

A. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

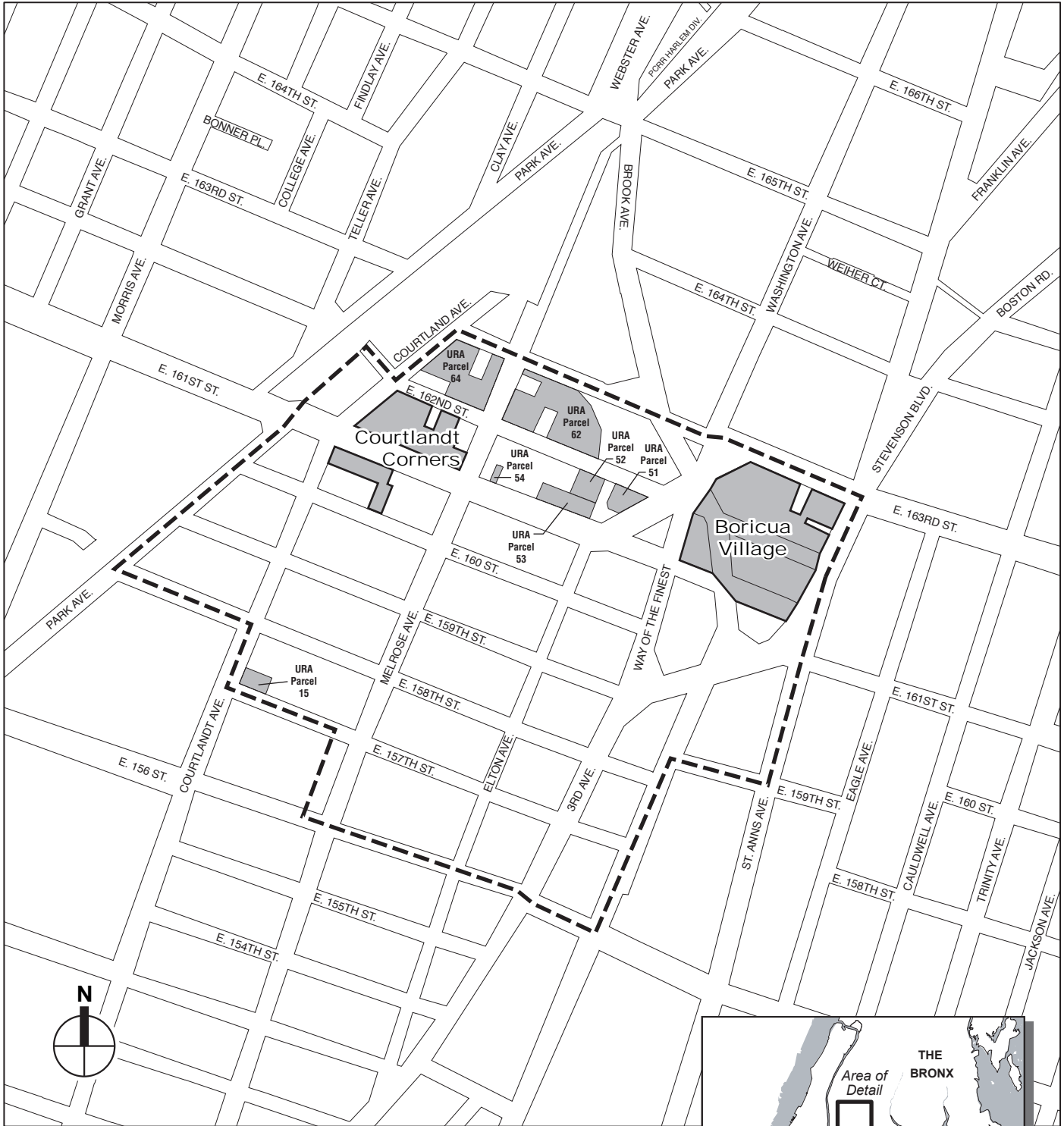
The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) proposes to amend the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan (URP) in order to facilitate future development in the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area (URA), located in the South Bronx in Community Districts 1 and 3 (see Figures 1-1 and 1-2). The Melrose Commons URP, adopted in 1994, governs development in the Melrose Commons URA. While there remain a number of unbuilt parcels in the URA, approximately 1,789 housing units have been constructed or are planned on sites for which developers have been designated. The proposed amendments would allow additional developments to proceed; the largest of these projects include Boricua Village, proposed by the Atlantic Development Group, and Courtlandt Corners, proposed by Phipps Houses.

The Atlantic Development Group's proposal calls for the development of URA sites 48, 49, 59, and 60 as Boricua Village, a mixed residential, community facility, and retail project. Boricua Village would consist of approximately 750 residential units, up to 50,000 square feet (sf) of retail space, a 120,000 square foot building to house Boricua College's Bronx campus, and 174 accessory parking spaces. The Boricua Village site is bounded by East 163rd Street, Third Avenue, East 161st Street, Washington Avenue, and Elton Avenue.

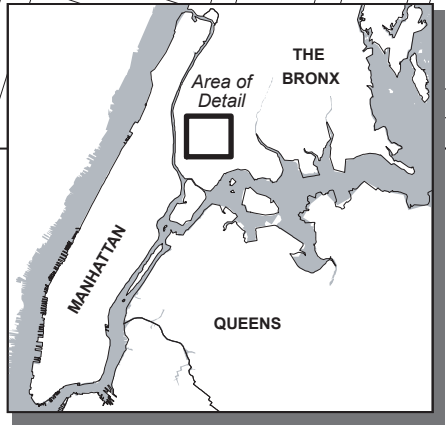
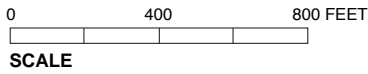
Phipps Houses proposes two mixed residential and commercial developments: Courtlandt Corner North on URA sites 56 and 57 and Courtlandt Corner South on sites 45 and 46. The Courtlandt Corner North site is bounded by East 161st Street, Courtlandt Avenue, East 162nd Street, and Melrose Avenue. The Courtlandt Corner South site is located immediately to the south across East 161st Street at Courtlandt Avenue. The two developments would contain a total of approximately 474¹ residential units and 28,000 sf of retail space. An accessory parking facility with a capacity of up to 100 vehicles would be located on the Courtlandt Corner North site.

The amendment to the URP would also allow the future construction of additional residential units on a number of other smaller sites within the URA, and would facilitate a total development of up to approximately 1,770 residential units, 99,900 sf of retail space, and 140,000 sf of community facility space as shown in Table 1-1.

¹ This EIS analyzes a total of 474 dwelling units on the Courtlandt Corners North and South sites. A proposed amendment to the Melrose Commons URP would limit the total residential development on the Courtlandt Corner North site (URA sites 56 and 57) to 400 units.



- Development Sites
- Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area

















THE CITY OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING PRESERVATION
AND DEVELOPMENT
DATE: MAY 1994

MELROSE COMMONS

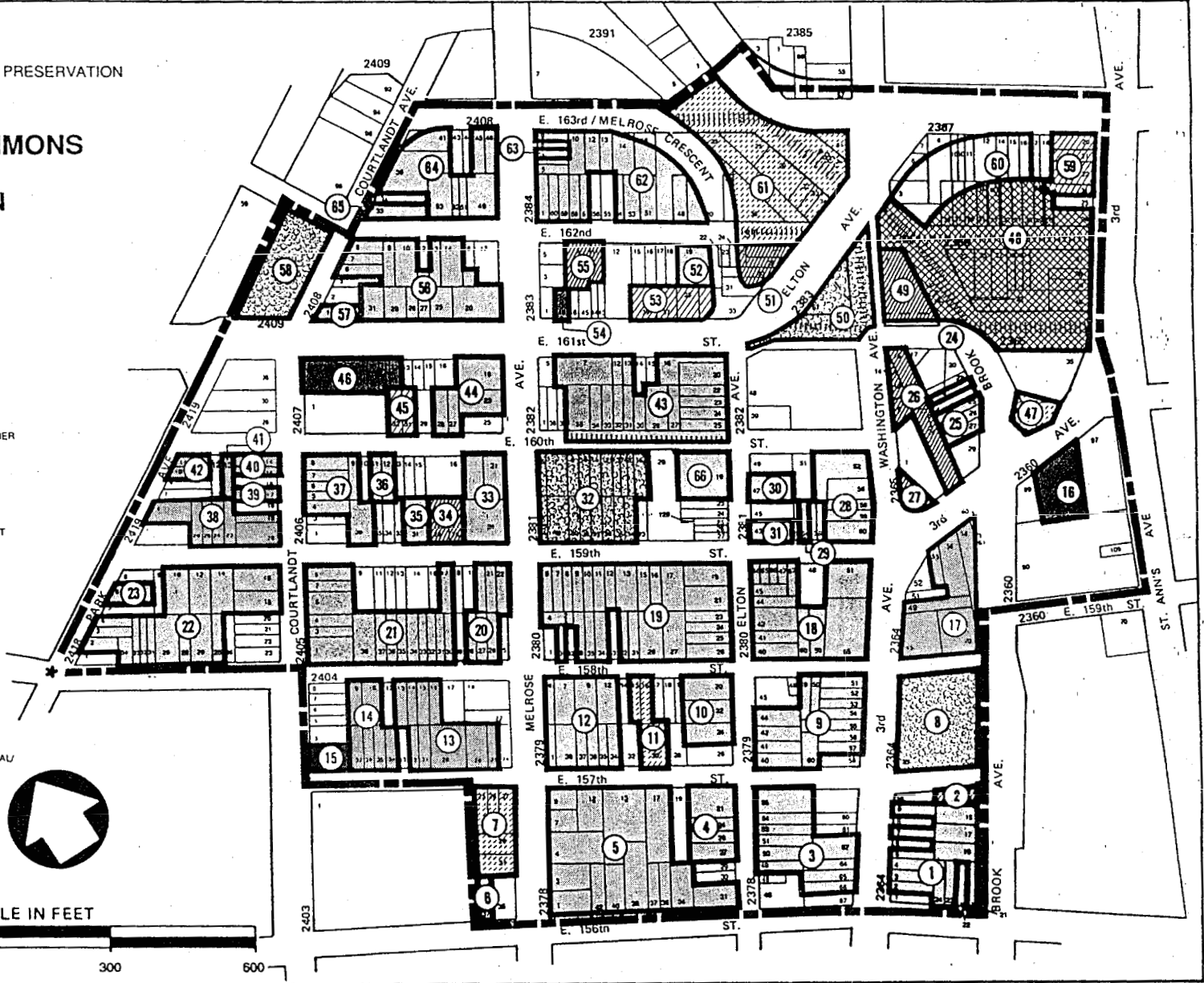
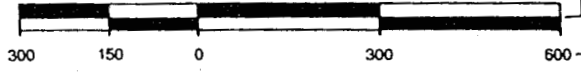
URBAN RENEWAL AREA
LAND USE PLAN
MAP 2

LEGEND

-  PROJECT BOUNDARY
-  POINT OF BOUNDARY OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
-  BLOCK NUMBER
-  SITE BOUNDARY AND NUMBER
-  STREET MAPPING
-  EXCLUDED FROM PROJECT
-  RESIDENTIAL
-  COMMERCIAL
-  COMMUNITY FACILITY
-  COMMUNITY FACILITY/COMMERCIAL
-  RESIDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL/COMMUNITY FACILITY
-  PUBLIC PARK
-  PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
-  EASEMENT



SCALE IN FEET



Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Sites and Current Land Use Designations
Figure 1-2

Table 1-1
Expected Additional Development in the
Future with the Proposed URA Amendments

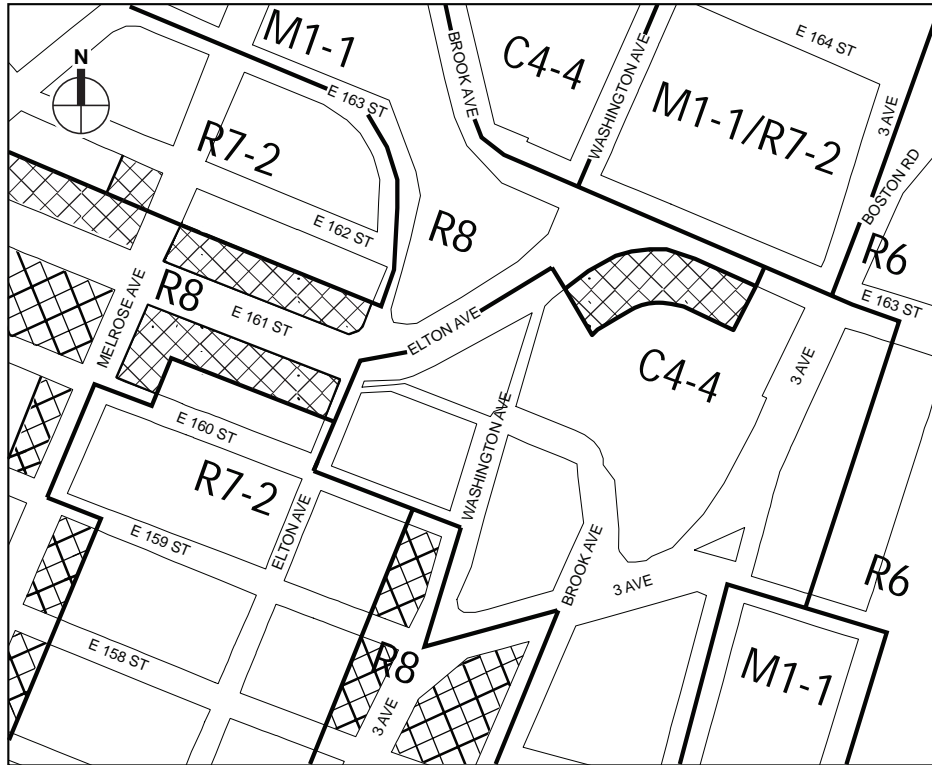
	URA Parcel(s)	Residential Units	Retail Floor Area	Community Facility Floor Area
Proposed Project				
Boricua Village	48, 49, 59, 60	750	50,000	120,000
Future Projects				
Courtlandt Corners	45, 46, 56, 57	474*	28,000	--
Other Development Sites				
	15	20	4,600	--
	52	26	--	--
	53	66	14,000	--
	54	--	3,300	--
	62	163	--	--
	64	271	--	--
	51	--	--	20,000
Total Proposed and Future Development		1,770	99,900	140,000
Note:	*This EIS analyzes a total of 474 dwelling units on the Courtlandt Corners North and South sites. A proposed amendment to the Melrose Commons URP would limit the total residential development on the Courtlandt Corner North site (URA sites 56 and 57) to 400 units.			
Sources:	Atlantic Development Group, Phipps Houses, HPD.			

The proposed and future actions necessary to facilitate the total development include a number of amendments to the Melrose Commons URP including changes to the land use; setting limits to the amount of residential units and commercial floor area on certain sites; and the elimination of lot coverage, height limit, and streetwall requirements. The environmental review also analyzes proposed and potential future rezonings of blocks within the urban renewal area that would allow for increase in floor area and housing units on certain sites including the Boricua Village site, the Courtlandt Corner North site, and URA site 64 (see Figures 1-3 and 1-4).


Table 1-2 shows which actions are required for each element of the development program and indicates whether each action is included in the current ULURP application (Proposed) or would be subject to a future ULURP application (Future).

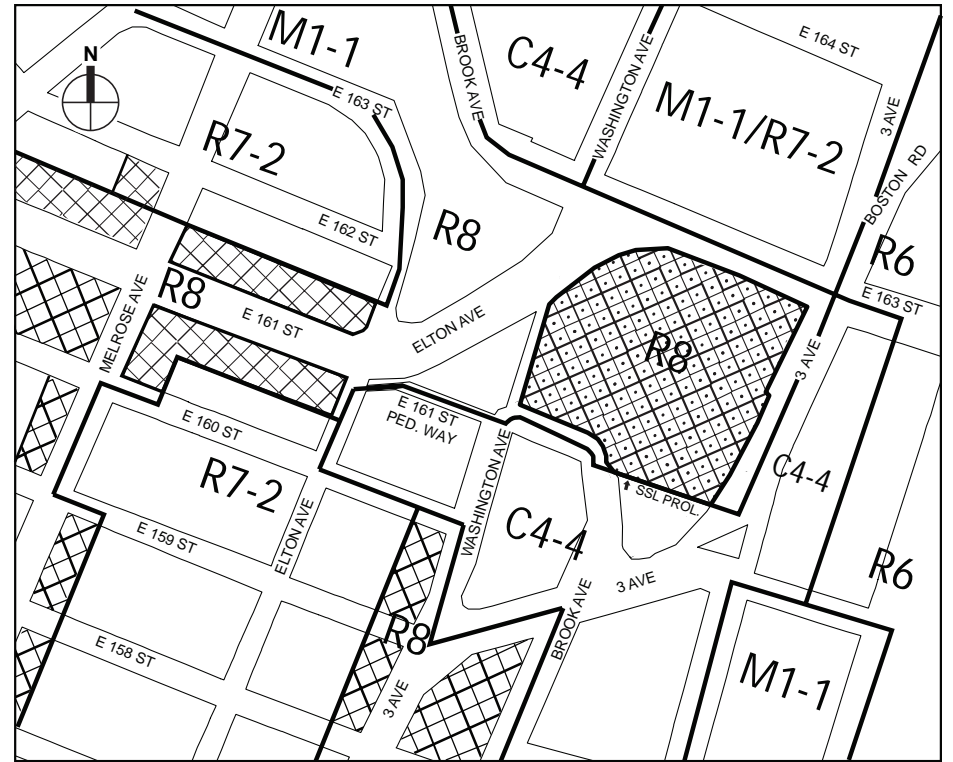
Table 1-2
Proposed and Future Actions Analyzed

Actions Needed	Proposed	Future *
Boricua Village (Sites 48, 49, 59, 60)		
Rezoning of project site	X	
Disposition of project site	X	
Melrose Commons URA Amendments ⁽¹⁾	X	X
Courtlandt Corners (Sites 45, 46, 56, 57)		
Rezoning of project site ⁽²⁾		X
Disposition of project site		X



EXISTING ZONING

 C 1-4 Overlay



PROPOSED ZONING

 C2-4 Overlay

**Table 1-2 (cont'd)
Proposed and Future Actions Analyzed**

Actions Needed	Proposed	Future *
Other Sites (15, 52, 53, 54, 62, 64, 51)		
Disposition of project site		X
Rezoning of site 64		X
<p>Notes: * Future actions are not included in the concurrent ULURP application. They would need to be reviewed and approved through future ULURP applications.</p> <p>(1) All of the proposed amendments to the URP are being analyzed in the EIS. All of the proposed amendments are included in the concurrent ULURP application except for the removal of height limits from all sites.</p> <p>(2) The EIS analyzes a potential rezoning of Courtlandt Corner sites and site 64 that would require future ULURP applications.</p>		
Source: HPD.		

As discussed below, the actions necessary to facilitate this development include a number of amendments to the Melrose Commons URP as well as zoning changes on the Boricua Village site, the Courtlandt Corner North site, and URA parcel 64.

B. BACKGROUND HISTORY

The Melrose Commons URP was adopted by the City in 1994. The plan governs development in the approximately 34-block Melrose Commons URA, which is generally bounded by East 163rd Street to the north; Brook, St. Ann’s, and Third Avenues on the east; East 156th, East 157th, East 158th, and East 159th Streets on the south; and Melrose, Courtlandt, and Park Avenues to the west.

A Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the URA issued in 1994 analyzed the development over a ten-year period of 1,714 new multi-family residential units, approximately 177,170 sf of new commercial space, and 200,845 sf of new community facility space. In addition to the designation of the URA, the actions analyzed in the FEIS include amendments to the zoning map, city map changes, park mappings, acquisition of certain properties within the URA, and special permits for the decking over of railroad right-of-ways.

The 1994 FEIS identified several significant or potentially significant adverse impacts as a result of the Melrose Commons URA project. These included a deficiency of open space; impacts on possible prehistoric and archaeological resources on development sites; increased pedestrian and vehicle traffic; impacts on bus service; high noise levels; and possible contamination of development sites from potentially hazardous materials remaining from previous uses. Measures were proposed to mitigate all of these impacts, with the exception of the deficiency in open space.

To date, approximately 582 residential units and 22,000 sf of commercial space have been constructed in the URA and approximately 726 residential units and 21,420 sf of commercial space are currently under construction. An additional 481 residential units and 45,000 sf of commercial space are planned for construction absent the proposed URP amendments and the accompanying environmental review (see Table 1-3). Thus, independent of the new development assessed in this DEIS, the total number of residential units planned or constructed

Melrose Commons

throughout the URA is 1,789, which represents approximately the full buildout of the 1,714 units analyzed in the 1994 FEIS.

Table 1-3
Melrose Commons URA Status of Development to Date

	URA Parcel(s)	Approx. Res. Units	Approx. Retail Floor Area
Completed Projects			
Plaza de Los Angeles	p/o 3, 4, p/o 9, 10, p/o 18	105	--
Sunflower Way I	19	90	--
Sunflower Way II	13, p/o 14, 20, 21	123	--
La Puerta de Vitalidad	p/o 18	60	7,000
Melrose Villa Hermosa	33	80	--
Palacio del Sol*	p/o 5	124	15,000
<i>Total completed</i>		582	22,000
Under Construction			
Peter Cintron Apts.	12	162	5,920
Park/Courlandt	p/o 38, 39, 40, 42	30	--
Courtlandt/E. 160 St.	35, 36, 37	29	--
La Casa de Felicidad	p/o 9	85	--
Courtlandt Avenue Apts.	22	168	--
Parkview Commons I	p/o 43	110	8,000
Jasper Hall	p/o 44	54	--
Parkview Commons II	p/o 43	88	7,500
<i>Total under construction</i>		726	21,420
Designated for Development			
2003 RFP Site 14	1, p/o 3, 17, 28	380	45,000
Addition to Park/Courtlandt	31, 23	21	--
Parkview Commons III	p/o 43	12	--
	p/o 5	68	--
<i>Total designated</i>		481	45,000
TOTAL COMPLETED, UNDER CONSTRUCTION, AND DESIGNATED		1,789	88,420
Note:	* Palacio del Sol has been recently completed and occupied but is treated as a No Build project in the EIS analyses.		
Source:	HPD, March 2006.		

C. PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

Amendments to the Melrose Commons URP and further environmental analysis are needed in order to allow for the buildout of the remaining urban renewal sites and to accommodate increased residential development beyond that anticipated when the plan was adopted in 1994. As described above, development that is planned or has been completed has reached the amount analyzed in the 1994 FEIS.

The proposed and future actions would contribute to the ongoing revitalization of the South Bronx. The buildout of the URA would help to meet the area's strong housing demand and

would provide a substantial amount of affordable housing. Changes to the URP’s regulations governing land use and building design would provide the flexibility needed to accommodate increased housing production in the URA. The market for affordable housing development in the area has proved stronger than expected and the remaining unbuilt parcels in the URA represent an opportunity to use city-owned land to facilitate the development of affordable housing. The removal of height limits would allow individual sites to accommodate a greater number of housing units, while land use changes would allow parcels currently designated only for commercial or community facility uses to develop with a mix of uses including residential. Amendments to the URP’s land use regulations are also needed to bring several existing community gardens into conformance and to permit the relocation of several gardens that would be displaced by housing development to new sites in the URA.

D. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

The proposed actions analyzed in this EIS include a number of amendments to the Melrose Commons URP, a proposed zoning map change, and the disposition of up to 42 city-owned properties to the Atlantic Development Group or its affiliates. These actions will require approval through the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) under City Charter Section 197(c).

AMENDMENT TO THE MELROSE COMMONS URA

The proposed amendments to the URP include changes to land use designations affecting 12 sites; the removal of wall regulations and street wall regulations throughout the URA; a change to lot coverage regulations on site 48; the modification or removal of curb cut regulations on four parcels; a change to height limits on sites 48, 49, 59, 60, 45, 46, 56, and 57; and the deletion of portions of two urban renewal parcels from the URP (see Table 1-4 and Figure 1-5). The proposed amendment to the URP listed in Table 1-4 is concurrent with the ULURP application.

Table 1-4
Current Proposed Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan Changes

Number	Site(s)	Descriptions of and Reasons for Changes
1	48	URP Map 2 would be modified to reflect a change in land use from <u>Community Facility / Commercial</u> to <u>Residential / Commercial / Community Facility</u> to allow for the development of Boricua Village.
2	48, 49, 59, 60 45, 46, 56, 57	Building height limits would be deleted to allow for the development of Boricua Village and future development on these Sites in the northern section of Melrose Commons, pursuant to zoning.
3	48, 49, 59, 60	The development of these Sites, in the aggregate, would be limited to a maximum of 750 residential units and 50,000 square feet of commercial space.
4	56, 57	The development of these Sites, in the aggregate, would be limited to a maximum of 400 residential units.
5	48	Delete from URP Section C the lot coverage maximum for Site 48 to allow for the mixed use development of Boricua Village.
6	46	URP Map 2 would be modified to reflect a change in the land use from <u>Commercial</u> to <u>Residential</u> to allow for mixed use development on this Site, consistent with other Sites on East 161 Street.

Table 1-4 (cont'd)

Current Proposed Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan Changes

Number	Site(s)	Descriptions of and Reasons for Changes
7	45	Restrictions on permitted land uses would be modified to allow for greater flexibility for the use of this Site.
8	15	URP Map 2 would be modified to reflect a change in land use from <u>Commercial</u> to <u>Residential</u> to allow for mixed-use development on this Site.
9	33	URP Maps 1 and 2 and new Exhibits A and B would be modified by deleting Block 2406, p/o Lot 16 from the UR Plan.
10	19	URP Maps 1 and 2 and new Exhibits A and B would be modified to delete Block 2380, Lots 35 and 36 from the UR Plan.
11	60	URP Map 2 would be modified to designate the land use as <u>Residential</u> . No designation was provided in the original plan.
12	38	URP Map 2 would be modified to change the land use of Block 2419, Lots 23-26 from <u>Residential</u> to <u>Residential/Community Facility</u> .
13	All	The "Minimum Street Wall and Building Wall Lengths and Heights" section would be deleted in order to simplify the design and review of projects.
14	48, 16, 17	The restriction that "no curb cuts shall be permitted on Third Avenue south of the proposed to be demapped portion of East 162 Street" would be changed to "No curb cuts will be permitted on Third Avenue south of the intersection of Third Avenue with Brook Avenue." In addition, Brook Avenue would be deleted from the series of streets for which curb cuts are prohibited and the stipulation that "No curb cuts will be permitted on Brook Avenue south of East 158 Street" would be added.
15	p/o 1, p/o 5, p/o 14, 30,45	The definition of <u>Residential</u> Land Use would be clarified to allow for active and passive recreation for public purposes.
16	2	URP Map 2 would be modified to change the land use from <u>Community Facility</u> to <u>Community Facility/Public Open Space</u> to provide more flexibility for the use of this site.
17	34	URP Map 2 would be modified to change the land use from <u>Community Facility</u> to <u>Community Facility/Public Open Space</u> to provide more flexibility for the use of this site.
18	48, 49, 59, 60	URP Section E.1 would be modified to reflect the intended rezonings.

The proposed and future amendments to the URP would allow for the full build-out of the Melrose Commons URA with approximately 1,770 additional housing units, 99,900 sf of retail space, and 140,000 sf of community facility space (see Table 1-1).

The proposed Boricua Village development (which consists of URA sites 48, 49, 59, and 60) would contain approximately 878,847 gross square feet (gsf) of floor area, including up to approximately 750 housing units, up to 50,000 sf of retail floor area, and a 120,000-square-foot college on a site that currently consists of vacant lots and vacant buildings. It is expected that the complex would consist of approximately eight residential buildings ranging from 6 to 13 stories and a 14-story building to house the Bronx campus of Boricua College (see Figure 1-6, "Boricua Village Illustrative Site Plan"). The Boricua Village development would include publicly accessible open space and an estimated 174 accessory parking spaces. The entrance and exit to the parking garage are expected to be located along Elton Avenue at East 163rd Street.

Approximately 1.5 acres of publicly accessible open space would be provided on the site. Changes proposed to the URP's land use designation on site 48 would allow residential development at this location. Changes to the URP's lot coverage restrictions on parcel 48 and the removal of the URP's height limits on sites 48, 49, 59, and 60 would also be needed. The amendment to the URP would include a provision limiting the total number of residential units to be developed on the Boricua Village site to 750 and the total amount of commercial floor area on this site to 50,000 square feet (see Figures 1-7A through 1-7G).

The proposed amendment to the URP and the future potential rezoning affecting sites 45, 46, 56, and 57 would result in the development of Courtlandt Corners South and North. Phipps Houses proposes to construct two mixed residential/commercial developments, Courtlandt Corner North and Courtlandt Corner South (see Figure 1-8, "Courtlandt Corners Ground Floor Illustrative Site Plan"). The two portions of the Courtlandt Corners development would contain a total of approximately 474,446 sf of floor area, providing up to approximately 474 residential units and 28,000 sf of retail space. Approximately 5,000 sf of public open space in the form of a community garden would be created on parcel 45. Courtlandt Corner North would be located on URA parcels 56 and 57 and would include an accessory parking facility that would accommodate up to 100 vehicles. The Courtlandt Corner North site would also include Block 2408, Lots 2 and 5, which were privately acquired by Phipps Houses and are not governed by the URP. In order to accommodate the Courtlandt Corners developments, the land use designation on parcel 46 would be changed to residential and height limits would be removed on all urban renewal parcels. Additionally, the land use designation on site 45 would be changed to permit public open space. The proposed amendment to the URP would also include a provision limiting the total number of residential units on sites 56 and 57 to 400 units.

The proposed amendments to the URP include a change in land use designation on site 15, located on the northeast corner of Courtlandt Avenue and East 157th Street, from commercial to residential/commercial. This would facilitate the construction of approximately 20 residential units and 4,600 sf of retail space on this site.

Additional changes to the URP's land use designations would bring into conformance a new community garden on site 2 and the northernmost lot of site 1 that was recently relocated from a nearby development site. Clarification of the definition of residential use on sites 14 and 30 to include public open space would bring the existing community gardens on those sites into conformance with the URP's land use regulations. Clarification of the definition of residential use on site 5 to permit public open space as well as residential use would allow an existing community garden to be relocated to another portion of the site in order to accommodate the residential development planned on that site.

The land use designation on site 38 would be changed from residential to residential/community facility because four lots on this site are currently used by the adjacent fire station for EMS parking. No new development is currently projected on this site.

ZONING MAP CHANGE

The proposed actions include the rezoning of Block 2366 and part of Block 2367, which include URA parcels 48, 49, 59, and 60 on the Boricua Village site, from C4-4 and R8 with a C1-4 commercial overlay to R8 with a C2-4 commercial overlay (see Figure 1-3). The C2-4 commercial overlay would extend across both blocks, encompassing the entire Boricua Village site, including site 60. The proposed rezoning would allow the Boricua Village development to include an increased amount of floor area and therefore accommodate more housing units.

DISPOSITION OF CITY-OWNED SITES

To facilitate development of Boricua Village 42, city-owned sites are proposed to be disposed to Atlantic Development Group. The city-owned lots proposed for disposition include:

- Block 2366 Lots 1, 21-23, 25, 27, 32-34, 37-40;
- Block 2367 Lots 1, p/o 3, p/o6, p/o 8, p/o 10 - p/o 12, 14-16, 20-22, 24, 26, 28-38, p/o 50, 55, 60;
- The demapped bed of East 162nd Street from Third Avenue to Washington Avenue;
- The demapped bed of Brook Avenue from East 161st Street to Elton Avenue; and
- The demapped bed of East 161st Street from Third Avenue to Brook Avenue.

E. DESCRIPTION OF FUTURE ACTIONS

To assess the full build-out of the Melrose Commons URA, the EIS analyzed a future potential rezoning of the northern portion of the Courtlandt Corner North site (part of site 56) from R7-2 and R7-2 with a C1-4 commercial overlay to R8 and R8 with a C1-4 commercial overlay, respectively (see Figure 1-4); and a potential future amendment to URA with the removal of height limits throughout the URA. The remaining undeveloped urban renewal sites north of East 161st Street, including parcels 51, 52, 53, 54, 62, and 64, are expected to be developed according to the URP’s current land use regulations except for the height regulations. This EIS also analyzes a potential future rezoning of site 64 from R7 to R8. To account for maximum likely development, it is assumed that these parcels would be developed according to the New York City Zoning Resolution’s Quality Housing program, which allows an overall building height of up to 75 feet on a narrow street and 80 feet on a wide street in R7 districts. In R8 districts, the Quality Housing program permits a maximum building height of 105 feet on a narrow street and 120 feet on a wide street. East 161st Street, Melrose Avenue, and Elton Avenue are wide streets.

With the buildout of these sites in the future with the proposed actions, there would be changes to roadway configuration in the northern portion of the URA. East 163rd Street would no longer be continuous between Melrose and Third Avenues. The western section, to be renamed Melrose Crescent, would be converted from two-way operations to one-way eastbound operations east of Melrose Avenue, and would curve south to meet East 161st Street at Elton Avenue. The eastern section would end at the junction with Brook Avenue.

For full build out of the Melrose Commons URA, future actions would require review and approval through ULURP, including disposition of remaining sites and potential amendments to the URP, including removal of building height restrictions on all remaining sites, resulting in height limits as per zoning. Development on Courtlandt Corner North within the URA may also require future zoning map change subject to review and approval through ULURP.

F. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) reviews the potential effects of the proposed and future discretionary actions described above. The City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) process provides a mechanism for decision-makers to understand the environmental consequences, the alternatives, and the need for mitigating significant impacts. CEQR rules guide environmental review through the following steps:

- *Establish a Lead Agency.* Under CEQR, the “lead agency” is the public entity responsible for conducting environmental review. The lead agency is typically the agency with primary responsibility for the proposed action. The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) is the lead agency for the proposed actions.
- *Determine Significance.* The lead agency’s first decision is to determine whether the proposed action may have a significant impact on the environment. The lead agency determined that this proposal could have a significant adverse effect on the environment, requiring that an EIS be prepared. HPD issued a Positive Declaration on November 30, 2005.
- *Scoping.* The lead agency issued a Positive Declaration on November 30, 2005, and issued a draft scope of analysis for the EIS. “Scoping” is the process of establishing the type and extent of the environmental impact analyses to be studied in the EIS. CEQR requires all scoping meetings to be public. A public scoping meeting was held on January 9, 2006, and a final scope of work was issued on March 28, 2006.
- *DEIS.* In accordance with the final scope of work, this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) has been prepared. The lead agency reviews all aspects of the document, calling on other City agencies to participate. Once the lead agency is satisfied that the DEIS is complete, it issues a Notice of Completion and circulates the DEIS for public review.
- *Public Review.* Publication of the Notice of Completion of the DEIS starts public review. During this period, which must extend for a minimum of 30 days, the public may review and comment on the DEIS either in writing or at a public hearing. Because the CEQR process is coordinated with land use review, the hearings are held jointly. All substantive comments become part of the CEQR record and are summarized and responded to in the FEIS.
- *FEIS.* The lead agency will prepare a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). The FEIS will include a summary restatement of each substantive comment made about the DEIS with a response to each comment.
- *Findings.* The lead agency and each involved agency will adopt a formal set of written findings, reflecting its conclusions about the potential for significant adverse environmental impacts of the proposed action, potential alternatives, and mitigation measures. The findings may not be adopted until 10 days after the Notice of Completion has been issued for the FEIS. Once findings are adopted, the lead and involved agencies may take their actions.

G. FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

As set forth in the Positive Declaration, the lead agency has determined that the proposed and future actions may result in one or more significant adverse environmental impacts and thus requires preparation of an EIS. The EIS has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines presented in the *CEQR Technical Manual*.

For all technical analyses in the EIS, the assessment includes a description of existing conditions, an assessment of conditions in the future without the proposed and future actions, and an assessment of future conditions in which the buildout of the URA in accordance with the proposed and future actions would be completed. Identification and evaluation of impacts of the proposed and future actions are based on the change from the future without the proposed and future actions to the future with the proposed and future actions.

DEFINING BASELINE CONDITIONS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

For each technical area being assessed in the EIS, the current conditions must first be described. The assessment of existing conditions establishes a baseline, not against which the proposed actions are measured, but from which future conditions can be projected. The analysis framework begins with an assessment of existing conditions because these can be most directly measured and observed. The existing conditions baseline for the various analyses areas then serves as a starting point for the projection of future conditions and the analysis of project impacts.

DEFINITION OF FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED AND FUTURE ACTIONS

The “future without the proposed and future actions,” or the “No Build condition,” describes a baseline condition, which is evaluated and compared to the incremental changes that are expected to result from the proposed and future actions. It is expected that the proposed projects and other future development expected to occur as a result of the proposed and future actions could be completed and occupied by 2009, and therefore the analyses in the EIS will consider future conditions in a Build year of 2009. The future without the proposed and future actions, or the “No Build” condition, will incorporate previously approved or designated development projects within the URA and in the surrounding study area that are likely to be built by the analysis year. Development underway or in discussion according to the original URP is assumed to be developed by 2009. Other future and proposed development is assumed to be built by 2009. Of the future proposed projects, Courtlandt Corners is the largest and is furthest along in planning. It is anticipated that appropriate ULURP approvals will be underway to meet the 2009 build year. Other smaller sites have fewer pre-development constraints and are also anticipated to be developed by about 2009.

Under the future without the proposed and future actions scenario, projects under construction or in discussion at HPD pursuant to the existing URP have been analyzed and have been reviewed in the original 1994 Melrose Commons FEIS. These developments would result in approximately 1,331 housing units and 81,420 square feet of commercial space. Expected changes in conditions in the Melrose Commons URA and the surrounding area in the future without the proposed actions include construction of a number of residential, commercial, and institutional projects. These are described in Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy” (see Figure 2-4 and Tables 2-2 and 2-3).

DEFINITION OF FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED AND FUTURE ACTIONS

The future conditions without the proposed actions are then adjusted to reflect the activities and incremental changes that are expected to result from the proposed and future actions. This scenario constitutes the “future with the proposed and future actions,” or the “Build condition.”

IDENTIFYING SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Identification of significant adverse environmental impacts is based on the comparison of future conditions without and with the proposed and future actions. In certain technical areas (e.g., traffic, air quality, and noise) this comparison can be quantified and the severity of impact rated in accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual*. In other technical areas, (e.g., neighborhood

character) the analysis is more qualitative. The methodology for each technical analysis is presented at the start of each technical chapter.

MITIGATION

Mitigation measures for all significant adverse impacts identified in this DEIS are described in Chapter 20, “Mitigation.” CEQR requires that any significant adverse impacts identified in the EIS be minimized or avoided to the fullest extent practicable, given costs and other factors. In the DEIS, options for mitigation can be presented for public review and discussion, without the lead agency having selected one for implementation. Where no mitigation is available, the EIS must disclose the potential for unmitigated significant adverse impacts.

ALTERNATIVES

Chapter 21, “Alternatives,” assesses alternatives to the proposed and future actions. CEQR requires that a description and evaluation of the range of reasonable alternatives to the action be included in an EIS at a level of detail sufficient to allow a comparative assessment of the alternatives to a proposed action. Alternatives and the rationale behind their selection are important in the disclosure of environmental effects of a proposed action. Alternatives provide options to the proposed action and a framework for comparison of potential impacts and project objectives. If the environmental assessment and consideration of alternatives identify a feasible alternative that eliminates or minimizes significant adverse impacts, the lead agency may want to consider adopting that alternative as the proposed action. CEQR also requires consideration of a “no action alternative” that evaluates environmental conditions that are likely to occur in the future without the proposed and future actions. *