

## **Willets Point Development Plan Generic Environmental Impact Statement Final Scope of Work**

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### **A. PREFACE**

The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development, in coordination with the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the Department of City Planning (DCP), is sponsoring an initiative by the City of New York (City) to rezone, create an urban renewal area, and implement a comprehensive development plan—the Willets Point Development Plan (proposed Plan)—in a portion of Willets Point, Queens. The ultimate goal of these proposed actions is to develop a land use plan consistent with public policy, improve environmental conditions in Willets Point, provide new affordable and market-rate housing, promote economic growth and job creation, create a regional destination, and improve the quality of life for area residents.

The proposed actions call for the redevelopment of an approximately 61-acre area on the Willets Point peninsula, generally bounded to the east by the Van Wyck Expressway and an undeveloped lot owned by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), to the south by Roosevelt Avenue, to the west by 126th Street, and to the north by Northern Boulevard (see Figures 1 and 2). The proposed development program for this area—the Willets Point Development District (District)—is expected to include a mix of uses, including residential, retail, hotel, convention center, entertainment, commercial office, community facility, open space, and parking. The proposed actions are intended to improve environmental conditions in Willets Point and transform this largely underutilized area into a new, enlivened destination with improved connections to surrounding neighborhoods and a mix of uses generating activity throughout the day and year, thereby providing significant economic and community benefits to the neighborhood, the Borough of Queens, and the City as a whole.

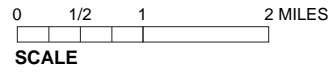
Adoption of the proposed actions would require public review, including by the local community board and the Queens Borough President, and approvals by a number of government agencies, including the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development, HPD, the New York City Planning Commission (CPC), and the City Council. Additionally, approvals will be required from the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The proposal requires review and the preparation of a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) under City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR).

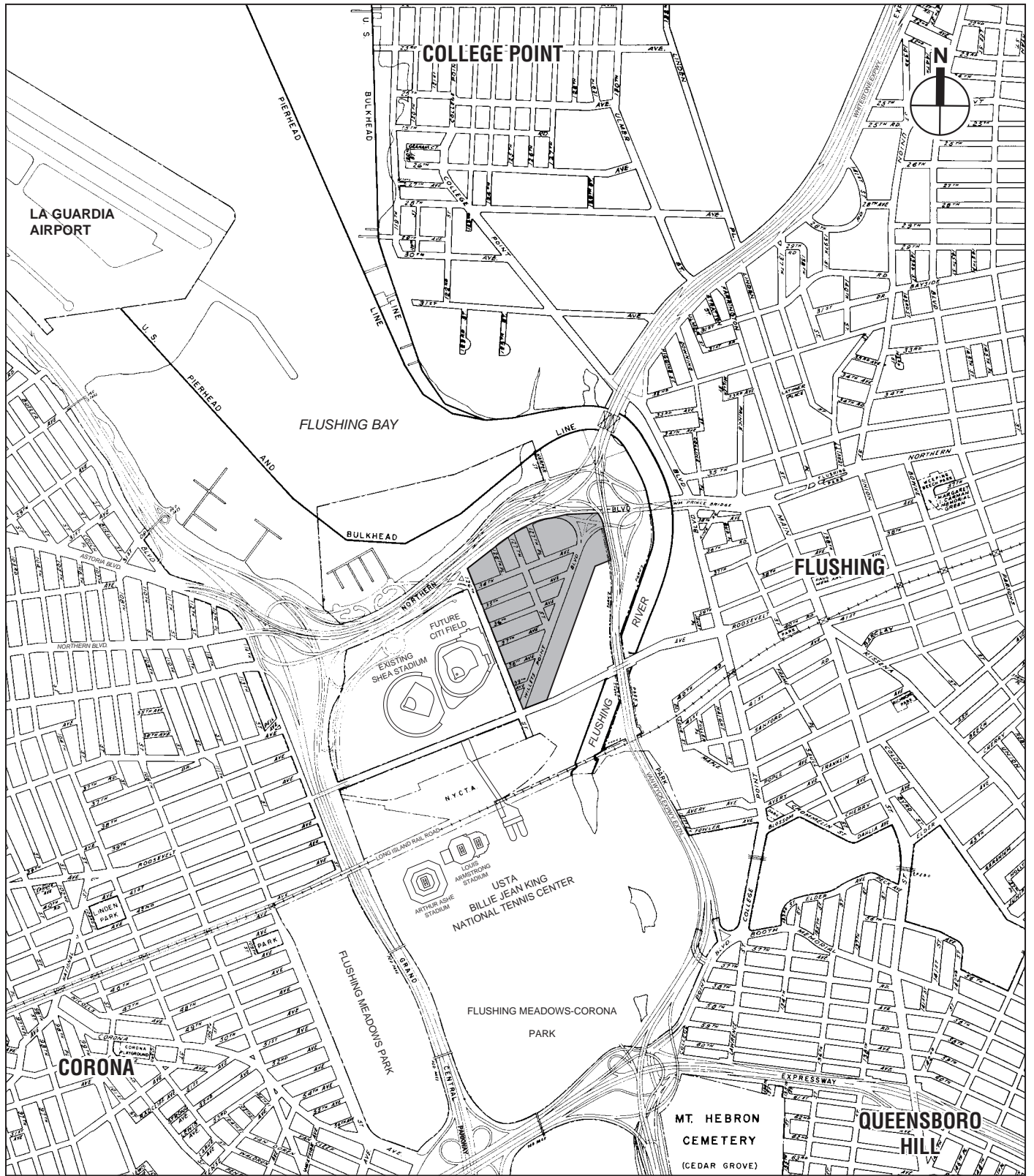
Although there is no developer or specific development plan in place at this time, the envelope of potential development anticipated under the proposed Plan includes up to 8.94 million gross square feet (gsf) of new buildings. The permitted uses are discussed in greater detail later in this document.

This document is the Final Scope of Work (Final Scope) for the Willets Point Development Plan Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS). This Final Scope has been prepared to



 Willets Point Development District





 Willets Point Development District

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describe the proposed project, present the proposed framework for the DGEIS analysis, and discuss the procedures to be followed in the preparation of the DGEIS. Pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and CEQR procedures, a Draft Scope of Work (Draft Scope) was prepared in accordance with those laws and regulations and the CEQR Technical Manual and distributed for public review on March 30, 2007. A public hearing on the Draft Scope was held on May 1, 2007 at the Flushing Branch of the Queens Public Library at 41-17 Main Street, Flushing, New York. Written comments were accepted from issuance of the Draft Scope through the public comment period, which ended May 14, 2007.

A number of comments were made in general support or opposition to the proposed Plan but did not relate to the proposed approach or methodology for the impact assessments. The majority of the comments relevant to the Draft Scope focused on: (1) the proposed Plan's effects on direct and indirect displacement of businesses; (2) concerns related to the potential hazardous contamination in the District; and (3) the consideration of other alternative uses within the District or alternative locations for the proposed Plan.

This Final Scope incorporates changes in response to the comments on the Draft Scope and project information that was developed subsequent to the release of the Draft Scope. These include:

- The proposed Urban Renewal Plan (URP) would include a maximum permitted floor area of 8.94 million gsf to allow flexibility in the combination of uses and sizes that could be developed within the District. Because of this flexibility, the DGEIS will also include an analysis of a development scenario in which the convention center use is replaced with additional residential and retail development (the No Convention Center Scenario).
- The proposed Plan would include new connections to the Van Wyck Expressway, site grading, site remediation, and infrastructure improvements, in addition to project elements described in the Draft Scope.
- The District is located directly across 126th Street from the new Citi Field currently under construction, as well as Citi Field surface parking lots B and C, located to the south and north of the new stadium, respectively. It is anticipated that if the proposed Plan is approved and the District is redeveloped, additional development could occur on Citi Field parking lot B (Lot B). While specific development plans for Lot B have not yet been proposed, it is anticipated that approximately 280,000 square feet (sf) of office, 184,500 sf of retail, and 970 parking spaces could potentially be developed at this location<sup>1</sup>. Lot B could be independently developed with a new office, retail, and parking program and is not linked to the proposed Plan. However, because of the proximity of Lot B to the District, this site's development would be more likely to occur as a result of the proposed Plan. While each project would require separate actions—each with its own approvals and environmental review processes—together they would add substantial new development to the immediate area. Therefore, in addition to evaluating the proposed Plan's potential to have environmental impacts, the DGEIS has been prepared to conservatively consider the cumulative impacts of both projects (the Willets Point Development Plan and the proposed

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<sup>1</sup> Lot B is currently under the jurisdiction of the New York City Industrial Development Agency (NYCIDA) and under lease to the New York Mets. Any future development on Lot B would require an amendment to the current lease agreement and discretionary approval by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), which administers the NYCIDA lease. These actions would require a separate environmental review process subject to CEQR.

development on Lot B) under the “Probable Impacts of the Proposed Plan.” The purpose of this analysis is to ensure that the full extent of potentially required mitigation is identified for any significant adverse impacts. The cumulative development for both the Willets Point Development Plan and the Lot B development is a total of 9,404,500 gsf of new development.

- The Alternatives section of the Final Scope has been revised to omit the consideration of the Commercial Alternative, which would limit uses in the District to retail, office, convention center, and hotel uses, and exclude the residential, school, and community facility uses analyzed in the proposed Plan. Upon further reflection, it was determined that this commercial alternative would be fundamentally counter to the City’s goals of creating a mixed-use, integrated community and providing mixed-income residential units to meet the growing demand for housing in Queens and the City. The Final Scope has also been revised to eliminate the Traffic Improvement Program (TIP) Alternative, which sought to minimize significant adverse traffic impacts of the proposed Plan through the identification of a range of potential traffic improvements. This alternative would be superfluous, since the development of new Van Wyck Expressway access ramps are part of the proposed Plan, and Chapter 23, “Mitigation,” would present a range of traffic improvement measures to address or minimize some or all of the proposed Plan’s significant adverse traffic impacts.

The Final Scope has been updated to include two new alternatives: (1) a Municipal Services Alternative, which evaluates conditions that would be likely to occur in the future without the proposed Plan if additional municipal services were provided to the District; and (2) a Staged Acquisition Alternative, which would entail the City’s initial acquisition of the western portion of the redevelopment site, followed by the acquisition of the eastern portion of the site. This would allow more time for the suitable relocation of the larger businesses, which have more specific relocation needs.

Deletions are not shown in this document. However, where relevant and appropriate, new text and editorial changes to the Draft Scope have been incorporated into the Final Scope and are indicated by double-underlining. Additionally, this Final Scope includes responses to comments received on the Draft Scope (Attachment A, “Response to Comments on Draft Scope of Analysis.”)

## **B. PROJECT CONTEXT**

### **BACKGROUND**

The proposed Plan represents a complex initiative for an area that has long been the subject of public interest. Subsequent to being the subject of high-profile proposals during the 1960s and 1980s for uses such as a football stadium and parkland, Willets Point was the focus of a planning study prepared by the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC)—at that time operating as the New York City Public Development Corporation—in the early 1990s that examined a number of redevelopment options for the area. In 1993, the Queens Borough President’s office released a study entitled “Willets Point—A New Direction,” which proposed the redevelopment of Willets Point into a major commercial center or as an international trade center that would be used to host import/export shows and to provide exhibition and office space for wholesalers and retailers. In 2001, HPD held a design workshop that explored potential redevelopment ideas for Willets Point. The workshop recommended land uses that would reconnect Willets Point with its neighboring communities and complement the nearby attractions

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and facilities. Suggested land uses included entertainment facilities such as movie theaters, an international commercial center that would utilize the mixed backgrounds of the surrounding communities, restaurants and retail shops that would profit from visitors coming to downtown Flushing, Flushing Meadows-Corona Park or Shea Stadium, and hotels servicing nearby LaGuardia and Kennedy Airports.

In 2002, the City created the Downtown Flushing Task Force to undertake a community planning process involving City and New York State (State) agencies, local and State elected officials, community members, advocacy groups, and local business leaders. The resulting development framework (“Framework”), completed in May 2004, identified a set of land use and economic goals to revitalize Downtown Flushing, the Flushing River waterfront, and Willets Point and to strengthen the area as a regional center, with enhanced connections to neighboring amenities and communities.

Recognizing the importance of Willets Point to the environmental, economic, and aesthetic welfare of the broader community, the Task Force outlined specific redevelopment goals for the Willets Point area, including:

- Create a regional destination that would enhance economic growth in Downtown Flushing and Corona;
- Improve environmental conditions in the District and reflect the sensitive nature of its waterfront setting;
- Create a larger, expanded Flushing core by integrating the two sides of the Flushing River through land use and design;
- Complement the adjacent recreational and sporting facilities;
- Optimize use of existing highway, public transit, and parking infrastructure to minimize local traffic impacts; and
- Create substantial positive economic value for the City and provide a source of quality jobs for area residents.

The City has adopted these goals as part of the proposed Plan. In addition, the proposed Plan aims to achieve the following goals, which are consistent with the overall Framework vision, but are not specifically articulated in the 2004 report:

- Provide a substantial number of new housing units to help meet the growing demand for housing in Queens and the City as a whole;
- Ensure that District housing would be affordable to a mix of incomes;
- Provide a world-class example of superior urban design, with a focus on green building and sustainable design practices; and
- Strengthen the role of Flushing and Corona as commercial centers in Northern Queens, while helping to meet the demand for office space in Queens and the City as a whole.

The proposed Plan represents a critical step in implementing this development Framework.

### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

Willets Point is located in the heart of northern Queens, adjacent to Shea Stadium, the USTA National Tennis Center, and Flushing Meadows-Corona Park (see Figure 2). The neighborhood of Corona is located just west of Shea Stadium, and Downtown Flushing is located just east of

Willets Point across the Flushing River. The District is located at the intersection of several major arterial highways, bordered to the east by the Van Wyck Expressway and an undeveloped lot owned by MTA, to the south by Roosevelt Avenue, to the west by 126th Street, and to the north by Northern Boulevard. It is easily accessible to the entire New York City metropolitan area via the No. 7 subway line, and is located in close proximity to both LaGuardia Airport and JFK International Airport.

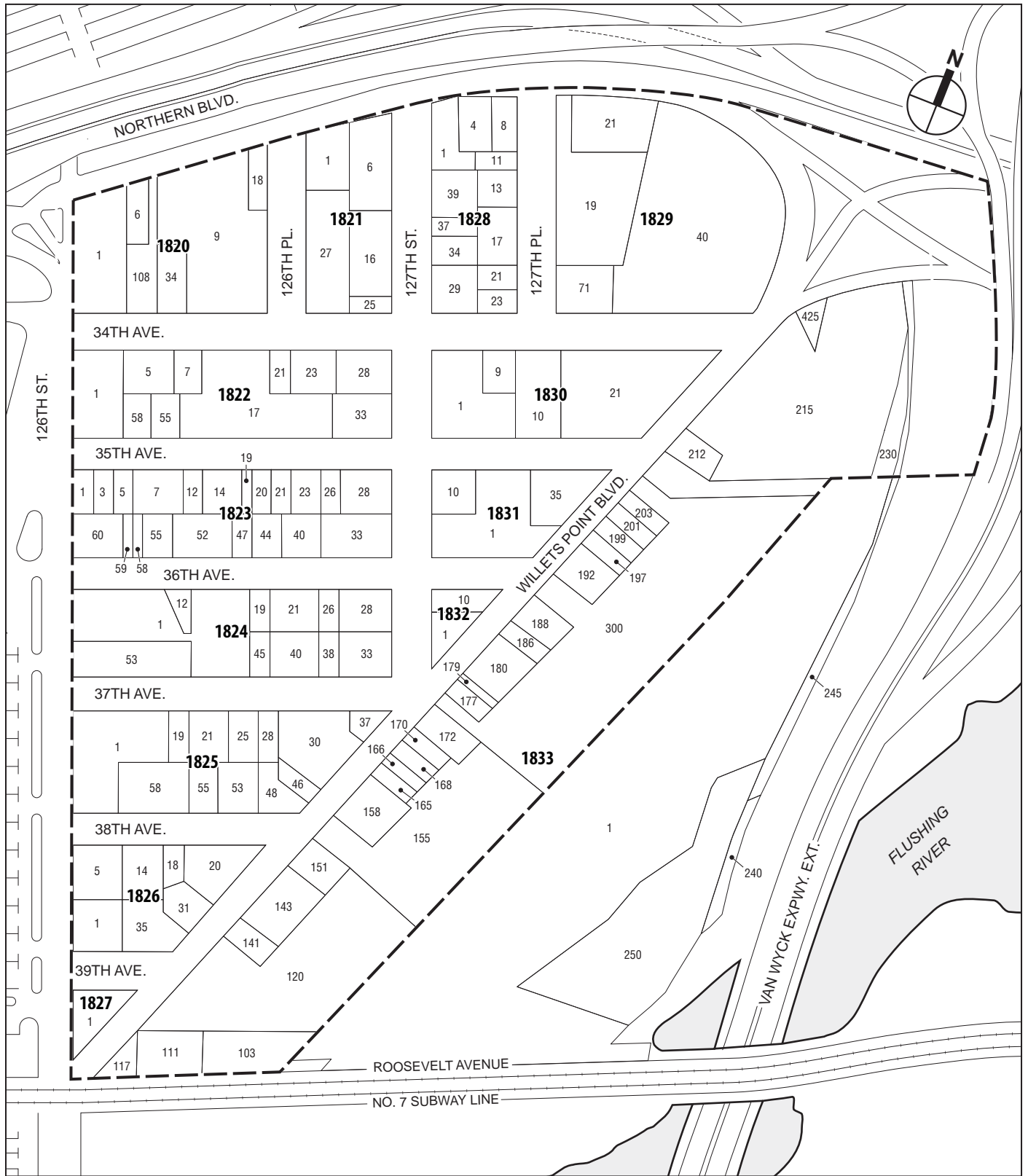
The District is approximately 61.4 acres in size, of which approximately 15.8 acres are within public street rights-of-way, approximately 45.0 acres are privately owned land, and approximately 0.6 acres are owned by MTA. The District comprises 127 tax lots and one partial lot (Block 1833, lot 1) located on 14 blocks (see Table 1 and Figure 3). It contains approximately 260 businesses, a mixture of automotive repair and auto body shops, junkyards, wholesalers, construction companies, and auto-related retail establishments.

**Table 1  
Blocks and Lots Affected by Proposed Plan**

<b>Blocks</b>	<b>Lots</b>
1820	1, 6, 9, 18, 34, 108
1821	1, 6, 16, 25, 27
1822	1, 5, 7, 17, 21, 23, 28, 33, 55, 58
1823	1, 3, 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 28, 33, 40, 44, 47, 52, 55, 58, 59, 60
1824	1, 12, 19, 21, 26, 28, 33, 38, 40, 45, 53
1825	1, 19, 21, 25, 28, 30, 37, 46, 48, 53, 55, 58
1826	1, 5, 14, 18, 20, 31, 35
1827	1
1828	1, 4, 8, 11, 13, 17, 21, 23, 29, 34, 37, 39
1829	19, 21, 40, 71
1830	1, 9, 10, 21
1831	1, 10, 35
1832	1, 10
1833	1 (partial)*, 103, 111, 117, 120, 141, 143, 151, 155, 158, 165, 166, 168, 170, 172, 177, 179, 180, 186, 188, 192, 197, 199, 201, 203, 212, 215, 230, 300, 425
<p><b>Note:</b> * <u>Approximately 24,600 sf</u> of block 1833, lot 1 (<u>owned by the MTA</u>) is included in the Willets Point Development District. <u>The remaining approximately 429,000 sf of that lot, which extends along the Flushing River waterfront, is outside of the District.</u></p>	

The District has long been characterized by environmental concerns, building code violations, and illegal activities. According to the Department of Building’s Business Information System, there were 192 open building code violations in the District as of January 2008, many of which were for Work without a Permit, Occupancy Contrary to Certificate of Occupancy, and Failure to Maintain Building.

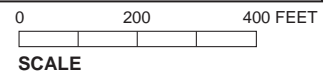
Site conditions within the Willets Point peninsula reflect a lack of infrastructure and the presence of hazardous materials, factors that will affect the implementation of the proposed Plan.



--- Willets Point Development District Boundary

**1826** Block Number

14 Lot Number





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The area's historical use in the early 1900s was as a dumping site for ash. Today, many automotive repair and service businesses and junkyard operations have continued to add contamination to the area through illegal dumping and poor housekeeping, creating unsafe and unhealthy conditions throughout the District. In 2001, the State Attorney General announced the indictment of 21 junkyards and 35 individuals for violating State environmental laws by dumping motor oil, antifreeze, transmission fluid and other materials onto the ground and into storm drains and Flushing Bay. In addition, some businesses in the area have been linked to organized crime; in the past several years, the New York State Attorney General, and the New York City Police Department (NYPD) have issued several indictments for auto theft and racketeering.

### **C. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

#### **PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

The City seeks to initiate a rezoning and establish an urban renewal area that creates a comprehensive land use, infrastructure, and development plan for the District, with the ultimate goal of improving environmental conditions in Willets Point, providing new affordable and market-rate housing, promoting economic growth and job creation through additional private investment, creating a new regional destination, and improving the quality of life for area residents. A redeveloped District would leverage the tremendous transportation and recreational assets of the area and improve connections to surrounding neighborhoods. A mix of uses would be encouraged to provide activity throughout the day and the calendar year.

Redevelopment of the District is representative of the City's long-term planning and sustainability goals. It would not only eliminate degradation of the natural environment, but also promote green building and sustainable design practices. It represents a transit-oriented urban infill development that would leverage the District's superior transit and highway infrastructure. It would contribute to the City's efforts to meet the short- and long-term demand for affordable and market-rate housing. Finally, it would serve as a world-class example of superior urban design and development.

#### **PROPOSED ACTIONS**

Redevelopment of the District would require a number of City and State approvals. Most of these are discretionary actions requiring review under CEQR; others are ministerial and do not require environmental review. The discretionary actions required for the proposed Plan include:

##### *DISCRETIONARY ACTIONS SUBJECT TO CEQR AND SEQRA*

- Adoption of a URP by HPD, to define District boundaries and the area to be redeveloped, as well as to prescribe maximum development envelopes. A summary of the draft URP is appended to this document as Attachment B.
- A change to the underlying zoning of the District from the existing M3-1 and R3-2 districts<sup>1</sup> to a C4-4 district. The proposed C4-4 zoning would allow for the range of uses anticipated. The existing permitted Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 2.0. A maximum permitted FAR of 3.4

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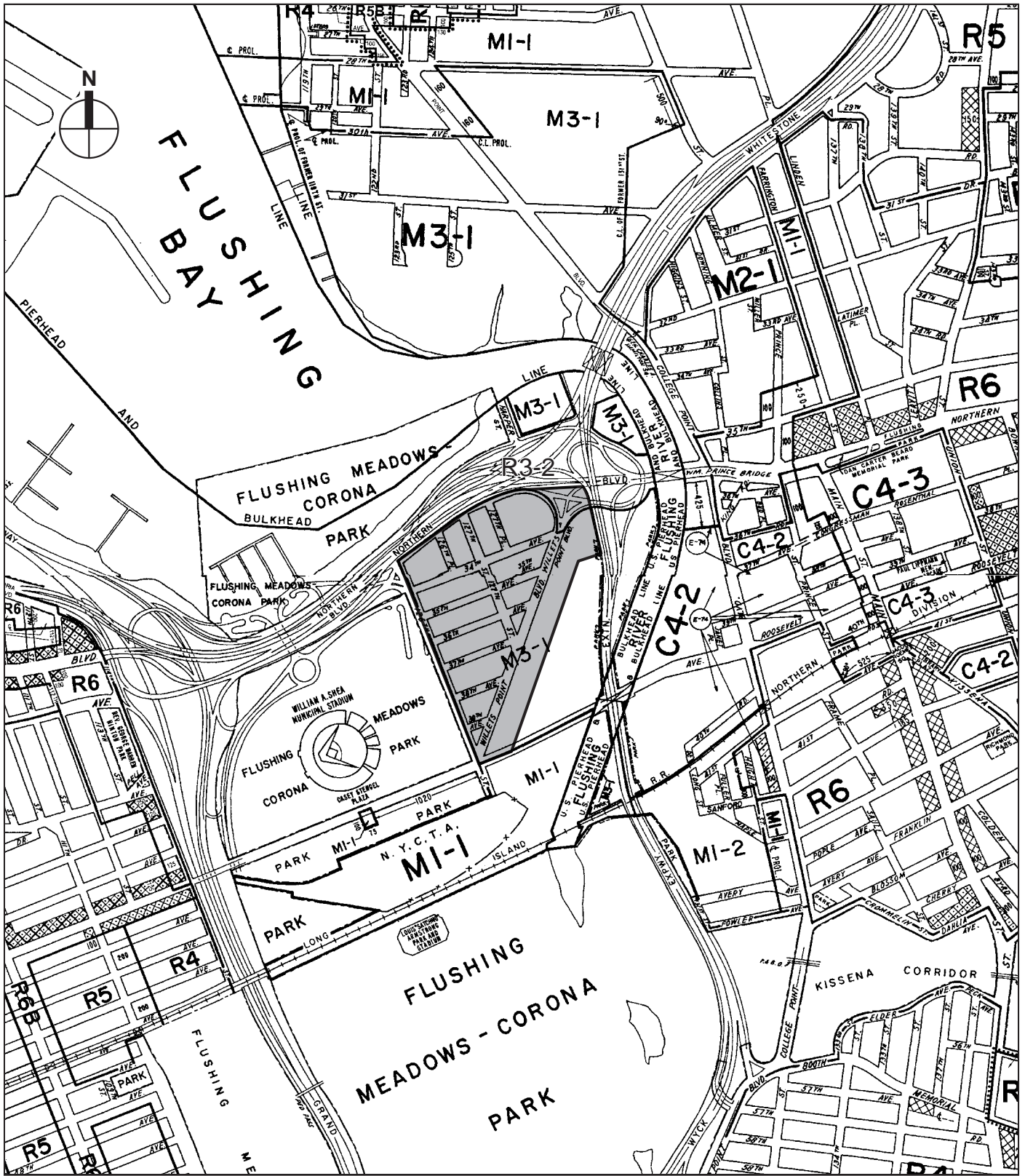
<sup>1</sup> A small area within the Willets Point Development District is included within an R3-2 district. The portion of the District that is zoned R3-2 district contains roadway connections to Northern Boulevard.

would apply across the entire District, as established by the proposed Special Willets Point District, described below.

- Creation of a zoning Special District to further guide development in the District, pursuant to CPC and City Council approval. In order to promote redevelopment of Willets Point consistent with the goals and objectives of the proposed Plan, and to eliminate unnecessary rigidities that would prevent the achievement of the best possible site plan, the proposed Special District would waive some C4-4 district requirements and the need for certain CPC and New York City Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) Special Permits. To create an appropriate scale and density within the District's surroundings, the urban renewal area would have special provisions regarding streetscape and urban design components. A summary of the proposed Special District regulations is appended to this document as Attachment C. (Figures 4 and 5 show the existing and proposed zoning, respectively.)
- Demapping of streets within the District, pursuant to CPC and City Council approval. In order to allow maximum flexibility in the creation of the redevelopment site plan, the proposed Plan would include the demapping of all streets within the District. The development rights generated from the demapping of these streets would be utilized in the development of the associated blocks and lots. Streets to be demapped include:
  - 126th Place between Northern Boulevard and 34th Avenue;
  - 127th Street between Northern Boulevard and Willets Point Boulevard;
  - 127th Place between Northern Boulevard and 34th Avenue;
  - 34th Avenue between 126th Street and Willets Point Boulevard;
  - 35th Avenue between 126th Street and Willets Point Boulevard;
  - 36th Avenue between 126th Street and Willets Point Boulevard;
  - 37th Avenue between 126th Street and Willets Point Boulevard;
  - 38th Avenue between 126th Street and Willets Point Boulevard;
  - 39th Avenue between 126th Street and Willets Point Boulevard; and
  - Willets Point Boulevard between 126th Street and Northern Boulevard.

As currently envisioned, all streets constructed under the proposed Plan would be private, and therefore would not require mapping actions.

- Acquisition of property in accordance with the URP.
- Possible acquisition of property pursuant to the Eminent Domain Procedure Law (EDPL).
- Disposition of property within the District for development in accordance with the URP.
- Possible approval of the business terms of the disposition pursuant to New York City Charter Section 384(b)(4) by the Queens Borough Board.
- Review and approval of a Freeway Access Modification Report by NYSDOT and FHWA for new access ramps to and from the Van Wyck Expressway, a highway on the Interstate System.



Willets Point Development District  
 Zoning District Boundary

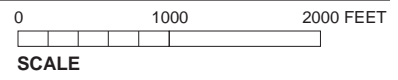
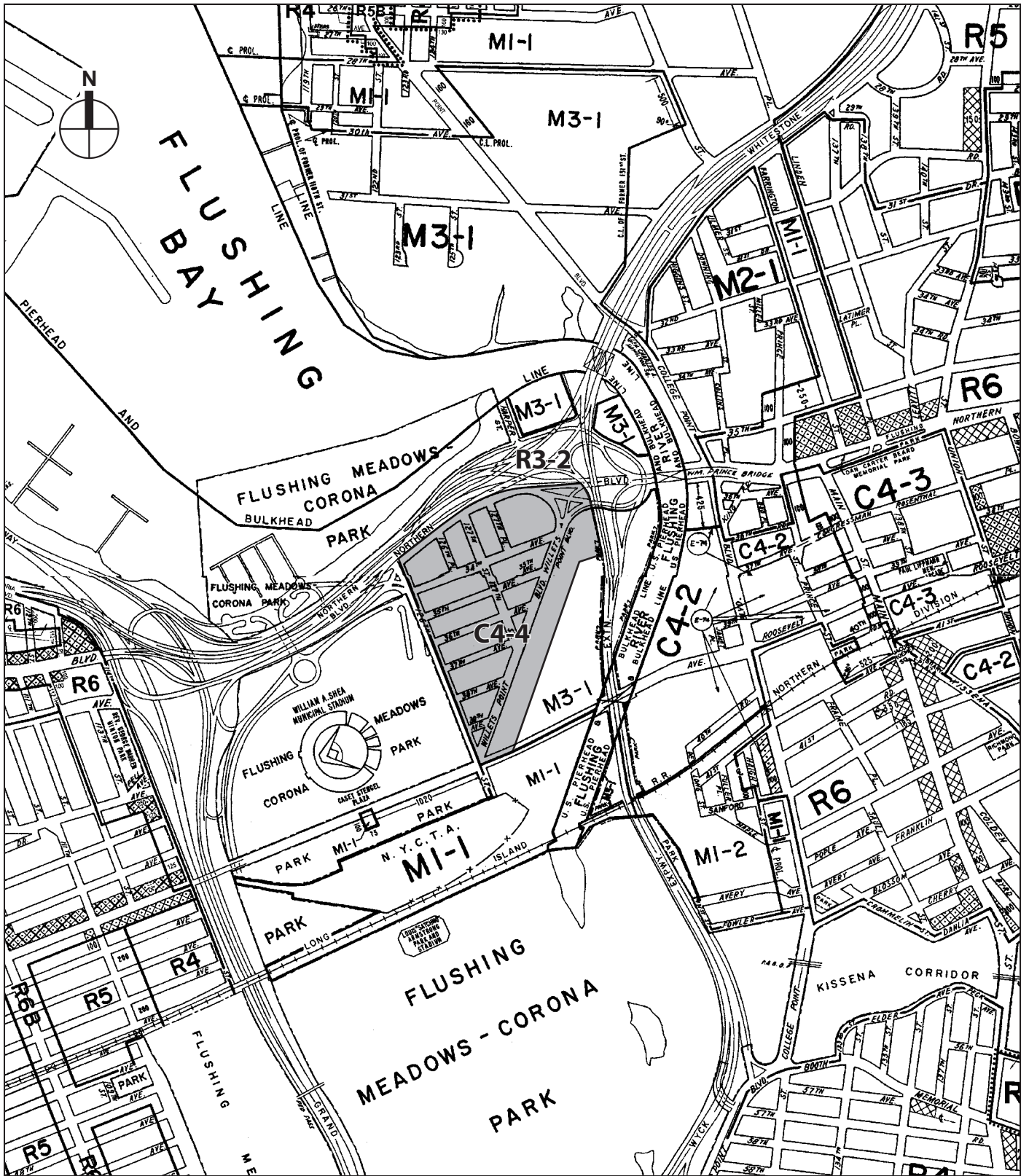


Figure 4  
Existing Zoning



Willets Point Special District  
 Zoning District Boundary

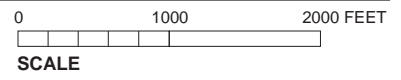


Figure 5  
Proposed Zoning

## **PROPOSED PROJECT**

The proposed Plan is intended to stimulate the transformation of the District from an area with significant environmental degradation that is isolated from its surroundings into a diverse and sustainable community that enhances connections to its surroundings, creates economic growth, and addresses the long term needs of the Borough of Queens and the City of New York.

The goals of the proposed Plan envisioned by the City are to:

- Create a vibrant, mixed-use, urban community that enhances connections between existing thriving neighborhoods and amenities in Northern Queens;
- Leverage the District's regional access and proximity to airports to drive economic growth and provide a significant number of quality new jobs for area residents;
- Continue the successful tradition of Queens' diverse communities by creating rental and/or homeownership housing opportunities that serve a mix of incomes and demographics;
- Create a sustainable, environmentally sensitive community that utilizes innovative green building technologies; and
- Catalyze future development.

The proposed Plan envisions residential and retail uses as the foundation of the redeveloped District. Office space, a hotel, and a convention center would build off this foundation to enhance Flushing and Corona's roles as regional economic centers. Community facilities and open space would enhance the built environment, provide quality amenities, and improve the quality of life for area residents and visitors.

Although there is no developer or specific development plan in place at this time, maximum permitted development under the proposed Plan would be 8.94 million gsf. The anticipated uses are described below.

### *RESIDENTIAL*

According to the most current New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey data published by HPD, the residential vacancy rate in Queens was only 2.82 percent in 2005, slightly lower than the citywide average of 3.09 percent. At the same time, the most recent DCP demographic study, *New York City Population Projections by Age/Sex and Borough* (2006), estimates that the population in Queens will increase by 15.1 percent between 2000 and 2030. The proposed actions would permit a substantial amount of housing to be constructed in the District, which would help accommodate future population growth in Queens, and contribute to the City's overall efforts to meet its short- and long-term demands for housing. Under the proposed Plan, housing units in the District would offer both rental and homeownership opportunities for a diverse range of incomes. It is anticipated that 20 percent of the proposed units would be reserved for low- and moderate-income households. Therefore, housing constructed under the proposed Plan would also support the goals outlined in the Mayor's New Housing Marketplace Plan, which commits to the construction or rehabilitation of 165,000 affordable housing units in the City.

### *RETAIL*

With a population of greater than 2 million and few shopping centers to serve it, Queens' residents are significantly underserved by retail of all types. The potential spending pool of Queens' residents is able to support far more retail space and entertainment venues than are

currently available in the borough. Many Queens residents travel to regional malls in Nassau County, Westchester County, and New Jersey, and to entertainment venues outside the borough. The accessibility of the District via mass transit and highways presents an opportunity to create a first-class retail, recreation, and entertainment destination that would attract people from all over the borough, as well as the larger tri-state area. Entertainment venues would satisfy local and City-wide demand while providing activities for before and after the sporting events that occur in the area.

*OFFICE*

New office space in the District would strengthen the role of Flushing and Corona as commercial centers in Northern Queens and would help meet demand for office space in Queens and the City as a whole. Given its proximity to two major airports and the thriving and expanding Downtown Flushing office district, the District is a particularly suitable location for new office development.

*CONVENTION CENTER*

A convention center would offer tremendous benefits to Northern Queens and the City by hosting large tradeshows, consumer shows, festivals, conferences, corporate events, banquets, and local events. Convention center visitors would include residents of Queens and the broader metropolitan region attending one-day events or tradeshows, as well as visitors from outside the region attending multi-day conventions and staying at the nearby hotel.

*HOTEL*

Demand for the hotel would be driven by its proximity to LaGuardia and JFK Airports, the growing Flushing community, Citi Field, the USTA National Tennis Center, and the proposed convention center. Occupancy rates at hotels in the area are already very high (approximately 80 percent), and much of the hotel stock in the area is aging. Redevelopment of the District offers an opportunity to create a premier hotel facility in Northern Queens.

*COMMUNITY FACILITY SPACE*

The community facility use space could include a mix of facilities, including medical offices, day care facilities, community recreation space, or uses such as dance studios, art galleries, theaters, community arts centers, museums, or a library.

*SCHOOL*

A new public school would be provided to serve the District residents and would be programmed to meet the shortfall in school capacity as a result of the proposed Plan.

*OPEN SPACE*

A minimum of eight acres of publicly accessible open spaces would be created to serve the range of user groups introduced by the proposed Plan, including residents, workers, tourists, and shoppers.

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### *PARKING*

Parking would be provided to meet the demand generated by the proposed uses. It is anticipated that parking would be dispersed throughout the District, in above- and below-grade parking facilities located in the bases of the proposed buildings, and that on-street parking would also be available in parts of the District.

### SITE AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

The proposed Plan also entails significant site improvements, including site remediation, grading, installation of new sanitary and sewer lines throughout the District, and a new connection between the District and the Van Wyck Expressway.

Because of past uses in the area, soil and groundwater have likely been impacted in varying degrees. The proposed Plan would include environmental remediation across the entire District under a comprehensive approach. The District would also be graded and elevated above the 100-year floodplain.

Additionally, new sanitary and sewer lines, a new sanitary pump station and force main, as well as other utilities would be installed as part of the proposed Plan. To facilitate access to and from the District, a new direct connection to the Van Wyck Expressway would be constructed at the northeastern corner of the District.

### **SITE PLAN, URBAN DESIGN AND SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

Placement of uses within the District would be guided by a series of urban design guidelines set forth in the URP and Special District regulations. The URP will define the District boundaries and area to be redeveloped, as well as prescribe maximum development envelopes, as per the City redevelopment goals. The Special District regulations will set forth guidelines on urban design elements such as bulk, height, setback, location of specific uses, and street hierarchies.

The site planning and urban design of the District are intended to create a dynamic community by integrating regional attractions and residential, office, and other uses within a network of pedestrian-scaled streetscapes throughout the District. The Special District regulations would allow for the provision of three zones with distinct land use and design provisions: an entertainment and commercial center, a residential community, and a convention center zone. The Special District would also regulate the general layout of the principal private streets, by mandating four or five specific intersections along 126th Street and establishing design parameters for five street types. These streets would establish the basic form of the District and ensure that the future uses in the District are integrated into a cohesive site design.

Figures 6 and 7 provide illustrative views of how the land uses and massing could be distributed across the District. The eventual built configuration of uses will be subject to change based on the results of the environmental review, market factors, and engineering considerations, but would be subject to all restrictions and guidelines provided in the Special Willets Point District text and the URP.

Due to its proximity to LaGuardia Airport, the District is subject to height restrictions established by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANY/NJ). The western portion of Willets Point may be built to a maximum height that is no greater than the new Citi Field, which is approved by the FAA for 218 feet above ground level, or 232 feet Above Mean Sea Level (AMSL). The height limits are also



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<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #6495ed; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Office	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #800080; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Hotel	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #00008b; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Primary School, Community Facility Use	
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| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:red; border:1px solid black;"></span> Retail     | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightgreen; border:1px solid black;"></span> Rooftop Courtyard         | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:purple; border:1px solid black;"></span> Convention Center                        | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:grey; border:1px solid black;"></span> Publicly Accessible Sidewalk |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:blue; border:1px solid black;"></span> Office    | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:purple; border:1px solid black;"></span> Hotel                         | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:darkblue; border:1px solid black;"></span> Primary School, Community Facility Use |  |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:yellow; border:1px solid black;"></span> Housing | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:green; border:1px solid black;"></span> Publicly Accessible Open Space | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:grey; border:1px solid black;"></span> Parking                                    |  |

Figure 7  
**Illustrative Site Plan - Scheme B**

determined by the distance from LaGuardia Airport and the “slope area” in which the site is located. The northeastern portion of the District is located within the 40:1 slope area. For every 40 feet away from the end of the runway, the building can rise 1 vertical foot AMSL. The PANY/NJ has provided four representative points, two in each slope area, to assist in calculating allowable building heights for planned development. Because the southern end of the site is farthest from the runway, structures there can be built to a taller height. In the 40:1 slope area, buildings at the northern boundary of the District would have a maximum height of 133 feet AMSL while points near the southern boundary may rise as high as 172 feet AMSL. Each point in the District has a different maximum height, as dictated by its distance from the runway. The building height restrictions that apply to the District are also regulated by special controls in Article VI of the New York City Zoning Resolution. Up to six feet of fill would be used to grade and raise the District to an elevation of between 14 and 17 feet AMSL. However, the buildings developed as a result of the proposed Plan would not exceed the maximum AMSL height limits described above.

The proposed Plan would transform the District from a large brownfield site into a community that would serve as a model of sustainability. The size and scope of the proposed Plan represent a unique opportunity to incorporate integrated sustainable design measures in meaningful ways. Not only would the Plan create a transit-oriented urban infill development that would leverage the District’s superior transit and highway infrastructure, it would also encourage the latest innovative building and planning technologies. Specifically, the Plan would encourage:

- that the District meets its energy, water, and resource requirements in a sustainable manner by minimizing pollution and treating waste products as a resource;
- development of an energy efficient community that would utilize low carbon technologies and green building strategies;
- best management practices for onsite stormwater retention, nature conservation, biodiversity enhancement, and attractive landscaping; and
- sustainable modes of transportation that prioritize walking, cycling, and public transport.

The City is currently in the process of considering how such sustainability measures might be implemented. The Willets Point Development Plan has been accepted as a pilot Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND) project by the United States Green Building Council (USGBC). The illustrative site plan has been designed to achieve LEED-ND certification, and NYCEDC would encourage any future development in the District to achieve LEED-ND certification.

## **D. FRAMEWORK FOR ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The proposed Plan would change the regulatory controls governing land use and development in the District and would allow its redevelopment. The DGEIS will analyze the potential of such redevelopment to generate significant adverse environmental impacts. The DGEIS will consider alternatives that would reduce or eliminate impacts identified in the technical analyses and propose mitigation for such impacts, to the extent practicable. The rezoning would permit a range of development options; from among these, the DGEIS will examine the maximum development envelope that would be allowable under the proposed Special District and URP. In addition, the analyses will account for future off-site development in order to identify conditions in the future, both without and with the proposed Plan. The approach to the analysis framework is further discussed below.

**MAXIMUM DEVELOPMENT ENVELOPE**

The proposed Plan would change the development potential of sites within the District in a manner consistent with the proposed Urban Renewal Plan (URP) as well as the new Special District. As a result, a range of new development could occur within the District.

The URP prescribes a maximum permitted floor area of 8.94 million gsf in the District. However, the URP allows flexibility in the combination of uses to be developed in the District, and prescribes maximum permitted floor areas for residential and commercial uses in the District, including 5,850,000 gsf of residential use and 3,160,000 gsf of commercial use. Since the flexibility provided in the URP could result in a variation in the uses included in the maximum development envelope, the DGEIS will analyze two development scenarios—the proposed Plan, which includes an approximately 400,000-square-foot convention center, and the No Convention Center Scenario, in which the convention center is replaced with an additional 350,000 sf of residential use and 50,000 sf of retail use.

While the actual development will depend on developer proposals and future market conditions, the City has developed maximum development envelopes. To the extent that actual development proposals differ from the development scenarios analyzed in the DGEIS, they would be subject to additional environmental review as appropriate. The development scenarios analyzed in the DGEIS, described below and shown in Table 2, will be used as the frameworks to assess potential impacts.

**PROPOSED PLAN**

- *Residential*: It is anticipated that up to 5.5 million square feet (sf), or up to 5,500 units, would be developed.
- *Retail*: The District would include up to 1.7 million sf of retail, including a multi-screen movie theater with up to 2,700 seats and approximately 150,000 sf of neighborhood retail and services which would primarily serve the new residential population.
- *Office*: The District would contain up to 500,000 sf of office space.
- *Convention Center*: It is anticipated that a convention center of up to 400,000 sf would be developed.
- *Hotel*: A full-service hotel of approximately 560,000 sf, with up to 700 rooms and ancillary banquet and restaurant facilities, would be developed.
- *Community Facility*: The District would include community facility uses up to a total of 150,000 sf.
- *School*: Although the details of the proposed school building have not yet been determined, for purposes of analysis, the facility is assumed to be approximately 130,000 sf in size and constructed to serve grades K-8. The program and capacity of the school would be developed in consultation with the Department of Education, and would meet the project-generated shortfall in seats.
- *Parking*: Parking would be provided to meet the demand generated by the proposed uses. Demand associated with the proposed Plan is anticipated to be approximately 6,700 spaces.
- *Open Space*: It is anticipated that approximately 8 acres of new publicly-accessible open space would be developed.

**Table 2**  
**Willetts Point Development Plan**

<b>Use</b>	<b>Urban Renewal Plan</b>	<b>Proposed Plan</b>	<b>No Convention Center Scenario</b>
Residential	Up to 5,850,000 gsf	5,500,000 gsf (5,500 units)	5,850,000 gsf (5,850 units)
Retail	Up to 3,160,000 gsf	1,700,000	1,750,000
Office		500,000	500,000
Convention Center		400,000	0
Hotel		560,000 (700 rooms)	560,000 (700 rooms)
Community Facility	==	150,000 gsf	150,000 gsf
School (K-8)*	==	130,000 gsf (Approx. 850 Seats)	130,000 gsf (Approx 900 Seats)
Parking Spaces**	==	Approx. 6,700	Approx. 6,000
Publicly Accessible Open Space	Minimum 8 Acres	Minimum 8 Acres	Minimum 8 Acres
<b>Total gsf</b>	<b>8,940,000 gsf Maximum</b>	<b>8,940,000 gsf</b>	<b>8,940,000 gsf</b>
<b>Notes:</b>			
* The capacity of the proposed school would meet the project-generated shortfall in school seats. A 130,000-sf school would accommodate up to approximately 900 seats; the square footage of the new school may be smaller if the project-generated shortfall in seats is less than anticipated.			
** The number of proposed parking spaces would be determined based on anticipated project-generated demand. Parking floor area is exempt from the gross floor area calculations, per the Special Willetts Point zoning district.			

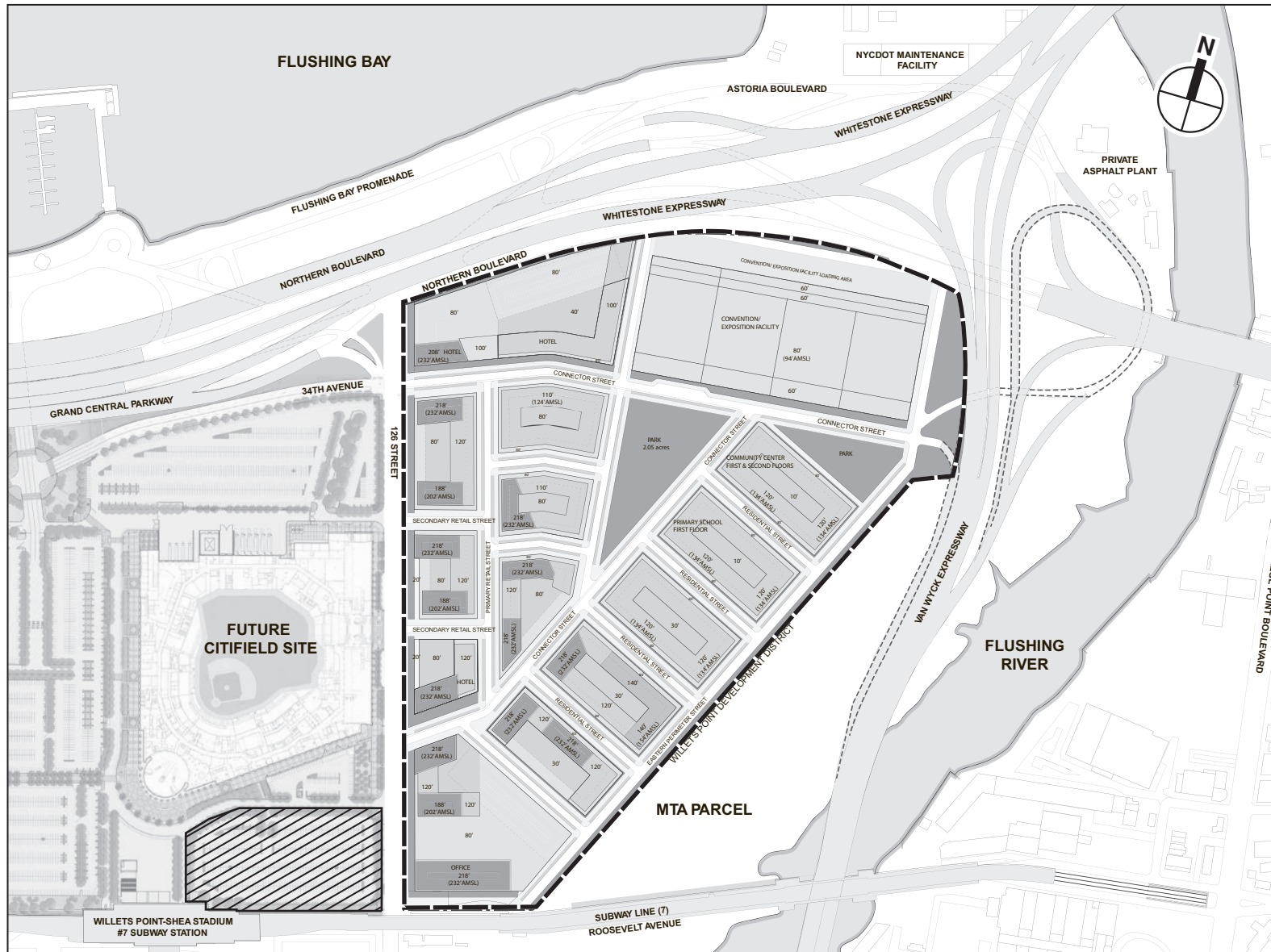
**NO CONVENTION CENTER SCENARIO**

As discussed previously, the proposed URP is structured to allow flexibility in the combination of uses and sizes that could be developed within the District, to a maximum of 8.94 million gsf. Thus, the DGEIS will also include an analysis of a development scenario in which the 400,000 gsf convention center use is replaced with an additional 350,000 sf of residential use and 50,000 sf of retail use.

It is assumed that development associated with the proposed Plan would start in 2009 and is anticipated to be complete by 2017.

**CITI FIELD LOT B FUTURE DEVELOPMENT—CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS**

The Willetts Point Development District is located directly across 126th Street from the new Citi Field, currently under construction, as well as Citi Field surface parking lots B and C, located to the south and north of the new stadium, respectively. It is anticipated that if the proposed Plan is approved and the District is redeveloped into a new mixed-use community and regional destination, additional development could occur on Citi Field parking lot B (Lot B). Any program would be developed as a collaborative effort between the City and Queens Ballpark Co.—a development entity for the New York Mets—or an affiliate. While specific development plans for Lot B have not yet been proposed, it is anticipated that approximately 280,000 sf of office, 184,500 sf of retail, and 970 parking spaces could potentially be developed at this location (see Figure 8). This development could include a two-story parking garage and a 14-story office building, surrounded by two stories of retail use.



- Willets Point Development District
- ▨ Citi Field Parking Lot B

Figure 8  
Lot B Development Site

**Willetts Point Development Plan**

Lot B could be independently developed with a new office, retail, and parking program and is not dependent upon the Willetts Point Development Plan. However, because of the proximity of Lot B to the Willetts Point Development District, this site’s development would be more likely to occur as a result of the proposed Plan. While each project would require separate actions—each with its own approvals and environmental review processes—together they would add substantial new development to the immediate area. Therefore, in addition to evaluating the proposed Plan’s potential to have environmental impacts, the DGEIS will conservatively consider the cumulative impacts of both projects (the Willetts Point Development Plan and the potential development on Lot B) under “Probable Impacts of the Proposed Plan.” The purpose of this analysis is to ensure that the full extent of potentially required mitigation is identified for any significant adverse impacts.

The cumulative development for both the Willetts Point Development Plan and the anticipated Lot B development is a total of 9,404,500 gsf of new development (see Table 3). Each section of the DGEIS will address the environmental effects associated with the Lot B development. For most technical areas in the DGEIS, impacts associated with the Lot B development program would be assessed under “Probable Impacts of the Proposed Plan,” based on the cumulative development scenario presented in Table 3. These technical areas include land use, zoning, and public policy; socioeconomic conditions; community facilities and services; open space; shadows; historic resources; urban design and visual resources; neighborhood character; natural resources; hazardous materials; waterfront revitalization program; infrastructure, solid waste and sanitation services; energy; traffic and parking; transit and pedestrians; air quality; noise; and public health. Since the development program and precise timing of the development for Lot B is unknown, the DGEIS cannot address the construction impacts at this time. However, given that any future development on Lot B would require separate approval and environmental review processes, these impacts would be examined in greater detail as part of any subsequent environmental review process for Lot B.

**Table 3  
Cumulative Development for Analysis**

<b>Use</b>	<b>Lot B Development (gsf)</b>	<b>Proposed Plan (gsf)</b>	<b>Cumulative - Proposed Plan and Lot B (gsf)</b>	<b>No Convention Center Scenario (gsf)</b>	<b>Cumulative - No Convention Center Scenario and Lot B (gsf)</b>
Residential	-	5,500,000	5,500,000	5,850,000	5,850,000
Number of Units	-	5,500	5,500	5,850	5,850
Retail	184,500	1,700,000	1,884,500	1,750,000	1,934,500
Office	280,000	500,000	780,000	500,000	780,000
Convention Center	-	400,000	400,000	0	0
Hotel	-	560,000	560,000	560,000	560,000
Number of Rooms	-	700	700	700	700
Community Facility	-	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
School (K-8)	-	130,000	130,000	130,000	130,000
Number of Seats*	-	Approx. 850*	Approx. 850*	Approx. 900*	Approx. 900*
Parking	970 spaces	6,700 spaces**	7,670 spaces	6,000 spaces**	6,970 spaces
Publicly-Accessible Open Space		Minimum 8 acres	Minimum 8 acres	Minimum 8 acres	Minimum 8 acres
<b>Total</b>	<b>464,500 gsf</b>	<b>8,940,000 gsf</b>	<b>9,404,500 gsf</b>	<b>8,940,000 gsf</b>	<b>9,404,500 gsf</b>

**Notes:**

\* The capacity of the proposed school would meet the project-generated shortfall in school seats.

\*\* The number of proposed parking spaces would be determined based on project-generated demand. Parking floor area is exempt from the gross floor area calculations, per the Special Willetts Point zoning district.

## E. SCOPE OF WORK

The DGEIS for the Willets Point Redevelopment Plan will be prepared pursuant to CEQR and the *CEQR Technical Manual*. The environmental review provides a means for decision-makers to systematically consider environmental effects along with other aspects of project planning and design, to evaluate reasonable alternatives, and to identify, and mitigate where practicable, any significant adverse environmental impacts. The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development will act as the lead agency for CEQR review.

The first step in preparing the DGEIS document is the public scoping process. “Scoping,” or creating the scope of work, is the process of focusing the environmental impact analysis on the key issues that are to be studied in the DGEIS. The proposed scope of work for each technical area to be analyzed in the Willets Point Redevelopment DGEIS follows. Analyses will be conducted for one Build year, 2017, by which time the full build-out associated with the proposed Plan and Lot B is expected to be complete.

### TASK 1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The first chapter of the DGEIS will introduce the reader to the proposed Plan and set the context in which to assess impacts. The chapter will provide a detailed description of the Plan, based on the framework for analysis, including: the project location and boundaries; existing uses that would be replaced; proposed uses, including new open spaces and transportation improvements; and site plan and urban design considerations. It will also include a statement of the purpose and need for the proposed Plan, including relevant public policy goals and objectives relating to the development of the proposed Plan and a description of the development framework developed by the Downtown Flushing Task Force. The project description also will discuss the planning history of the site. The chapter is the key to understanding the proposed Plan and its impact, and gives the public and decision-makers a base from which to evaluate the proposed Plan against both Build and No Build options.

### TASK 2. ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

This chapter will discuss the framework for the analyses in the DGEIS, including the analysis year and general project phasing, and the maximum development envelopes that will be assessed in the DGEIS. The chapter will also provide detailed descriptions of the required actions and approvals necessary for project implementation, the roles of the involved public agencies, and the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) and CEQR processes.

### TASK 3. LAND USE, ZONING, AND PUBLIC POLICY

The proposed Plan would directly affect the land use on approximately 61 acres of land in the Willets Point peninsula of Queens. The land use, zoning, and public policy analysis will assess the potential impacts of the expected changes in land uses resulting from the proposed Plan. The analysis will evaluate impacts within the District as well as primary and secondary study areas.

The primary study area for land use, zoning, and public policy analysis encompasses the region within roughly a ½ mile of the District, a distance that, based on *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, defines the area in which the proposed Plan and anticipated development on Lot B could reasonably be expected to create potential direct and indirect impacts. The ½-mile primary study area is generally bounded by 31st Street in College Point to the north, Flushing Meadows Corona Park to the south, Main Street in Flushing to the east, and 114th Street in Corona to the

west. The boundaries of the larger secondary study area will extend approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from the District boundaries and will be defined to recognize the presence of various neighborhoods in the surrounding area, including Flushing, Corona, and College Point. As the potential for impacts is generally greater in closer proximity to the District, the primary study area will be assessed at a greater level of detail than the secondary study area. The land use assessment will include a description of existing conditions and evaluations of the future conditions with and without the proposed Plan and Lot B in 2017. Subtasks for the land use, zoning, and public policy analysis include:

- Provide a brief development history of the District.
- Based on existing studies, information included in existing geographic information systems (GIS) for the area and field surveys, identify, describe, and graphically present predominant land use patterns and site utilization in the District and in the primary and secondary study areas. Recent land use trends and major factors influencing land use trends will be described based, as applicable, on discussions with public or private agencies and local real estate brokers.
- Describe and map existing zoning and recent zoning actions in the District and study areas.
- Describe other public policies that apply to the District and the study areas, including specific development projects and plans for public improvements.
- List future development projects in the study areas that could affect future land use patterns and trends by the Plan's 2017 Build year. Identify pending zoning actions or other public policy actions that could affect land use patterns and trends as they relate to the proposed Plan. Based on these changes, assess future conditions in land use and zoning without the proposed Plan and Lot B.
- Identify potential impacts of the proposed Plan and Lot B on land use and land use trends, zoning, and public policy, and assess the compatibility of the proposed Plan and Lot B with surrounding land use and the consistency of the proposed actions with recognized public policies, such as the New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Revitalization Plan (WRP), zoning, and other identified public policies.

#### **TASK 4. SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

Socioeconomic impacts can occur when a proposed project directly or indirectly changes economic activities in an area. The purpose of the socioeconomic assessment is to disclose changes that would be created by a proposed action and identify whether they rise to a significant level. The socioeconomic chapter will examine the effects of the proposed Plan and Lot B on socioeconomic conditions in the District and in the surrounding study areas, which will generally conform to the land use study areas outlined in Task 3.

The analysis will follow the guidelines of the *CEQR Technical Manual* in assessing the proposed Plan's effects on socioeconomic conditions. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the five principal issues of concern with respect to socioeconomic conditions are whether a proposed project would result in significant impacts due to: (1) direct residential displacement; (2) direct business and institutional displacement; (3) indirect residential displacement; (4) indirect business and institutional displacement; and (5) adverse effects on a specific industry.

In conformance with the *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, the assessment of each area of concern will begin with a screening assessment or preliminary assessment. Detailed analyses



will be conducted for those areas in which the preliminary assessment cannot definitively rule out the potential for significant adverse impacts. The detailed assessments will be framed in the context of existing conditions and evaluations of the future conditions without and with the proposed Plan and Lot B in 2017.

*DIRECT RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT*

Field observations indicate that the District contains one non-conforming residential use. The proposed Plan would displace all current uses in the District, including this residence. While the presence of this residence will be disclosed in the DGEIS, a detailed analysis of direct residential displacement is not warranted, because the displacement of a single household would not have the potential to adversely affect socioeconomic conditions in the study area.

*DIRECT BUSINESS AND INSTITUTIONAL DISPLACEMENT*

The proposed Plan would directly displace approximately 260 businesses that are currently located in the District. Because of the number of businesses that could be displaced, and their heavy concentration in one industry (auto-related), it is anticipated that a preliminary assessment will not adequately demonstrate that the proposed Plan would not cause a significant adverse impact due to direct business displacement. Therefore, a detailed analysis will be undertaken. This analysis will be framed in the context of existing conditions and evaluations of the future without the proposed Plan and the future with the proposed Plan. Tasks will include:

- Describe the operational characteristics of the businesses to be displaced, as well as the products, markets, and employment characteristics. This discussion will be based on available data from public sources such as the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) and the U.S. Census Bureau, and private companies such as Claritas, Inc. and Dunn & Bradstreet, field investigations, and interviews with business owners in Willets Point.
- In coordination with work performed under the “Effects on Specific Industries” task outlined below, describe the effects of the businesses on the New York City economy and determine whether the businesses to be displaced are a defining element of the character of the District or the broader study area.
- In coordination with work performed under the “Effects on Specific Industries” task outlined below, determine whether the businesses to be displaced have substantial economic value to the City or region. Describe what economic value they have and the effects of their products and services.
- Describe the locational needs of the businesses to be displaced and assess whether the businesses would be able to relocate in the study area or elsewhere within the City. This assessment will be based on a comparison of the products, services, and location needs of the businesses with the consumer base and available properties in the study area and/or City. The analysis will describe any potential for neighborhoods that currently contain a high concentration of auto-related or other industrial businesses to accommodate businesses displaced by the proposed Plan.
- Based on information provided in the “Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy” chapter, assess conditions in the study area in the future conditions without the proposed Plan, including any

## Willets Point Development Plan

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population, employment, and real estate market changes anticipated to take place by the time the Plan is complete.

- Describe the likely effects of the displacement on the businesses being displaced and on the character of the District and study area. The identification of impacts will depend on whether the businesses are a defining element of neighborhood character, whether they are important to the City economy, and whether they could be relocated elsewhere within the City.
- Formulate mitigation measures, if necessary, and summarize within the DGEIS.

### *INDIRECT RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT*

The maximum development envelope includes up to 5,500 housing units, as well as a hotel and convention center, retail and entertainment uses, community facilities, and approximately 500,000 sf of office space (or 5,850 housing units in the No Convention Center Scenario). According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, residential development of 200 units or less or commercial development of 200,000 sf or less would typically not result in significant indirect socioeconomic impacts. Since the proposed Plan and Lot B would introduce more than 200 residential units and more than 200,000 sf of commercial development, a preliminary assessment of indirect residential impacts is required under CEQR.

The indirect residential displacement analysis will use 1990 and 2000 US Census data, as well as current real estate market data, to present demographic and residential market trends and conditions for the study area in responding to the following criteria for determining the potential for significant adverse impacts:

- If the project would add substantial new population with different socioeconomic characteristics compared with the size and character of the existing population;
- If the project would directly displace uses or properties that have had a “blighting” effect on property values in the area;
- If the project would directly displace enough of one or more components of the population to alter the socioeconomic composition of the study area;
- If the project would introduce a substantial amount of a more costly type of housing compared to existing housing and housing expected to be built in the study area by the time the project is complete;
- If the project would introduce a “critical mass” of non-residential uses such that the surrounding area becomes more attractive as a residential neighborhood complex; and
- If the project would introduce a land use that could offset positive trends in the study area, impede efforts to attract investment to the area, or create a climate for disinvestment.

If a preliminary assessment does not rule out the possibility that the proposed Plan and Lot B could cause significant adverse impacts due to indirect residential displacement, a more detailed analysis will be conducted.

### *INDIRECT BUSINESS AND INSTITUTIONAL DISPLACEMENT*

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, commercial developments of 200,000 sf or less would typically not result in significant indirect socioeconomic impacts. Since the proposed Plan and Lot B is anticipated to introduce more than 200,000 sf of commercial use, a preliminary assessment of indirect business and institutional impacts is required under CEQR.

The indirect business displacement analysis will estimate the number and type of jobs that would be generated by the proposed Plan and Lot B, and will use employment data from NYSDOL (and, as necessary, from sources such as Claritas Inc. and Dunn & Bradstreet), rental rate and sale price data from local brokerage firms, and zoning and land use information gathered as part of the broader DGEIS effort in order to respond to the following criteria for determining the potential for significant adverse impacts:

- If the project would introduce enough of a new economic activity to alter existing economic patterns;
- If the project would add to the concentration of a particular sector of the local economy enough to alter or accelerate an ongoing trend to alter existing economic patterns;
- If the project would directly displace uses that have had a “blighting” effect on commercial property values in the area, leading to rises in commercial rent;
- If the project would directly displace uses of any type that directly support businesses in the area or bring people to the area that form a customer base for local businesses;
- If the project would directly or indirectly displace residents, workers, or visitors who form the customer base for existing businesses in the study area; and
- If the project would introduce a land use that would offset positive trends in the study area, impede efforts to attract investment to the area, or create a climate for disinvestment in the area.

If a preliminary assessment does not rule out the possibility that the proposed Plan and Lot B could cause significant adverse impacts due to indirect business and institutional displacement, a more detailed analysis will be conducted.

#### *ADVERSE EFFECTS ON SPECIFIC INDUSTRIES*

Because approximately 75 percent of the 250 businesses that would be directly displaced by the proposed Plan are auto-related businesses, a detailed analysis will be undertaken to determine the potential for significant adverse impacts due to effects on the auto industry. This analysis will be conducted in coordination with the “Direct Business Displacement” task described above, and will be similarly framed in the context of existing conditions and evaluations of the future conditions without and with the proposed Plan. Tasks will include:

- Using information gathered for the “Direct Business Displacement” task, characterize the businesses to be directly displaced and describe their relationship with other auto-related businesses in the City.
- Determine any factors that would affect the future operations of the auto-related industry in the City.
- Determine whether the proposed Plan would significantly affect business conditions in the auto-related business in the City.
- Determine whether the proposed Plan would substantially reduce employment or impair the viability of the auto-related industry in the City.

Analysis of non-auto related industries with a presence on the project site will be conducted at a level of detail that is appropriate based on *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, depending on the results of the preliminary assessment.

### *ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS*

The socioeconomic analysis will assess the fiscal and economic impacts of the proposed Plan because of its size, proposed use, and likely contribution to the economic vitality of New York City. Economic benefits associated with construction and operation of the development program outlined in the maximum development envelopes will be estimated using the RIMS II model developed by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, or the IMPLAN model from the Minnesota IMPLAN Group, Inc. Subtasks will include:

- Estimate economic and fiscal benefits accruing to New York City and New York State during construction of the development program outlined in the maximum development envelopes. Benefits will include direct and indirect employment (presented in person-years), employee compensation, economic output, and taxes.
- Based on the type and magnitude of development outlined in the maximum development envelopes, estimate annual economic and fiscal benefits accruing to New York City and New York State during the ongoing operation of the District. Benefits will include direct and indirect employment, employee compensation, economic output, and taxes including sales taxes, real estate taxes, personal income taxes, and hotel occupancy taxes.
- Compare the estimated economic and fiscal benefits of the maximum development envelopes with the benefits generated by the uses that are currently present in the District.
- Describe public sector costs involved with the construction and operation of the proposed Plan and any associated improvements. These could include operational subsidies, additional municipal services, relocation, and costs to implement measures to mitigate project-related impacts (if relevant).

### **TASK 5. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

The demand for community facilities and services is directly related to the type and size of the new population generated by development resulting from a proposed action. This chapter of the DGEIS will evaluate the effects on community services due to the proposed Plan and Lot B, including effects on police and fire protection, public schools, outpatient and emergency health care facilities, libraries, and publicly funded day care facilities. The community facilities and services assessment will include a description of existing conditions, and evaluations of future conditions in 2017 with and without the proposed Plan and Lot B.

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, preliminary thresholds indicating the need for detailed analyses are as follows:

- Public Schools: More than 50 new elementary/middle school or 150 high school students.
- Libraries: A greater than 5 percent increase in ratio of residential units to libraries in the borough. For Queens, this is equivalent to a residential population increase of 621 residential units.
- Health Care Facilities (outpatient): More than 600 low- to moderate-income residential units.
- Day Care Centers (publicly funded): More than 50 eligible children based on the number of new low/moderate-income residential units by borough. For Queens, this is equivalent to an increase of 250 low-income or 278 low/moderate-income residential units.

- Fire Protection: The ability of the fire department to provide fire protective services for a new project usually does not warrant a detailed assessment under CEQR. Generally, a detailed assessment of fire protective services is included only if a proposed project would affect the physical operations of, or access to and from, a station house.
- Police Protection: The ability of the police department to provide public safety for a new project usually does not warrant a detailed assessment under CEQR. Generally, an assessment of police protective services is included only if the proposed project would affect the physical operations of, or access to and from, a precinct house.

Based on these thresholds and the maximum development envelope assumptions, detailed analyses will be conducted for public schools, libraries, outpatient health care facilities, and day care centers. The individual catchment areas for each service provider will serve as the study area boundaries for these analyses. The fire and police facilities that serve the District will be identified in the DGEIS for informational purposes.

#### **TASK 6. OPEN SPACE**

The proposed Plan involves the potential construction of up to 8.94 million gsf of new development and will exceed CEQR thresholds for a detailed open space analysis. In addition, the potential creation of several new publicly accessible open spaces within the District is part of the proposed Plan to be analyzed. Therefore, a detailed analysis of open space will be conducted. This analysis will determine whether the Plan would affect the quantitative and qualitative measures of open space adequacy within the ¼-mile and ½-mile study areas recommended for commercial and residential projects in the *CEQR Technical Manual*. Subtasks include:

- Establish the study area boundaries, specifically: a study area of ½ mile around the District for the residential population, and a study area of ¼ mile around the District for the worker population. All Census block groups with at least 50 percent of their area falling within these study areas will be included in the open space study areas.
- Prepare a demographic analysis of the residential and worker populations of the study areas. Determine population in the open space study areas based on the 2000 Census of Population and Housing. Estimate employment in the open space study areas using reverse journey-to-work data. Use 2000 Census data to identify the age breakdown of the study area population.
- Compile an inventory of all publicly accessible passive and active open spaces, both publicly and privately owned, for the study areas. This will be accomplished through coordination with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and private owners of open spaces, and verified through field visits. The inventory will include an evaluation of the condition and use of existing open spaces, as well as acreage. Qualitative discussions of major publicly accessible open spaces in proximity to the District but outside the study area, such as portions of Flushing Meadows-Corona Park and Kissena Park, will also be included.
- In conformance with *CEQR Technical Manual* methodologies, assess the adequacy of existing publicly accessible open space facilities. This analysis will include a quantitative assessment of the ratio of open space to population and a qualitative assessment that considers such factors as the adequacy of open spaces to serve particular age groups.
- For the future condition without the proposed Plan and Lot B, assess expected changes in future levels of open space supply and demand by the Plan's Build year, based on other planned development projects within the study areas and any public open space expected to be developed. Develop open space ratios for future No Build conditions and compare them

## Willets Point Development Plan

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with existing ratios to determine changes in future levels of adequacy in the future without the proposed Plan and Lot B.

- Based on the residential and worker populations to be added by the proposed Plan and Lot B, as well as the new publicly accessible open spaces to be provided, assess the effects on open space supply and demand in the study areas. This will include a quantitative assessment of project impacts based on a comparison of open space ratios in the future with and without the proposed Plan and Lot B. It will also include a qualitative evaluation that considers such factors as the proximity of other open spaces outside the study area and the adequacy of the area's open spaces to serve the particular age groups in the study area.

### **TASK 7. SHADOWS**

The *CEQR Technical Manual* requires a shadow analysis for proposed projects that have the potential for new shadows long enough to reach an existing publicly accessible open space, important natural feature, or historic resource with sun-sensitive features. Based on the height and bulk of the development envelope as described in the maximum development envelopes, the proposed Plan and anticipated development on Lot B could result in new buildings that would be greater than 50 feet in height. Therefore, a screening-level analysis will be performed to identify the potential for the proposed Plan and Lot B to have shadow impacts on such resources, including resources located in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. If project-generated shadows would reach any existing open spaces, natural features, or historic resources with sun-sensitive features, a full shadows analysis would be performed for those resources. The analyses performed for this task would follow the methodology recommended in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, and focus on the relation between the incremental shadows from the proposed Plan and Lot B and any sun-sensitive landscape elements or activities.

### **TASK 8. HISTORIC RESOURCES**

This section of the DGEIS will assess the potential of the proposed Plan with Lot B to affect any historic architectural and archaeological resources, either directly through construction activities or indirectly by altering the context in which the resources are located. In comments dated February 7, 2007, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) indicated that no archaeological resources and architectural resources have been identified in the District or within 400 feet of the District. On October 15, 2007 the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) determined that one building, the former Empire Millwork Corporation Building, at 128-30 Willets Point Boulevard, is eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places (S/NR). OPRHP further determined that demolition of this building would constitute an adverse impact on historic resources. Therefore, this section will summarize the consultation with OPRHP with respect to the former Empire Millwork Corporation Building and identify whether there are any other properties within the study area that may appear to meet eligibility criteria for listing on S/NRs or for designation as New York City Landmarks ([NYCLs] “potential architectural resources”) that have not yet been identified, as set forth in the *CEQR Technical Manual*. Tasks within this section are as follows:

- Define the study area for identifying if there are any potential architectural resources. This includes the area where direct physical impacts may occur and also accounts for a larger area where potential contextual effects may occur. The study area will be defined during the analysis, but typically includes the project site (in this case, the District) and extends 400 feet from the perimeter of the project site boundary.

- Based on visits to the District and study area by an architectural historian, survey standing structures in the study area to identify any properties that appear to meet eligibility criteria for NYCL designation or listing on the S/NRs. Prepare a map if any such resources are identified.
- Assess the effects of planned development projects expected to be built by the project's Build year in the future conditions without the proposed Plan and Lot B on any potential architectural resources.
- Assess the project's impacts on any designated or potential architectural resources, including contextual impacts as well as any direct physical impacts.
- Where appropriate, develop mitigation measures to avoid and/or reduce any adverse effects on any potential architectural resources in consultation with LPC.

### **TASK 9. URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES**

This section of the DGEIS will assess changes in urban design patterns and visual resources of the study area as a result of the proposed Plan and Lot B. Tasks within this section are as follows:

- Define the study area for urban design and visual resources. The study area will be defined during the analysis. It is expected to encompass an area within approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of the District, taking into account natural and man-made features, including Flushing Bay, elevated structures including Northern Boulevard and the subway on Roosevelt Avenue, and the Van Wyck Expressway.
- Based on field visits, describe the urban design of the District and the study area, using photographs and text as appropriate. Following the guidance outlined in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the DGEIS will consider the following urban design characteristics: natural features, block forms, streetscape elements, street patterns and street hierarchy, as well as building bulk, use, type, and arrangement.
- As per the *CEQR Technical Manual*, based on field visits, describe visual resources and view corridors in the District.
- Based on planned development projects, describe the changes expected in the urban design and visual character of the study area that are expected in the future without the proposed Plan and Lot B.
- Describe the proposed actions and City Plan and Plan and anticipated development on Lot B and assess how they would affect urban design elements in the study area compared with the No Build scenario. Assess the Plan's potential impacts on visual resources and view corridors, considering its orientation and proximity to such resources. Evaluate the significance of the changes on urban design elements and visual resources.

### **TASK 10. NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER**

The character of a neighborhood is established by numerous factors, including land use patterns, the scale of development, the design of its buildings and landscapes, the presence of notable landmarks, and a variety of other physical features, including, but not limited to, traffic, pedestrian patterns, and noise. Most of these elements will already be covered in other DGEIS sections and, therefore, this DGEIS section will essentially represent a summary of the key thoughts of these other analyses.

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The proposed Plan and anticipated development on Lot B could affect the character of the area by introducing new residential, commercial, hotel, community facility, institutional, parking, and open space uses. The “Neighborhood Character” chapter will consider whether the proposed Plan and Lot B could have moderate effects on several of the elements that contribute to neighborhood character or which in combination could have an effect on neighborhood character, and will assess the potential impact of the proposed Plan and Lot B on the character of the study area. CEQR impact categories that will be considered in the neighborhood character assessment include: land use, urban design, visual resources, historic resources, socioeconomic conditions, traffic, and noise. Subtasks include:

- Drawing on other DGEIS sections, describe the predominant factors that contribute to defining the character of the neighborhood.
- Based on planned development projects, public policy initiatives, and planned public improvements, summarize the changes that can be expected in the character of the neighborhood in the future without the proposed Plan and Lot B.
- Drawing on the analysis of project impacts on various DGEIS sections, assess and summarize the impacts of the proposed Plan and Lot B on neighborhood character.

### **TASK 11. NATURAL RESOURCES**

Under CEQR, a natural resource is defined as plant and animal species and any area capable of providing habitat for plant and animal species or capable of functioning to support ecological systems and maintain the City’s environmental balance. Resources such as surface and groundwater, soils (upland and wetland), drainage systems, wetlands, dunes, beaches, grasslands, woodlands, landscaped areas, gardens, parks, and built structures used by wildlife may be considered, as appropriate, in a natural resources analysis.

Since the District is essentially built out with existing uses, there are limited issues with respect to natural resources. Much of the District is located within a 100-year floodplain. Therefore, information on design criteria and constraints pursuant to floodplain regulations will be obtained and incorporated into this section of the DGEIS. Methods to flood-proof or raise habitable structures above the floodplain in accordance with New York City regulations will be described as appropriate.

### **TASK 12. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) has been completed for the District. The Phase I ESA, which includes a visual inspection of accessible areas and a review of federal/State databases and historic maps/aerial photos, identified a variety of concerns, originating primarily from automotive uses including junkyards, auto body shops, and repair shops. Based on the Phase I ESA, a program of soil and groundwater testing was developed, though access for borings was limited to streets/sidewalks. The testing found both historic fill material and evidence of low level petroleum contamination. However, based on the condition and general housekeeping of many of the parcels, it is believed that there may be areas of more concentrated petroleum contamination (in soil and likely groundwater), especially near the underground tanks located on some individual parcels. With respect to the anticipated redevelopment of Lot B, a preliminary subsurface investigation was conducted by Mueser Rutledge Consulting Engineers in July 1998, and subsequent environmental investigations relating to the development of Citi Field—including two soil borings and 12 soil gas sampling locations—were completed within the Lot B site boundary in 2006.



Based on the existing Phase I and Phase II ESAs (for the District and Lot B), the hazardous materials analysis for the DGEIS will include the following:

- The potential for hazardous materials to be present will be determined from the Phase I (which reviewed fire insurance, and other historical maps; aerial photographs, DEC and New York City Fire Department records) and Phase II ESA reports.
- The potential for subsurface disturbance (associated with implementation of the overall Plan with Lot B, including demolition and decommissioning of existing utilities) will be discussed along with the potential for exposure to workers and the community during development of the District (i.e., when any subsurface contamination would be exposed and remediated) and to site occupants/users following development (especially more sensitive uses such as residences and schools).
- Given that subsurface testing will need to be performed at many of the properties where access has not been possible, procedures to ensure that appropriate testing (and any necessary remediation) for each site is performed will be specified. This testing would include both geophysical testing to locate underground tanks (or other buried items) and soil/soil vapor/groundwater testing to determine the impacts from petroleum spills or other sources of contamination.
- Based on the potential for impacts from hazardous materials, appropriate and likely remedial measures will be described. These measures may include: requirements prior to or during building demolition; testing and remediation of contaminated soil or groundwater prior to or during construction; special measures for the disposal of excavated soil; mitigation measures incorporated into the project design (e.g., venting of soil gas or capping of areas with soil contamination); and measures to protect health and safety during and, if appropriate, after construction.

### **TASK 13. WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM**

The District is located within the State and City's Coastal Zone, and therefore must be assessed for its consistency with the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP). A new WRP consisting of 10 policies was approved by the New York State Department of State (NYS DOS) in August 2002. These policies are used as the basis for evaluation of discretionary actions within the City's designated Coastal Zone. This analysis will review the 10 policies and assess where applicable, the general consistency of the project with the policies.

### **TASK 14. INFRASTRUCTURE**

As described in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, due to the size of New York City's water supply system and the City's commitment to maintaining adequate water supply and pressure for all users, few actions would have the potential to result in a significant adverse impact on the water supply system. The proposed Plan and Lot B would result in increased demand for infrastructure services, including an increase in the District's demand for water and wastewater treatment services. The proposed Plan and Lot B would require infrastructure connections/extensions, as the District is not currently connected to the City's sewer systems. The estimated water usage, sewage generation, and stormwater discharge rates associated with the maximum development envelope will be evaluated to determine if the capacity of the network is sufficient, and to determine whether the proposed Plan with Lot B will result in any significant adverse impacts. This section will also describe and account for any changes in drainage associated with the proposed Plan and Lot B.

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### *Water Supply*

A review of City water supply maps shows that the District is served by a 72-inch water line. Demands in the area served by this line are generally limited to the Willets Point Development District and Shea Stadium. The analysis of water supply will include the following subtasks:

- The existing water distribution system serving the District will be described based on information obtained from the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)'s Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations.
- The current water usage within the District will be estimated.
- The likely demand will be assessed for future conditions without the proposed Plan and Lot B, and the effects on the system will be described.
- Average and peak water demand for the maximum development envelopes will be projected.
- The effects of the incremental demand on the system will be assessed to determine if there is sufficient capacity to maintain adequate supply and pressure.

### *Wastewater*

The entire Willets Point Development District is currently without any connections to the New York City sanitary sewer system, requiring individual septic fields throughout the area. Therefore all flow generated by the proposed Plan and Lot B would result in additional wastewater requiring treatment. The analysis of wastewater includes the following subtasks:

- The existing sewer system serving the District will be described based on available information obtained from DEP. Flows to the Bowery Bay Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) will be obtained for the latest 12-month period of record. The 12-month average monthly flow will be presented.
- The future sewage flows generated within the WPCP service area will be obtained from DEP's study of population and employment for this area. The projected 12-month average monthly flow will be presented.
- Sanitary sewage generation will be estimated for the maximum development envelopes and Citi Field with Lot B, based on the most current water usage calculations DEP employs and on data submitted to DEP for the Citi Field project.
- Proposed amendments to the drainage plan for the District will be described and evaluated, including anticipated changes associated with the Citi Field project.
- The effects of the incremental sewage demand on the City's sewer system, pump station(s), and WPCP will be assessed to determine if there would be any impact on the existing sewer capacity, local pumping station, the operations of the WPCP or on its SPDES permit conditions.
- The analysis will include an examination of the potential for issues related to impacts on combined sewer overflow events (CSOs). This analysis would be based on the sewer information for the area and any known CSO issues in the drainage area that covers the District, as well as the proposed amendments to the drainage plan. An analysis of the potential for separating storm and sanitary waste will also be evaluated.

### *Stormwater*

Currently, drainage is conveyed through an interconnected sewer system within existing streets and roadways in the District. The current system is reported to be in poor condition, as

temporary flooding conditions occur regularly in the area. The proposed Plan and Lot B would create new drainage patterns over the District and would require an amendment to the existing drainage plan. This task includes:

- Describe the existing runoff characteristics of the District, including a description of pervious and impervious surfaces.
- Based on the maximum development envelopes, describe the potential changes to runoff characteristics, including the quantity and quality of runoff.
- Assess the potential impacts to surface water quality resulting from potential changes in stormwater management.

#### *Solid Waste*

The analysis of solid waste will include the following subtasks:

- Existing and future City solid waste disposal practices will be described, including the collection system and status of landfilling, recycling, and other disposal methods.
- Solid waste generation will be estimated for existing conditions and the future without the proposed Plan.
- Solid waste generation by the Plan with Lot B will be projected.
- The impacts of the Plan's solid waste generation on the City's collection needs and disposal capacity will be assessed.

#### *Energy*

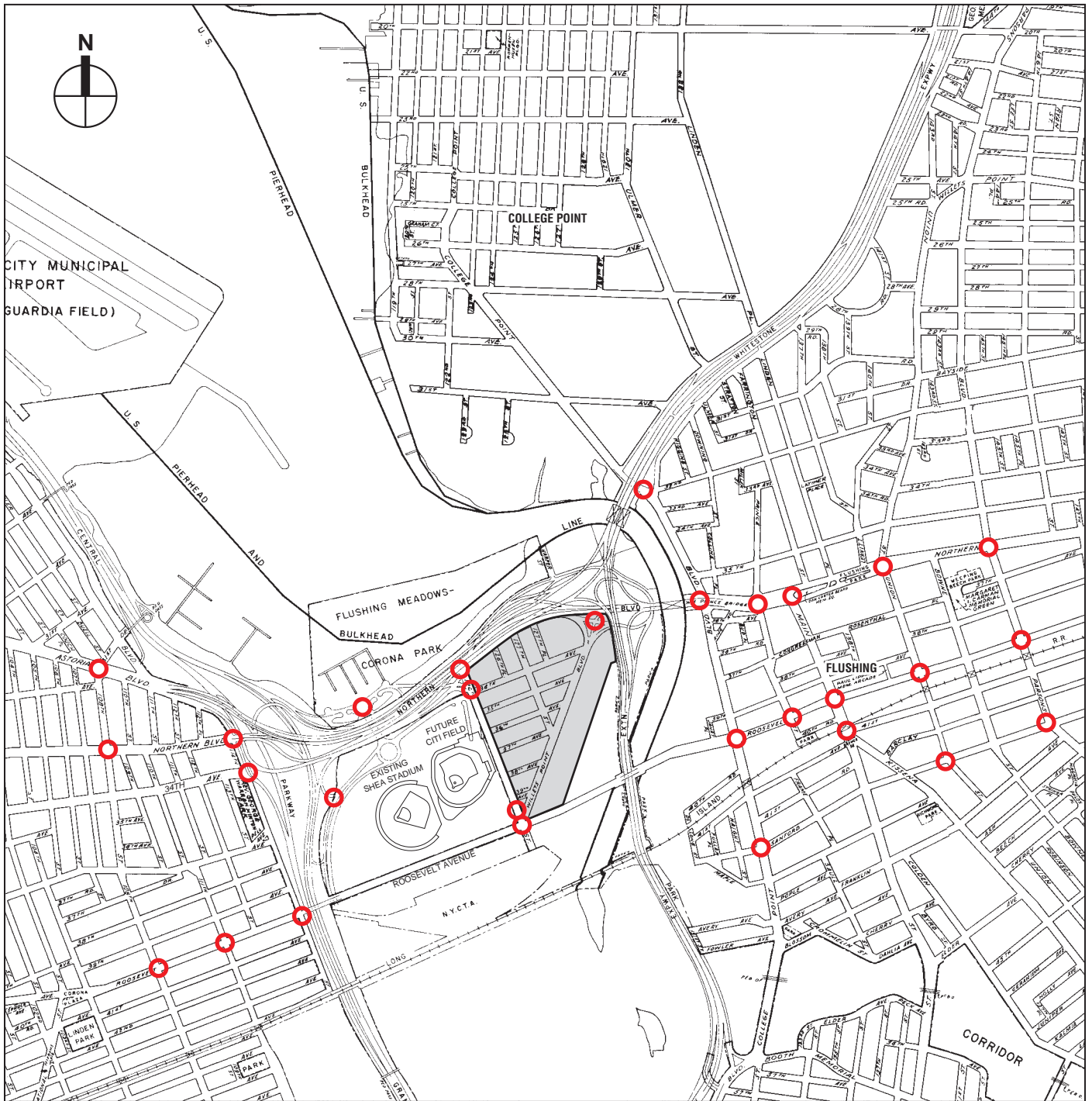
The analysis of energy will include the following subtasks:

- The energy systems that supply the study area will be described.
- Projected changes in the demand for energy will be assessed, and their effect on the supply systems will be described.
- The energy usage for the maximum development envelopes will be estimated. Any construction of new distribution lines necessary to meet the potential demand will be described.

### **TASK 15. TRAFFIC AND PARKING**

The primary objective of the traffic and parking analysis is to assess whether the proposed Plan and Lot B can be expected to have significant impacts on the roadway network and parking, and to identify and evaluate appropriate mitigation measures to address such impacts. The DGEIS's traffic and parking studies shall include the following subtasks:

- Identify appropriate primary and secondary traffic study areas. The primary study area is the focus of more intense traffic activity generated by the proposed Plan (and Lot B) closer to the District, while the secondary area is the focus of a more targeted and less intense analysis. The primary study area focuses on the immediate intersections surrounding the District, as well as critical/sensitive locations at a greater distance from the site depending on the volume of project-generated trips assigned to these critical locations. It is anticipated that the following roadway intersections and ramp/merge/diverge/weave sections along the surrounding major highways, will be analyzed (see Figure 9).



- Willets Point Development District
- Intersection to be Analyzed

0 1000 2000 FEET  
SCALE

*STREET NETWORK*

- Parsons Boulevard @ Northern Boulevard;
- Parsons Boulevard @ Roosevelt Avenue;
- Parsons Boulevard @ Sanford Avenue;
- Union Street @ Northern Boulevard;
- Union Street @ Roosevelt Avenue;
- Union Street @ Sanford Avenue;
- Main Street @ Northern Boulevard;
- Main Street @ Roosevelt Avenue;
- Main Street @ Kissena Boulevard / 41st Avenue;
- Prince Street @ Northern Boulevard;
- Prince Street @ Roosevelt Avenue;
- College Point Boulevard @ 32nd Avenue;
- College Point Boulevard @ Northern Boulevard;
- College Point Boulevard @ Roosevelt Avenue;
- College Point Boulevard @ Sanford Avenue;
- Roosevelt Avenue @ Willetts Point Boulevard;
- Roosevelt Avenue @ 108th Street;
- Roosevelt Avenue @ 111th Street;
- Roosevelt Avenue @ 114th Street;
- Roosevelt Avenue @ 126th Street;
- Northern Boulevard @ Willetts Point Boulevard;
- Northern Boulevard @ 108th Street
- Northern Boulevard @ 114th Street
- Roosevelt Avenue @ 108th Street;
- Northern Boulevard @ 126th Street;
- 34th Avenue / GCP Exit Ramp/ Northern Boulevard Exit Ramp @ 126th Street;
- Grand Central Parkway northbound exit ramp @ West Park Loop Road;
- Astoria Boulevard @ 108th Street;
- Northern Boulevard @ 108th Street;
- Northern Boulevard @ 114th Street;
- 34th Avenue @ 114th Street;
- Roosevelt Avenue @ 111th Street;
- Roosevelt Avenue @ 114th Street;
- Worlds Fair Marina @ Boat Basin Road; and
- 126th Street and/or Roosevelt Avenue @ major new project-generated intersections (likely two total).

Once the magnitude and assignment of project-generated traffic volumes have been determined, it is anticipated that some of these intersections may be screened out as not requiring detailed

analysis. Intersections will be selected for analysis based on the project trip generation program and preliminary assignment routes.

*HIGHWAY NETWORK*

- Grand Central Parkway mainline in both directions between LIE and Roosevelt Avenue;
  - Van Wyck Expressway mainline in both directions between LIE and Roosevelt Avenue;
  - Whitestone Expressway mainline in both directions between Northern Boulevard and Linden Place;
  - Ramp from World's Fair Marina/Boat Basin Road to the Grand Central Parkway;
  - Ramps from the northbound Van Wyck Expressway to eastbound and westbound Northern Boulevard;
  - Ramp from the northbound Whitestone Expressway to the southbound Van Wyck Expressway;
  - Ramp from westbound Northern Boulevard to the southbound Van Wyck Expressway;
  - Ramp from eastbound Astoria Boulevard and eastbound Northern Boulevard to the northbound Whitestone Expressway;
  - Ramps from the southbound Whitestone Expressway to the eastbound and westbound Grand Central Parkway;
  - Ramp from westbound Northern Boulevard and southbound Whitestone Expressway to westbound Astoria Boulevard;
  - Ramp from eastbound Astoria Boulevard and the Grand Central Parkway to the northbound Whitestone Expressway and eastbound Northern Boulevard;
  - Ramp from the eastbound Grand Central Parkway toward Stadium Road and the northbound Whitestone Expressway;
  - Ramp from the southbound Whitestone Expressway to westbound Northern Boulevard; and
- For the purposes of vehicular traffic analysis, a network-wide analysis will be conducted. The proposed Plan assumes that all existing streets within the District will be demapped, and any future streets proposed will be private streets. The traffic analysis will thus look at key entry points from the public streets to the private street network for assessment.
  - Inventory and update street widths, sidewalk widths, and traffic flow directions, number of moving lanes, parking regulations, official signal timing (cycle length, phases), traffic control devices (stop sign, signal), location of bus stops, driveways of the public streets surrounding the District, as well as other items required for traffic analysis. The most recent signal timings from the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) will be obtained for each study area intersection.
  - Determine the peak traffic analysis hours. In accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, all data collected or used for the analyses should be less than three years old. Existing available data may be used, and recent available data collected for the Downtown Flushing Traffic Simulation Study, EISs under way for Downtown Flushing development sites, and any recent data that could have been collected for Shea Stadium studies will be

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reviewed. Establish peak hours in consultation with existing sources (such as other EISs, counts, etc), with the peak traffic analysis hours informed by the uses anticipated for the proposed Plan and Lot B. The guidelines set forth in the *CEQR Technical Manual* will be used when collecting new counts. It is anticipated that the following seven peak traffic analysis periods and analysis conditions will be analyzed:

- Weekday AM peak hour (without Mets game);
  - Weekday midday peak hour (without Mets game);
  - Weekday PM peak hour (without Mets game);
  - Saturday midday peak hour (without Mets game);
  - Weekday PM peak hour (with Mets game==pregame arrivals);
  - Saturday midday peak hour (with Mets game==pregame arrivals); and
  - Saturday late afternoon peak hour (with Mets game==postgame departures).
- Examine existing 24-hour Automatic Traffic Recorder (ATR) machine counts and possible new counts, and compare the hourly data with projected peak hour trip generation for the proposed Plan and Lot B in order to determine the exact hours to be analyzed.
  - Assemble available traffic count data and supplement it with additional traffic counts where needed. New counts would be conducted via a mix of both ATR machine counts and manual intersection counts, noting through and turning volumes at each intersection being analyzed and vehicle classification counts needed to establish percentages by auto, taxi, truck, bus, etc. Traffic volume networks will be established for each of the intersections for each of the peak traffic analysis hours. Activities associated with existing uses in the District will also be surveyed via counts along 126th Street and Northern Boulevard.
  - Determine existing traffic operating characteristics—volume-to-capacity (v/c) ratios, average vehicle delays, and levels of service using Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) procedures. Findings will be presented in graphical and tabular forms.
  - Conduct travel speed and delay runs along key corridors, which will be analyzed for air quality and/or noise conditions. These corridors are expected to include Northern Boulevard, Roosevelt Avenue, 126th Street, the Van Wyck Expressway, the Grand Central Parkway, and other principal routes. Examine speeds for the existing conditions for each peak hour.
  - Determine the volume of traffic that can be expected to be generated by development projects that are anticipated to be built and operational by the proposed Plan's Build year. These traffic volumes will be assigned to the primary and secondary study area intersections and combined with an annual background traffic growth rate of one percent per year and vehicle trips generated by background projects, in order to develop future No Build traffic volume maps. Background projects will include the redevelopment of Shea Stadium (which will be smaller than the existing stadium), proposed development at the Municipal Lot No. 1 site in Downtown Flushing, and other major developments proposed and expected to be built in Downtown Flushing and other nearby locations. These projects will be identified in conjunction with DCP, and their trip generation will be quantified using standard travel demand forecasting methodologies. Changes to the roadway network likely to occur by the Build analysis year will also be identified and reflected in the traffic volume network.
  - Determine future No Build traffic operating characteristics—v/c ratios, average vehicle delays, and levels of service—using HCM procedures. Findings will be presented in graphical and tabular forms.

- Determine the volume of traffic that would be generated by the proposed Plan and Lot B. It is expected that a range of possible land uses will be considered, including hotel, residential, destination retail, local retail, office, recreational/entertainment, movie theater, and others. These uses will have different trip-making characteristics and vary by time periods and modes of transportation. A travel demand projection estimating the projected activities associated with these uses will form the basis on which the entire transportation impact assessment will be conducted. Trip generation rates, temporal distributions, modal splits, and average vehicle occupancies will be researched from recent City EISs and, if necessary, from other sources such as the 2000 U.S. Census database, the Institute of Transportation Engineers' *Trip Generation Manual*, and other accepted professional sources. This effort will also include an estimate of anticipated linkage of trips with the various uses being proposed and uses located surrounding the project site. NYCDOT will be consulted in developing the appropriate linkage estimates for the various proposed uses during different analysis time periods.
- Assign project-generated traffic volumes to and through each of the traffic analysis locations for each of the peak traffic hours and analysis conditions described above. Future Build traffic volume maps will be prepared for each analysis condition.
- Determine future Build traffic operating characteristics—v/c ratios, average vehicle delays, and levels of service—using HCM procedures. Findings will be presented in graphical and tabular forms. Proposed transportation improvements, including the new access ramps to and from the Van Wyck Expressway, will be incorporated into the Build traffic analyses.
- Identify potential significant traffic impacts by comparing future No Build and Build conditions as per criteria specified in the *CEQR Technical Manual*. Identify and evaluate traffic capacity improvements that would be needed to mitigate significant adverse traffic impacts.
- Prepare traffic volume and speed-and-delay data needed for the air quality and noise analyses.
- Identify all off-street parking lots and garages within 1/4 mile of the District—their locations, capacities, and occupancy levels during representative peak weekday and weekend conditions. Identify projected utilization levels under future No Build conditions, as well.
- Identify the amount of off-street parking being proposed under the proposed Plan and Lot B and develop parking accumulation profiles for the overall program, noting the adequacy or inadequacy of the capacity being built by time of day for weekday and weekend conditions, with and without events at Shea Stadium and the USTA National Tennis Center. The impact assessment will focus on the adequacy of parking, location of access/egress points, means of controlling/directing traffic to appropriate parking locations, and interface operations between parking driveways and the surrounding street system.
- Identify the typical parking regulations within 1/4 mile of the District and the percentage to which those on-street spaces are currently used and would be expected to be used under future No Build conditions.
- Estimate the number of on-street parking spaces that might be provided under the maximum development envelopes being evaluated in the DGEIS.
- Assess vehicle/pedestrian safety conditions by reviewing the most recent three years of accident data from NYSDOT for intersections in the vicinity of the project site. High accident locations will be identified in accordance with criteria prescribed by the *CEQR*



*Technical Manual.* If the proposed Plan with Lot B is anticipated to generate notable vehicular and pedestrian traffic at such locations, future safety conditions will be evaluated. Where appropriate, mitigation or improvement measures will be recommended to alleviate any safety impacts.

### **TASK 16. TRANSIT AND PEDESTRIANS**

The transit and pedestrians analysis will incorporate project-related components, assess whether the proposed Plan and Lot B can be expected to result in significant impacts, and evaluate appropriate mitigation measures to address such impacts. The specific elements of this analysis are outlined below.

- Identify transit and pedestrian study areas. Transit service is currently available via the No. 7 subway line, the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR), and the Q48 and Q66 bus routes. (Service to the Shea Stadium LIRR station is available on game days only.) A detailed analysis of control areas and circulation elements at the Willets Point-Shea Stadium subway station will be conducted. Ridership and peak period train loading will also be assessed. A qualitative discussion and a review of LIRR operations will be provided. A detailed analysis of the two nearby bus routes along the northern and southern borders of the District will also be conducted. This analysis will include an evaluation of peak load points and assessment of loading conditions at nearby bus stops. To address existing and future pedestrian conditions, sidewalks, crosswalks, and corner reservoirs along Roosevelt Avenue, 126th Street, and Northern Boulevard will be analyzed. In addition, specific elements associated with the proposed Plan, such as sidewalks and crosswalks within the District, will be assessed to determine if the projected activities could be accommodated.
- Review preliminary travel demand estimates for the proposed Plan and Lot B and determine the appropriate analysis time periods. Due to the level of cumulative activities anticipated for Mets game day arrival and departure, a detailed assessment of transit operations during these time periods will be conducted. To assess pedestrian conditions, a detailed analysis will be conducted for all game day and commuter peak time periods described for the traffic assessment. If warranted, weekday midday and non-game day conditions will also be assessed.
- Assemble available data and collect new data. New data will be collected at the Willets Point-Shea Stadium subway station, at nearby bus routes, and at surrounding pedestrian elements. These data will be supplemented by information developed for other studies, specifically those from the Shea Stadium Redevelopment EIS.
- Determine existing transit and pedestrian operating conditions. A detailed analysis will be conducted for the transit and pedestrian elements identified above and presented for the critical time periods. For the transit analysis, a quantified analysis will be conducted for the weekday AM and PM (with and without a Mets game) peak periods, as well as the weekend midday (with a Mets game) and late afternoon (with a Mets game) peak periods. For the pedestrian analysis, all seven peak periods identified for the traffic analysis above will be assessed.
- Determine future transit and pedestrian operating conditions. No Build and Build analyses will be conducted incorporating background growth, trips associated with other developments in the area, and increments induced by the proposed Plan and Lot B. For the Build conditions, the analysis will also address the potential effects associated with any anticipated changes in the area's transit and pedestrian infrastructure. Potential significant

impacts will be identified in accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines. Where appropriate, viable mitigation measures, such as stairway and crosswalk widenings, will be recommended and discussed with the appropriate approval agencies (e.g., MTA and NYCDOT).

## **TASK 17. AIR QUALITY**

The number of project-generated trips will likely exceed the *CEQR Technical Manual* air quality analysis screening thresholds at a number of locations within the traffic study area. Thus, an analysis of mobile emissions air quality impacts will be conducted. The potential effects of carbon monoxide (CO) and particulate matter emissions (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) from the project-generated vehicles on ambient levels in the study area will be assessed at the locations where the greatest potential for project-related increases in concentrations would occur.

The stationary source air quality impact analysis will assess the effects of emissions (e.g., sulfur dioxide, CO, particulate matter, and/or nitrogen oxides) from the proposed Plan's and Lot B's HVAC systems. In addition, the proposed Plan would add new residential uses and open spaces in an area with existing industrial/manufacturing uses. While the Plan would displace all industrial uses in the District, there may be remaining industrial uses in the broader study area. Therefore, an analysis to examine the potential for impacts on the proposed Plan from industrial emissions will be performed.

### *MOBILE SOURCE ANALYSES*

- 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 DEC will be compiled for the analysis of existing conditions.
- Determine receptor locations for microscale analysis. Select critical intersection locations in the study area, based on data obtained from the traffic analysis. At each intersection, multiple receptor sites will be analyzed.
- Select dispersion model. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s CAL3QHC screening model will be used for less congested locations. EPA's CAL3QHCR refined intersection model will be used at intersections that are found to exceed CO standards or *de minimis* criteria using the CAL3QHC screening model, and for the PM<sub>10</sub>/PM<sub>2.5</sub> intersection analysis. For the CAL3QHCR analysis, five years (2001-2005) of meteorological data from LaGuardia Airport will be used, and concurrent upper air data from Brookhaven, New York, will be used for the simulation program.
- Select emission calculation methodology and "worst-case" meteorological conditions. Vehicular cruise and idle emissions for the dispersion modeling will be computed using EPA's MOBILE6.2 model. For the "worst-case" analysis (at screening locations), conservative meteorological conditions to be assumed in the dispersion modeling are a 1 meter per second wind speed, Class D stability, and a 0.70 persistence factor. In addition, the *CEQR Technical Manual* recommended winter temperature of 43 degrees Fahrenheit will be used as input to the model.
- At each mobile source microscale receptor site, calculate maximum 1- and 8-hour CO concentrations for existing conditions, future conditions without the proposed project, and the future conditions with the proposed project. Maximum 24-hour and annual PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations will be determined for the future conditions without the proposed project and the future conditions with the proposed project. CO concentrations will be

## Willets Point Development Plan

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determined for up to three peak periods. No field monitoring will be included as part of these analyses.

- Evaluate potential future CO concentrations on nearby receptors in the District from the elevated Van Wyck Expressway.
- Assess the potential CO impacts associated with any proposed parking facilities. Information on the conceptual design of the parking facilities will be employed to determine potential off-site impacts from emissions. A screening analysis will be used following the procedures suggested in the *CEQR Technical Manual* for mechanically and naturally ventilated parking structures to determine maximum potential worst-case impacts. Cumulative impacts from on-street sources and emissions from the parking facilities will be calculated where appropriate. Compare future CO pollutant levels with standards and applicable *de minimis* criteria, to determine potential significant adverse project impacts.
- Examine traffic mitigation measures. Analyses will be performed to examine and quantify ameliorative measures to minimize any significant adverse impacts of the proposed Plan and Lot B.
- At any receptor sites where significant adverse air quality impacts are predicted to occur, analyses would be performed to determine what mitigation measures would be required to attain standards.

### STATIONARY SOURCE ANALYSES

- A stationary source screening analysis will be performed to determine the potential for significant pollutant concentrations from fossil-fueled heating, ventilating, and HVAC systems. The screening analysis will consider the potential impacts of the proposed Plan and Lot B, as well from existing or proposed large facilities within 1,000 feet of the District, as well as commercial, institutional, or large-scale residential developments within 400 feet of the District. Project-on-project impacts will also be determined, where applicable. The screening analyses will use the procedures outlined in the *CEQR Technical Manual*.
- A field survey will be performed to identify any manufacturing or processing facilities within 400 feet of the District. DEP's Bureau of Environmental Compliance (BEC) files will be examined to determine if there are permits for any industrial facilities within a 400-foot radius of the boundary of the District, and a 1,000-foot radius of the District for large sources with process emissions, as per the *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines. A review of federal and State permits will also be conducted. Based upon this information a determination will be made of whether further detailed analysis is necessary. If necessary, the ISC3 dispersion model screening database will be used to estimate the short-term and annual concentrations of critical pollutants at the potential receptor sites. Predicted worst-case impacts on the project will be compared with the short-term guideline concentrations (SGC) and annual guideline concentrations (AGC) reported in the DEC's DAR-1 AGC/SGC Tables (December 2003) to determine the potential for significant impacts. In the event that violations of standards are predicted, measures to reduce pollutant levels to within standards will be provided.

### TASK 18. NOISE

The noise study will focus on assessing: (1) potential noise impacts due to project-generated traffic; and (2) the level of attenuation needed in project-developed buildings to satisfy CEQR

requirements. The analysis of the proposed Plan's potential for noise impacts will include the following subtasks:

- Select noise descriptors to describe the noise environment and the impact of the proposed new developments. The 1-hour equivalent noise level ( $L_{eq(1)}$ ) and the 1-hour noise level exceeded 10 percent of the time ( $L_{10(1)}$ ) would be the major noise descriptors used. Other noise descriptors, such as  $L_{eq}/L_{dn}$ ,  $L_1$ ,  $L_{50}$ , and  $L_{90}$ , would be examined, where appropriate.
- Based on residential and other sensitive locations potentially affected by the Plan with Lot B, select appropriate noise receptor locations.
- Determine existing noise levels. Existing noise levels would be determined primarily by field measurements. Measurements would be made for both weekday and weekend conditions. Measurements would be made using a Type I, noise analyzer and would include measurements of  $L_{eq}$ ,  $L_1$ ,  $L_{10}$ ,  $L_{50}$ , and  $L_{90}$ , noise levels. Where necessary, measurements would be supplemented by mathematical model results to determine an appropriate base case of existing noise levels. Noise sources, particularly from surface traffic, aircraft, and industrial operations will be identified. Per CEQR requirements, noise from aircraft operations would be excluded from all measurements at sites intended for impact identification. This methodology yields a conservative analysis because the baseline measurement is lower, thereby increasing the increment in noise due to project-generated automobile traffic. Aircraft operation noise will be included in measurements taken at sites intended for building attenuation analysis, ensuring that the highest ambient level is recorded and adequate building attenuation can be planned for. If necessary, noise measurements will be made using the appropriate noise descriptors.
- Determine future noise levels without the proposed Plan and Lot B. At each receptor location, noise levels without the Plan with Lot B for the analysis year would be determined, based on the modeling performed using the TNM model for vehicular traffic and FTA modeling techniques for rail and transit facility noise.
- Determine future noise levels with the proposed Plan and Lot B. At each receptor location, noise levels with the proposed Plan for the analysis year would be calculated based on modeling performed using the TNM model for vehicular traffic and FTA modeling techniques for rail and transit facility noise. In addition, the analysis will also assess potential noise impacts from stationary sources.
- Compare noise levels with standards, guidelines, and other impact evaluation criteria. Existing noise levels and future noise levels, both with and without the proposed Plan and Lot B, will be compared with CEQR noise criteria. In addition, future noise levels with the proposed Plan and Lot B would be compared with future noise levels without the proposed Plan and Lot B to determine the impacts (e.g., an increase of 3 dBA or more would be considered a significant impact).
- Examine mitigation measures. If necessary, recommendations of measures to attain acceptable interior noise levels and to reduce noise impacts to acceptable levels will be made.

## **TASK 19. CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS**

The DGEIS will assess potential construction-related impacts. The likely construction schedule for development in the District and an estimate of activity on-site will be described. Construction impacts will be evaluated according to the *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines. The construction assessment for the proposed Plan will generally be qualitative, focusing on areas

where construction activities may pose specific environmental problems. Suggestions on how to mitigate potential impacts will also be included. Construction impacts lasting more than two years will be substantially analyzed. Technical areas to be analyzed include:

- **Traffic and Parking.** Most of the construction would be contained within the District, thereby minimizing potential impacts. Therefore, as noted above, the construction assessment will generally be qualitative. It will include a determination of the volume of construction workers driving to the site and the volume of construction vehicles entering and leaving the site in the peak traffic period in the peak year of construction. Construction in the District would also displace current on-site uses. To the extent that on-site parking is utilized today by Shea Stadium patrons, this use will be estimated and disclosed.
- **Air Quality.** Describe mobile source emissions from construction equipment and worker and delivery vehicles, and fugitive dust emissions. Analyze potential CO and PM mobile source air quality impacts during construction, based on information on traffic and truck volumes and on-site activities. Assess impacts of criteria pollutants from on-site construction activities, including particulate matter emissions from sources of fugitive dust. Discuss measures and emission reduction strategies to reduce impacts.
- **Noise.** Estimate construction noise levels from various pieces of construction equipment and discuss potential effects on adjacent land uses. Measures to minimize construction noise impacts will be presented, as necessary.
- **Hazardous Materials.** Construction of the proposed Plan would involve a variety of earth-moving and excavating activities, and construction activities in these areas could encounter contaminated soil or groundwater. The range of remedial and health and safety measures that would be employed prior to and/or during construction will be discussed.
- **Infrastructure.** The proposed Plan would need to relocate public infrastructure, particularly water and sewer connections, as well as electric, gas, and telephone lines; thus, the services to the neighborhood during the relocation will be addressed.
- **Other Technical Areas.** As appropriate, this section will discuss the other areas of environmental assessment for potential construction-related impacts.

### **TASK 20. PUBLIC HEALTH**

According to the guidelines of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, public health concerns for which an assessment may be warranted include: increased vehicular traffic or emissions from stationary sources resulting in significant adverse air quality impacts; increased exposure to heavy metals and other contaminants in soil/dust resulting in significant adverse hazardous materials or air quality impacts; the presence of contamination from historic spills or releases of substances that might have affected or might affect ground water to be used as a source of drinking water; solid waste management practices that could attract vermin and result in an increase in pest populations; potentially significant adverse impacts to sensitive receptors from noise and odors; and actions for which any potential impacts result in an exceedance of accepted federal, State, or local standards. Depending on the results of relevant technical analyses, a public health analysis may be warranted. If so, this analysis will be provided.

### **TASK 21. MITIGATION**

Where significant project impacts have been identified, measures to mitigate those impacts will be identified and described. This task summarizes the findings of the relevant analyses and

discusses potential mitigation measures. Where impacts cannot be practicably mitigated, they will be disclosed as unavoidable adverse impacts.

**TASK 22. ALTERNATIVES**

The purpose of an alternatives section in an EIS is to examine development options that would reduce or eliminate project-related impacts while substantially meeting the goals and objectives of the action. The specific alternatives to be analyzed will include a No Action Alternative, which describes the conditions that would exist if the proposed Plan and Lot B were not implemented, and a No Unmitigated Impact Alternative, which assesses a change in density or program design in order to avoid the potential for any unmitigated significant adverse impacts that may be associated with the proposed Plan and Lot B. The DGEIS will also include a Municipal Services Alternative, which evaluates conditions that would be likely to occur in the future without the proposed Plan if additional municipal services were provided to the District; a Flushing Bridge Alternative, which analyzes the proposed Plan with construction of a new pedestrian bridge connecting the District and downtown Flushing; and a Staged Acquisition Alternative, which would entail the City's initial acquisition of the western portion of redevelopment site, followed by the acquisition of the eastern portion of the site. This would allow more time for the suitable relocation of the larger businesses, which have more specific relocation needs. Additional alternatives to be analyzed would be based on any significant adverse impacts identified in the DGEIS. The analysis of each alternative will be qualitative, except where impacts of the Plan have been identified.

**TASK 23. EIS SUMMARY CHAPTERS**

*UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS*

Any significant impacts for which no mitigation can be put forth or implemented will be presented as unavoidable adverse impacts.

*GROWTH-INDUCING ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSED PLAN*

Describe any growth-inducing aspects of the proposed Plan and Lot B, focusing on whether it is expected to trigger further development.

*IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES*

This section summarizes the proposed Plan with Lot B and its impacts in terms of the loss of environmental resources, both in the immediate future and the long term.

**TASK 24. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Executive Summary will utilize relevant material from the body of the DGEIS to describe the proposed Plan with Lot B, its environmental impacts, measures to mitigate those impacts, and alternatives to the proposed Plan. \*

## **Attachment A: Response to Comments on Draft Scope of Analysis**

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### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This document summarizes and responds to comments on the proposed Draft Scope of Work (“Draft Scope”), issued on March 30, 2007, for the preparation of the Draft General Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) for the Willets Point Development Plan Project. Oral and written comments were received during the public hearing held by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development on May 1, 2007, and written comments were accepted from issuance of the Draft Scope through the public comment period, which ended May 14, 2007.

Section B lists the elected officials, organizations, and individuals who provided comments on the Draft Scope. Section C contains a summary of these comments and a response to relevant comments. These summaries convey the substance of the comments made, but do not necessarily quote the comments verbatim. Comments are organized by subject matter and generally parallel the chapter structure of the proposed DGEIS. Where more than one commenter expressed similar views, those comments have been grouped and addressed together. Where relevant and appropriate, substantive changes and other edits to the Draft Scope have been incorporated into the Final Scope.

### **B. LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS WHO COMMENTED ON THE DRAFT SCOPE**

#### **ELECTED OFFICIALS**

1. Helen Marshall, Queens Borough President, oral comments and written submission dated May 1, 2007 (1)
2. Hiram Monserrate, New York City Councilmember, oral comments (2)
3. Nettie Mayersohn, Member of Assembly 27th Assembly District, oral comments presented by Michael Simanowitz, written submission dated May 1, 2007 (3)

#### **ORGANIZATIONS**

4. American Chinese Women's Association, Ethel Chen, President; Executive Board Member – Holly Civic Association; oral comments (4)
5. Asian Americans for Equality, Unidentified Speaker, oral comments (5)
6. Asian Queens Housing Development Corp., Charles Pei Wang, Executive Director, oral comments and written submission dated May 1, 2007 (6)
7. Association for a Better New York, Michelle A. Adams, written submission dated May 1, 2007 (7)
8. Building & Construction Trades Employers Association, Paul Fernandes, oral comments (8)
9. Community Board 7, Joe Femenia, member, written submission dated April 16, 2007 (9)

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10. Community Board 7, Robert LoPinto, member, written submission (10)
11. Community Board 7, Ranganatha Rao, member; Holly Civic Association, oral comments and written submission dated May 1, 2007 (11)
12. Community Board 7, Isaac Sasson, member, written submission dated April 23, 2007 (12)
13. Convention Development NYC & Company, Susan Wall, Vice President, oral comments and written submission dated May 1, 2007 (13)
14. Flushing Chinese Business Association, Fred Fu, oral comments (14)
15. Flushing Chinese Business Association, Peter Koo, President, oral comments and written submission dated May 1, 2007 (15)
16. Flushing Jewish Community Council, Paul Engel, oral comments (16)
17. Flushing Willetts Point Corona Local Development Corporation, Claire Shulman, President, oral comments (17)
18. Georgian Jewish convention, Roman Zak, President, oral comments (18)
19. International Union of Painters & Allied Trades, District Council #9, Jack Kittle, oral comments and written submission dated May 1, 2007 (19)
20. Local #3 IBEW, Austin McCann, oral comments (20)
21. The Municipal Art Society Of New York, written submission dated May 14, 2007 (21)
22. New York Building Congress, Richard T. Anderson, President, written submission dated May 2, 2007 (22)
23. New York Hall of Science, Marilyn Hoyt, President and CEO, oral comments and written submission dated May 1, 2007 (23)
24. Pratt Center for Community Development, Mercedes Narciso, Senior Planner, oral comments and written submission dated May 1, 2007 (24)
25. Queens Botanical Garden, Susan Lacerte, Executive Director, oral comments (25)
26. Queens Chamber of Commerce, William R. Egan, Executive Vice President, oral comments and written submission dated May 1, 2007 (26)
27. Queens Congregations United for Action, Elcida Diaz, oral comments (27)
28. Queens Museum of Art, Tom Finkelppearl, Director, oral comments (28)
29. Queens Zoo, Dan Wharton, oral comments (29)
30. Real Estate Board of New York, Brian Klimas, oral and written comments (30)
31. Scrap Auto Wreckers & Parts Association, Kenneth Raiss, Attorney, oral comments (31)
32. TDC Development, JW Victor, representing Michael Meyer, President, oral comments and written submission dated May 1, 2007 (32)
33. Union Representative of Local 890, Carlos Gutierrez, oral comments (33)
34. Willetts Point Business Association, Richard Musick, oral comments (34)
35. Willetts Point Business Association, Christopher Petrizzo, oral comments (35)



**Attachment A: Response to Comments on Draft Scope of Analysis**

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36. Willets Point Industry & Realty Association, Nelson Johnson, Arnold & Porter, LLP (on behalf of) oral comments and written submission dated May 14, 2007 (36)
37. Willets Point Industry and Realty Association, Daniel T. Scully, written submission dated April 27, 2007 (37)
38. Women Builders Council, Sandra Wilkin, President, written submission undated (38)

**INTERESTED PUBLIC**

39. Cecilia Acevedo, Fodera Foods, oral comments (39)
40. Jerry Antonacci, Crown Container Co, Inc., oral comments (40)
41. Joseph Ardizzone, Willets Point resident, oral comments (41)
42. Nir Bello, Property & business owner, oral comments (42)
43. Jack Bono, Bono Sawdust Supply Co., Inc., oral comments (43)
44. Aldon Calderon, President, American Racing Shop Inc., oral comments (44)
45. Carlos Canal, Property owner, oral comments (45)
46. George Charalambos, Queens resident, oral comments (46)
47. Andros Cheridemou, Shea Trucking & Auto Rebuilders, oral comments (47)
48. Vinnie Cinque, Tully Construction Co, Inc., oral comments (48)
49. Yogem De La Cruz, Fodera Foods, oral comments (49)
50. David Duberstein, Resident, oral comments (50)
51. Iris Echevarria, Feinstein Ironworks, oral comments (51)
52. Daniel Feinstein, President and co-owner, Feinstein Ironworks Inc., oral comments (52)
53. Howard Feinstein, Vice President & co-owner, Feinstein Ironworks, oral comments (53)
54. Anthony Fodera, Owner, Fodera Foods, oral comments (54)
55. John Fodera, Fodera Foods, oral comments (55)
56. Barbara Franco, Queens resident, oral comments (56)
57. Alfred Franza, United Steel Products, Inc., written submission dated May 14, 2007 (57)
58. Irene Presti Giacomo, Property owner, oral comments and written submissions dated May 2, 2007 and May 10, 2007 (58)
59. Jerry Gomez, JDM Custom Wheels, oral comments (59)
60. Francisco Hermida, Roosevelt Auto, oral comments (60)
61. Gladys Hernandez, O.C.U.A, oral comments (61)
62. Holly Hung, Daughter of business owner, oral comments (62)
63. Jim Kennedy, Queens resident, oral comments (63)
64. Elianna Marin, Fodera Foods, oral comments (64)
65. Thomas Mina, Vice President, Thomas Mina Supplies, oral comments (65)

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66. Judy Musick, Former property owner, oral comments (66)
67. Jakeup Nuro, Former business owner, oral comments (67)
68. Armando Pagan, Vice President, Parts Authority Inc., oral comments (68)
69. George Pantelidis, Queens resident, oral comments (69)
70. Jackie Paterno, Property & business owner, written submission dated May 8, 2007 (70)
71. David Prevete, Property owner, Prevete Brothers, oral comments (71)
72. Elizabeth Rivera, Tully Construction Co. Inc., oral comments (72)
73. Yaron Rosenthal, Owner, Parts Authority Inc., oral comments (73)
74. Daniel Sambucci, III, Owner, Sambucci Brothers, oral comments (74)
75. Daniel Sambucci, Business owner, oral comments (75)
76. Jonathan Schanter, Sambucci Brothers, oral comments (76)
77. Janice Serrone, AA Glass Sales, oral comments (77)
78. Neil Soni, Owner, House of Spices, oral comments (78)
79. G.L. Soni, House of Spices, oral comments (79)
80. Bob Viala, Owner, Flushing Auto Salvage, oral comments (80)
81. Mohammad Wasim, House of Spices, oral comments (81)

## **C. COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

### **PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**Comment 1:** The scoping hearing did not comply with the State Environmental Quality Review Act/City Environmental Quality Review (SEQRA/CEQR) procedures because many members of the public were barred from entering. The hearing should be reopened to allow all persons who wish to attend to do so, and to allow comments based on the information that the Willets Point Industry and Realty Association has requested. (36)

**Response:** The scoping hearing complied with all applicable SEQRA/CEQR requirements. At certain times during the public hearing the room was filled to capacity and members of the public were asked to wait before entering the building. However, every individual had an opportunity to enter the building and register to speak at some point during the hearing, which was held between 3:00 PM and 7:30 PM. Every individual who registered to speak at the hearing had an opportunity to do so, and written comments were accepted through May 14, 2007 so that people who were not able to attend or did not wish to provide oral testimony at the hearing had an opportunity to submit written comments.

**Comment 2:** The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development is the lead agency and the agency in charge of CEQR review; this is contrary to state law, as it insulates the City Council and others in the review process. (65)

**Comment 3:** The City Council, as the ultimate decision-maker on this project, should be lead agency. (36)

**Response:** The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development is the appropriate lead agency for this project. It is sponsoring the proposed Plan in coordination with the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the Department of City Planning (DCP). The DGEIS will undergo coordinated review, with participation from multiple agencies. The coordinated review process will ensure that the interests and concerns of involved agencies will be considered by the lead agency as part of the environmental review process.

**Comment 4:** The City is deliberately denying the property owners a part in the process of redevelopment in order to accommodate only those whom they choose. (58, 65, 70)

The City has spent years and millions of dollars studying this; why hasn't the City asked the property and business owners what they would like to happen? (78)

**Response:** In addition to the public hearing on the Draft Scope, there will be other opportunities for the interested public to comment on the proposed Plan through the CEQR and Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) processes.

**Comment 5:** The City is fast-tracking this project at the expense of those most likely to be affected. (65)

**Response:** The City will follow all applicable rules and regulations regarding the timeline for public review under the CEQR and ULURP processes.

**Comment 6:** Given the substantial environmental issues associated with this project, it is unclear why the lead agency issued a "Positive Declaration." It seems that the agency should have issued a "Conditional Negative Declaration," and proposed remedial actions to mitigate the environmental impacts. (12)

**Response:** The commenter appears to have misinterpreted the meaning of a Positive Declaration. A Positive Declaration is issued when the lead agency determines that an action may have one or more significant adverse impacts. Issuance of a Positive Declaration requires that an EIS be prepared to analyze the potential for the project to result in significant adverse impacts. As part of the environmental review process, potential significant adverse impacts will be disclosed, and appropriate mitigation measures will be identified. Further, in accordance with the New York State SEQRA regulations, for proposed projects exceeding certain thresholds that are directly undertaken, funded or approved by an agency or municipality, those required proposed actions are deemed to be Type I actions for which a Conditional Negative Declaration (CND) is not applicable. The proposed Plan would be considered a Type I action because it proposes to

permit the construction of: 1) at least 2,500 new residential units in a city or town having a population of greater than 1,000,000, which would be connected to existing community or public water and sewerage systems including sewage treatment works (6NYCRR617.4(b)(5)(v)); and 2) a facility with more than 240,000 square feet of gross floor area in a city, town or village having a population of more than 150,000 persons, (6NYCRR617.4(b)(6)).

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION, PURPOSE, AND NEED**

*GENERAL*

**Comment 7:** De-mapping of public streets will result in additional available development rights. The Draft Scope does not include an analysis of how much additional Floor Area Ratio (FAR) results. The permanent de-mapping of streets results in a substantial square footage loss of publicly owned property. The Draft Scope should justify this loss. (21)

**Response:** The proposed Special Willets Point District will include a cap on the overall FAR to be developed in the District, and the Urban Renewal Plan will prescribe the maximum development envelope for the proposed Plan. The proposed demapping of the District's streets would permit flexibility in site plan design and would not be used to generate floor area for development.

**Comment 8:** It is unfair that the property owners have been paying taxes and not received services in return for years. (18, 31, 34, 44, 45, 46, 55, 57, 58, 59, 62, 65, 70, 77, 78)

The City has harassed the existing business owners by issuing violations for not providing these services, and collecting fines for these violations without giving owners the right to rectify the situation. (58, 67, 68)

**Response:** The DGEIS will contain a description of municipal services currently provided in the District, as well as a description of infrastructure improvements that would be made as part of the proposed Plan. The DGEIS will also describe a No Action with Additional Services Alternative, which evaluates conditions that would be likely to occur in the future without the proposed Plan if additional municipal services were provided to the District.

**Comment 9:** The proposed Plan will not be successful for a number of reasons, including: the amount of investment it would take to beautify the elevated 7 train enough to complement the new development; Flushing River is polluted and unattractive and will discourage people from living in or visiting the District; and the property is contaminated and can't be cleaned up enough for the proposed uses. (80)

**Response:** As outlined in the Draft Scope, issues of urban design, hazardous materials, and natural resources will be examined in the DGEIS.

**Comment 10:** The Final Scope should include growth inducing impacts. (21)

**Response:** The Final Scope of Work has been revised to include an analysis of growth inducing impacts. In particular, the DGEIS will account for the additional development that could occur on Citi Field parking lot B (Lot B) if the proposed Plan is approved and the District is redeveloped. While specific development plans for Lot B have not yet been proposed, Lot B could be independently developed with a new office, retail, and parking program and is not linked to the proposed Plan. However, because of the proximity of Lot B to the District, this site's development would be more likely to occur as a result of the proposed Plan. While each project would require separate actions—each with its own approvals and environmental review processes—together they would add substantial new development to the immediate area. Therefore, in addition to evaluating the proposed Plan's potential to have environmental impacts, the DGEIS will conservatively consider the cumulative impacts of both projects (the Willets Point Development Plan and the proposed development on Lot B).

**Comment 11:** The City should plan for the redevelopment of the waterfront in Downtown Flushing simultaneously with the proposed Plan. (14, 32)

The new Willets Point community should be viewed as a tourist destination as a whole; new projects should also be created in Downtown Flushing. (15)

**Response:** The DGEIS will include a description of applicable public policy and the relationship of the Willets Point Development District to other areas, including Downtown Flushing.

**Comment 12:** The City has involved local elected officials and Community Boards 7, 3, and 4 in the process to facilitate the redevelopment plan for Willets Point. (1)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 13:** The Final Scope of Work should include a plan for the disposition of property to multiple owners and developers, as opposed to a single developer. (21)

**Response:** This is not a scoping comment. The mechanism for the disposition of property is not relevant to the analysis of the project's potential environmental impacts. Property disposition will be determined at a later date—after the completion of the environmental review process and pending approval of the proposed Plan.

**Comment 14:** The auto-related businesses were recently surveyed by Professor Tom Angotti and his colleagues at Hunter College. The results of this study should be reviewed in detail and incorporated into the DGEIS as applicable. (36)

**Response:** This study, among other documents, will be reviewed, and relevant information will be incorporated as part of the DGEIS.

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### *PURPOSE AND NEED*

**Comment 15:** Any public project initiated by the City should aim to achieve the maximum public good, particularly for society’s most vulnerable groups, and should include development of community facilities that are otherwise inhibited by the high cost of privately-held land. (6)

**Response:** The DGEIS will describe the range of community facility uses that could be included in the proposed Plan.

**Comment 16:** The proposed Plan should be constructed in public property, like Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. (42)

The proposed Plan should be constructed somewhere other than Willets Point. (49)

**Response:** As described in the Draft Scope, one of the key goals of the proposed Plan is to transform a largely underutilized site that has long been characterized by environmental concerns, building code violations, and illegal activities into a new, enlivened destination with improved connections to surrounding neighborhoods and a mix of uses. Constructing the development on an alternate property—particularly a well-utilized public resource such as Flushing Meadows-Corona Park—would not meet the stated purpose and need of the proposed Plan.

**Comment 17:** While demand for hotels is adequately supported in the Draft Scope, there is no similar evidence presented of a need for a new convention center in Queens. (21)

**Response:** The DGEIS will address the need for a new convention center in Queens. The DGEIS will also include a discussion of a No Convention Center Scenario as part of the proposed Plan.

**Comment 18:** The City is in need of a convention facility to accommodate “mid-sized” tradeshows that require 50,000 to 400,000 gross square feet, such as the convention center that is proposed as part of the Willets Point Redevelopment Plan. (13)

The proposed facility, combined with the proposed hotel, is a suitable alternative to meet this need. It would also give another part of the City the opportunity to benefit from New York City’s visitor industry. (13, 26)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 19:** The proposed development would be extremely beneficial to the surrounding neighborhoods, the Borough of Queens, and the City as a whole. (3, 6, 7, 8, 13, 19, 28, 29, 30, 38, 63, 69)

It is now time to clean up Willets Point and recognize its enormous potential (7, 63).

The proposed Plan would include affordable housing and retail space, and would result in hundreds of construction jobs and permanent employment opportunities once the project is completed. (7, 19, 30, 38, 69)

Once completed, the redevelopment of Willets Point will be an ongoing source of tax revenue, generating approximately \$1.5 billion over a projected 30-year period. (7, 19)

Consistent with the City's PlaNYC 2030, the proposed Plan makes efficient use of land through the remediation of a 60-acre Brownfield site and the transformation of an underutilized area into a vibrant, mixed-use community. (22, 30)

This mixed-use plan improves environmental conditions in the area while creating much-needed affordable housing. (3, 19)

The Willets Point Development District is well situated for supporting residential, retail, commercial, and cultural development, with its proximity to mass transit and major arterial highways and airports, as well as nearby attractions such as Shea Stadium, Downtown Flushing and the USTA Tennis Center. (7, 22, 30, 69)

The proposed Plan makes sense, as it will attract business from nearby Shea Stadium. (20)

**Response:** Comments noted.

**Comment 20:** The proposed Plan would bring needed infrastructure improvement to the area, including increased transit service. (23, 25)

**Response:** The DGEIS will assess the effects of any infrastructure improvements that are included in the proposed Plan.

**Comment 21:** The Bloomberg administration should be praised for its inclusion of opportunities for Minority and Women Business Enterprises. (38)

**Response:** Comment noted.

*PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT PLAN*

**Comment 22:** The proposed Plan packs too many uses into a small area. The proposed development should include more cultural and community facility uses and less office and retail uses. The proposed retail use should be reduced to 1.5 million gross square feet (gsf), and the office uses reduced to 100,000 gsf, as there is plenty of space being developed in the College Point Corporate Park. The movie theater should be removed from the plan, as there is an existing movie theater less than a mile away. The proposed hotel should be reduced to 600 rooms. The

## Willets Point Development Plan

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community and cultural spaces should be increased to 500,000 gsf (including a mini-theater for the performing arts), and the school should be expanded to 500,000 gsf. (11)

**Response:** The development programs proposed in the Final Scope represent a maximum development envelope, and will be used as a framework to assess potential impacts. Actual development within the District will depend on various factors, such as developer proposals and future market conditions.

**Comment 23:** The Asian population in Queens is aging, and there are currently very few nursing homes or elderly housing equipped with services to accommodate them. The proposed Plan should set aside a site for the construction of low-income senior housing to serve this population. (6)

**Response:** Although the proposed Plan does not require a senior housing development, housing units in the District would offer both rental and homeownership opportunities for a diverse range of incomes.

**Comment 24:** The City needs to ensure that there is a real affordable housing component to the project. (2)

The Draft Scope refers to the creation of an urban renewal area that will provide new affordable and market rate housing. The scope does not define either “affordable” or “market rate,” nor does it specify the criteria that will be used to determine income requirements. (21)

Fifty percent of the proposed residential units should be set aside for affordable housing at or below the median income for Queens, and at least 20 percent of those units should be affordable for low-income families. These units should be made affordable in perpetuity. (5, 24, 27)

**Response:** As stated in the Draft Scope, the proposed Plan would offer both rental and homeownership opportunities for a diverse range of incomes. The Final Scope has been updated to note that the Plan anticipates that 20 percent of the proposed units would be reserved for low- to moderate-income households.

**Comment 25:** The City should clean the Flushing River in connection with the project. (14)

**Response:** This is not a scoping comment. The DGEIS will assess the impacts of the proposed Plan on natural resources, including the Flushing River.

**Comment 26:** The DGEIS should specify in detail the degree to which green technologies will be used. For example, the DGEIS should specify which LEED rating the proposed buildings would meet, and specify the strategies and technologies that the buildings would use to meet this rating system. (36)

The project should apply LEED standards for sustainable development and seek the “affordable housing” points in their LEED application. (24)



- Response:** Sustainable design features will be discussed in further detail in the DGEIS.
- Comment 27:** Energy efficiency measures should be incorporated in the Willets Point design to reduce energy consumption. Use of central air conditioning should be used, if that is optimal in terms of energy efficiency. The potential to use geothermal technology should be explored. An effort should be made to use efficient heat exchangers. (50)
- Response:** The New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) would encourage any future development in the District to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND) certification. The DGEIS will describe a range of sustainable practices that may be incorporated into the proposed Plan, including measures to reduce energy consumption.
- Comment 28:** The proposed Plan should reflect the character of the surrounding neighborhoods, which are relatively poor, by providing much-needed services and low-income housing. (28, 61)
- The surrounding areas are not “luxury”; this plan contains too much luxury residential and other uses. (42, 56, 61, 77)
- Response:** The proposed Plan would offer rental and homeownership opportunities for a diverse range of incomes. The “Socioeconomic Conditions” chapter of the DGEIS will consider whether the proposed Plan has the potential to affect the housing and socioeconomic profile of the surrounding study area.
- Comment 29:** The City should ensure the involvement of organized labor and that living-wage jobs are provided. (2, 8, 20)
- The City should guarantee the provision of living-wage jobs with first-source hiring and business opportunities targeted to residents in nearby neighborhoods. (24)
- Response:** The “Socioeconomic Conditions” chapter of the DGEIS will estimate the number and type of jobs that would be generated by the proposed Plan. An analysis of whether living-wage jobs should be provided is a public policy issue and is outside of the scope of CEQR.
- Comment 30:** The project should include a waterfront open space to the east, along Flushing River, that would provide access from the District to Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. (14)
- There is a marina and a beautiful promenade on the waterfront that is largely unconnected to Willets Point and Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. New connections must be made to fully utilize those resources. (1)

## Willetts Point Development Plan

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**Response:** The DGEIS will describe existing and future connections between the District and surrounding uses. The open space analysis in the DGEIS will assess the proposed Plan's effects on open space supply and demand in the ¼-mile and ½-mile open space study areas and will include a qualitative evaluation that considers such factors as the proximity and accessibility of existing open spaces outside of the study areas.

**Comment 31:** The project should include more frequent service to the project site from the No. 7 train and the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR). (1, 14, 23, 28)

**Response:** An analysis of transit operating conditions will be conducted for the No. 7 subway line and the Q48 and Q66 bus routes. The LIRR station closest to the District is only operational during game days. The DGEIS will discuss the potential extension of regular LIRR service to this station. Should significant adverse impacts be identified, feasible mitigation measures, if any, will be proposed.

**Comment 32:** The project should include strong linkages to the many cultural and historic institutions in the area. (23, 25)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 33:** The project should address future growth in Willetts Point by providing critical infrastructure, transportation, and community facilities. The plan should include new schools, daycare centers, and recreational centers for youth, and adequate infrastructure, including parking, traffic control, public transportation, and utilities. (24)

**Response:** The DGEIS will describe all infrastructure improvements, transportation improvements, and community facilities such as a school, that will be included as part of the proposed Plan. As described in the Draft Scope, the DGEIS will estimate infrastructure demands (water usage, sanitary sewage generation, stormwater discharge rates, solid waste generation, and energy usage), roadway and parking demands (trip generation and parking demand), and community facility demands (public schools, libraries, outpatient health care, day care) associated with the proposed Plan.

**Comment 34:** The scope states that 63 percent of land owners occupy the property in the District; however, it is closer to 50 percent. (73)

**Response:** This statement does not appear in the Draft Scope. However, the DGEIS will describe current land ownership and property utilization within the District.

### *SITE PLAN*

**Comment 35:** The City's plan does not adequately physically connect the site to the surrounding areas, such as Downtown Flushing, the USTA Tennis Center,

Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, and the adjacent residential neighborhood of Corona. (32)

The plan should include a pedestrian bridge from Downtown Flushing to the site. (14, 32) Otherwise, pedestrians from Flushing would have to access the site via Roosevelt Avenue, which is extremely noisy due to the elevated No. 7 train. (14)

The plan should provide a bridge or tunnel through Roosevelt Avenue. (14)

The plan should include construction of a new bridge between College Point Boulevard and Willets Point Boulevard (south of the site), which provides both vehicular and pedestrian access. (11)

**Response:** The DGEIS will assess changes in the urban design patterns of the study area as a result of the proposed Plan as well as any impacts the project could have on roadway conditions and pedestrian flows. As noted under “Task 22, Alternatives,” in the Draft Scope, the provision of a pedestrian bridge connecting the District and downtown Flushing will be analyzed as an alternative in the DGEIS.

**Comment 36:** The proposed street grid should respond to the existing Flushing waterfront zoning, with pedestrian visual corridors across the river. (32)

**Response:** The “Urban Design and Visual Resources” chapter of the DGEIS will assess changes in urban design patterns, including view corridors, planned streetscape, and street design and topology which would occur as a result of the proposed Plan.

**Comment 37:** The DGEIS should discuss the nature and proposed solutions for the formidable engineering challenges that confront the project, such as: 1) construction on artificially created land with questionable structural integrity; 2) how construction will affect the Northern Boulevard and Van Wyck Expressway structures, and; 3) how subsurface parking facilities will be provided, in view of the groundwater conditions and the necessity of capping the land. (36)

The environmental and other site conditions do not warrant the type and density of development that the City is proposing. (4, 31) A detailed soil survey should be done to ensure that the site can realistically be developed at the density proposed. (4)

The proposed mitigation of placing a four to six foot capping layer over the entire site may cause problems. The proposed fill could inadvertently surcharge the underlying areas and severely impact surrounding areas. (36)

**Response:** The DGEIS will describe geotechnical issues related to construction of the proposed Plan on Willets Point, including any remediation, and will assess the potential for significant adverse impacts associated with project construction. The Final Scope has been revised to reflect the inclusion of this discussion.

## **Willets Point Development Plan**

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**Comment 38:** The Final Scope should include an analysis of increases to build out costs that are due to flood proofing measures. (21)

**Response:** The DGEIS will discuss the project's conformity with floodplain requirements. Any estimated construction costs included in the DGEIS as part of the economic assessment will present costs associated with project construction.

**Comment 39:** The proposed residential uses should be located closer to the subway station, and the hotel and convention center should be placed elsewhere, as these uses primarily depend on vehicular access. (11, 32)

**Response:** The site plans included in the Draft Scope are illustrative and are intended to show a possible configuration of the uses proposed as part of the Plan. There is flexibility for the siting of residential uses. The actual site plan would be developed after a developer has been selected, pending project approval, and would be based on the zoning Special District text, the results of the environmental review, market factors, and engineering considerations among other things. The DGEIS will analyze the effects of the proposed Plan with respect to both urban design and transportation.

**Comment 40:** The proposed residential buildings should be located at least 100 feet from expressway ramps. (11)

**Response:** Comment noted.

### *EMINENT DOMAIN*

**Comment 41:** The use of eminent domain for this project is wrong. (33, 35, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 51, 52, 58, 59, 65, 66, 67, 74, 77) Eminent domain was originally intended for the public good, not the connected few. (35, 58) The "possible condemnation of property" would indicate that the project serve a public purpose. The Draft Scope should describe this public purpose in detail. (21) This is not a blighted area. (78)

The City needs to find an equitable solution to ensure that the existing property owners and businesses, as well as surrounding community, will be positively affected by the redevelopment. (1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 16, 23, 25, 26, 55)

The existing property owners should profit from the redevelopment, not developers. (18, 31, 51, 54, 58, 75)

There are enormous environmental and infrastructure issues to be addressed; how can the public know that the City will not take property and then fail to develop it? (37, 68, 71, 73)

The City has ignored the substandard conditions in this area for years; this is unlawful and unfair. It is unfair for the City to cite blighted conditions as its reason for condemning properties in Willets Point, since the state of the area is

largely due to the City's failure to provide basic services. (34, 36, 41, 46, 57, 58, 65, 68)

This is the second time in recent history the City has created a plan to redevelop Willets Point; the threat of condemnation has hindered property owners from making improvements to their properties and expanding their businesses. (57, 58, 78)

Why does the City want to condemn our properties now, when it provided us with grants and low-interest loans 28 years ago to enable us to remain in Willets Point? (57)

**Response:** Any condemnation undertaken for the proposed Plan will comply with all applicable federal and state laws and constitutional requirements. A description of the purpose and goals of the proposed redevelopment Plan will be included in the DGEIS.

#### **ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK**

**Comment 42:** The Framework for environmental review notes a built-out assumption of 2009-2017. The Final Scope should be more specific as to which project components will be built when. (21)

**Response:** Because there is no developer or specific development plan in place at this time, it is not possible to outline an exact construction plan for the proposed Plan. However, the "Construction Impacts" chapter of the DGEIS will present a likely construction schedule for development at the site. The DGEIS will assess project impacts at full build-out in 2017.

**Comment 43:** The DGEIS should assess a No Action condition where the City has complied with its obligation to provide adequate infrastructure services, but also community support services for existing businesses. (36)

**Response:** The DGEIS will include an analysis of a No Action with Additional Services Alternative, which evaluates conditions that would be likely to occur in the future without the proposed Plan if additional municipal services were provided to the District. The Final Scope has been revised to reflect the inclusion of this alternative.

**Comment 44:** The study area for the DGEIS should be expanded to two miles, due to the intensity of the proposed development. (10)

**Response:** The study areas outlined in the Draft Scope vary according to technical area (e.g., land use, socioeconomic conditions) and were defined to encompass the areas that would be most likely to be affected by the proposed Plan. Each of the study areas are consistent with or larger than what is recommended by *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines.

## **Willetts Point Development Plan**

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**Comment 45:** There are several large developments under way in the area: Flushing Town Center, Flushing Commons, Queens Crossing and the redevelopment of the RKO Keith Theater. These projects are close to Willetts Point and must be considered. (1)

**Response:** The DGEIS will consider all known development projects that are expected to be completed in any of the relevant study areas by 2017, including the projects identified above. These development projects will be included in the future baseline condition that will provide the basis against which the anticipated effects of the proposed Plan will be evaluated.

### **LAND USE, ZONING, AND PUBLIC POLICY**

**Comment 46:** The City's proposal is in conflict with an earlier study commissioned by (NYCEDC in 1991, which states that the area is best suited for industrial development and owner-sponsored improvement. (37, 65)

**Response:** The 1991 study does not reflect the City's current goals and objectives relating to Willetts Point. The DGEIS will consider the project's consistency with relevant public policy and will review previous planning studies pertaining to the study area.

**Comment 47:** The Final Scope should include a direct analysis of land use patterns and site utilizations in the project areas, as opposed to depending on studies that have already been conducted in the past. (21)

**Response:** The DGEIS will utilize current land use information for the study area.

**Comment 48:** It is likely that the existing businesses will decentralize, locating to less affluent neighborhoods. The Final Scope should include an evaluation of the decentralization of "pollution points" to neighborhoods that already host these uses. (21)

Existing businesses should not be relocated in Flushing, College Point, or other nearby areas. (9)

**Response:** The DGEIS will discuss potential relocation areas for the existing businesses that would be directly displaced as a result of the proposed Plan. It is likely that relocations would occur into areas that are zoned to permit such uses. None of the businesses located in the District are large emitters of air pollutants (none require a State Facility or Title 5 permit), and none of them individually would have the potential to result in significant adverse impacts in the areas to which they would relocate. As District businesses would relocate individually, no particular neighborhood would experience an influx of new industrial uses.

**Comment 49:** The Final Scope should analyze the loss of manufacturing space in relation to PlaNYC 2030, which calls for significant increases in public transportation.

Public transit yards need to be sites in M-zones; how does this plan relate to a more comprehensive plan for the City's manufacturing zones? (21)

**Response:** The proposed Plan would not displace any public transit yards. The DGEIS will consider the project's consistency with relevant public policy, including PlaNYC 2030.

### **SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

**Comment 50:** The goals of the proposed development refer to providing a significant number of quality new jobs for area residents. The Final Scope should provide a count of those jobs and a complete analysis of the nature, permanence, and quality of those jobs, and their availability both to local residents and to those workers displaced from current Willets Point businesses. For example, the retail component described in the Draft Scope makes no reference to how existing retailers in Corona and Flushing could benefit from an expanded customer base arising from hotel and convention center users. (21)

**Response:** The "Socioeconomic Conditions" chapter of the DGEIS will estimate the number and type of jobs that would be introduced by proposed Plan. This has been noted under "Task 4, Socioeconomic Conditions," of the Final Scope. The indirect business and institutional displacement portion of the chapter will consider the effects of the proposed Plan on existing businesses in the study area, including potential benefits to existing retailers.

### *DIRECT DISPLACEMENT*

**Comment 51:** The "Iron Triangle" provides a valuable, affordable service. This area is bustling with activity. This service would be lost forever. (36, 56, 68, 77, 80)

**Response:** Per *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, the analysis of direct business displacement will consider whether the businesses that would be displaced have substantial economic value to the City or regional area, and whether they could relocate without great difficulty. Consistent with the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the assessment of a business's economic value and relocation requirements will consider: 1) its products and services, 2) its locational needs, particularly whether those needs can be satisfied at other locations, and 3) the potential effects on businesses and consumers of losing the displaced business as a product or service.

**Comment 52:** There is a synergy among many of the existing businesses. If they are relocated and dispersed, not all of the businesses in the area will be able to survive. Therefore, the EIS should examine the impact associated with losing some businesses completely. (36)

The existing businesses will have much difficulty relocating for several reasons, including: Willets Point is one of the last M3-1 zones left in the City; many businesses depend on being in close proximity to transportation infrastructure;

and many businesses have long-term leases or have invested in extensive infrastructure that may be impossible to relocate. (36, 40, 52, 68, 73, 78, 79)

The DGEIS should include an analysis of the unique locational needs of the existing businesses, including the synergies of these businesses as well as the likelihood that they will be able to obtain the specialized permits they need to operate. (36)

**Response:** As indicated above, the analysis will consider whether the businesses that would be displaced have substantial economic value to the City or regional area, and the potential for relocation.

**Comment 53:** The Draft Scope does not include the number of jobs provided by existing businesses. (21)

**Response:** It is estimated that there are approximately 1,711 employees working at businesses located in the District. The DGEIS will include the latest available employment information.

**Comment 54:** Many of the jobs that would be lost are entry-level jobs; many of the workers are recent immigrants. (79)

The DGEIS should evaluate the effect on the individual workers that will lose their jobs, have to commute longer distances, etc. (10)

The “Iron Triangle” provides employment opportunities for new entrants to the work force. It also provides jobs and business opportunities for recent immigrants. The economic impact analysis must determine whether these lost opportunities will disproportionately affect low-income persons and minorities. (36)

Hundreds of families will be adversely affected by the loss of these jobs. (18, 39, 42, 45, 58, 59, 60, 67, 81)

**Response:** In accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the socioeconomic analysis will assess the likelihood that existing on-site businesses would be able to relocate within the study area or elsewhere in City. The results of this analysis will indicate whether or not the existing jobs would be retained in the City.

**Comment 55:** The City needs to put together a comprehensive relocation plan. (52, 53, 75, 79)  
The City has not yet spoken with the businesses about their relocation plan. (31, 52, 78) The City needs to provide a list of potential relocation sites. (68)

**Comment 56:** What will happen to the employees of these businesses? The relocation plan should include compensation for employees that are negatively impacted. (18, 39, 45, 48, 49, 52, 58, 60, 72, 76, 78, 81)

For those businesses that cannot feasibly be relocated, the City should compensate business owners for the value of their business. (37)



**Response:** To the extent known, the relocation benefits available to residents and businesses will be described in the DGEIS.

**Comment 57:** The City cannot possibly compensate businesses for the adverse effect that relocation will have; it takes years to establish a client base and reliable reputation in a location. (58)

**Response:** Comment noted.

*INDIRECT DISPLACEMENT*

**Comment 58:** The Final Scope should assess the disproportionate loss of jobs currently accessible to immigrants who are local residents, and the multiplier effects of job losses in Corona and Flushing local communities. Job losses emanating from changes of use to Willets Point may result indirectly in residential displacement. (21)

**Response:** The socioeconomic analysis will determine whether the businesses to be displaced have important or substantial economic value to the City and whether they would be able to relocate in the study area or elsewhere in the City. Following CEQR guidelines, the analysis will also consider whether a substantial number of businesses or employees would be displaced that collectively define the character of the study area and whether the project has the potential to result in significant adverse indirect residential displacement within the study area.

**Comment 59:** The projected uses include 1.7 million square feet of retail. Consideration should be given to what types of retail would be most appropriate to avoid duplication of services and goods that would adversely impact Flushing and Corona. (1)

**Response:** The DGEIS will consider the potential for indirect business displacement resulting from the proposed Plan.

*ADVERSE EFFECTS ON SPECIFIC INDUSTRIES*

**Comment 60:** The DGEIS should require a detailed analysis of adverse affects on other relevant industries, such as the waste management industry (including Tully Environmental, Inc., and Crown Container), the distribution industry (including House of Spices, Inc, Fodera Foods, and T. Mina Supply), and the wood product manufacturing industry (including American Sawdust Company and Bono Sawdust). (10, 36)

The DGEIS should thoroughly examine the effect that the proposed Plan would have on the construction companies that would be forced to relocate or close their businesses, including the adverse effects that could result in the local economy and on construction costs in New York City. (22)

## Willetts Point Development Plan

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**Response:** As indicated in the Draft Scope, it is anticipated that a detailed analysis will be undertaken to determine the proposed Plan's effects on the auto industry because approximately 75 percent of the businesses currently located in the District are auto-related businesses. Analysis of other industries currently located on the project site will be conducted at a level of detail that is appropriate based on *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, depending on the results of the preliminary assessment. The Final Scope has been revised to clarify this approach.

**Comment 61:** The Draft Scope notes that an analysis will reveal "adverse effects on a specific industry." In the case of Willetts Point, the concentration of auto uses constitutes an industrial synergy that is unique, and not likely to be duplicated elsewhere. The Final Scope should detail the efforts to relocate these uses, including accommodating them in the city's Industrial Business Zones. (21)

**Response:** The socioeconomic analysis will follow *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines in analyzing the potential for the proposed Plan to result in significant adverse direct business displacement impacts and effects on specific industries. To the extent known, the relocation benefits available to residents and businesses will be described in the DGEIS.

### *ECONOMIC ANALYSIS*

**Comment 62:** The Final Scope should begin to enumerate the public costs of the project, including, but not limited to: the costs of site acquisition; the costs of remediation; and the costs of required infrastructure. Without feasibility findings, there will be no way to determine public benefits such as the number of affordable housing units in comparison to the real costs paid by taxpayers. (21)

**Response:** Public sector costs associated with the proposed Plan, to the extent that they are known, will be described in the DGEIS.

**Comment 63:** The Draft Scope specifies that the DGEIS must "compare the estimated economic and fiscal benefits of the reasonable worst-case development scenario (RWCDs) to the benefits generated by the uses that are currently in the District." Since the current economic benefits from Willetts Point are stifled because the City has failed to provide basic services, the economic impact analysis should evaluate not only the economic benefits from the uses currently present, but also the benefits of an industrial community with all its required City services. (36)

**Response:** The DGEIS will include an analysis of a No Action with Additional Services Alternative, which evaluates conditions that would be likely to occur in the future without the proposed Plan if additional municipal services were provided to the District. Differences in economic benefits generated by the proposed redevelopment plan and those that could be generated under the No Action with

Additional Services Alternative will be discussed qualitatively in the “Alternatives” chapter of the DGEIS.

**Comment 64:** The economic impact analysis should evaluate the net economic benefits of the proposed Plan, not just its benefits in isolation. (36)

**Response:** As indicated in the Draft Scope, the economic benefits analysis will compare the estimated economic and fiscal benefits of the proposed Plan with the benefits generated by the uses that are currently present in the District. It will also disclose, to the extent that they are known, public sector costs associated with the proposed Plan.

**Comment 65:** Willets Point is not the only area in the City where you could put a shopping center, hotel or office building, but it is the only place where you could put the businesses that are there now. Accordingly, the economic impact analysis should evaluate the net economic benefits to the City, not just the benefits to the developer. (36)

**Response:** The DGEIS will examine the potential for businesses currently located in the District to relocate to other parts of the City, and will describe the City’s relocation plans for on-site businesses, to the extent that they are known. The economic impact analysis will estimate economic and fiscal benefits to New York City and State.

**Comment 66:** The direct and indirect losses of jobs and tax revenues should be quantified. (36)

**Response:** The economic impact analysis will estimate the direct and indirect economic and fiscal benefits (including jobs and tax revenues) currently generated by businesses in the District. Future plans for each of the existing on-site businesses will not be known before completion of the environmental review process. Therefore, it is not possible to disclose in the DGEIS what portion of the direct and indirect economic impacts currently generated would be lost or retained within the City and State.

#### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

**Comment 67:** The proposed Plan must include community facilities to serve the new residences, including a new school. (2)

**Response:** As described in the Draft Scope, the proposed Plan includes a new public school, approximately eight acres of new publicly accessible open space, and approximately 150,000 square feet of space for community facility uses.

**Comment 68:** The proposed 650-seat school is insufficient. The capacity should be increased relative to the Board of Education’s 30-year projections. This project should address the need for intermediate and high school seats. (10, 11, 27)

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**Response:** A new public school would be constructed to serve the District residents and would be programmed to meet the project-generated shortfall in school capacity. The program and capacity of the school would be developed in consultation with the School Construction Authority (SCA) and the Department of Education (DOE) but, under full program build out, is contemplated to contain between 850 and 900 seats. The DGEIS will assess the proposed Plan's potential to generate new elementary, intermediate, and high school students and will analyze the effect of the proposed Plan on school capacity and utilization rates.

**Comment 69:** The proposed school must have a playground. (11)

**Response:** The proposed school would not be designed until after a developer is selected, and the environmental review process is complete. However, at the appropriate time, the proposed school would be designed and programmed in consultation with the SCA and DOE and would be consistent with DOE program and design requirements.

### **OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

**Comment 70:** While the Draft Scope notes that the open space will be publicly accessible, the diagram indicates that the park space will be limited to a small triangle of space in the center of the development. The Final Scope should indicate how the public would access the open space. (21)

**Response:** The DGEIS will provide further detail about the publicly accessible open space that would be developed as part of the proposed Plan.

**Comment 71:** The Plan should include more open space to accommodate the proposed residential uses. (11)

**Response:** As stated in the Draft Scope, the proposed Plan includes approximately 8 acres of publicly accessible open space. The DGEIS will include a detailed open space analysis that will assess whether the existing and future populations in the study area would be adequately served by open space resources.

### **HISTORIC RESOURCES**

**Comment 72:** The "Iron Triangle" should be landmarked as a historic resource. (56)

**Response:** The "Historic Resources" chapter of the DGEIS will discuss any properties in the District or study area that are eligible for listing on the State/National Registers of Historic Places or for designation as New York City Landmarks, as well as whether there are any properties that may appear to meet the eligibility criteria that have not already been identified.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER**

**Comment 73:** There is tremendous potential that the proposed actions will have a significant effect on the neighborhood character. Under the proposed Plan, it is likely that

the Willet Point area will completely lose its industrial character, a quality that currently defines this neighborhood. The significance in the change in the neighborhood, including the addition of new residents, businesses not related to the auto industry, and a convention center, will change the face of this neighborhood. This effect on neighborhood character must be individually and fully studied in the EIS, and not simply summarized as the Draft Scope suggests. (21)

**Response:** As stated in the Draft Scope, the proposed Plan could affect the character of the area by introducing new residential, commercial, hotel, community facility, institutional, parking, and open space uses. The neighborhood character chapter will describe the neighborhood's overall character, as well as the elements that contribute to and define that character, and will assess the potential impact of the proposed actions on the character of the study area.

#### **NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Comment 74:** The DGEIS should anticipate future climate changes in order to determine the impacts of the proposed Plan and necessary mitigation levels, particularly in areas below flood level. It should evaluate and require implementation measures identified in New York City PlaNYC, namely with respect to: 1) determine the expected frequency and severity of storm events and evaluate their impact on the proposed Plan; 2) develop a community planning tool kit and site-specific climate adaption plan; and 3) determine mitigation measures to address inadequacies in the building code (e.g., the building code does not require that windows be equipped to handle a Category 3 hurricane). (36)

**Response:** The issues identified above are City-wide issues and are not addressed through CEQR on a project-specific level. However, it should be noted that one of the proposed Plan's program components includes the raising of the existing grade throughout the District to conform to floodplain requirements.

**Comment 75:** The DGEIS should analyze whether the proposed Plan meets the criteria for construction in tidal wetlands and/or adjacent areas and evaluate the project's compliance with the criteria set forth in 6 N.Y.C.R.R Part 661. (36)

**Response:** The DGEIS will consider the proposed Plan's consistency with the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) and assess any potential for the proposed plan to affect natural resources in the area, including tidal wetlands. The District does not contain tidal wetlands and/or adjacent areas.

#### **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

**Comment 76:** The study on the need for or the addition of any community facility, especially public schools or day care facilities, should be analyzed in detail, keeping in mind that the proposed site is toxic and that children have a heightened susceptibility to toxins. The study should include a proposed cleanup and

remediation plan, as well as a monitoring plan, for the potential toxins that could be present in such facilities. (21)

**Response:** Procedures to ensure that appropriate testing will be performed for each site will be specified in the DGEIS. As indicated in the Draft Scope, the DGEIS will assess the potential for exposure to workers and the community prior to or during development of each site, and to site occupants/users following development (particularly more sensitive uses such as residences and schools).

**Comment 77:** The Final Scope must include the results of testing on sites other than sidewalks and streets, from which reliable extrapolations about contamination cannot be made. (21)

**Response:** The Phase II investigation completed to date could only be performed on publicly accessible areas (i.e., sidewalks and streets). Procedures for additional subsurface testing, including the placement of E-designations or an equivalent on District parcels, will be specified in the DGEIS to ensure that appropriate testing for each site is performed as access is made available.

**Comment 78:** It is not clear that the petroleum and other contaminants present in the soil have been investigated well enough to determine what mitigation measures might be necessary, and additional investigation may not take place until after construction has begun, when it will be too late to implement appropriate mitigation strategies. (36)

The proposed mitigation of placing a four- to six-foot capping layer over the entire site could be problematic; since Willets Point is constructed over a high water table area, the proposed fill could inadvertently surcharge the underlying areas and severely impact surrounding areas. (36)

Accordingly, adequate environmental investigations should be performed as part of the DGEIS, and these investigations should be used to evaluate the impacts of the proposed Plan and the necessary mitigation. They must contain the detail and information required by the federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act. (36)

**Response:** The DGEIS will describe the soil and groundwater testing undertaken, as well as the additional subsurface testing that would be performed at many of the properties where access has not been possible. The DGEIS will also describe the appropriate and likely remedial measures that would be required, in accordance with applicable local, state and federal regulations. Initial investigation activities would proceed under review and approval of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), with involvement from state and federal agencies as appropriate. The Construction chapter will describe any site preparation and pile driving that would be necessary to redevelop the District, which contains soil layers comprised of uncontrolled fill.

**Comment 79:** The health and safety risks associated with the massive excavation, removal, and hauling of the contaminated soils should be described in the DGEIS. (36)

**Response:** The DGEIS will evaluate the areas where subsurface disturbance is expected and describe measures to address the potential for exposure to workers and the community prior to or during development of each site, as well as potential for exposure to future occupants or users of the site.

**Comment 80:** Why is the City not planning to excavate and fully remediate the area if the theme of this project is environmental sustainability? (73)

**Response:** The scope of future remedial action will be established and refined based on the analytical data. Remedial measures will be assessed with respect to protection of public health and the environment and compliance with appropriate regulatory standards.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE, SOLID WASTE, AND ENERGY**

**Comment 81:** The project should include infrastructure and facilities necessary to support the area. (24)

**Response:** The DGEIS will describe all infrastructure improvements and community facilities included as part of the proposed Plan, and will assess the project's potential to impact existing infrastructure and community facilities in surrounding areas.

**Comment 82:** The DGEIS should include an evaluation of recycling and recycling container locations, water reuse, waste prevention practices, water conservation, on-site electric generation (solar, co-generation, wind, etc.), and open space maintenance (lawn clippings, composting, etc.) (10)

**Response:** The DGEIS will include information on sustainable design features and best management practices that would be encouraged as part of the proposed Plan.

### **TRAFFIC AND PARKING**

**Comment 83:** The project should include access to the Van Wyck Expressway. (28)

Adequate space should be provided for widening the Grand Central Parkway and the Van Wyck Expressway so that new ramps can be added to accommodate that increase in traffic from this project and the new development in Downtown Flushing. (11)

The plan should include vehicular access from the site to Roosevelt Avenue and Northern Boulevard. (30)

Though surrounded by highways, direct access to the area is limited. Improved access from area highways must be investigated to support the existing and projected uses for the area. (1)

## Willets Point Development Plan

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**Response:** The site is currently accessible via 126th Street from both Roosevelt Avenue and Northern Boulevard. The proposed Plan will include a new connection between the Van Wyck Expressway and the District. The Final Scope has been revised to reflect this addition to the development program.

**Comment 84:** The DGEIS should provide an in-depth analysis of existing and proposed traffic conditions on the major surrounding roadways, as well as mitigation measures to address all traffic impacts. (9)

**Response:** The DGEIS will analyze existing traffic volumes, traffic patterns, and levels of service within the traffic study area and determine whether the proposed Plan would have significant adverse impacts on street and roadway conditions. Should significant adverse impacts be identified, feasible mitigation measures, if any, will be proposed.

**Comment 85:** Northern Boulevard is currently congested during peak periods, and 35th Avenue is currently used by drivers to avoid Northern Boulevard. It can only be expected that increased development in Willets Point and Flushing would add volume to 35th Avenue. Traffic movements at the following intersections on 35th Avenue in Flushing should be analyzed: Farrington Street, Linden Place, Leavitt Street, and Union Street. (1)

**Response:** The traffic analysis locations were determined in consultation with New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT). Detailed traffic assignments will be conducted as the analyses progress to determine if any intersections in addition to those cited in the scoping document and approved by NYCDOT warrant detailed study. If the intersections suggested by the commenter are shown to incur significant additional traffic from the proposed Plan (as per CEQR guidelines), they will be added.

**Comment 86:** 6,000 of the proposed parking spaces should be reserved for the proposed residential uses. (11)

**Response:** Comment noted.

### TRANSIT AND PEDESTRIANS

**Comment 87:** The DGEIS should include an analysis of the current and future capacity of the No. 7 train and the LIRR to add this significant amount of transit users. (21)

EDC should work closely with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) at the outset to ensure that the future growth of the area could accommodate future users. EDC should include in the DGEIS a plan for encouraging the use of public transportation. (21)

**Response:** As stated in the Draft Scope, the DGEIS will examine the effects of project-generated transit demand on public transit facilities and lines/routes serving the District, including the No. 7 subway line and the Q48 and Q66 bus routes. The



LIRR station closest to the District is only operational during game days. MTA will be involved in the review of the transit and pedestrian analysis included in the DGEIS.

## **AIR QUALITY**

**Comment 88:** The carbon dioxide expected to be generated by the project should be considered in all areas of the air quality analysis. (10)

**Response:** Per *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, the quantitative analysis of air quality impacts will focus on seven air pollutants that have been identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as being of concern. These include carbon monoxide (CO), lead (Pb), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), inhalable particulates (PM<sub>10</sub>), fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), and sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>).

## **NOISE**

**Comment 89:** The Draft Scope states, “Per CEQR requirements, noise from aircraft operations would be excluded from all measurements.” The source of this statement is unclear and seems to conflict with the procedures outlined in the *CEQR Technical Manual*. The DGEIS should fully characterize 1) the airport-related noise at the site; 2) the effect of that noise on a planned residential development; and 3) the extent to which the noise could be mitigated, as well as the associated costs. (36)

**Response:** Per CEQR guidance, noise from aircraft operations would be excluded from all measurements at sites intended for impact identification. This methodology yields a conservative analysis because the baseline measurement is lower, thereby increasing the increment in noise due to project-generated automobile traffic. Aircraft operation noise will be included in measurements taken at sites intended for building attenuation analysis, ensuring that the highest ambient level is recorded. Basing the level of required building attenuation on measurements that include aircraft overflights will ensure that the building attenuation is sufficient to create suitable interior noise levels despite the noise generated by the aircraft.

**Comment 90:** Willets Point is directly in the LaGuardia Airport flight path. Noise levels and abatement measures must be identified for the new development. (1)

**Response:** The noise analysis in the DGEIS will include an assessment of the level of noise attenuation required in the proposed buildings to ensure that acceptable interior noise levels are achieved. If necessary, recommendations on measures to attain acceptable interior noise levels and to reduce noise impacts to acceptable levels will be made.

## CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

**Comment 91:** The DGEIS should address the anticipated effects on traffic flow, pedestrian uses, parking, and transit operations during the construction period. (9)

**Response:** Trip generation calculations will be made for construction worker vehicle trips and construction truck trips. As part of the trip generation, the number of parking spaces that would be used by construction workers will be calculated. In addition, the number of workers arriving by public transportation will be estimated. Where construction activities could disrupt pedestrian access, the length and type of these disruptions will be described.

## PUBLIC HEALTH

**Comment 92:** The Final Scope should include a health survey of existing workers to assess whether long-term exposure to environmental hazards has resulted in medical complications for workers. (21)

**Response:** A health survey of existing workers is outside of the scope of CEQR and the exposure of existing workers to environmental hazards is not related to the proposed Plan.

## ALTERNATIVES

**Comment 93:** The No Build alternative should be analyzed in two ways: 1) assuming continuation of the current situation, where the City does not provide proper sanitary and storm sewers, street repair, and police services; and 2) assuming that no eminent domain occurs and the City provides sewers, street paving, and other infrastructure and services in this area. The second alternative should include, as a mitigation measure, the provision of training and facilities for pollution prevention for the area's auto repair establishments. (36)

Making the area suitable for residential use may require the excavation and removal of massive quantities of contaminated soil. The DGEIS should look at the alternative method of existing businesses remediating their own sites after the installation of sewers. (36)

The City should provide all of the infrastructure that property owners have been paying for all of these years so that the area can grow and develop on its own. (54, 59, 64)

**Response:** The Final Scope and DGEIS will include an analysis of a No Action with Additional Services Alternative, which evaluates conditions that would be likely to occur in the future without the proposed Plan if additional municipal services were provided to the District. The Final Scope has been revised to reflect the inclusion of this analysis.

**Comment 94:** The Final Scope should include a Manufacturing Alternative that allows for the retention of high-performing automotive and manufacturing uses, provides a

continuing supply of M-zones for uses resulting from PlaNYC 2030, and includes space for an incubator for research into alternative fuel generation and “green” automotive care, as well as a trade school that emphasizes training for the site’s existing workers. (21)

The Willets Point area can be redeveloped to accommodate all interested parties. There is more than enough space to include construction of a proper industrial park to accommodate existing businesses as well as much of the City’s proposed uses. (4, 51, 58)

**Comment 95:** The City should consider carving out a portion of the proposed District for those businesses that can not be feasibly relocated. (37, 79)

**Response:** The alternatives described above would not fully meet the objectives and goals of the proposed Plan. The DGEIS will analyze a No Action with Additional Services Alternative, which evaluates conditions that would be likely to occur in the future without the proposed Plan if additional municipal services were provided to the District, which would continue to operate under its existing industrial zoning.

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The project is generally bounded by (i) Northern Boulevard on the north, (ii) the Van Wyck Expressway and the western boundary of Block 1833, Lot 1 (the property owned by the Metropolitan Transit Authority) on the east, (iii) Roosevelt Avenue on the south, and (iv) 126th Street on the west.

### **A. PURPOSE OF PLAN**

The plan would encourage redevelopment and economic growth through mixed-use development containing retail, office, residential uses, a hotel, a convention center, community and cultural facilities, new open space and parking on an approximately 60-acre development site adjacent to the proposed new Mets ballpark, Citifield. The new mixed-use development plan is part of a comprehensive strategy led by the New York City Economic Development Corporation to support growth in all five boroughs. The plan seeks to:

- Redevelop the Area in a comprehensive manner, removing blight and maximizing appropriate land use;
- Remove or rehabilitate substandard and unsanitary structures;
- Remove impediments to land assemblage and orderly development;
- Strengthen the tax base of the City by encouraging development and employment opportunities in the Area;
- Provide new housing of high quality;
- Provide appropriate community facilities, parks and recreational uses, retail shopping, public parking, and private parking; and
- Provide a stable environment within the Area which will not be a blighting influence on surrounding neighborhoods.

The plan for the area involves rezoning, a zoning text change and street demapping actions. Zoning changes from manufacturing to commercial use would permit a mix of high-density commercial, retail and residential uses. A zoning text change would create the Special Willets Point District that will focus on design guidelines regarding height, bulk, setback, distance between buildings, urban design elements, and basic site planning (use zones), as well as allowing certain targeted land uses as-of-right. There is one development site in the plan.

### **B. PROJECT DATA**

There are currently 127 privately-owned parcels within the plan area that are proposed for acquisition and one residential unit and approximately 260 businesses will require relocation. It is anticipated that all private structures within the plan boundaries will be demolished.

**FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

**NOT PART OF URBAN RENEWAL PLAN OR ULURP APPLICATION**

The Special District is intended to actualize The City's Plan for a dynamic new neighborhood by establishing controls on use, streetscapes, bulk, building articulation, open space, parking and signage. These controls are generally arranged in four basic project components: streets and streetscapes, a regional retail/entertainment center, a convention center, and a residential neighborhood.

**Uses**

Pursuant to the proposed actions, the District would be rezoned C4-4. However, the Special District text would restrict the full range of C4 uses to a regional retail/entertainment center located up to 600' east of 126th Street; the remainder of the site would be limited to residential, community facility, convention center, and C1 local retail uses. To provide additional flexibility for The City's Plan, certain uses would be allowed as-of-right that currently require Special Permits from the City Planning Commission or Board of Standards and Appeals:

- Convention centers/trade expositions with a capacity in excess of 2,500 persons, up to a maximum floor area of 400,000 square feet
- Parking garages exceeding 225 spaces (with special design requirements)
- Physical culture or health establishments (gyms)
- Eating and drinking establishments with a capacity of more than 200 persons; only along 126th Street
- Indoor interactive entertainment facilities; only along 126th Street
- Amusement arcades; only along 126th Street

**Floor Area**

The Special District will impose a maximum cap of 3.4 FAR for the entire District.

**Streets**

The Special District will require four mandatory intersections with existing 126th Street and establish general locational requirements for five principal private streets:

**Two Connector Streets**

- Intersection of 126th Street and 34th Avenue, continuing 34th Avenue into the District
- Intersection of 126th Street and the prolongation of Citi Field's southern edge, continuing that line into the District
- Mandatory connections to each other

**One Primary Retail Street**

- Must be located within 220' and 320' east of 126th Street, generally parallel to 126th Street
- Mandatory intersections with secondary retail Streets and connector streets

**Two Secondary Retail Streets**

- Intersection of 126th Street and Citi Field entrance centerline, continuing into District
- Intersection of 126th Street and the prolongation of Citi Field's northern edge, continuing into the District
- Mandatory intersections with the primary retail street

**Streetscape Design Parameters**

The Special District will establish dimensions and design parameters addressing sidewalk widths, planting strips, parking lanes, bike lanes, travel lanes and pedestrian amenities for five specified private street types as well as three remaining public streets bounding the District. The design parameters for the listed streets are described in their respective component sections.

**Private Streets**

- Connector Streets
- Primary Retail Street
- Secondary Retail Streets
- Residential Streets
- Eastern Perimeter Street

**Public Streets**

- 126th Street
- Northern Boulevard
- Roosevelt Avenue

The Special District will establish a **maximum block size of 218' x 450'**, except for two anchor blocks at the intersections of 126th Street and Northern Boulevard and 126th Street and Roosevelt Avenue.

**Regional Retail/Entertainment Center**

The Special District will create a dynamic, pedestrian-oriented regional retail/entertainment zone with intensive restaurant, nightlife and entertainment uses along 126th Street and a more fine-grained fabric of shops and apparel stores on the primary and secondary retail streets. This zone will also contain the tallest residential towers in the District, up to a maximum height of 218'.

The Special District will:

- Establish a 600' wide area parallel to 126th in which the full range of C4-4 uses would be allowed
- Mandate ground floor retail uses except the following ZR Use Groups:

- 6B (offices)
- 6E (non-commercial clubs)
- 8C (auto service establishments)
- 8D (prisons)
- 9B and 10B (wholesale establishments)
- 12D (public parking garages); size limits for building lobbies
- Prescribe maximum store frontage restrictions on primary and secondary retail streets to encourage a varied pedestrian shopping experience: 110' per storefront along 126th Street and 65' per storefront along primary and secondary retail streets.
- Require ground floor glazing (70%)
- Prescribe streetwall locations (70% within 8' of street line)
- Prohibit curb cuts and loading on 126th Street and primary retail street
- Establish anchor blocks at Northern Boulevard and Roosevelt Avenue along 126th Street and exempt the Northern Boulevard anchor block store frontage requirements
- Require cinema and office tower to be located most proximate to public transit within 600' of Roosevelt Avenue
- Prescribe design parameters for the following streets:
  - 126th Street
    - 15' sidewalk, including tree pits and planting strips.
    - 20'–35' pedestrian amenity/grade change zone, including a minimum 5' pedestrian circulation space in front of all building streetwalls
    - Privately Owned Public Space (POPS)-compliant design for required pedestrian amenity areas
  - Connector Streets
    - Right-of-way minimum 75', maximum 86'
    - 22' – 33' cartway, including two - three 11' travel lanes
    - 5' one-way bike lane
    - 15' sidewalks
    - 9' parking lane/landscaped amenity strip on both sides
  - Primary Retail Street
    - Maximum 70' right-of-way
    - 22' cartway, including two 11' travel lanes
    - 15' sidewalks
    - 9' parking lanes/landscaped amenity strips on both sides

## **Willets Point Development Plan**

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### **Secondary Retail Streets**

- Maximum 68' right-of-way
- 22' cartway, including two 11' travel lanes
- 13' sidewalks
- 10' pedestrian access/grade change/landscaped amenity area between streetwall and sidewalk
- Prescribe streetwall heights as follows:
  - 60' (min.) to 85' (max.) base height; additional minimum base height of 20' on 126th Street directly opposite Citi Field to allow for 2nd-floor restaurant terraces
  - 10' setbacks on 126th Street and primary retail street; 15' setbacks on secondary retail streets
- Prescribe building heights as follows:
  - "Transition Zone" rising from streetwall base to 120' (after required setback)
  - "Tower Zone" above 120' rising to the maximum height mandated by FAA/PA (218', including bulkheads)
  - 170' maximum tower width
  - 11,000 sf maximum tower floor plate
  - General solar orientation (east-west, long side facing south)
  - Uppermost story may only cover 50-85% of the gross area of the story below (penthouse rule)
  - Sheer tower walls would be allowed in 4 locations along 126th Street
- Require POPS-compliant public access areas:
  - Along 126th Street
  - Along the convention center's front wall

### **Convention Center**

The City's Plan includes the development of a mid-range facility for conventions, meetings, trade shows and expositions. The Special District would permit such a facility without requiring a Special Permit; establish locational restrictions to site it in the most appropriate areas; and better integrate it into the community by establishing pedestrian-oriented design and streetscape requirements.

The Special District will:

- Permit as-of-right convention center with a capacity in excess of 2,500 persons, up to a maximum floor area of 400,000 square feet
- Prescribe two location options:

#### **Option A**

- Located within 1,800' of intersection of Roosevelt Avenue and 126th



Option B

- Located within 650' of Northern Boulevard
- Not permit convention center within 200' of 126th Street
- Require building frontage to be oriented along a connector street
- Require ground floor glazing (50%) on streetwall fronting connector street
- Limit loading to rear
- Prescribed 40' (min.) to 85' (max.) base height after which a 10' setback would be required
- Prescribe design parameters for convention center street frontage:
  - as per "Connector Streets," except the required 9' pedestrian amenity/parking space is eliminated and the following are required:
    - 15' sidewalks
    - 12' drop-off area
    - 10'-22' pedestrian amenity area

**Residential Community**

The Special District will encourage the development of a sustainable, pedestrian-oriented residential neighborhood surrounding a public park, with the public realm 'activated' by individual residential entries and lower maximum building heights regulated by FAA flight paths.

The Special District will:

- Limit uses to residential, community facility and local retail (C1 equivalent)
- Establish maximum block dimensions (218' x 450'; perimeter = 1,336')
- Require every ground-floor dwelling unit on a residential street to have its own entrance directly onto the street in order to add variety to streetwalls and activate the street front.
- Buildings containing ground-floor dwelling units on residential streets must also provide a minimum 4' setback from the streetline, which may include plantings, stoops and other individual residential entrances.
- Prescribe streetwall heights as follows:
  - 40' (min.) to 85' (max.) base height
  - 10' setbacks on connector streets; 15' setbacks on residential streets
- Require minimum interior courtyard widths of 60'
- Prescribe design parameters for residential streets:
  - Maximum 62' right-of-way
  - 20-22' cartway, including two 10'-11' travel lanes
  - 13' sidewalks
  - 8' parking lane/landscaped amenity strips on both sides

## **Willets Point Development Plan**

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- Prescribe design parameters for an Eastern Perimeter Street separating the District from publicly-owned land on the District's eastern boundary:
  - Right-of-way minimum 62', maximum 75'
  - 20-33' cartway, including two-three 10-11' travel lanes
  - 13' sidewalk along the street's western boundary and at least 5' along its eastern boundary
  - 8' parking lane/landscaped amenity strips on both sides
- Stipulate CPC Chair Certification to ensure appropriate mix of uses at every development phases

### **Open Space and Sustainability**

The Special District will require adequate, well-designed open spaces, including a central park in the residential neighborhood, as well as lay the foundation for sustainable development.

The Special District will:

- Require a minimum 8 acres of open space, including:
  - 2 acre (min.) central park, surrounded on all sides by streets or a public school and with frontage on at least one "Connector Street," and located at least 200' from any District boundary line
  - 20-35' wide open space/pedestrian amenity area along the east side of blocks bounding 126th Street
  - 20-45' wide open space/pedestrian amenity area along the south side of blocks bounding Roosevelt Avenue
  - 60' wide pedestrian corridor and 20,000 square foot plaza in southern anchor block if DEP utility easement is retained
  - 8-15' wide open space/pedestrian amenity area along the north side of blocks bounding Northern Boulevard
  - 8-15' wide open space/pedestrian amenity area along the eastern boundary of the Eastern Perimeter Street
  - 10-22' wide open space/pedestrian amenity area along the front of the convention center
- Mandate rooftop landscaping for all parking structures roofs larger than 400 square feet.
- Prescribe planting treatments on all streets in accordance with street design parameters
- Require at least one street tree for every 25' of streetwall.
- Require bicycle storage at 1sf/1,000sf ratio of floor area (400sf max.)
- Allow by CPC Special Permit a DHC/CHP (cogeneration) power plant

**Parking and Loading**

The Special District will:

- Establish minimum parking requirements as per underlying zoning (C4-4), but exempt parking area from floor area calculations
- Require reservoir space in each garage for 10 automobiles or 5% of total parking spaces, whichever is greater
- Require fully enclosed parking wrapped by active uses, except
  - above 50 feet along 126th Street (must be enclosed or screened)
  - below 35 feet along Northern Boulevard (ground-floor wrapping to 50' from intersections is required; perimeter must be buffered by landscape treatment)
  - cellars more than 600 feet from 126th Street, provided the streetwall is set back at least 4' and such open space is planted, and at least 50% of such streetwall is built of opaque materials
- Prohibit curb cuts or loading on 126th Street and the primary retail street; on other streets prohibit curb cuts within 50' from intersections

**Signs**

The Special District will set forth signage regulations correlated to predominant uses and activity patterns in each project component area:

- Entertainment/Lifestyle Center
  - prescribe C4-4 sign regulations but allow more flexible provisions for 126th Street
- Residential neighborhood and convention center
  - prescribe C1 sign regulations; disallow advertising signs

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