34th Street Transitway
Work Plan for Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and Related Statutes and Regulations

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1. INTRODUCTION

The New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT), in collaboration with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) New York City Transit (NYCT) and in cooperation with MTA Bus Company (MTA Bus), is sponsoring the 34th Street Transitway project (the "Proposed Project") to implement enhanced bus service along 34th Street from the Hudson River to the East River in Manhattan (New York County, New York). The Proposed Project intends to decrease travel times for transit riders, improve vehicular and pedestrian operation and safety along 34th Street, and provide convenient connections to the major land uses and transportation facilities along the corridor.

NYCDOT (the "Project Sponsor") is applying for federal funds administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for implementation of the Proposed Project. Therefore, NYCDOT will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) to document the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Project in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) 42 USC §§ 4321, *et seq*., and its implementing regulations as set forth in 23 CFR Part 771, 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508, and 49 CFR Part 622. This EA will also be prepared in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended; Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966; Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations; and other applicable Federal statutes, rules, and regulations. The build year of the project for analysis purposes will be 2012.

NYCDOT is also required to meet the requirements of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and New York City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR). However, as the Proposed Project will qualify as a Type II action, further environmental review will not be required to meet SEQRA and CEQR requirements.

2. PROJECT CONTEXT

2.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The Project Site is located in Midtown Manhattan and includes portions of the road bed and adjacent sidewalk of 34th Street from the Hudson River to the East River as well as bus shelters and stops at additional locations beyond 34th Street.

34th Street spans Manhattan from the Hudson River to the East River. At its west end, 34th Street connects to Route 9A, and at its east end there are ramps to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) Drive. Route 9A and the FDR Drive are part of the regional roadway network with connections to the interstate highways that serve New York City. 34th Street also has, between Third and First Avenues, an entrance to and exit from the Queens-Midtown Tunnel, which provides a vehicular connection between Midtown Manhattan and the Long Island Expressway. At Dyer Avenue, on the west side of Manhattan, access is provided to the Lincoln Tunnel, one of Manhattan's three vehicular connections to New Jersey.

Along 34th Street, there are a number of Manhattan's most popular and prominent destinations including the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, Pennsylvania (Penn) Station, Madison Square Garden, the flagship Macy's store, the Empire State Building, and the New York University Langone Medical Center.

Due to its connections and adjoining land uses, 34th Street is an important travel corridor for a variety of travel types and functions. 34th Street has among the highest pedestrian volumes in New York City, with people accessing the regional transit network at Penn Station and several subway stations, or taking advantage of the area's numerous commercial and cultural destinations. The street is heavily used by local buses serving crosstown travel needs, commuter coach buses from other parts of the city and region, some intercity bus routes, and tour buses.

34th Street is currently a four- to six-lane, two-way street. Its center lanes are used for general traffic, and for much of its length, its curbside lanes are dedicated to buses on weekdays from 7AM to 7PM. At other times, the curbside lanes are used by standing and/or parked vehicles, including the loading and unloading of trucks.

2.2 PURPOSE AND NEED

The existing crosstown bus service along 34th Street operates at slow speeds with substantial delays in route, resulting in long travel times and increased operating costs, wasted fuel, and negative effects on air quality. These problems and associated costs will escalate as M34 and/or M16 bus service is added to meet future demand. Furthermore, pedestrian congestion will increase at key locations along 34th Street as new development and transportation projects, including 17 million square feet of office space and more than 12,000 dwelling units, attract more people to the area. Improved, high-capacity transit service is needed to alleviate the operating deficiencies of existing crosstown bus service on 34th Street and to ensure that future riders can be fully accommodated. Additionally, pedestrian congestion is very high along the corridor, and pedestrian improvements are needed to improve the safety and desirability of walking along the street. By improving transit mobility, improving pedestrian safety and

mobility, as well as complementary measures such as adding curb loading space along the street, this project is expected to improve the livability of the 34th St corridor.

Recognizing the need for improved transit service on the corridor, NYCDOT installed curbside bus lanes along 34th Street from the FDR Drive to Route 9A. These bus lanes are for the exclusive use of buses and right turning vehicles, and are typically in effect from 7am-7pm on weekdays. This project has improved crosstown bus speeds on the corridor by 17 percent, but these speeds are still slow, with an end-to-end travel time of 28 minutes, and an average speed of 4.3 miles per hour. The project had minimal improvements for express buses and for pedestrians on the corridor.

2.3 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Based on the problems identified above, the Project Sponsor, in collaboration with NYCT and with MTA Bus, has developed goals and objectives for the Proposed Project. These goals and their supporting objectives are shown in **Table 1.** As part of the Alternatives Analysis process, these goals and objectives were updated with public input.

Table 1
Goals and Objectives

GOAL	OBJECTIVE
PRIMARY GOALS	
IMPROVE CROSSTOWN MOBILITY	• Reduce transit travel time for crosstown trips • Improve transit reliability • Reduce pedestrian congestion • Provide convenient connections to existing and future transit service • Improve express bus operations along 34th Street • Accommodate future transit demand
MINIMIZE CAPITAL AND OPERATING CONCERNS	• Implement within a reasonable construction timeframe • Implement within a reasonable construction cost • Be consistent with MTA operating procedures • Avoid conflicts with existing and proposed infrastructure • Avoid effects on critical roadway functions
SECONDARY GOALS	
ENHANCE COMMUNITY CHARACTER	• Support existing and proposed development • Improve connections between residential and commercial destinations • Improve pedestrian circulation and safety
MINIMIZE ADVERSE IMPACTS ON THE BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	• Avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse impacts on historic resources • Minimize encroachment on view corridors • Maintain access to existing and future uses on 34th Street • Avoid property acquisition to the maximum extent feasible • Reduce vehicular congestion, emissions, and noise • Minimize construction impacts to the extent feasible • Avoid impacts on natural features and coastal waters

3. PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

In order to select the alternative that would best meet the purpose and need and goals and objectives of the Project, NYCDOT conducted an Alternatives Analysis to identify options for improving crosstown transit service along 34th Street, evaluate potential alternatives, and select a locally-preferred alternative consistent with FTA requirements. The Alternatives Analysis considered the potential alignment, logical termini, and transit mode for new fixed-guideway service along the corridor.

- ***Alignment:*** 34th Street was selected as the preferred alignment for the Proposed Project. It traverses the full length of Manhattan and provides adequate right-of-way to implement a two-way transitway.
- ***Logical Termini:*** Manhattan's two Midtown ferry terminals are located at either end of the 34th Street corridor—the East 34th Street Ferry Terminal at 34th Street and the FDR Drive and the West Side Ferry Terminal at West 39th Street and Route 9A. These termini are nearby to other major traffic generators, including the Javits Center (West 34th Street and Twelfth Avenue) and the NYU Langone Medical Center (East 34th Street and the FDR Drive). As these terminals provide an important connection to regional transit service, they were selected as the logical termini for the Proposed Project. While the project improvements will be limited to 34th Street, services using the corridor are expected to serve the West 39th Street ferry terminal and other destinations around the city.
- ***Mode:*** NYCDOT evaluated five modal alternatives for improved transit service along 34th Street. These are further described below.

The Alternatives Analysis also considered a Transportation System Management (TSM) Alternative that would improve transit mobility at lower cost than potential fixed-guideway options. After careful consideration of a number of alternatives and in consultation with local stakeholders, community groups, and other interested members of the public, NYCDOT selected a preferred alternative for the Proposed Project.

3.1 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Alternatives Analysis considered seven options for the Proposed Project. In accordance with FTA guidelines, the analysis considered a No Build Alternative, in which current conditions are maintained, and a Transportation System Management (TSM) Alternative. The TSM Alternative includes minimal to modest investment to improve service without extensive capital improvements. In addition to the No Build and TSM Alternatives, NYCDOT, in collaboration with NYCT and in cooperation with MTA Bus Company, proposed five build alternatives that would implement fixed-guideway (dedicated road or rail) operations with various transit modes. **Table 2** describes the alternatives that were evaluated in the Alternatives Analysis phase.

3.2 EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

The alternatives evaluation was a two step process—primary screening and secondary screening. The screening methodology and results are documented in the *34th Street Transit Corridor—Alternatives Analysis Report* (NYCDOT, January 2010).

Table 2
List of Alternatives

DESIGN PARAMETER	ALTERNATIVE						
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7
	NO BUILD	TSM	BUS RAPID TRANSIT	STREETCAR	LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT	AUTOMATED GUIDEWAY TRANSIT	HEAVY RAIL TRANSIT
RIGHT-OF-WAY	Dedicated curbside lanes from 7AM to 7PM	Dedicated curbside lanes from 7AM to 7PM	Two-way transitway separated from general traffic lanes	Tracks in curbside lanes	Dedicated at-grade tracks	Elevated Guideway	Elevated or underground tracks
STATIONS	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
FARE COLLECTION	On-board	Off-board or other technology to speed boarding	Off-board or other technology to speed boarding	Off-board or other technology to speed boarding	Off-board or other technology to speed boarding	Off-board or other technology to speed boarding	Off-board or other technology to speed boarding
TRAFFIC OPERATIONS	Through traffic for full-length	Through traffic for full-length	Westbound only west of 6th Ave.; Eastbound only east of 5th Ave.; No through traffic from 5th to 6th Aves.	Through traffic for full-length	Westbound only west of 6th Ave.; Eastbound only east of 5th Ave.; No through traffic from 5th to 6th Aves.	Through traffic for full-length	Through traffic for full-length
SIGNAL PRIORITY	None	Limited	Full or Partial	Full or Partial	Full or Partial	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
VEHICLE TYPE	Same as current (standard bus)	3-door articulated bus	3-door articulated bus	Streetcar	LRT consist	People mover consist	Subway consist
EXPRESS BUS LANES	Shared with bus; passing buses use general traffic lanes	Shared with bus; passing buses use general traffic lanes	Shared with BRT with passing lanes	Shared with streetcar; passing buses use general traffic lanes	No	No	No

The primary screening considered the consistency of the seven project alternatives with two of the project's goals: 1) Improve crosstown mobility; and 2) Minimize capital and operating concerns. Three alternatives passed the primary screening, Alternative #1-No Build, Alternative #2-TSM, and Alternative #3-Bus Rapid Transit. Alternatives #1 did not perform well but were carried forward as required by the alternatives screening process; Alternatives #2 and #3 performed well enough to be carried into the secondary screening. The remaining four build alternatives did not pass the primary screening and were eliminated from further consideration.

In addition to the consideration of the alternatives' abilities to improve crosstown mobility and minimize capital and operating concerns, the secondary screening evaluated the potential environmental benefits and detriments of the alternatives. Alternative #3—BRT received the highest score of the three alternatives considered in the secondary screening. It would both

improve crosstown travel times and pedestrian circulation along 34th Street and is consistent with existing MTA transit services. Alternative #3 would also have minimal environmental effects as it would not displace existing or proposed uses on 34th Street, would not directly impact historic resources, parklands, or natural resources, and would not substantively change air quality or noise emissions from transit operations on 34th Street. Alternative #3 would result in traffic diversions from the closure of travel lanes, but it could increase opportunities for curbside parking and delivery operations.

Based on the results of the primary and secondary screenings, Alternative #3-BRT was recommended as the locally-preferred alternative for the Proposed Project and will be compared to a no-build alternative in the EA.

3.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT / LOCALLY-PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The Proposed Project would consist of a two-way, at-grade, single-side running transitway. The transitway would extend along 34th Street from the FDR Service Road to Twelfth Avenue (Route 9A). The two-way, bus-only transitway would be aligned along one side of the street, with the remainder of the street generally used for one way traffic flow, and curbside parking and loading. In most locations, the transitway would be two lanes, but at certain locations, it would include three or four lanes to allow moving buses to pass stopped buses.

Both the M16 and M34 bus services will be upgraded to BRT services. The M34 service will continue to make all of its stops along the Transitway, as shown in Figure 2; the M16 will continue to make additional stops beyond the Transitway corridor.

Figure 2
Proposed 34th Street Transitway

The transitway would result in changes in general (non-bus) traffic flows on 34th Street, as the currently two-way street would become one-way for private vehicles. In most locations, two travel lanes and one parking lane would be available for general traffic; in some locations, it is

expected that only one general travel lane will be needed to accommodate traffic volumes. One effect of this change would be revised access to the Queens-Midtown and Lincoln Tunnel exits on 34th Street.

New York City Transit would replace the existing M34 fleet with new buses, which are likely to have three doors. These low-floor buses provide higher capacity than the existing M34 buses and allow for boarding and alighting at three locations. The characteristics of these buses will be described in additional detail in the EA.

Bus "stations" would be located on 34th Street at most of the north-south avenues, and would be located both in medians and on the existing sidewalks. Median stations would have raised platforms to ease the boarding and alighting of buses. The stations would generally consist of canopies for weather-protection, ticket vending machines, and information kiosks. Stations located within the median would have fencing or another type of barrier to protect bus passengers from vehicles in the adjacent general traffic lane. The preliminary station locations for the transitway would emulate most of the M16/M34 bus stop locations as shown in **Figure 2** above. To complement the proposed layout of 34th Street, pedestrian improvements would be implemented. These improvements include:

- Curb extensions at most intersections;
- Pedestrian refuges at median island stations;
- Widened, new or re-aligned crosswalks.

The EA will include detailed diagrams of the layout of the project, so the basis for any analysis is clear. These block designs will be determined as part of the preliminary engineering for the project, and will be based on significant public outreach and input, as well as other design considerations. These designs will then be further refined in the final design of the project.

NYCDOT is currently undertaking a detailed assessment of the potential traffic diversions that would result from the changes to general traffic flow on 34th Street. Analysis will be prepared to determine potential traffic flow changes at intersections along and near 34th Street and at other locations that may realize a substantive increase in volumes. NYCDOT will then develop a traffic management and improvement plan to address any potential effect of the Proposed Project and will implement these improvements as part of the Proposed Project.

4. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

As described above, NYCDOT is seeking capital investment funding from FTA. Therefore, as required by federal rules and regulations, FTA must make a determination of the potential environmental effects of the undertaking consistent with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. §§4321 et seq.: 23 CFR 771; 40 CFR 1500-1509). NEPA establishes an umbrella process for coordinating compliance with federal law through the preparation of environmental documentation to demonstrate the potential impacts of an undertaking on the built and natural environment. Based on consultation with FTA, NYCDOT will prepare an EA for the Proposed Project.

As required by the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), New York State and all local (City) agencies must classify an action, which determines the environmental review requirements of the undertaking. New York City's process for implementing SEQRA is called City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR). CEQR differs in that it adapts and refines SEQRA rules to take into account the special circumstances of New York City. SEQRA and CEQR categorize actions as one of three types—Unlisted, Type I, and Type II. Actions that are explicitly listed in Section 617.4 of Title 6 of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (6 NYCRR) are considered Type I actions and environmental review is required. Actions listed in 6 NYCRR Section 617.5 are considered Type II actions. Under SEQRA and CEQR, Type II actions are either considered unlikely to result in significant environmental impacts or are activities for normal business or agency operations. Unlisted actions are undertakings not identified in NYCRR Sections 617.4 or 617.5. Based on the Type II categories and exemptions identified in Part 617 of 6 NYCRR, NYCDOT has determined that an environmental review for the Proposed Project is not required.

In addition to meeting the requirements of NEPA, the Proposed Project must comply with other federal rules and regulations intended to protect human health and the built and natural environment. As such, the environmental documentation will assess the potential impacts of the Proposed Project in accordance with the following federal laws, executive orders, and other pertinent requirements.

- ***Clean Air Act and New York State Air Permits (42 USC 7506(c); 40 CFR Part 93; ECL Article 19; 6 NYCRR Parts 201).*** New transportation projects must conform to the applicable State Implementation Plan (SIP).
- ***Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 USC §1451 et seq.; 15 CFR Part 930; NY Executive Law Art. 42; 19 NYCRR Part 600):*** Projects affecting New York's coastal zone must be consistent with the Coastal Zone Management Act, through the New York State Department of State's Coastal Management Program and New York City's approved Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan. The New York State Department of State, in consultation with the New York City Department of City Planning, makes a determination of the project's consistency with the Coastal Zone Management Act.

- ***Endangered Species Act (16 USC 1531-1544; 50 CFR Part 402).*** This act requires FTA to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for projects that may jeopardize threatened or endangered species, or destroy or adversely modify their critical habitats.
- ***Environmental Justice (Executive Order 12898 of 1994, 59 CFR 7629, February 16, 1994; 1997 USDOT "Order to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations," 62 CFR 18377, April 15, 1997).*** These Orders require that impacts and benefits from a federal or federally-funded transportation project are equitably distributed among all population groups and that minority or low-income areas are not overburdened with the adverse aspects of proposed project alternatives. FTA is responsible for complying with the Executive Order.
- ***Floodplains (Executive Order 11988 of 1977; USDOT Order 5650-2, "Floodplain Management and Protection," April 23, 1979).*** Federal and state agencies must regulate and limit the location of a project in a floodplain to avoid any adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains. FRA will make the floodplain determination.
- ***National Historic Preservation Act (16 USC 470A; 36 CFR Part 800).*** Projects potentially affecting historic and archaeological resources must comply with the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 review process. FTA is responsible for carrying out the Section 106 review for the Project in consultation with the New York State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) at the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP).
- ***Wetlands (Executive Order 11990 of 1977; USDOT Order 5660.1A, "Preservation of the Nation's Wetlands," August 24, 1978).*** Federal and state agencies must avoid the adverse impacts associated with the destruction or modification of wetlands unless there is no practical alternative and all possible measures to minimize harm have been taken.
- ***U.S. Department of Transportation Act—Section 4(f) (49 USC 303; 23 CFR 771.135).*** Section 4(f) prohibits the Secretary of Transportation from approving any program or project that uses any publicly owned land from a public park, recreation area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or historic site of national, state, or local significance unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land, and unless the program includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the site or resource.

4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

FTA, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and other federal agencies provide guidance to assess the potential for significant impacts of projects analyzed under NEPA. Specifically, FTA has guidance for the assessment of noise and vibration, and FTA and FHWA have guidance for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act. EPA has guidance for the assessment of air quality to meet transportation conformity requirements of the Clean Air Act. NYCDOT will work with FTA to ensure that all analyses are prepared at a proper level of detail.

To assist applicants and City agencies in the preparation and review of documents required by CEQR, the Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination (MOEC) has published the *CEQR*

Technical Manual. The most recent edition of the CEQR Technical Manual was released in May 2010 and provides methodologies and guidance for collecting data, for quantifying or qualifying the potential impacts of an action, for determining whether impacts are considered significant and require mitigation, and for identifying mitigation measures to alleviate significant impacts. The guidance and methodologies set forth in the CEQR Technical Manual reflect local environmental conditions, the City's environmental priorities and concerns, and impact thresholds, developed in coordination with local involved and interested agencies, to conform with federal, state, and local environmental laws.

Except where FTA or another Federal agency has specific guidance or regulatory requirements (i.e., historic resources, noise, and vibration), the environmental documentation for the Proposed Project will follow guidance set forth in the *CEQR Technical Manual*.

4.3 SCOPE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

4.3.1 SOCIAL CONDITIONS

The social conditions section of the EA encompasses the physical, demographic, and economic characteristics of the project site and surrounding area to provide: 1) an assessment of potential impacts on land uses, population and employment, and business conditions; and 2) context for the other technical analyses in the document.

The social conditions assessment will include the characteristics of both a primary and a secondary study area. The primary study area will include parcels within approximately ¼-mile of the proposed 34th Street Transitway from the Hudson River to the East River and extend north along the West Side Highway to the West Side Ferry Terminal. The secondary study area would encompass areas of Manhattan that may realize substantial changes in traffic as determined by the NYCDOT traffic model.

For the primary study area, the EA will characterize existing and proposed land uses, zoning and public policy initiatives, including consistency with PlaNYC. The EA will also describe the commercial characteristics of the area as well as employment and demographic conditions. The demographic analysis will focus on factors that demonstrate the presence or absence of transit-dependent populations (i.e., automobile ownership, mode to work/home) and environmental justice populations (i.e., income and race). Collectively, the land use, employment, and demographic characteristics of the area will be used to qualitatively assess potential changes related to the Preferred Alterative and to describe its potential effects on community character.

In addition to the more broad assessment of potential effects on community character, the EA will detail any direct impacts on social conditions. Such effects may include the potential for direct or indirect displacement, and consistency with planned and approved development proposals.

The EA will also characterize social conditions in areas that may realize substantial increases in traffic resulting from changed traffic patterns on 34th Street. This analysis will more broadly qualitatively describe the land use and social conditions of these areas to support the indirect and cumulative effects sections of the EA.

4.3.2 CULTURAL RESOURCES

The historic resources (above-ground and archaeological resources) assessment will evaluate potential impacts of the Proposed Project consistent with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Given the limited scope and duration of construction activities as well as the scale and context of permanent structures associated with the Proposed Project, the cultural resources assessment will be more of a screening analysis rather than a detailed assessment that involves design consultation and formal Section 106 public meetings.

4.3.2.1 Archaeological Resources

The 34th Street corridor contains a number of subgrade structures, including subway infrastructure and utility lines, and therefore, it is likely that subsurface areas would not be sensitive for archaeological resources. Furthermore, the Proposed Project does not involve deep excavation or work outside the streetbed and sidewalk areas.

For the archaeological resources assessment, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) and the New York State Offices of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) will be consulted on areas of potential sensitivity. If LPC and OPRHP concur that this area lacks potential for archaeological sensitivity, then this finding would be documented in the EA, and detailed analysis would not be required.

In the event that LPC and/or OPRHP request additional research to document the absence or presence of archaeological resources within the project site, a Phase 1A documentary study would be prepared. Should the Phase 1A study identify potential archaeological resources and if LPC and/or SHPO determine that the Proposed Project could adversely affect these resources, then a Phase 1B study would be conducted, and a Programmatic Agreement or Memorandum of Agreement would be required to stipulate measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate the potential effects of the Project. The findings of any supplemental studies as well as the stipulations of the Programmatic Agreement or Memorandum of Agreement would be summarized in the EA.

4.3.2.2 Historic Resources

The Proposed Project would be constructed and operated adjacent to historic structures that are listed on or eligible for listing on the State and National Register of Historic Places as well as designed New York City Landmarks. The project would also abut the southern boundary of the Garment Center Historic District (S/NR-listed; NYCL-eligible).and the northern boundary of the Madison Square North Historic District Extension (NYCL-eligible). At this time, it is not anticipated that the Proposed Project would demolish any historic structures. Therefore, the analysis presented in the EA will be limited to potential impacts from construction-period vibration and long-term, contextual effects from the operation of a transitway on 34th Street.

NYCDOT will develop two Areas of Potential Effect (APE) for historic structures, one for above ground structures and one for below ground structures. As the Proposed Project is limited to shelters/stations, sidewalk treatments, pavement treatments and markings, and signage within the public right-of-way, the APE would not be extensive for the EA. However, to adequately identify historic properties that could be impacted by construction activities, the APE would extend 90 feet from the project site.

The EA will identify all historic properties and districts (S/NR-listed, S/NR-eligible, NYCL-designated, and NYCL-eligible) within the APE. The EA will identify measures to be undertaken to avoid potential damage from construction vibration. The EA will also qualitatively evaluate the potential contextual effects of new project infrastructure on adjacent historic resources.

Before publication of the EA, the APE and the identification of potential project impacts will be submitted to OPRHP (and LPC, as necessary) for concurrence under Section 106. Any comments issued by OPRHP will be incorporated into the EA.

4.3.3 PARKLANDS

Parklands are explicitly protected under Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act and Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act. The project site is adjacent to public parklands (Hudson River Park) and plazas (Herald Square and Duffy Square); however, the project would only permanently occupy public right-of-way. The EA will identify mapped parkland in the vicinity of the project site to support findings with respect to Section 4(f) and 6(f) requirements.

4.3.4 VISUAL AND AESTHETIC RESOURCES

Based on CEQR standards, an assessment of potential impacts on visual and aesthetic conditions is typically undertaken when an action would result in a building or structure substantially different in height, bulk, form, setbacks, size, scale, use, or arrangement than exists; when an action would change block form, demap an active street, map a new street, or would affect the street hierarchy, street wall, curb cuts, pedestrian activity, or other streetscape elements; or when an action would result in above-ground development or would change the bulk of new above-ground development and is proposed in an area that includes significant visual resources.

The Proposed Project would result in new above-grade infrastructure including bus stops/shelters and signage. All new shelters and signage would be consistent with existing infrastructure used citywide, including along 34th Street, and as such would not require a detailed analysis. This conclusion will be documented in the EA.

4.3.5 TRANSPORTATION

The transportation section of the EA will determine whether the Proposed Project may have a potential significant impact on traffic operations and mobility, public transportation facilities and services, pedestrian circulation, on- and off-street parking, and curbside operations.

4.3.5.1 Traffic

NYCDOT is undertaking a detailed evaluation of changes in traffic patterns that will result from the closure of travel lanes on 34th Street. The NYCDOT traffic model will identify locations where vehicles will potentially divert and anticipate potential operating constraints. On the basis of preliminary results of the model, NYCDOT will identify intersection and roadway improvements such as signal timing modifications, changes in curbside regulations, and lane configurations to alleviate potential capacity constraints. These measures will be implemented as part of the Proposed Project and will be incorporated into the final version of the traffic model. They are distinct from mitigation measures, which will be implemented to prevent any

identified potential adverse impact from the Proposed Project. Attachment A provides a detailed description of NYCDOT's traffic modeling methodology.

The traffic analysis will be based on a traffic model, which will use a study area comprising Midtown Manhattan between 14th Street and 60th Street from the Hudson River to the East River as well as major regional roads in an area roughly bounded by the Verrazano Narrows Bridge to the south, the New Jersey Turnpike to the west, the George Washington Bridge to the north, and the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway to the east (major roads as defined by links in the NYMTC BPM).

The EA will specifically report the average vehicle delay, volume-to-capacity ratio, and Level of Service for every intersection along 34th Street, as well as for any intersection beyond 34th Street that the model indicates will experience a significant increase in delay as defined in the *CEQR Technical Manual* in the build condition compared to the no-build condition. The EA will also document measures of effectiveness in the no build and build conditions for any intersections beyond 34th Street where NYCDOT will plan to make intersection improvements as part of the Proposed Project, expected to be approximately 30 to 40 intersections. The analysis will incorporate methodologies outlined in the *2010 CEQR Technical Manual*.

- The EA will examine traffic conditions in the weekday AM, midday, PM peak hours.
- The EA will document future 2012 conditions without implementation of the Proposed Project. The 2012 conditions reflect anticipated development, background traffic growth, and planned changes in street operations that are being implemented by NYCDOT and others. Based on the modeled outputs, the EA will identify the future volume-to-capacity ratio, average vehicle delay, and level of service for the intersections and their individual traffic movements/approaches.
- The EA will identify proposed changes in traffic operations with implementation of the Proposed Project. These changes will include proposed changes to vehicular travel along 34th Street and any project improvements at locations where traffic may be diverted.
- The EA will document future 2012 traffic conditions with implementation of the Proposed Project, including all project improvements. Based on the modeled outputs, the EA will identify the future volume-to-capacity ratio, average vehicle delay, and level of service for the intersections and their individual traffic movements/approaches.

4.3.5.2 Parking

Based on the 2010 CEQR Technical Manual, a detailed parking analysis is not required as a result of the Proposed Project, and parking studies are not otherwise required by other relevant legislation. Furthermore, it is estimated by NYCDOT that curb access within the 34th Street corridor will increase as part of the Proposed Project. However, the curb access changes that will be implemented as part of the Transitway have been raised as a concern that could potentially impact community character. Therefore, a parking analysis will be performed to document any changes in the overall supply of curbside parking and loading space. The parking study area will be determined based on the changes proposed as part of the Preferred Alternative. The parking study area will at a minimum cover both curbsides for the full length of 34th Street and would also include any block (both curbsides) where the parking supply is decreased by more than 10 percent as compared to current conditions.

- The EA will identify and quantify existing curbside (on-street) parking and loading spaces and off-street parking facilities within the parking study area, based on current parking regulations.
- The EA will document any changes to the street network, on-street parking regulations, closure or reduction of existing off-street parking facilities, and/or addition of any new parking facilities within the parking study area in 2012 absent the Proposed Project.
- The EA will detail changes to on-street curb restrictions and curbside parking supply as a result of the Proposed Project. It will identify the proposed number of curbside parking and loading spaces and the curb frontage plan for every block face where changes will be made.
- The EA will compare No Build Alternative projected parking and loading supply to the Proposed Project parking and loading supply.

4.3.5.3 Transit

The Proposed Project will have an overall benefit to transit. The EA will document existing and future anticipated demand for transit service to identify any additional capacity that might be necessary to meet demand. All analysis will be based on standards in the CEQR technical manual.

- The EA will identify existing transit services along the 34th Street corridor, including routes, frequencies, and ridership.
- Future local bus ridership for the 34th Street corridor will be estimated for 2012 accounting for background growth and anticipated development in the area.
- The EA will examine whether the level of operation of the M34 and M16 BRT services will be adequate to meet future demand, accounting for the proposed new three-door buses that would operate along 34th Street. In addition to summarizing bus load levels, the EA will describe improvements in bus transit travel times and operations as a result of the Proposed Project. The EA will also identify any transit service that may be altered by the project (i.e., changes in routings, frequencies, or schedules) to determine if there would be any adverse impacts on customers of these existing transit services.

4.3.5.4 Pedestrians

According to the 2010 CEQR Technical Manual, a detailed pedestrian analysis is required when a proposed action would generate 200 or more peak hour trips at a particular pedestrian element (i.e., sidewalk, corner, or crosswalk). No additional pedestrian trips are projected as a result of the Proposed Project, and sidewalk expansions and median refuges are expected to improve pedestrian levels of service and safety. The EA will qualitatively identify these improvements along the corridor. Additionally, the EA will include a qualitative discussion on the effect of pedestrian movements adjacent to bus stop locations for the Proposed Project.

4.3.6 AIR QUALITY

NEPA requires an assessment of potential impacts on air quality to demonstrate compliance with the Clean Air Act, including State Implementation Plans and specific criteria for transportation projects. The EA will consider the potential impacts and benefits of the project on both regional (mesoscale) and local (microscale) air quality and examine whether the

project could result in any new exceedances of or any exacerbation in any existing exceedances of National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

On a regional scale, the Proposed Project would have a nominal effect on air quality. While the Proposed Project would serve numerous transit riders, it would probably not divert a substantial number of people from travel by private automobile. Furthermore, the travel distance is fairly short, so the potential reductions in vehicle-miles traveled would not be substantial. However, the diversion of automobile trips from potential lane closures on 34th Street has the potential to result in a modest increase in vehicle miles of travel in the New York Region. The EA will document any potential changes in vehicle-miles traveled and qualitatively describe the potential impacts on regional air quality. The EA will also identify the project's listing on the Transportation Improvement Program and describe modeling that has been undertaken in accordance with transportation conformity requirements.

The Proposed Project would divert traffic (automobiles and trucks) from 34th Street to other area roadways. While this would be expected to benefit air quality for receptors along 34th Street, it may increase emissions in other areas of Manhattan. Two types of mobile source pollutants—carbon monoxide (CO) and particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10}) will be analyzed to determine the potential impacts of these diversions. CO emissions relate mostly to the diversion of automobiles from 34th Street while PM emissions are mostly attributed to trucks. The EA analysis will be undertaken for a total of up to four receptor sites for CO analysis and up to four receptor sites for PM analysis. The locations will be selected based on the results of quantified traffic modeling by NYCDOT, as described in 4.3.5.1. It is possible that both CO and PM emissions will be modeled for the same receptor site or sites, which would reduce the total number of receptors for quantified analysis. The mobile source analysis will be performed as follows:

- Determine receptor locations for the CO and PM microscale analysis. Select critical intersection locations in the study area based on data obtained from the traffic model outputs.
- Gather existing air quality data. Collect and summarize existing ambient air quality data for the study area. Specifically, ambient air quality monitoring data published by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) will be compiled for the analysis of existing and future conditions.
- Select dispersion model. Identify the appropriate dispersion model to be used in the microscale carbon monoxide analysis at each of the receptor sites previously identified. It is anticipated that the CAL3QHC dispersion model (Version 2) will be used for the CO microscale analysis and the CAL3QHCR model will be used for the PM analysis. For the CAL3QHCR analysis, five years of recent meteorological data from LaGuardia Airport and concurrent upper air data from Brookhaven, New York, will be used.
- Select emission calculation methodology and "worst-case" meteorological conditions. Compute vehicular cruise and idle emissions for the dispersion modeling using the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) MOBILE6.2 model. Conservative meteorological conditions to be assumed in the dispersion modeling are a 1 meter per second wind speed, Class D stability and a 0.79 persistence factor. In addition, the *2010 CEQR Technical Manual*

recommended winter temperature of 50 degrees Fahrenheit for the Borough of Manhattan will be used as input to the model.

- Calculate CO concentrations. Calculate maximum 1- and 8-hour CO concentrations for each mobile source microscale receptor site for existing conditions, the future conditions without the Proposed Project and the future conditions with the Proposed Project. Maximum 24-hour PM_{10} and 24-hour and annual $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations will be determined for the future conditions without the project and the future conditions with the Proposed Project. CO and short-term PM concentrations will be determined for up to two peak periods. No field monitoring will be included as part of these analyses.
- Compare existing and future levels with standards. Compare and determine compliance of future CO pollutant levels with and without the Proposed Project with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). In addition, New York City's CO *de minimis* criteria will be employed to determine the impacts of the Proposed Project. Predicted PM_{10} concentrations with the Proposed Project will be compared to the NAAQS, and predicted project-generated increases of $PM_{2.5}$ will be compared with the CEQR criteria.
- The EA will identify and characterize the emissions profile of the proposed new bus fleet for the 34th Street Transitway and compare this profile to the existing fleet. The EA will identify whether or not emissions from bus operations would increase as a result of the Proposed Project.

4.3.7 ENERGY AND GREENHOUSE GASES

While the Proposed Project may not directly contribute to a reduction in automobile trips, the project is expected to improve the efficiency of bus operations by increasing speeds, and thereby, reducing energy demand and greenhouse gas emissions indirectly as part of the enhancement of public transportation in the city as a whole. At the same time, the diversion of automobile trips from potential lane closures on 34th Street may result in a modest increase in vehicle miles of travel in the New York Region. The EA will include a qualitative discussion of the potential benefits and/or impacts on energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, relying on recent draft guidance from the Council on Environmental Quality, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and the *2010 CEQR Technical Manual*.

4.3.8 NOISE AND VIBRATION

4.3.8.1 Noise

The Proposed Project would potentially increase the frequency of bus trips and would divert vehicles (automobiles and trucks) from 34th Street to other Manhattan locations, which has the potential to adversely impact sensitive noise receptors.

The criteria for identifying substantial increases in traffic volumes will be a doubling in passenger car equivalents (PCEs) at a location. The EA analysis will be limited to up to six such locations, selected on the basis of volume changes; the presence or absence of sensitive land uses; and other existing conditions that may result in substantial and adverse levels of ambient noise. Based on these criteria, NYCDOT will use the traffic model to identify appropriate analysis locations that meet these criteria.

The EA analysis will follow FTA's *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (May 2006) and the 2010 *CEQR Technical Manual*, both of which provide a detailed methodology for the examination of potential noise and vibration impacts:

- Perform 20-minute measurements at each receptor location during typical weekday AM, midday, PM, and nighttime peak periods. Hourly L_{eq}, L_1, L_{10}, L_{50}, and L_{90} values will be recorded.
- Use The Noise Model (TNM) to calculate existing ambient levels for the receptor sites.
- Predict future 2012 no build and build ambient noise levels using the TNM at the six receptor sites.
- Evaluate changes in ambient noise consistent with FTA and CEQR criteria. FTA criteria compares future build noise levels to existing noise levels, whereas the CEQR methodology compares no build and build noise levels.
- Characterize changes in noise levels and determine whether the Proposed Project (and associated traffic diversions) would result in significant adverse impacts. Both the FTA and CEQR criteria will be employed to assess potential impacts.

4.3.8.2 Vibration

For projects that involve rubber-tire vehicles, vibration impacts are typically unlikely except in unusual circumstances. While there are vibration sensitive uses along the corridor (i.e., Manhattan Center, City University of New York Graduate Center, Morgan Library, New York University Medical Center, and the New York University Cancer Center), the area currently supports high volumes of automobile, truck, and bus traffic throughout the day. Furthermore, the area is traversed by subgrade subway and commuter rail structures, which are also generators of ground-borne vibration.

The Proposed Project would result in enhanced bus operations along 34th Street, but these improvements are not anticipated to substantially increase the volume of buses on the corridor or their potential for ground-borne vibration. The project would also reduce automobile and truck trips as a result of lane closure, which would lessen the vibration impacts of these vehicle types. For these reasons, a general vibration assessment is not considered necessary. The EA will document this conclusion.

4.3.9 NATURAL RESOURCES

The Project Site is fully developed with built structures, but it does span areas within the New York City Coastal Zone Boundary. Furthermore, NEPA requires that a project document compliance with a number of federal regulations pertaining to natural features. Therefore, the EA will include a brief natural resources assessment.

NYCDOT will correspond with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the NYSDEC Natural Heritage Program, and other appropriate natural resource agencies to determine whether sensitive habitats or species are present within and near the project site. As none are anticipated, the EA would document the outreach with these agencies and the findings cited in their responses.

The EA will also document any project activities within floodplains or wetlands. There would not be in-water work for the Proposed Project, and wetlands are not present within the project site. Therefore, the EA would document the absence of wetlands in this area. The project may

include new structures within the 100-year floodplain. The EA would show in maps the designated floodplains and identify project activities in these areas.

Portions of the Proposed Project would be located within the boundaries of the New York City Coastal Zone. As such, the Proposed Project must demonstrate consistency with New York City's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP). NYCDOT will prepare a LWRP Consistency Assessment Form. The LWRP Consistency Assessment Form would be submitted to the New York State Department of State (NYSDOS) and the New York City Department of City Planning (NYCDCP). Both agencies have responsibility for making coastal zone consistency determinations in the City of New York. The EA will document the LWRP consistency review, including a copy of the Consistency Assessment Form and any correspondence with NYSDOS and NYCDCP.

4.3.10 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The EA will assess whether current or historical activities on or near the Project Site may have resulted in contamination by hazardous substances or wastes. This will consist of the following tasks:

- A site reconnaissance to note activities of potential concern or obvious areas of concern related to soil and/or groundwater contamination on site and at adjacent properties.
- A review of readily available historical information regarding past site usage to assess the potential for contamination. Historical information, which may include historic Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, historic aerial photographs, historic City Directories and historic topographic maps, will be reviewed.
- State and local agency review will be limited to a database search and review to determine potential environmental sites that may be disturbed by construction of the Proposed Project.

The detailed results of this study, including backup materials, will be provided in a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment completed in accordance with ASTM 1527-05 standards. The Phase I report and any necessary remediation or mitigation measures will be summarized in the body of the EA. If a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment is required, then this will also be documented in the EA.

4.3.11 SAFETY AND SECURITY

FTA guidance requires an examination of safety and security as it is considered a concern with all transit projects. The EA will briefly document safety and security measures to be incorporated as part of the Proposed Project, including standard operating procedures by the MTA. The EA will also include a qualitative assessment of safety along the 34th Street corridor. This safety assessment will identify and incorporate NYCDOT's planned physical improvements to sidewalks, signal timing, and crosswalk lengths.

4.3.12 CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

Construction activities, although temporary in nature, can sometimes result in significant adverse impacts. A project's construction activities may affect a number of technical areas analyzed for the operational period, such as social conditions, historic resources, traffic, air

quality, and noise. Due to the short-term duration and low intensity of construction activities, construction impacts will be discussed qualitatively in the EA.

4.3.13 INDIRECT AND CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

NEPA require consideration of the indirect and cumulative effects of a project.

4.3.13.1 Indirect Effects

CEQ regulations (40 CFR Part 1500-1508) define indirect impacts as those that are "caused by an action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable." Generally, these impacts are induced by the Proposed Project. Indirect effects can occur within the full range of impact areas, such as changes in land use, economic vitality, traffic congestion, air quality, noise, vibration, and water and natural resources. Examples of indirect effects can include growth-inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in land use patterns, population density, and growth rates, and related effects on air and water and other natural systems. The EA will examine potential indirect effects of the Proposed Project identifying both the potential indirect benefits and impacts that may occur.

4.3.13.2 Cumulative Effects

The EA will consider resources, eco-systems, and human communities that could be potentially affected by the Proposed Project and whether those could also be affected cumulatively when combined with other reasonably foreseeable projects. Cumulative impacts result from the incremental consequences of an action when added to other reasonably foreseeable future actions (40 CFR 1508.8).

The EA will examine both the short-term and long-term cumulative effects of the Proposed Project and other proposed development in the 34th Street area. Major development (Hudson Yards, Western Rail Yards, NYU Hospital Expansion, 15 Penn Plaza, and First Avenue Properties) and transportation projects (ARC and Moynihan Station) are planned and could be in simultaneous construction with the Proposed Project. Construction of these projects combined with the construction and operation of the Proposed Project has the potential to result in adverse cumulative effects on access and circulation along 34th Street. However, because construction of the Proposed Project would be of short duration, it is assumed that the analysis of potential cumulative construction-period impacts would be qualitative.

In the long term, permanent traffic pattern changes that would be implemented as part of the Proposed Project have the potential to impact vehicular access to and from proposed development projects. However, the Proposed Project would improve transit access to these sites serving their future residents and workers. The EA will describe both the potential future cumulative benefits and impacts of the Proposed Project and other approved development and transportation projects on and near 34th Street. It is assumed that this analysis would be qualitative.

4.3.14 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Executive Order (EO) 12898, issued in 1994, directs federal and state agencies to incorporate environmental justice as part of their mission by identifying and addressing the effects of all programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. An Environmental Justice analysis will be prepared in accordance with methodology and guidance defined by the

Council on Environmental Quality, USDOT, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Using Census Data, the EA will identify environmental justice populations in the vicinity of the project site. The analysis will also consider populations in the secondary study area if and where traffic, air quality, and noise impacts have been identified because of traffic diversions generated by the Proposed Project. The determination of the presence or absence of environmental justice populations will be based on the relative proportion of minority and low-income populations in the study area(s) to the average for Manhattan (New York County) as a whole.

If environmental justice communities are identified, the EA will examine whether impacts on these communities would be adverse and disproportionate. The EA will also document targeted outreach efforts to solicit comments from any environmental justice communities that could be impacted by the Proposed Project.

4.3.15 SECTION 4(f)

Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966 (49 USC § 303) prohibits the Secretary of Transportation from approving any program or project that requires the "use" of 1) any publicly owned land in a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national state, or local significance, or 2) any land from a historic site of national, state, or local significance unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land and the project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the resource.

As the project would not acquire property that qualifies as a Section 4(f) resource and since construction activities would be limited to the public right-of-way, it is not anticipated that a detailed Section 4(f) evaluation would be required for the Proposed Project. The EA will document this finding based on conditions identified in the Historic Resources, Parklands, and Natural Resources sections of the document.

4.4 ORGANIZATION/OUTLINE OF THE EA

The proposed outline of the EA is as follows:

Executive Summary
Chapter 1—Purpose and Need
Chapter 2—Project Alternatives
Chapter 3—Social Conditions
Chapter 4—Cultural Resources
Chapter 5—Parklands
Chapter 6—Visual and Aesthetic Conditions
Chapter 7—Transportation
Chapter 8—Air Quality
Chapter 9—Energy and Greenhouse Gases
Chapter 10—Noise and Vibration
Chapter 11—Natural Resources
Chapter 12—Hazardous Materials
Chapter 13—Safety and Security
Chapter 14—Construction Impacts

Chapter 15—Indirect and Cumulative Effects
Chapter 16—Environmental Justice
Chapter 17—Process, Agency Coordination, and Public Participation
List of Preparers
List of Recipients
Appendices

5. PROCESS, AGENCY COORDINATION, AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

NYCDOT has developed a public involvement program to provide project information to residents, business and institution operators, and public agencies with an interest in the Proposed Project. The outreach about this corridor of need dates back to 2008, including the Alternatives Analysis phase of the project in 2009 and 2010. Information about the public outreach, including summaries of meetings, and other public feedback received, will be included in the EA.

5.1 COORDINATION WITH BUS OPERATORS

Throughout this project, NYCDOT has been working closely with MTA New York City Transit and MTA Bus, who are the operators of the most frequent transit service along this corridor. NYCDOT has also coordinated with other operators of bus service on the corridor that may also use the Transitway. This coordination will be described in the EA.

5.2 NYCDOT 34TH STREET PUBLIC OUTREACH PROGRAM

The specific components of NYCDOT's program are described below.

Community Advisory Committee

The 34th Street Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is composed of a broad range of stakeholders, including elected officials, Community Board members, civic/neighborhood groups, business organizations, local residents, and major area institutions. The role of the CAC is:

- To provide opportunities for input through the project design process
- To provide stakeholders with information to share with their constituencies about project details and outreach efforts
- To ensure that key issues are identified and addressed

The CAC will meet every few months during the planning process for the project. The first meeting of the CAC took place on June 15, 2010, and was attended by 38 area stakeholders.

DOT will be presenting the traffic analysis and other elements of analysis relevant to the EA to the CAC.

Project Open Houses

Public open houses will take place at key points during the project to ensure that the larger public can find out about the project status, and provide input on the project process. The open

house format allows the public to have one-on-one conversations with project staff and focus on individual needs. Our first open house was held on April 21, 2010 and was attended by over 70 members of the public.

DOT will hold at least one open house presenting the traffic analysis and other elements of analysis relevant to the EA.

Community Forums

To address specific concerns about curb access and delivery needs on 34th St, several forums will be convened to discuss curb access needs and options regarding access and deliveries along the Transitway. DOT will be announcing these forums online through the DOT website and social media (Facebook, Twitter), through Community Boards and elected officials, and by reaching out directly to individual buildings to attract strong representation. The first set of these forums are scheduled for October and November 2010, and are intended to provide an opportunity for detailed comments on block-specific and building-specific loading needs to be taken into account during preliminary design for the project.

Community Board Presentations

The project is being presented to Community Boards as requested by the boards along the corridor. There are three Community Boards located along the corridor (Manhattan Community Boards 4, 5, and 6). DOT has presented at each board at least once since Fall 2009, and will continue to meet with the boards when invited.

Stakeholder Meetings and Presentations

NYCDOT has held presentations and meeting with representatives of public agencies, business, civic, and professional associations, and community groups upon request. NYCDOT will continue these meetings as project planning progresses.

5.3 NEPA PUBLIC OUTREACH

The preparation of an EA requires public review, but there is no requirement for public meetings or hearings. Consistent with NEPA requirements, NYCDOT will make the EA publicly available for a minimum of 30 days following its publication. NYCDOT will accept written comments on the EA and responses will be prepared and incorporated into FTA's statement of findings on the project.