open space on the Development Site, would support the uses found within the Waterfront subarea. The new land uses resulting from the Proposed Actions would be substantially more compatible with the park and other waterfront uses in the Waterfront subarea than the existing transportation and municipal uses on the Development Site. The new open space on the Development Site would create a visual relationship with the adjoining Hudson River Park, particularly along the western portion of the site, where a waterfront lawn is proposed to be developed. The design for this lawn area, as

currently proposed, would allow for active and passive recreation and may allow for occasional outdoor events. The amphitheater seating abutting the High Line would provide unobstructed views of the Hudson River and Hudson River Park. Furthermore, the proposed tiered open space that would lead down to the existing street level at West 30th Street and Twelfth Avenue would provide access from the Development Site to the adjacent Waterfront subarea. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would complement the character of the Waterfront subarea and would not create a significant adverse neighborhood character impact in this subarea.

TENTH AVENUE SITE

The Proposed Actions would result in the construction of an affordable housing building with ground-floor neighborhood retail on the Tenth Avenue Site. The building would be developed over an existing Amtrak rail line, which would require the construction of a platform. This platform would eliminate existing views of the rail tracks, but these views do not contribute beneficially to the neighborhood's overall character. It would eliminate from view a portion of the rail cut, which currently disrupts the grid and block form in this section of the neighborhood. Although a specific design for this building has not been determined at this time, it is anticipated that it would be approximately 11 stories, or 99 feet tall. The building would rise approximately six stories or 66 feet in height on West 48th and West 49th Streets, and then set back 15 feet before rising an additional four stories. By covering the rail cut and reinforcing the continuity of development, the Proposed Actions would improve the visual character of the Tenth Avenue Site.

As described above, there are no architectural or visual resources on this site. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse neighborhood character impact related to architectural or visual resources on the project site.

Residential development on the Tenth Avenue Site would be consistent with existing uses in the surrounding neighborhood, as well as those that will be constructed in the Future without the Proposed Actions. The proposed ground-floor retail use also would be in keeping with the concentration of retail uses found within the study area, particularly along Tenth Avenue. With the required window wall building attenuation (between 25 and 35 decibels), the users of the Tenth Avenue Site would not experience any noise-related impacts on neighborhood character.

Overall, the proposed building would greatly improve the character of the Tenth Avenue Site, and would complement the mixture of densities and uses in the surrounding area, and would not have a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character.

TENTH AVENUE SITE STUDY AREA

The proposed development on the Tenth Avenue Site would be consistent with the use, bulk, height, and arrangement of buildings in the surrounding neighborhood, as well as those that will be constructed in the Future without the Proposed Actions. The proposed ground-floor retail use also would be in keeping with the concentration of retail uses found within the study area, particularly along Tenth Avenue. The proposed development would cover an open rail cut bordered by a concrete wall and chain link fencing with a residential building with ground floor retail, thereby improving the visual character of the site as seen from the surrounding area, Although the building would be taller than nearby structures, at 99 feet it would not be out of scale with the surrounding area of Clinton.

Since the proposed development at the Tenth Avenue Site would be built on an existing block and lot, it would not alter any view corridors. Views east over the project site of the diverse skyline of Midtown Manhattan would be partially obstructed; however, these buildings would still be visible on the cross streets adjacent to the project site, in addition to other east-west view corridors in the study area.

Because only affordable housing units would be developed on the Tenth Avenue Site, these additional units would not introduce a population with different socioeconomic characteristics compared with the size and character of the existing population, but would instead reinforce and help preserve the mix of incomes that characterize the residents of the Clinton/Hells Kitchen neighborhood.

Therefore, the Proposed Actions would have a positive impact on neighborhood character in the Tenth Avenue Site study area.

NINTH AVENUE SITE

On the Ninth Avenue Site, the existing parking lot would be redeveloped with a mixed-use building with affordable residential units, ground-floor neighborhood retail, and NYCT office space. The office space would be used as a training facility for employees at the adjacent NYCT building. The development would also allow for NYCT below-grade parking for emergency vehicles. Although a specific design has not been developed at this time, it is anticipated that the proposed building would be approximately 12 stories or 115 feet in height along its Ninth Avenue frontage, and approximately 6 stories or 66 feet tall in the midblock.

There are no architectural or visual resources on this site. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse neighborhood character impact related to on-site architectural or visual resources.

The proposed development would be consistent with the concentration of residential uses found throughout the surrounding neighborhood, particularly along Ninth Avenue, and the proposed ground-floor retail would extend the commercial development found along both sides of Ninth Avenue. Because only affordable housing units would be developed on the Ninth Avenue Site, these additional units would not introduce a population with different socioeconomic characteristics compared with the size and character of the existing population, but would instead reinforce the mix of incomes that characterize the residents of the Clinton neighborhood. The small amount of proposed office and ground-floor retail space would not add a critical mass of non-residential space on the site. With the required window wall building attenuation (between 25 and 35 decibels), the users of the Ninth Avenue Site would not experience a noise-related impact on neighborhood character.

In short, but replacing a gravel parking lot with a new residential mixed-use building, the Proposed Actions would improve the character of the Ninth Avenue Site.

NINTH AVENUE SITE STUDY AREA

The proposed development on the Ninth Avenue Site would be consistent with existing uses and the bulk, height, and arrangement of buildings in the surrounding neighborhood, as well as those that will be constructed in the Future without the Proposed Actions. In addition, the proposed development would complement trends toward a greater mix of uses in the Ninth Avenue Site study area. The replacement of a parking lot with a residential building would improve the visual character of the site, and the proposed ground-floor retail uses would be in keeping with the

commercial character of the avenue. The 6-story base of the building would continue the streetwall of the block, as it would abut a 6-story office building to the east and a 7-story residential building to the south. Although the building would be taller than nearby structures, at 115 feet it would not be out of scale with the surrounding area of Clinton.

Since the proposed building would be constructed on an existing block and lot, it would not alter any existing view corridors. The proposed building could partially obstruct views along Ninth Avenue—the Time Warner Center and Hearst Building to the north and Worldwide Plaza to the south—however, these visual resources are located outside of the study area and would still be visible along Ninth Avenue within the study area. Finally, the development of the Ninth Avenue Site would not result in any visual or contextual impacts on architectural resources in the study area. The potential architectural resources (tenements) located within 90 feet of the Ninth Avenue Site would be protected from accidental damage during construction through a Construction Protection Plan to be developed and implemented in consultation with OPRHP and LPC.

Therefore, the Proposed Actions would have a positive impact on neighborhood character in the Ninth Avenue Site study area.

F. PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTIONS–2017

As described in Chapter 2, "Framework for Analysis," for analysis purposes, the interim year of development of the Proposed Actions is 2017. By 2017, construction on the Development Site is anticipated to be complete for the three buildings closest to Eleventh Avenue, the two privately owned but publicly accessible streets, the central open space area, and a plaza located at the northwest corner of the site. This interim development would include either 1.49 million gsf of office space or a 1,200 room convention-style hotel, up to 162,750 gsf of retail space, and up to 1,558 residential units, as well as the public school and 850 accessory parking spaces. This mixture of uses is the same as for the 2019 Future with the Proposed Actions condition—residential, commercial, community facility, open space, and parking.

The interim development, although less than full build, would still improve the character of the Development Site, by offering access to and through the site, providing the central open space, and developing a mix of residential, commercial and community facility uses. This development would also have a positive effect on neighborhood character in the Development Site Study Area, similar to, but lesser than, that of the full build. Like the full build, the Proposed Actions in 2017 would not have a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character. ✷