

One Police Plaza Security Plan EIS

CHAPTER 5: URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

A. INTRODUCTION

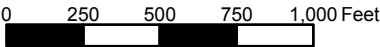
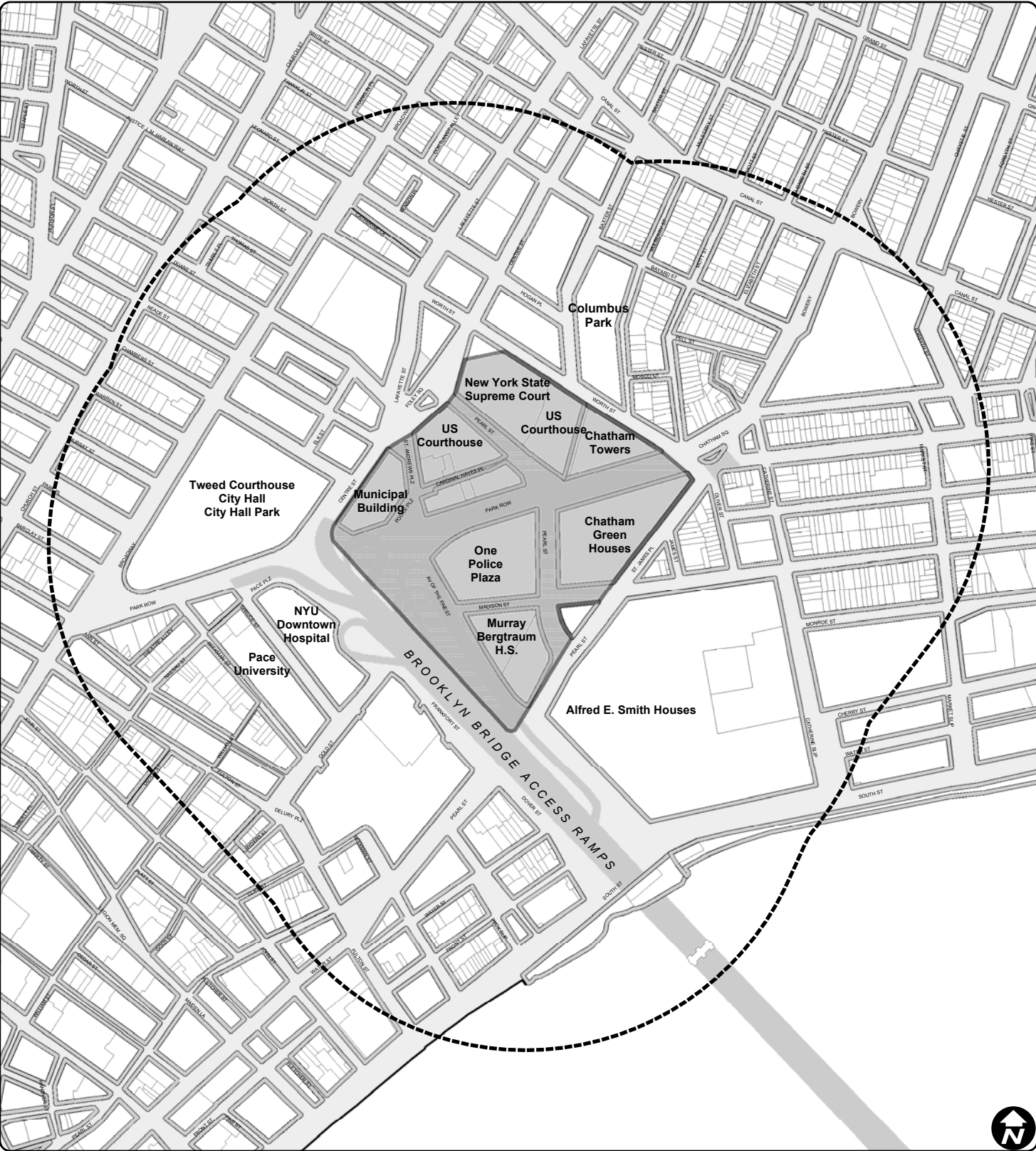
This chapter provides an assessment of the potential effects on urban design and visual resources that could result from the action. Together, the urban design components and visual resources of an area define the distinctive physical identity of a neighborhood. As described in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the action being analyzed is a security plan currently in place at One Police Plaza and surrounding roadways. The security plan was implemented by the NYC Police Department (NYPD) through the installation of attended security checkpoint booths, planters, bollards and hydraulically-operated delta barriers to restrict vehicular access to roadways adjacent to One Police Plaza and adjacent civic buildings.

Given the above conditions and the guidelines set forth in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, an analysis of urban design and visual resources is warranted. The analysis of urban design, as stipulated by CEQR, will assess the effects of the action on those attributes that constitute the physical appearance of buildings and streets in the study area. These attributes include building bulk, use, and type; building arrangement; block form and street pattern; streetscape elements; street hierarchy; and natural features. Bulk is created by the size of a building and its massing on a site. Height, length, and width define a building’s size, while volume, shape, setbacks, lot coverage, and density define its mass.



As the security plan being analyzed in the With-Action scenario includes streetscape elements that restrict pedestrian and vehicular access to certain blocks and streets, the analysis of visual resources provided in this chapter will focus on the security plan’s effects on the ability of the public to view and enjoy significant view corridors and vistas, natural resources, historic resources, and the waterfront from publicly accessible locations. Given the small physical scale and confined setting of the security plan, a general overview of visual resources, such as local waterfront views, public parks, and landmarked structures and districts in the study area will be provided along with an assessment of the effects of the security plan on those resources within its vicinity.

For analysis purposes, the urban design and visual resources study area is coterminous with the study area used for analysis in Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy,” and is defined by a quarter-mile radius around the security zone (see Figure 5-1). The analysis year for baseline conditions is 2001, which is prior to the establishment of the post-September 11th, 2001 security plan. The analysis year for the security plan itself (also referred to as the With-Action scenario) is 2006.

Urban Design and Visual Resources Study Area



Legend

-  Security Zone (Closed to Public Vehicular Traffic after 09/11/2001)
-  Urban Design and Visual Resources Study Area (Quarter-Mile Radius)

B. BASELINE CONDITIONS

The September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center resulted in a security plan which included the closure of streets situated adjacent to the civic facilities located near One Police Plaza (see Figure 5-1 for security zone area). Prior to the attacks, the streets that had been closed were open to all vehicles, with the exception of the streets that closed in 1999 for security purposes (see Chapter 1, Figure 1-3). In addition, the security features associated with the post- September 11, 2001 street closures such as delta barriers, security booths, jersey barriers, and bollards were not in place. A description of the conditions that existed in the surrounding area prior to September 11, 2001 will provide context for the analysis which follows. These baseline urban design and visual resources conditions are discussed in this section.

Urban Design

Security Zone

The security zone is comprised of an approximately 7-block area in Manhattan and its surrounding streets, bounded roughly by Pearl Street to the east, Centre Street to the west, Pearl Street and Park Row to the north, and the Brooklyn Bridge to the south (see Figure 5-1). This area is unique in that it lies at the border between predominantly residential and retail uses to the north and City and Federal institutional uses to the south.

Almost all of the buildings in the security zone are tall, high-rise institutional, commercial, and residential structures, generally above 15 stories in height. Specifically, these buildings are the 16-story One Police Plaza building, the 39-story Municipal Building, a 31-story United States Courthouse, and accompanying buildings ranging from 2 to 13 stories, a 25-story United States District Courthouse, the 25-story Chatham Towers residential building, the 21-story Chatham Green Houses, the 7-story Murray Bergtraum High School, and the 32-story Verizon tower to the south of the school.

The approximately 7-block security zone area contains a varied stock of building forms and two major uses- institutional and residential. Directly to the east of the northern terminus of Park Row stands the Chatham Green Houses, a 21-story complex of three brick residential buildings aligned into a singular building footprint resembling the letter “S”. Chatham Green was built in the 1960s and features low lot coverage and distinctive balconied facades on both sides of the building. Directly to the west of the northern terminus of Park Row is Chatham Towers, a residential complex comprised of two 25-story residential buildings of mid-1960s concrete construction. The towers are staggered at the center of their lot and are surrounded by trees and a landscaped plaza.

Institutional uses, namely City, State, and Federal Courthouses and City law enforcement facilities,

are centered to the west and southwest portions of the security zone area. To the west of Chatham Towers stand two institutional buildings used by the United States District and New York State Supreme Courts, respectively: 500 Pearl Street and 60 Centre Street. 500 Pearl Street is a 1920s granite building with a prominent 25-story tower resting on an approximately 7-story building base. 60 Centre Street, also completed in the 1920s, is an approximately 7-story courthouse featuring a Roman classical exterior and a radial building plan. Sixty Centre Street was landmarked in 1966 by the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission (NYC LPC). To the south of 60 Centre Street stands the United States Courthouse at 40 Centre Street, an approximately 31-story Classical Revival skyscraper, also landmarked by NYC LPC in 1975. Forty Centre Street features above-ground connections to two ancillary buildings that stand 10 and 13 stories tall between it and Park Row. Directly adjacent to the south side of 40 Centre Street is St. Andrew's Roman Catholic Church, a complex comprised of a 2-story brick church and 4-story associated brick building, both built in 1937. Further southwest is Police Plaza, a landscaped plaza with benches, tables, and trees at the center of the surrounding government and law enforcement buildings.

At 1 Centre Street, to the west of Police Plaza, stands the Municipal Building, a prominent 39-story building designed in the early 1900s by McKim, Mead, & White. The building exhibits high lot coverage and bulk, with its tall Corinthian columns extending from its archway over Chambers Street up to the golden statue at its peak. One Centre Street was landmarked by NYCLPC in 1966 and houses several City Agencies. To the east of Police Plaza stands the headquarters for the NYC Police Department, One Police Plaza, which is an approximately 16-story brick and glass building constructed in the 1970s. One Police Plaza exhibits fairly high bulk, extending to its full height from the ground without setbacks.

In the southeast corner of the security zone stands the 7-story Murray Bergtraum High School at the intersection of Rose Street and Avenue of the Finest, and the 32-story tower operated by Verizon Telecommunications. Murray Bergtraum High School is a NYC public high school within a bulky, brick and concrete building rising 7 stories from a triangular footprint that is anchored by corner cylindrical structures. The Verizon building, formerly the NYNEX Building, is a white concrete building featuring distinctive dark striations along its facades created by columns of glass windows. This high-bulk building features low lot coverage and high bulk and is used by Verizon for telecommunication purposes.

Building arrangement varies throughout the security zone area. The combination of large buildings and large blocks allows for blocks with low to moderate lot coverage. The buildings in the security zone area are generally centered on their blocks and are surrounded by features such as landscaped open space, parking, or perimeters comprised of open plazas.

No singular form governs the blocks found in the security zone study area. The blocks that comprise this area are non-rectilinear superblocks that are the sites of large buildings and/or spaces, inclusive of institutional buildings such as the Municipal Building and One Police Plaza, as well as Chatham

Towers and Chatham Green, which are large residential apartment buildings.

The street pattern in the security zone area is irregular and non-rectilinear, as the streets in this area border irregularly-shaped superblocks and weave into and around the prominent elevated access roadways that connect the Brooklyn Bridge to the rest of Manhattan. Taken as a whole, the security zone area resembles a square that has been sliced diagonally one way by Park Row and the other way by Pearl Street. As such, uniform east-west and north-south corridors for travel and views are uncommon. As described in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” several streets in the vicinity of One Police Plaza were closed in 1999, creating discontinuities of street access and function but not of physical form. As shown in Chapter 1, Figure 1-3, there was a full closure of Madison Street between Avenue of the Finest and Pearl Street, the restriction of Avenue of the Finest between Madison Street and Park Row except for vehicles headed for the municipal parking garage, and a prohibition of southbound traffic on Pearl Street between Park Row and Madison Street.

Within the security zone area, sidewalks are well populated with street trees while the private open spaces and landscaped areas surrounding the Chatham Green and Chatham Towers residential developments provide dense greenery along both sides of the northern portion of Park Row. The public open space on Police Plaza provides open plaza space with simple, minimal tables and benches, and distinctive plaza paving. The streetwalls in the area are semi-continuous, as each of the blocks within this area features one to two large buildings.

Study Area

The study area extends a quarter-mile radius from the security zone and contains all or part of approximately 80 blocks in Manhattan, encompassing portions of four distinct neighborhoods: the southeastern portion of Chinatown, the northeastern portion of the Fulton Market area, the northern portion of the Civic Center area, and the northeastern portion of Tribeca. These areas are also illustrated in Figure 5-1. The urban form of the study area varies widely, exhibiting several types of building stock ranging from low-rise residential buildings with street level retail to tall high-density commercial and residential towers.

The study area is comprised of a mixture of institutional, residential, commercial, and retail uses. Just outside the security zone area, a core of predominantly institutional buildings, with some commercial office uses, stands roughly bounded by Broadway, Worth Street, Pearl Street, and the Brooklyn Bridge, with tall, high-bulk buildings ranging from 5 to 45 stories in height. Courthouse and City law enforcement buildings extend between Centre and Baxter Streets to White Street, while NY Downtown Hospital and Pace University stand to the south of the Brooklyn Bridge access ramps between Gold, Beekman, and Nassau Streets. To the northwest and northeast of this institutional zone is Chinatown, which contains low-to mid-rise buildings, (generally 5 to 7 stories in height), with moderate to high lot coverage. Street-level retail use is generally mixed in with residential buildings throughout Chinatown, which predominantly exhibits the early 1900s brick tenement

building form.

Along the southeast border of the study area's institutional core are two large housing developments - the Alfred E. Smith Houses public housing development and the Southbridge Towers complex, which consist of tall, 12- to 27-story residential towers situated within playgrounds, plazas, courtyards, and small commercial establishments.

Punctuating each block of Broadway from Worth Street southward are several commercial office towers from the early 1900s, generally ranging from 14 to 60 stories in height, but with moderate bulks given the characteristic setbacks designed into these towers for light and air. The tallest of these towers is the landmarked Woolworth Building between Park Place and Barclay Street. To the west of Broadway are buildings typical of Tribeca, industrial loft-style buildings from the late 1800s and early 1900s, ranging from 5 to 6 stories in height with cast-iron facades and full lot coverage.

The Fulton Market District comprises the southern portion of the secondary study area, with buildings that generally exhibit high bulk on small lots and widely varied heights. Slender, tall buildings at 12 to 30 stories anchor the corners and midblocks of many of the blocks along Fulton Street, interspersed among mid-rise buildings 4 to 6 stories in height. To the east of Pearl Street extending out onto the piers comprising the South Street Seaport, the predominant building stock is made up of low-rise 3- and 4-story buildings, of late-1800s brick-and-mortar construction.

Within the study area, the majority of buildings are coterminous with lots that are aligned perpendicularly to the surrounding street grid. With the exception of the larger superblock housing developments, buildings generally have their edges aligned with their lot boundaries, leaving little room for variation in the placement of buildings upon lots. The larger housing developments in the area generally feature high-rise apartment buildings that are spaced apart, often divided by common amenities such as open space or recreational facilities.

Because the study area is a patchwork of several neighborhoods, smaller localized grids intersected, creating irregular blocks at their edges. These convergences are anchored down by public squares, as was the case with Chatham Square and Foley Square. Additional superblocks in the area included the Southbridge Towers and the Alfred E. Smith Towers.

There are several distinct regions of blocks that exhibit similar form within the study area. These patches are generally divided by large superblocks, parks, or regions whose forms responded to the presence of the many elevated and at-grade access roadways to the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridge. The South Street Seaport District, generally to the east of Pearl Street and to the north of Fulton Street, has many areas closed to vehicles to allow pedestrian use. To the west of Broadway and to the north of Canal Street exist rectangular blocks, 200 by 400 feet in size, that are roughly in alignment with the Manhattan street grid. Located between Catherine Street and the on-ramps to the Manhattan Bridge are several predominantly residential blocks that are approximately 200 by

800 feet in size. In addition, the blocks nearest to the South Street Seaport are approximately 200 by 300 feet in size and align with the East River edge.

In the study area, the street pattern is generally rectilinear, loosely aligned with the Manhattan grid to the west of the Bowery. To the east of the Bowery and Water Street, streets are oriented perpendicularly to the East River. In the narrow streets of the historic district around the South Street Seaport, it is common to find streets that meander in direction and create angular street junctures; streets that dead-end and created alleyways, and streets that exist only for several blocks.

Many street trees are found within the study area. Streetwall continuity, with few empty lots and alleyways along block fronts, are prevalent throughout the majority of the study area, with the exception of the standalone civic buildings. Curb cuts regularly punctuated the sidewalks for vehicle entry into properties containing light manufacturing uses, for instance, along Chrystie Street where produce and seafood distribution establishments operated. Cobbled streets are maintained to the east of Pearl Street and to the north of Fulton Street, in the mainly pedestrian corridors that comprised the Fulton Fish Market and South Street Seaport District. Remnants of industrial use in the Tribeca loft buildings between Broadway and Church Street were seen in the elevated metal platforms that stand at the building facades and were once used for loading. Metal cellar doors, in line with the sidewalks, were commonly found in the secondary study area in conjunction with street-level retail businesses, restaurants, and buildings that once housed industrial use.

The street hierarchy in the entire study area, as illustrated in Figure 5-1, is composed of several major arterials running east-west and north-south, which cater to the heaviest pedestrian and vehicular traffic and served as truck and crosstown bus routes for NYC Transit (NYCT) buses. The major east-west arterials are Canal Street, which runs between the Holland Tunnel to New Jersey to the west and the Manhattan Bridge to the east; Chambers Street, which runs between the West Side Highway (Route 9A) to the west and the Brooklyn Bridge to the east; and Worth Street (also known as Thomas Paine Street), which runs between Hudson Street and the Bowery. The major north-south arterials are Broadway, the Bowery, Park Row, Pearl Street, Water Street, and South Street, which runs underneath the Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) Drive, an expressway that traces the eastern edge of Manhattan. The narrower east-west and north-south streets throughout the remainder of the study area are considered local routes.

The Brooklyn Bridge on- and off-ramps are an important element in the urban design context of the study area. Built in the last part of the 19th Century, the Brooklyn Bridge spans the East River from Park Row in Manhattan to Adams Street in Brooklyn. There is a raised boardwalk in the middle of the bridge for pedestrians and bicycles. Benches and flowers at Park Row mark the end of the Manhattan side of Brooklyn Bridge. The ramps associated with the bridge run throughout the western portion of the study area and the elevated ramps create unusual spaces at street level. In some cases, the street level space is used for parked cars, while other areas have been covered with greenery to create “green streets.” The Brooklyn Bridge and its network of ramps divide the civic

center from the offices and other land uses in lower Manhattan.

The principal natural feature of the urban design study area is the East River, situated to the east of the island of Manhattan to form an aquatic border between Manhattan and the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens. Esplanades along the East River provide passive recreational areas for residents and visitors, a contextual backdrop for eastward views from points further inland, as well as a visual feature for waterfront properties. The topography of the entire study area is generally flat, with gentle downward slopes near the edge of Manhattan at the East River. No further natural features are found in the study area.

Visual Resources

Security Zone

The security zone area is a densely developed urban area with few opportunities for expansive view corridors. Views of the Brooklyn Bridge are an important visual resource, as are views of the civic center's ornate cornices. The Municipal Building and the U.S. Courthouse, have decorative crowns distinguishable from the other tall buildings in the area. Street-level views of the Brooklyn Bridge from Police Plaza and from other points in the eastern portion of the security zone area are blocked by the Verizon Building (formerly the New York Telephone Company switching center). View corridors to the East River are not available along the full length of the east-west streets due to the irregularity of the street grid in the study area. Elevated roadways associated with the FDR Drive and the Brooklyn Bridge, fencing, and above-ground development commonly obstruct public views of the river.

Study Area

Views to the visual resources within the study area are generally short and are often limited to the immediate surroundings of each resource. Views of larger structures, such as the Municipal Building, the Woolworth Building, and the Brooklyn Bridge generally do not extend across the study area due to visual barriers created by buildings. These structures are periodically visible from open spaces throughout the study area, where views are possible due to the variation of building heights, and from vantage points along the Manhattan and Brooklyn waterfronts.

C. 2006 NO-ACTION CONDITION

Under the 2006 No-Action condition, it is assumed that the security plan implemented by the NYPD after September 11, 2001 that resulted in the street closures would not be in place. The roadways would be open with the 1999 street closures and municipal garage closure in place and

transportation services would continue as they were prior to September 11, 2001. Under this scenario, all private and commercial vehicles would have access throughout the security zone, with the exception of the streets that were closed in 1999. In addition, all security-related streetscape elements would not be present in the security zone.

Urban Design

Security Zone

Since the baseline year, no changes have occurred in building bulk, use, or type; building arrangement; block form and street pattern; street hierarchy; or natural features within the security zone area. Changes in streetscape elements have occurred within the security zone area since the baseline 2001 year with the implementation of the security plan. The features of the security plan included the installation of attended security checkpoint booths, planters, bollards and hydraulic-operated delta barriers to restrict the access of unauthorized vehicles from the roadways situated adjacent to the civic facilities located near One Police Plaza, which are considered potential terrorist targets. Following the 2001 street closures, private police vehicles were permitted to park at an angle along Park Row; however, all vehicles are now prohibited from parking along Park Row. Private police vehicles were also permitted and continue to park along the closed northbound Brooklyn Bridge off-ramp. How the security plan has affected urban design in the study area is discussed below in detail under Section D, “With-Action Condition.”

Under the No-Action condition, there would be no change from baseline conditions in the urban design features (inclusive of building bulk, use, and type; building arrangement; block form; street pattern; streetscape elements; street hierarchy; and natural features) within the security zone area.

Study Area

As discussed in Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy,” besides a few residential conversions and new residential construction, little development has occurred in the study area. As such, the urban design characteristics of the area have not changed significantly in the study area since the baseline conditions. Brooklyn Bridge Plaza, the open space area located at street level under the Brooklyn Bridge, has recently undergone an upgrade to become a more attractive area that includes new sitting areas, trees and plantings, and sports courts. In addition, police vehicles that were permitted to park on James Madison Plaza, located at Pearl Street and Madison Streets, before and after baseline conditions, are currently not permitted to park there as a result of a court order. In addition, Duane Street between Broadway and Centre Street, along the south facade of a complex of two Federal buildings, was closed for security purposes after the baseline year. Access to this segment of Duane Street is provided to authorized government vehicles.

Visual Resources

Security Zone

As discussed above, the security zone area continues to be a densely developed urban area with few opportunities for expansive view corridors. Street-level views of the Brooklyn Bridge from Police Plaza and from other points in the eastern portion of the security zone area are blocked by the Verizon Building. View corridors to the East River are not available along the full length of the east-west streets due to the irregularity of the street grid in the study area. Elevated roadways associated with the FDR Drive and the Brooklyn Bridge, fencing, and above-ground development continue to obstruct public views of the river. As discussed above, changes in streetscape elements have occurred within the security zone area from baseline conditions with the implementation of the security plan that was put into place following the events of September 11, 2001. How the security plan has affected visual resources within the security zone is discussed below in detail under Section D, “With-Action Condition.”

Under the 2006 No-Action condition, there would be no change from baseline conditions in the ability of the public to view visual resources within the security zone area.

Study Area

As with the security zone area, the study area continues to be a densely developed urban area. As discussed above, besides a few residential conversions and new residential construction, little development has occurred in the study area that would have affected visual resources. How the security plan has affected visual resources within the study area is discussed below in detail under Section D, “With-Action Condition.”

Under the 2006 No-Action condition, there would be no change from baseline conditions in the ability of the public to view visual resources within the study area.

Urban design characteristics and visual resources throughout the study area would be expected to remain the same under the No-Action condition. As discussed above, besides a few residential conversions and new residential construction, little development has occurred in the study area since the baseline year. This area of Lower Manhattan is fully developed with little opportunity for new development. As shown in Chapter 2, Table 2-2, most land use changes that have occurred since the baseline year have been in the form of residential conversions of office buildings. It would therefore be unlikely that urban design characteristics, urban design patterns, and visual resources in the study area would be much different than they are in the study area in the With-Action condition if the street closures were not in place.

D. 2006 WITH-ACTION CONDITION

As discussed above, the action has resulted in the installation of temporary security booths, rising-plate hydraulic delta barriers, bollards, and planters on various streets and intersections within the security zone for the purpose of closing streets to unauthorized vehicular traffic to create a secure perimeter around One Police Plaza and adjacent civic facilities. As discussed in Chapter 1, "Project Description," and shown in Figure 1-4, security checkpoint locations for vehicular access have been installed at the following locations:

- Park Row, just west of Worth Street
- Park Row, near the Brooklyn Bridge
- Pearl Street at Foley Square
- Pearl Street on the west side of Park Row
- Pearl Street at St. James Place
- Madison Street at St. James Place
- Avenue of the Finest at Pearl Street
- Rose Street at Frankfort Street
- Northbound Park Row Brooklyn Bridge off-ramp

In addition, the action resulted in the creation of sally ports - two delta barriers on the same roadway that allow a vehicle to be immobilized for inspection - at the following checkpoints:

- Madison Street at St. James Place
- Pearl Street at St. James Place
- Avenue of the Finest at Pearl Street
- Park Row west of Worth Street

As a result, the following streets within close proximity to One Police Plaza that are open only to authorized vehicles include:

- Park Row, between approximately Worth Street and the Brooklyn Bridge
- Pearl Street, between Foley Square and St. James Place
- Madison/Rose Streets, between Frankfort Street and St. James Place
- Avenue of the Finest
- Northbound Park Row Brooklyn Bridge off-ramp

This section describes urban design and visual resource conditions that have been affected under the current security plan within the security zone area and within the quarter-mile radius study area. This assessment considers the effects of the With-Action condition from where it is visible: from within the security zone area and from locations outside of, though within view of, the security plan

features.

Urban Design

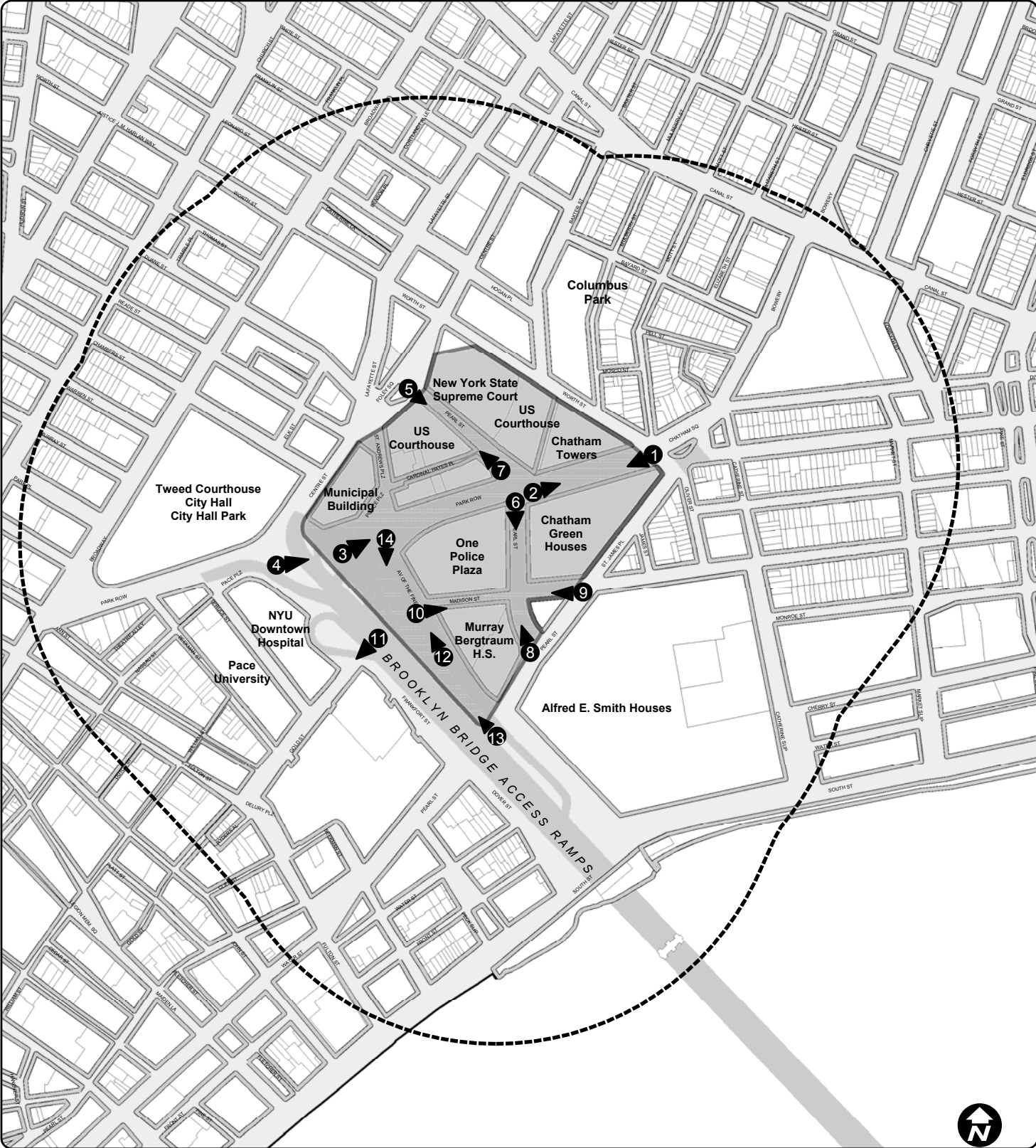
Security Zone

The addition of these security elements has resulted in the modification of the local street pattern, through the restriction of access to portions of Park Row, Pearl Street, and Madison Street and the alteration of the streetscape within the security zone. The security plan has not affected building bulk, use, and type; or natural features. Figure 5-2 depicts the photograph reference number and view direction of the photos shown in Figure 5-3.




The main access point into the security zone for Chatham Green residents arriving in vehicles and other authorized vehicles is located at Park Row and Worth Street (see Photo 1 of Figure 5-3). Park Row is the widest street in the security zone, formerly carrying two-way traffic in four lanes. There are two security booths located at this checkpoint with two delta barriers located in both northbound and southbound lanes. Planters border the south side of the sidewalk along Worth Street at Park Row. A temporary electronic sign is located at this checkpoint to alert drivers that Park Row is open to authorized vehicles only.

Commercial vehicles, such as delivery trucks, are only permitted through the checkpoint at Park Row and Worth Street after displaying valid identification. After passing through the barricade, commercial trucks must pull into a truck inspection staging area on the westside side of Park Row where they are inspected by the USMS officers as well as bomb sniffing dogs (Photo 2 of Figure 5-3). There is a temporary USMS security booth positioned at the truck inspection area as well as a temporary chain link fence cage for the bomb sniffing dogs. Concrete jersey barriers topped with two feet of black wrought iron fencing line the center, west side, and east side of Park Row. Jersey barriers with black fencing border the east side of Park Row along side of police headquarters. There are two temporary trailers located along this portion of the sidewalk as well. There are also temporary security booths and delta barriers located along the southern portion of Park Row; one in the southbound lane, just south of Police Plaza, and in the northbound lane, just north of Frankfort Street (Photos 3 and 4 of Figure 5-3).

There are temporary USMS security booths and delta barriers located at Foley Square at Pearl Street and on the west side of Park Row at Pearl Street restricting vehicular access on this portion of Pearl Street (Photos 5 and 7 of Figure 5-3). There are temporary security booths and delta barriers on the east side of Park Row at Pearl Street and on the west side of St. James Place and Pearl Street (Photos 6 and 8 of Figure 5-3). The security checkpoint at St. James Place and Pearl Street also contains planters and French barriers (movable metal pedestrian barricades) (Photo 8 of Figure 5-3). While this portion of Pearl Street formerly carried traffic in both north and southbound directions,



Legend

-  Security Zone (Closed to Public Vehicular Traffic after 09/11/2001)
-  Urban Design and Visual Resources Study Area (Quarter-Mile Radius)
-  Photo Reference Number and View Direction



1. View south on Park Row at Worth Street



2. View north on Park Row at Pearl Street



3. View north on Park Row at Police Plaza



4. View north on Park Row at Frankfort Street



5. View east on Pearl Street at Foley Square



6. View east on Pearl Street at Park Row



7. View west on Pearl Street at Park Row



8. View north on Pearl Street at St. James Place



9. View south on Madison Street at St. James Place



10. View east on Madison Street at Avenue of the Finest



11. View south on Rose Street at Avenue of the Finest



12. View north on Avenue of the Finest at Madison Street



13. View north on Avenue of the Americas at Pearl Street



14. View east on closed Brooklyn Bridge ramp

it is now only open to northbound authorized traffic since the street closures in 1999. A permanent black wrought iron fence and concrete planters located down the center of Pearl Street between Park Row and St. James Place were installed after the 2001 security plan was put into place (Photo 6 of Figure 5-3).

As discussed in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the closure of Madison Street between Pearl Street and Avenue of the Finest was part of the 1999 street closures and temporary security booths and delta barriers were situated at Madison Street and Avenue of the Finest and Pearl Street and Madison Street as part of that security plan. After the 2001 security plan was put into place, temporary security booths and delta barriers were installed on the west side of St. James Place at Madison Street and at Rose Street and Frankfort Street (Photos 8 and 10 of Figure 5-3). There are also planters and jersey barriers located at the checkpoints at Rose Street and Frankfort Street and Madison Street at St. James Place.

As discussed in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” Avenue of the Finest between Madison Street and Park Row was a part of the 1999 street closure and a temporary security booth and delta barrier was located on west side of Avenue of the Finest at Madison Street (Photo 9 of Figure 5-3). As a result of the 2001 security plan, Avenue of the Finest was closed to unauthorized vehicles from Pearl Street to Park Row with the addition of a temporary security booth, delta barrier, and planters (Photo 12 of Figure 5-3).

In addition, as discussed above, an off-ramp from the Brooklyn Bridge was closed as part of the With-Action condition. Vehicles that previously exited the Brooklyn Bridge via this off-ramp were able to travel north on Park Row or east along Avenue of the Finest. A temporary barricade is located at the entrance of the off-ramp and authorized vehicles currently park on the ramp (Photo 13 of Figure 5-3).

According to the NYPD’s Counter Terrorism Division, these security measures are necessary to create a “secure zone” around NYPD headquarters and other civic buildings that are considered potential terrorist targets. The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 resulted in greater security measures being implemented all over the City, particularly in Lower Manhattan due to the large number of government offices and financial institutions located there. Security devices, although typically not aesthetically pleasing, have become part of the landscape of the City after September 11, 2001. The area surrounding the New York Stock Exchange and Metro Tech in Brooklyn, for example, have implemented similar security plans where public streets have been closed to unauthorized traffic and features such as delta barriers, jersey barriers, concrete planters, and bollards have been installed. The security plan features discussed above have altered the urban design characteristics of the security zone area, creating a makeshift and nonhomogeneous setting. However, these security features are considered necessary to protect potential terrorist targets and these features will remain in place as long as a potential terrorist threat exists.

Although these security measures are necessary, their temporary and unaesthetic nature has resulted in a negative alteration of the streetscape within the security zone. The closure of public streets and the addition of the security elements have introduced a forbidding and unaesthetic quality to the area. The action has created a disconnect between the security zone area and the surrounding neighborhood. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, in terms of streetscape elements, a significant adverse impact would result if an action would add to, eliminate, or alter a critical feature of a streetscape. The streets within the security zone, before they were closed, particularly Park Row, were active through streets connecting the Financial District to Chinatown and the Civic Center area. The absence of vehicular traffic and activity within the security area has created an abandoned quality, which is in stark contrast to the active and lively surrounding area. The temporary quality of the security elements has created a haphazard, inconsistent look that does not fit with the surrounding urban design context. The absence of vehicles and addition of the security elements have altered the streetscape within the security zone and a significant adverse impact to urban design has resulted. Chapter 11, “Mitigation,” of this EIS provides a description of measures to be developed to mitigate the urban design impacts identified in this chapter.

Study Area

The action has not altered the urban design characteristics that give the study area its defining appearance. The features of the security plan discussed above have altered streetscape elements limited to the area within the security zone. The built form of the area, consisting of a mixture of historic and visual landmarks built on irregularly shaped blocks, has remained unchanged.

Visual Resources

Security Zone

Street level views in the security zone area have been altered by the current temporary security measures. All of the temporary barricades have a makeshift quality resulting from their mobility and inconsistency of design and materials. Visual resources in the security zone area consist of the streetscapes unique to the area and the Civic Center’s historic landmarks, including the Brooklyn Bridge, the Municipal Building, the United States Courthouse, and the New York County Courthouse. In general, view corridors to significant visual resources are not available from points within the security zone, and those of major landmarks in the area, such as the Brooklyn Bridge and the Municipal Building, are available as upward views from public spaces, unobstructed by structures under one story in height. The barricades also figure prominently into views at street level since the majority of the security zone has no traffic and little pedestrian traffic. Otherwise, views to these resources have not been dramatically changed and significant visual resources have remained prominently visible. These security elements are minimally intrusive to viewsheds and have not adversely impacted visual resources located in the area.

Study Area

The security plan elements have not blocked public views to any visual resources, including view corridors, vistas, historic landmarks, historic districts, and open spaces within the study area. The installed streetscape elements that comprise the physical elements of the NYPD security plan do not preclude views of visual resources given the low heights of the bollards, jersey barriers, French barricades, and concrete planters and modest size of the security checkpoint booths. As such, the security plan has not adversely impacted visual resources within the study area.