

**Willets Point Development**  
**~~Draft~~Final Scope of Work for a**  
**Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement**

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## **A. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This ~~Draft~~Final Scope of Work for a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) addresses proposed modifications to the previously approved Willets Point Development Plan for the approximately 61-acre Special Willets Point ~~d~~District in Queens, to include the proposed “Willets West” development on the surface parking lot west of the CitiField baseball stadium; the development of structured parking facilities on surface parking Lot D and South Lot along Roosevelt Avenue, adjacent to the stadium (see **Figures 1 and 2**); and changes to the phasing of the project; ~~and. With these modifications, the project site would comprise approximately 108.9 acres and the proposed project could result in up to 10.34 million square feet of development. This SEIS considers changes in background conditions, including~~ federal approval of the Freeway Access Modification Report (AMR) for new vehicular connections from the Special Willets Point ~~d~~District to the Van Wyck Expressway. ~~With these modifications, the Willet Point Development site would comprise 108.9 acres.~~

A Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS) for the Willets Point Development Plan (the Plan) was issued in September 2008 by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development (ODMED) as lead agency under the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), its implementing regulations (6 NYCRR Part 617), and New York City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR). The approved project was for redevelopment of a largely underutilized site with substandard conditions and environmental degradation—into a lively, sustainable community and regional destination with approximately 8.94 million square feet of residential, retail, hotel, convention center, entertainment, commercial office, community facility, open space, and parking uses. Other than some sewer infrastructure work, redevelopment of the Special Willets Point ~~d~~District has not commenced since the issuance of the FGEIS in 2008.

### **BACKGROUND**

Since World War II, there have been numerous attempts to redevelop Willets Point, which became known over the years for its many auto repair businesses and junkyards. Since 2000, these planning efforts have accelerated. In 2001, the City’s Department of Housing Preservation and Development’s (HPD) design workshop explored potential redevelopment ideas and recommended land uses that would connect Willets Point with neighboring communities and complement nearby attractions and facilities. In 2002, the City created the Downtown Flushing Task Force, which outlined land use and economic goals for the redevelopment of Willets Point in its Downtown Flushing Development Framework. The Downtown Flushing Development





## **Willets Point Development Draft Scope of Work**

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Framework became the starting point for the City's creation of the Willets Point Development Plan, which was approved by the City Council in 2008. The numerous actions required for the ~~Willets Point Development Plan~~—which included the creation of a new special zoning district (the Special Willets Point District) and an urban renewal plan for the area—required review under SEQRA and CEQR. ~~The FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda, which assessed the potential effects of the proposed actions and their modifications, were accepted by ODMED and SEQRA findings were issued on February 11, 2011. After~~

An FGEIS for the Plan was issued in September 2008 by ODMED as lead agency under SEQRA, its implementing regulations (6 NYCRR Part 617), and CEQR. The Willets Point Development Plan was approved by the City Council in 2008. The approved project was for redevelopment of a largely underutilized site with substandard conditions and environmental degradation—into a lively, sustainable community and regional destination with approximately 8.94 million square feet of residential, retail, hotel, convention center, entertainment, commercial office, community facility, open space, and parking uses. Subsequent technical memoranda assessed the potential effects of modifications to the proposed actions, and were accepted by ODMED; SEQRA findings were issued on February 11, 2011.

Subsequent to the City Council's approval of the Willets Point Development Plan in 2008, the City issued a Request for Qualifications and subsequent Request for Proposals for the redevelopment of this area. The City has also undertaken several measures that support the goals of the ~~Willets Point Development Plan~~, including measures related to site acquisition, assistance for District workers, advancement of the proposed connections to the Van Wyck Expressway, and ongoing infrastructure work. ~~Adjacent to the Willets Point district~~In December 2011, the City also broke ground on the new sanitary and storm water mains that will provide new public sanitary sewer service to support the redevelopment of the District and adjacent areas and replace an inadequately sized storm water sewer and outfall to help alleviate chronic flooding that occurs in the District and adjacent areas. Adjacent to the Special Willets Point District, the new CitiField stadium opened in 2009, replacing the former Shea Stadium, and the area formerly occupied by Shea Stadium was converted to a surface parking lot.

In 2012, in response to a competitive Request for Proposal (~~RFP~~) process, the Queens Development Group—a joint venture between the Related Companies and Sterling Equities—was selected as the City's designated developer for Phases 1A and 1B (~~formerly Phase 1~~) of the Willets Point Development Plan.<sup>1</sup> The applicant is proposing to include in its proposed development additional land beyond the boundaries of the Special Willets Point District in order to develop portions of the main CitiField parking field west of the stadium ("Willets West") and CitiField parking fields south of Roosevelt Avenue. The applicant is also proposing to develop interim parking uses on a portion of the land within the Special Willets Point District to accommodate the stadium's parking demand during the initial phase of the area's proposed redevelopment. The discretionary actions needed for the proposed modifications include a zoning text amendment and a special permit to allow surface parking and recreational uses within the Special Willets Point District and modification of the City's existing lease for the CitiField parking lot, as well as potential additional actions discussed below.

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<sup>1</sup> Formerly Phase 1 in Technical Memorandum #4, with some adjustments to footprint.

### *CURRENT PROJECT*

The project applicant proposes to expand the proposed redevelopment of the Willets Point area to include portions of the CitiField stadium parking areas. The new proposed development plan (referred to here as the “proposed project”) would redevelop the Willets Point/CitiField area with a mix of uses over a period of 20 years. The proposed project would incorporate a development in the Special Willets Point District substantially similar to what was anticipated and analyzed in the 2008 FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda, as well as a major entertainment/retail component and parking west of CitiField.

The project applicant would obtain, at a minimum, LEED certification for each building within Phases 1A and 1B (described below), and shall use commercially reasonable efforts to obtain LEED silver certification for each building constructed in these phases of the proposed project. For Phase 1B, the project applicant would also obtain LEED ND certification. Notwithstanding the foregoing, to the extent Local Law 86 applies to any portion of Phases 1A and 1B, as applicable, the project applicant would implement any required alternative standards.

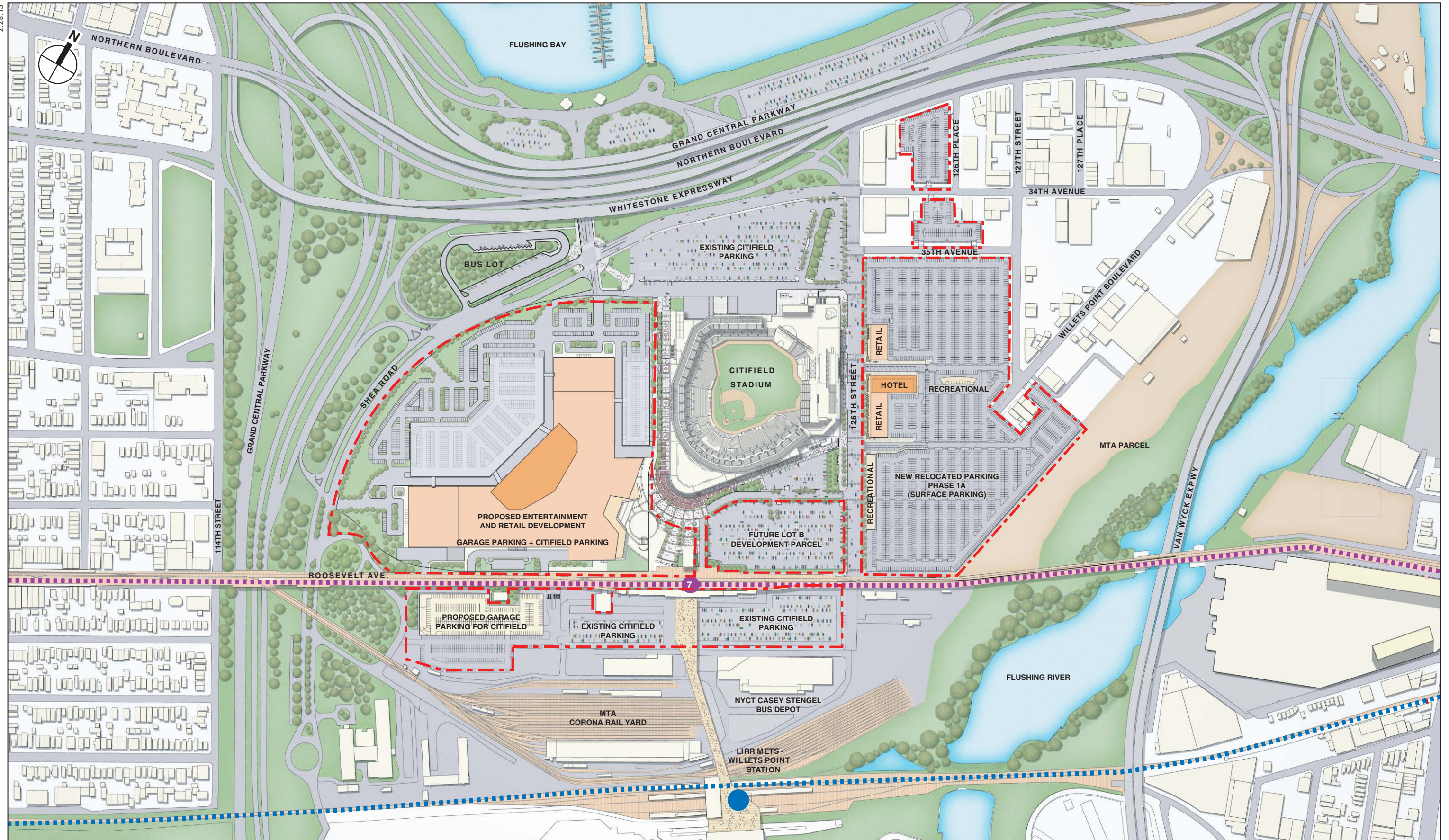
The project is anticipated to proceed in three continuous phases.

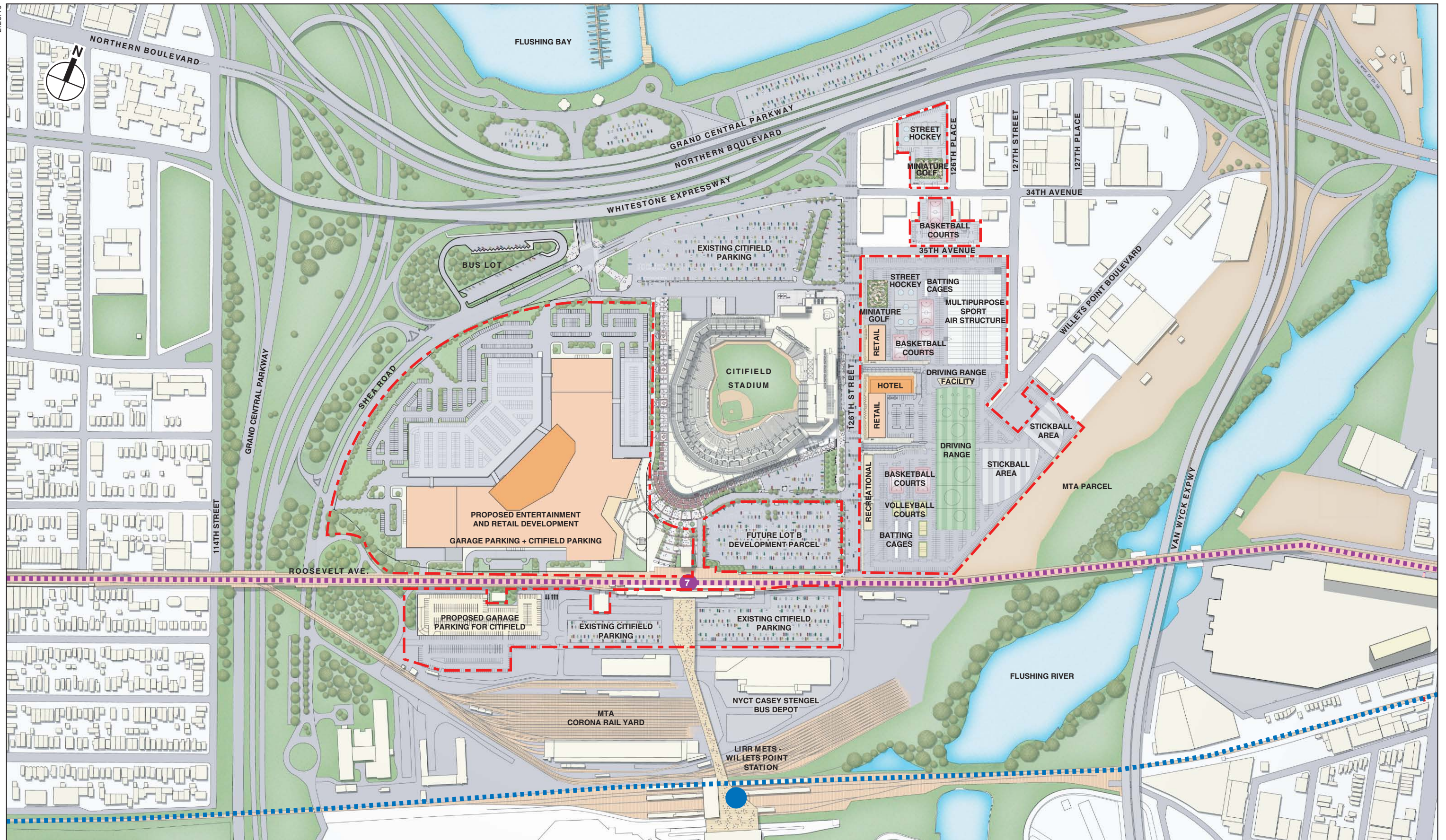
Phase 1A: The initial remediation and development of an approximately 23-acre portion of the Special Willets Point District with a 200-room hotel and associated parking, approximately 30,000 square feet of retail space, and a 2,750~~800~~-space surface parking area/off-season public recreation space; the development of the parking field west of CitiField with “Willets West”—an entertainment/retail center of approximately 1.4 million gross square feet (one million sf of gross leasable area) and a 2,900-space parking garage; and the development of a structured parking facility on the westernmost CitiField surface parking lot south of Roosevelt Avenue. The illustrative site plans for this phase are shown in **Figures 3a and 3b**. It is anticipated that Phase 1A would be completed by 2018.

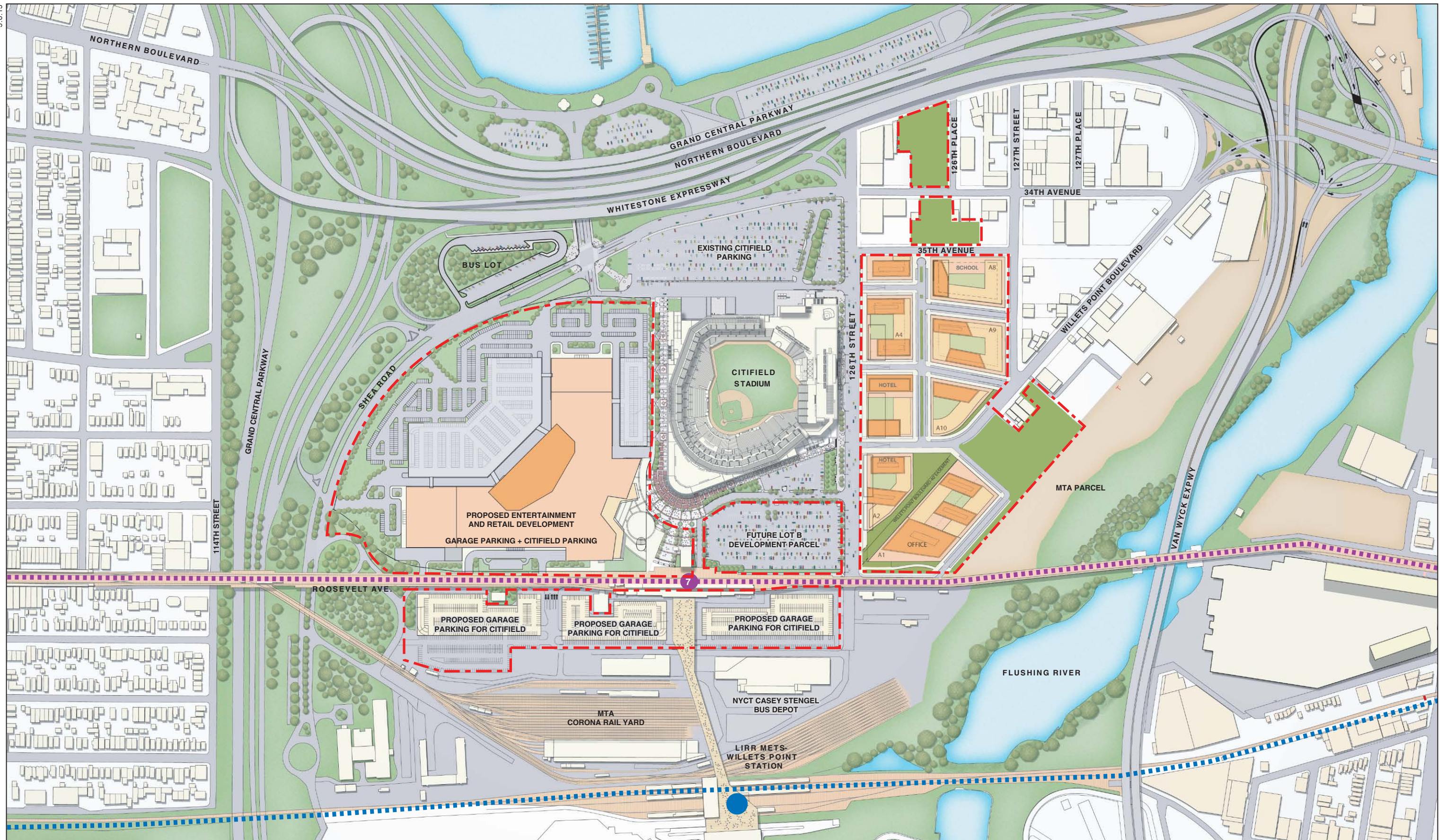
Phase 1B: The replacement of the interim surface parking area/off-season recreation space on the approximately 23-acre affected portion of the District and the creation of approximately 4.23 million square feet of residential, retail, office, hotel, public school, community facility, enclosed parking, and public open space uses. The 2,750~~800~~<sup>625</sup> spaces of replacement Mets parking is currently anticipated to be relocated into new structured parking facilities on the CitiField surface parking lots south of Roosevelt Avenue (South Lot/Lot D). The illustrative site plan for this phase is shown in **Figure 4**, and **Figure 5** provides illustrative renderings comparing Phases 1A and 1B to existing conditions. It is anticipated that Phase 1B would be completed by 2028. It is also assumed that the recently-approved Van Wyck Expressway ramp improvements would be completed by 2024.

Phase 2: The completion of the full build-out of the Special Willets Point ~~d~~District substantially as anticipated in the FGEIS is expected by 2032. The illustrative site plan for Phase 2 is shown in **Figure 6**. In addition, consistent with the analysis presented in the FGEIS, the SEIS will analyze the development of parking, retail, and office uses by 2032 on Lot B, a portion of the CitiField leasehold along Roosevelt Avenue.

The project sponsor is seeking discretionary actions that would allow implementation of the proposed project for the project site, which is expanded from what was analyzed in the 2008 FGEIS. Because the proposed project may result in significant adverse environmental impacts not identified in the FGEIS, an SEIS is being prepared. The SEIS will analyze the extent to which the development and discretionary actions as currently proposed could potentially result in any significant adverse environmental impacts not previously identified in the FGEIS.

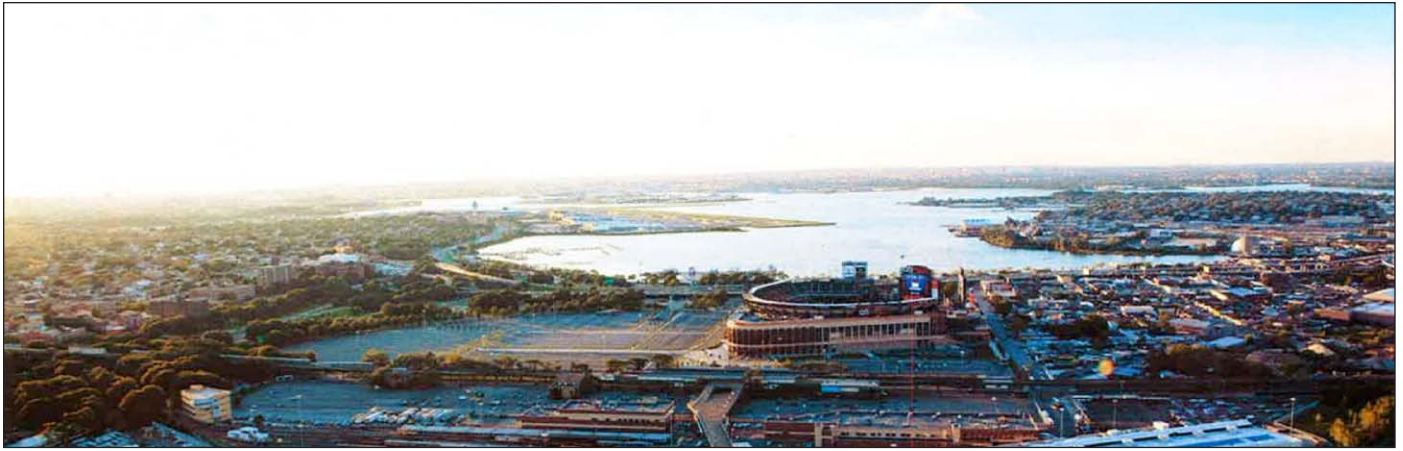






Publicly-Accessible Open Space within the Special Willets Point District

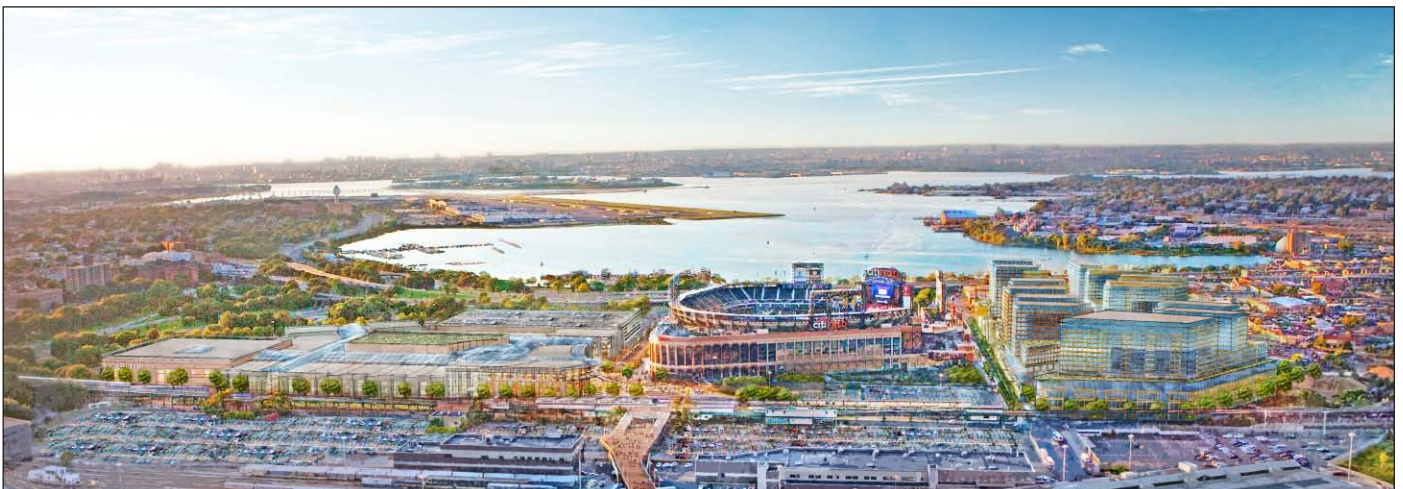
Private Open Spaces within the Special Willets Point District



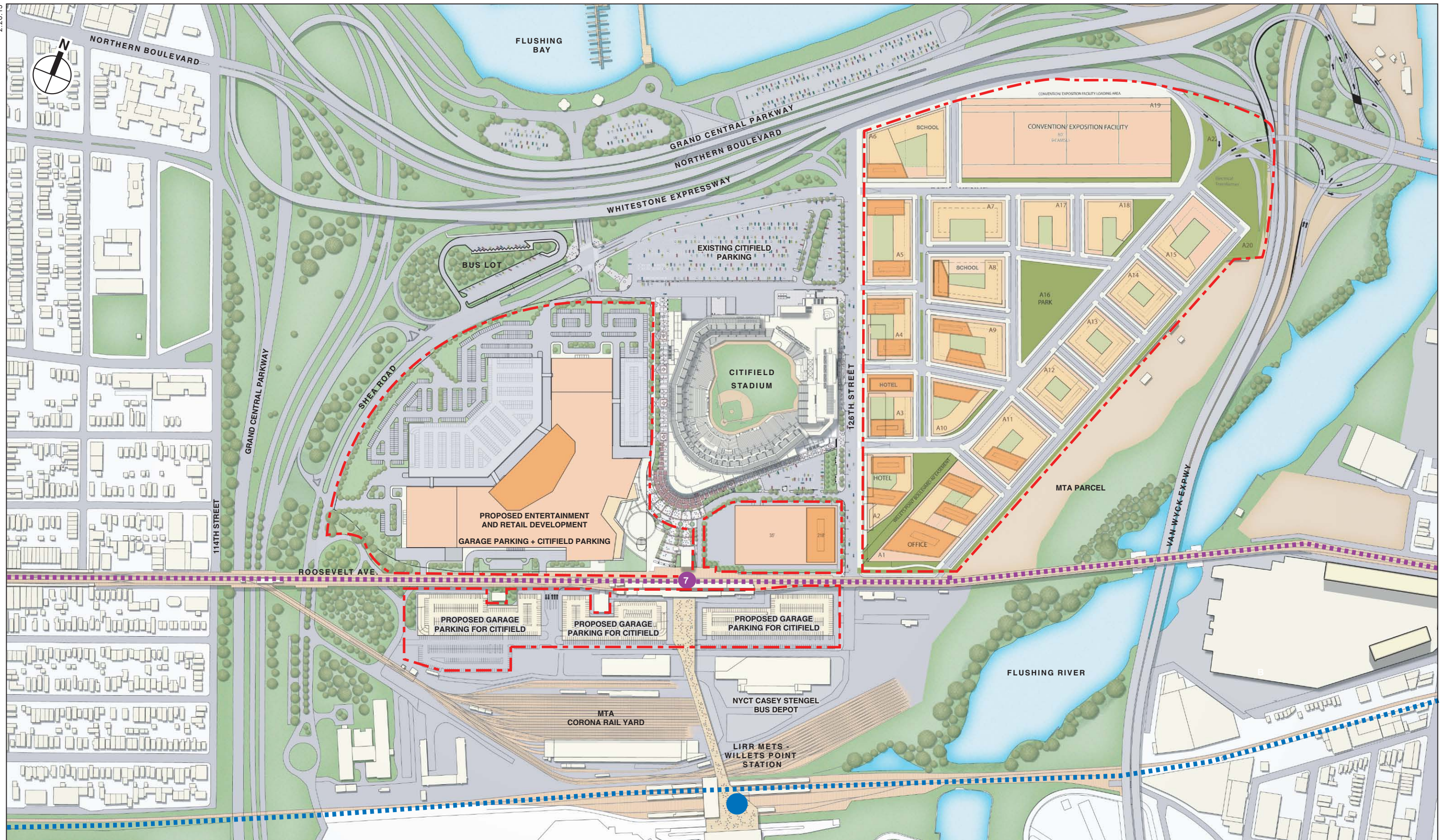
Existing Conditions



Illustrative rendering of Phase 1A



Illustrative rendering of Phase 1B



Publicly-Accessible Open Space within the Special Willets Point District

Private Open Spaces within the Special Willets Point District

Specifically, the SEIS will consider differences between the programs and site plans as described in the FGEIS and the current proposed program, site plan, and actions. The SEIS will also consider changes in background conditions on the project site and in the surrounding areas to reflect the current status of planned and proposed projects and the new anticipated year of completion for the proposed project.

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT SITE**

The project site is composed of three discrete areas, roughly bounded by Shea Road and Northern Boulevard to the north, the Van Wyck Expressway to the east, Roosevelt Avenue and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Corona Rail Yard to the south, and Shea Road to the west (see **Figure 1**). The “Willets Point” portion of the project site (the Special Willets Point District) comprises approximately 61 acres, approximately 15.8 acres of which are within public street rights-of-ways, approximately 0.6 acres of which are owned by the ~~Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA)~~, and the remainder of which is a mix of privately owned land and land owned by the City. The Willets Point area comprises 128 tax lots and one partial lot (Block 1833, Lot 1) located on 14 blocks. Since the FGEIS was completed in 2008, the City has acquired ~~a number~~, or is in contract to purchase, 95 percent of the land area lots within the proposed Phase 1A/1B footprint (Assemblage Option 2), and has control of 4 lots in the remainder of the District. The current tenants and uses within the District are anticipated to be substantially as described in the FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda.

The “Willets West” portion of the project site is mapped parkland that comprises an approximately 30.7-acre section of the surface parking field adjacent to CitiField. This area comprises a portion of Block 1787, Lot 20. The “Roosevelt Avenue” portions of the project site comprise three CitiField-related surface parking lots (South Lot and Lots B and D) along Roosevelt Avenue. The Lot B parking lot, which comprises a portion of Block 1787, Lot 20, is approximately 4.7 acres in size; the South Lot and Lot D parking lots, which comprise a portion of Block 2018, Lot 1500, are collectively approximately 12.1 acres in size. Lot D and South Lot are used for commuter parking and United States Tennis Association National Tennis Center events when baseball games are not in progress.

In total, the project site comprises approximately 108.9 acres.

## **PRIOR ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The 2008 FGEIS examined the potential for significant impacts resulting from the redevelopment of the project site in the impact categories of land use, zoning and public policy; socioeconomic conditions; community facilities; open space; shadows; historic resources; urban design and visual resources; neighborhood character; natural resources; hazardous materials; waterfront revitalization program; infrastructure; solid waste and sanitation; energy; traffic and parking; transit and pedestrians; air quality; noise; construction impacts; and public health. The FGEIS found that no significant adverse environmental impacts would result from the proposed development ~~p~~Plan with respect to land use, zoning and public policy; socioeconomic conditions; open space; shadows; urban design and visual resources; neighborhood character; natural resources; waterfront revitalization program; infrastructure; solid waste and sanitation; energy air quality; construction impacts; and public health. Potentially significant impacts were identified for publicly-funded child care, historic resources, hazardous materials, traffic, transit and pedestrians, and noise.

Subsequent to the issuance of the FGEIS, the City Planning Commission proposed several modifications to the Special Willets Point District zoning regulations. These modifications were described, and their potential for significant adverse environmental impacts examined, in a technical memorandum dated September 23, 2008, which found that there were no additional impacts due to the modifications that had not been disclosed in the FGEIS. The City Planning Commission voted in favor of the Willets Point Development Plan with those modifications on September 24, 2008.

Following the City Planning Commission vote, new information became available related to: negotiated property acquisition by the City in the District; Phase II Environmental Site Investigations (ESIs) in the District; the amount of affordable housing to be provided in the District (an increase from 20 to 35 percent); and projected school and day care populations. This information was described, and its potential to result in significant adverse environmental impacts not previously identified was examined, in a technical memorandum dated November 12, 2008 (Technical Memorandum #2). That technical memorandum concluded that none of the newly available information would lead to significant adverse environmental impacts that had not been identified and addressed in the FGEIS. The City Council voted to approve the Willets Point Development Plan with the City Planning Commission modifications on November 13, 2008.

In 2009, the City considered the effect of the economic downturn on the Willets Point project. The City anticipated that economic conditions would make it challenging for developers to finance the acquisition and remediation of the entire Willets Point site at one time and prior to any development, as described in the FGEIS. In a technical memorandum dated November 23, 2009 (Technical Memorandum #3), an Adjusted Plan for Willets Point was analyzed similar to the Staged Acquisition Alternative analyzed in the FGEIS. In the Adjusted Plan, remediation and development of an initial portion of the District would have proceeded first, followed by remediation and development of the remaining portion of the District. The Adjusted Plan assumed the same overall development program at full build-out as the Staged Acquisition Alternative (with revisions described in the prior technical memoranda), but anticipated a smaller development footprint during the first years of development, with approximately 70 percent as much floor area in the initial phase compared to the Staged Acquisition Alternative.

In a technical memorandum dated February 10, 2011 (Technical Memorandum #4), the City considered an Updated Plan that was similar to the Adjusted Plan analyzed in the 2009 technical memorandum as well as to the Staged Acquisition Alternative analyzed in the FGEIS. Compared ~~to~~with both the Adjusted Plan and the Staged Acquisition Alternative, the Updated Plan anticipated a smaller development footprint and less overall development (approximately 1.345 million gsf) in the first phase; however, at full build-out the Updated Plan would have developed the District with the same gross floor area and mix of uses as the Approved Plan (with subsequent revisions described in the prior technical memoranda) and would have had the same controls on floor area ratios set forth in the provisions of the Special District zoning text that ~~has~~had been approved by the City Planning Commission and the City Council.

A substantial difference between the Approved Plan and the Updated Plan was the timing of property acquisition and construction phasing. Under the Approved Plan, the necessary remediation, grading, and infrastructure improvements would have taken place across the District at the beginning stages of construction; in comparison, with the Updated Plan (as with the Staged Acquisition Alternative and the Adjusted Plan), development activities would have proceeded incrementally, with the necessary remediation, grading, infrastructure improvements,

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and construction activities associated with the buildings in the southwestern portion of the District ~~to occurring~~ first, and construction activities on the remainder of the District ~~to following~~. Whereas the Staged Acquisition Alternative and Adjusted Plan assumed the District's connections to the Van Wyck Expressway would be constructed before the end of the first phase of development, with the Updated Plan these connections would have been ~~be~~ completed no later than after the end of the first phase of development and before the first building to be developed in the second phase of construction is completed. Some negotiated acquisition might also have occurred within the remainder of the District during the initial phase of development.

The new connection to the Van Wyck Expressway, which was assumed in the FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda, was subject to federal approval of the Freeway Access Modification Report (AMR). A Finding of No Significant Impact was issued and the AMR was approved in April 2012, and the City has committed to provide capital funds for its construction.

### **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The proposed project is intended to remediate and transform the area surrounding CitiField, which is largely separated from adjoining neighborhoods by major highways, into a thriving new neighborhood and regional destination. The project would expand on the goals and objectives of the original (2008) Willets Point Development Plan; ~~by~~ By providing development that spannings both sides of the new CitiField, the proposed project would allow for a more comprehensive and continuous neighborhood transformation linking Flushing and Corona. The environmental degradation of the Special Willets Point ~~District~~ would be remediated. The commercial components of the proposed project would provide jobs and create new retail, hotel and entertainment uses that would complement the adjacent sports venue and strengthen economic activity in the neighborhood, borough and City. The substantial residential component (which includes affordable housing units) would accommodate a portion of the City's current and future housing needs. The new structures and open spaces are intended to create an active streetscape that includes retail uses as part of a diverse mixed-use program, enhancing the pedestrian experience.

### **PROPOSED PROJECT**

The proposed project would redevelop the Willets Point/CitiField area with a mix of uses that is expected to be completed by 2032. The redevelopment would incorporate a development in the Special Willets Point District substantially as anticipated and analyzed in the 2008 FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda, as well as a major entertainment/retail component and parking adjacent to CitiField. Changes to the development analyzed here versus that analyzed in the 2008 FGEIS include an increase in the overall amount of retail development from 1.7 million square feet to 2.65 million square feet. This increase results from development of the 1.4 million square foot (1 million leasable square foot) development at Willets West combined with a concurrent reduction in the overall amount of ~~destination~~ retail in the Special Willets Point District from 1.7 million square feet to 1.25 million square feet to account for Willets West. The SEIS also assumes 5.85 million square feet of residential development to match the highest amount of residential analyzed in the FGEIS (in the No Convention Center Scenario), and a 230,000-square-foot ~~feet of~~ school use rather than the FGEIS's 130,000-square-foot ~~feet of~~ school use to ~~account for the potential for the project to require~~ accommodate a greater number of the project's potential school seats demand.

The project is anticipated to proceed in three continuous phases, as follows.

### *PHASE 1A*

The first phase of the project would commence with the remediation and development of an approximately 23-acre portion of the Special Willets Point District and the development of “Willets West” on the existing parking lot west of CitiField. The 23-acre portion of the District would be remediated to address any hazardous materials issues. Upon completion of the environmental remediation, a 200-room hotel and associated parking, and approximately 30,000 square feet of retail space would be constructed above the floodplain along the east side of 126th Street, activating the 126th Street corridor—according to the District’s regulations—with a 20-foot-wide public esplanade, and a ~~2,800~~750-space surface parking area would be developed ~~within the District~~ east of the retail and hotel uses. The parking area would be converted to active recreational use a minimum of 6 months per year ~~during the major league baseball off-season and potentially during selected other times of year.~~ This interim parking/recreational area would be replaced by permanent development in Phase 1B, as described below ~~(with the exception of a small number of parking spaces accessory to the hotel). Work is currently underway by the City on the construction of a sanitary sewer main and reconstruction of a storm sewer and outfall to support the redevelopment of Willets Point, which currently lacks this basic infrastructure.~~

In tandem with the development of the parking area, “Willets West”—an entertainment and retail center of approximately 1.4 million gross square feet (approximately one million sf of gross leasable area) —would be developed on a portion of the surface parking lot west of CitiField (see **Figures 3a** and **3b**). This entertainment and retail center, which would be developed on mapped parkland as authorized by statute, would allow for more comprehensive transit-oriented development around the Mets/Willets Point stops on the No. 7 train and Long Island Rail Road and would support the economic development of the area. The complex could include over 200 retail stores, including anchor and “mini” anchor retailers, as well as movie theaters, restaurant and food hall spaces, and entertainment venues. Surface parking and a parking structure also would be developed in this location, including 2,500 new spaces for the entertainment/retail center and 400 spaces ~~as of~~ replacement parking ~~to be for~~ used by the Mets. It is anticipated that the Willets West development, by building a critical mass of uses, would create a new destination that would serve as a catalyst for the subsequent build-out of the Willets Point area. In addition, the westernmost CitiField surface parking lot south of Roosevelt Avenue (a portion of the South Lot) would be redeveloped as a structured parking facility, to replace a portion of the CitiField parking spaces formerly located on the Willets West site.

Phase 1A is expected to be completed by 2018.

### *PHASE 1B*

In the next phase of the project, the interim surface parking lot/recreational space created during Phase 1A within the Special Willets Point District would be developed, transforming this formerly contaminated area into a new neighborhood. Consistent with the goals and objectives of the Willets Point Development Plan, Phase 1B of the proposed project would create more development on the east side of 126th Street, featuring a more active, attractive streetscape, providing new jobs, and complementing the adjacent CitiField. In addition, the new development would complement the new Willets West development created in Phase 1A. The residential units to be developed in this phase (which include affordable housing units) would accommodate a portion of the City’s current and future housing needs, and the proposed school would address the project-generated school seat demand.

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The program for this development would include approximately 4.23 million square feet of development: 2.49 million sf of residential use (2,490 units, 872 of which would be affordable), 875,000 sf of retail serving the community, 500,000 sf of office use, approximately 235,000 sf of hotel use (290 rooms), 25,000 sf of community facility use, and a 105,000 sf public school, along with parking and more than ~~five~~<sup>six</sup> acres of new public open space (see **Figure 4**). This development is anticipated to be developed ~~organically~~, block by block, substantially as envisioned in the Willets Point Development Plan. In addition, new structured parking facilities would be constructed on portions of the CitiField leasehold along Roosevelt Avenue (South Lot and Lot D) to replace the 2,725~~50~~ CitiField parking spaces formerly located within the Special Willets Point District. The 75 accessory parking spaces created in Phase 1A for the hotel would remain in the District.

Construction of the new Van Wyck Expressway access ramps—which was anticipated in the FGEIS and for which the City has received approval from the Federal Highway Administration—is slated to be completed in 2024. Construction of the Phase 1B program is anticipated to take four years; however, the buildings within the District are not expected to be occupied until after the ramp improvements have been completed. The ramps would be operational prior to the occupancy of the Phase 1B buildings.

Phase 1B is expected to be completed by 2028.

### ***PHASE 2***

In Phase 2, the remainder of the Special Willets Point District would be built out substantially as described in the FGEIS. Upon completion of Phase 2, the full build-out of the District is anticipated to total approximately 8.94 million square feet of development ~~within the District~~, including: up to 5.85 million square feet of residential use (approximately 5,850 units, 2048 of which would be affordable) ~~of residential use, including affordable housing~~; up to 1.25 million sf of retail; approximately 500,000 sf of office; up to 400,000 sf of convention center use; up to 560,000 sf of hotel use (approximately 700 rooms); up to 150,000 sf of community facility use; approximately 230,000 sf of public school use; and a minimum of 8 acres of publicly-accessible open space. The number of proposed parking spaces within the District would be determined based on project-generated demand, but is anticipated to be no more than the 6,700 spaces identified in the FGEIS. Remediation of the portions of the District not already developed in Phases 1A and 1B is assumed to be completed prior to 2028. As with Phase 1B, Phase 2 is anticipated to be completed incrementally over four years, with full build-out expected to be completed by 2032. ~~The development of Phase 2 would be subject to a separate RFP process, under which a developer for Phase 2 has not yet been selected.~~ The Queens Development Group may or may not be selected as the designated developer for Phase 2. Phase 2, illustrated in **Figure 6**, assumes a similar generic programming to that analyzed in the FGEIS, while Phase 1A and Phase 1B have discrete programs and designs. ~~In addition, consistent with the analysis presented in the FGEIS, the SEIS will analyze the development of parking, retail, and office uses by 2032 on Lot B, a portion of the CitiField leasehold along Roosevelt Avenue.~~

**Table 1** below provides a summary of the proposed program, by phase, with a summary of the proposed new parking and relocation of existing CitiField parking shown in **Table 2**.

**Table 1**  
**Summary of Proposed Program, by Phase**

Use (gsf)	Project Area	Phase 1A	Phase 1B	Phase 2	Totals by Use
Retail	SWPD	30,000	875,000	345,000	1,250,000
	WW	1,400,000 <sup>1</sup>			1,400,000
Hotel	SWPD	160,000 [200 keysrooms]	235,000 [290 keysrooms]	165,000 [210 keysrooms]	560,000 [700 keysrooms]
Residential	SWPD		2,490,000 [2,490 units]	3,360,000 [3,360 units]	5,850,000 [5,850 units]
Parking	SWPD	75 [2,725]	2,625	4,000	6,700 <sup>2-3</sup>
	WW	2,500 [400]			2,500 [400]
	Lot D/South Lot	[1,068 <sup>4</sup> ]	[2,725 <sup>5</sup> ]		1,795 <sup>6</sup> [3,893]
School	SWPD		105,000	125,000	230,000
Community Facility	SWPD		25,000	125,000	150,000
Office	SWPD		500,000		500,000
Convention Center	SWPD			400,000	400,000
Open Space	SWPD	TBD	56 acres	35 acres	8 acres <sup>2</sup>
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,590,000 gsf</b> <b>2,575 spaces</b> <b>[4,193 spaces]</b>	<b>4,230,000 gsf</b> <b>2,625 spaces</b> <b>[2,725 spaces]</b> <b>56 acres</b>	<b>4,520,000 gsf</b> <b>4,000 spaces</b> <b>35 acres</b>	<b>10,340,000 gsf</b> <b>9,200 spaces</b> <b>[4,193 spaces]<sup>3</sup></b> <b>8 acres</b>

**Notes:** SWPD = Special Willets Point District  
WW = Willets West  
Unless otherwise noted, uses are within Special Willets Point District.  
(###) = Replacement Mets parking spaces.  
<sup>1</sup> Anticipated to include cinema use and approximately 400,000 sf of common area and back of house space.  
<sup>2</sup> 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 Willets Point District.  
<sup>3</sup> Total is not cumulative, as the 2,725 replacement Mets parking spaces developed in Phase 1A would be removed in Phase 1B.  
<sup>4</sup> Net Mets replacement spaces over 1,795 spaces currently in Lot D/South Lot. There will be a total of 2,863 spaces in these lots upon completion of Phase 1A.  
<sup>5</sup> Replaces the spaces developed in SWPD in Phase 1A, which would be relocated to Lot D/South Lot.  
<sup>6</sup> Spaces currently in Lot D/South Lot, which would be incorporated into new structured parking facilities on those lots. These existing spaces were not included in the Phase 1A and Phase 1B figures, which included only new and replacement spaces.  
<sup>7</sup> Phase 1B school use would be expanded in Phase 2. Its size would be determined in response to the analysis of need in the community facilities chapter.  
<sup>2</sup> Some of the open spaces developed in Phase 1B would be replaced or expanded with new open space in Phase 2. The cumulative total of open space to be developed within the District is 8 acres.  
<sup>9</sup> Cumulative analysis will also consider the potential development analyzed in the FGEIS for Lot B (184,500 retail, 280,000 sf office. Replacement of existing 598 parking spaces is assumed to occur on site; development-generated need for 310 spaces anticipated to be satisfied within the District and CitiField parking areas.)

**Table 2**  
**Proposed New and Replacement Parking (Cumulative by Phase)**

<u>Project Area</u>	<u>Existing Conditions</u>			<u>Phase 1A</u>			<u>Phase 1B</u>			<u>Phase 2</u>		
	<u>CitiField</u>	<u>New</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>CitiField</u>	<u>New</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>CitiField</u>	<u>New</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>CitiField</u>	<u>New</u>	<u>Total</u>
WW	4,100	=	4,100	400	2,500	2,900	400	2,500	2,900	400	2,500	2,900
SWPD	=	=	=	2,750	75	2,825	=	2,700	2,700*	=	6,700	6,700*
South Lot/Lot D	1,795	=	1,795	2,745	=	2,745	5,495	=	5,495	5,495	=	5,495
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,895</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>5,895</b>	<b>5,895</b>	<b>2,575</b>	<b>8,470</b>	<b>5,895</b>	<b>5,200</b>	<b>11,095</b>	<b>5,895</b>	<b>9,200</b>	<b>15,095</b>

**Notes:** SWPD = Special Willets Point District  
 WW = Willets West  
 "CitiField" parking is the total number of spaces within the project site that either currently or would in the future serve events at CitiField. Existing Willets West spaces lost to development would be replaced as shown, in Phases 1A and 1B.  
 "New" parking is the total number of parking spaces that would serve the proposed project.  
 \*These reflect newly developed spaces for Phase 1A, Phase 1B and Phase 2 (2,750 Mets spaces would be relocated to South Lot/Lot D in Phase 1B).

#### COMPARISON OF SEIS AND FGEIS

The actions requested to facilitate the proposed project would not change the underlying zoning of the Special Willets Point District, and the same overall development of 8.94 million square feet would still be permitted within the District. However, the proposed project would differ from the development analyzed in the FGEIS in that the FGEIS program did not include any development outside of the ~~Willets Point District~~ and did not anticipate the use of the District for surface public parking and recreation. Accordingly, the SEIS will analyze ~~Furthermore, since 1.4 million square feet (1 million leasable square feet) of retail that would be developed at Willets West, the interim parking and recreational uses that would occur within the District, and the proposed parking garages at Willets West, the South Lot, and Lot D. Given the retail development that would occur in Willets West, it was assumed that less destination-retail would be developed within Willets West the District, so this SEIS analyzes 1.25 million square feet of retail at Willets Point within the District rather than 1.7 million square feet. An~~ Although the residential program and its projected population have not changed since the 2008 FGEIS (as analyzed in the No Convention Center Scenario), an increase of 100,000 square feet of school space is assumed in this SEIS to account for potential increases in the number ~~reflect updated projections of increased school seats required for the new residential population demand citywide and in the district particular in Queens. See Table 23 below for a comparison of the proposed project for the District vs. the program analyzed in the FGEIS. Any u~~ Uses not noted below are not proposed to change from the program analyzed in the FGEIS.

**Table 23**  
**Totals by Use in Special Willets Point District**  
**Proposed Program vs. FGEIS**

<u>Use</u>	<u>Proposed Program</u>	<u>FGEIS</u>
Retail	1,250,000	1,700,000
Residential	5,850,000 [5,850 units]	5,550,000 [5,500 units] (Convention Center Scenario) 5,850,000 [5,850 units] (No Convention Center Scenario)
Public School	230,000	130,000

The 2008 FGEIS analyzed a Staged Acquisition Alternative, in which the western portion of the District was assumed to be developed by 2013 and the remaining portion of the District would be built out by 2017. Technical Memoranda #3 and #4 also considered the phasing of development in the District over two analysis years. In comparison, this SEIS analyzes the development of the proposed project over three analysis years (2018, 2028, and 2032).

## **REQUIRED APPROVALS**

The proposed project is expected to seek the following discretionary public approvals:

- Zoning text amendment to ZR Section 124-60 to allow use modifications as part of a phased development within the Special Willets Point District;
- Special permit pursuant to ZR Section 124-60 to allow surface parking/open and enclosed privately operated recreation uses for Phase 1A within the Special Willets Point District;
- ~~Certification by the CPC Chairperson pursuant to ZR Section 124-05;~~
- Modification of the existing lease for the CitiField property and adjacent parking properties;
- Mayoral and Queens Borough Board approval of the business terms pursuant to New York City Charter Section 384(b)(4); ~~and~~
- Approval by the New York City Industrial Development Agency (IDA) for the waiver of mortgage recording tax for property within the Special Willets Point District; and
- A minor modification of the previously approved changes to the City Map to modify the staging for the closure of City Streets. This modification would not result in the demapping of any additional City streets beyond those previously approved for demapping.

In addition to the discretionary approvals listed above, ~~the phasing of the development within the Special Willets Point District will require certain technical revisions to the previously approved City Maps that modify the staging for the closure of city streets. This would not be a discretionary approval as the revisions would not result in the demapping of any additional city streets beyond those previously approved for demapping.~~ Public Design Commission approval also will be required for the Willets West development. In addition to the above approvals, confirmation that all proposed buildings fall within the maximum Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) height limitations would be sought from the FAA; however, no approval or permit to exceed such permitted heights is anticipated to be sought.

## **B. CITY ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW**

Because the proposed project requires discretionary approvals from the New York City Department of City Planning (DCP), New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development (ODMED), and the Borough Board, it is subject to CEQR. ODMED is the CEQR lead agency for the proposed project. The SEIS will follow the guidance of the 2012 *CEQR Technical Manual* (revised June 18, 2012) with respect to environmental analyses and impact criteria.

Scoping is the first step in SEIS preparation and provides an early opportunity for the public and other agencies to be involved in the SEIS process. Scoping is intended to determine the range of issues and considerations to be evaluated in the SEIS. The goals of scoping are to focus the EIS on potentially significant impacts and to eliminate from consideration issues that are irrelevant or insignificant. This Draft Scope of Work for the SEIS has been prepared to describe the

## **Willets Point Development Draft Scope of Work**

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proposed project and development program, present the proposed content of the SEIS, and discuss the analytical procedures to be followed.

~~A public scoping meeting will be held. The period for submitting written comments will remain open until the end of the tenth day after the close of the scoping meeting. The Final Scope of Work for the SEIS will incorporate all relevant comments made on the draft scope and will revise the extent or methodologies of the studies, as appropriate, in response to comments made during the scoping process and to include any other necessary changes to the scope of the SEIS. The Draft SEIS will be prepared in accordance with the Final Scope of Work for the SEIS.~~

Along with its issuance of a Positive Declaration, ODMED issued a draft Scope of Work for the SEIS on August 28, 2012. A public scoping meeting was held for the proposed project on September 27, 2012, and additional comments were accepted until October 26, 2012. After the lead agency considered comments received during the public comment period, this Final Scope of Work was prepared to direct the content and preparation of an SEIS. As the next step in the process, once the lead agency has determined that the SEIS is complete, it will be subject to public review, in accordance with the CEQR and ULURP processes with a public hearing and a period for public comment. A Final EIS (FEIS) will then be prepared to respond to those comments received on the SEIS. ODMED will make CEQR findings based on the FEIS, before making a decision on project approval.

## **C. ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK**

### **OVERVIEW**

The SEIS for the development of the project site will supplement the 2008 FGEIS. The SEIS will contain:

- A description of the proposed project and its environmental setting;
- A description of the evolution of project site conditions since 2008;
- The identification and analysis of any significant adverse environmental impacts of the proposed project, including the short- and long-term impacts;
- An identification of any significant adverse environmental impacts that cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented;
- A discussion of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project;
- An identification of irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources that would be involved in the proposed project, should it be implemented; and
- The identification and analysis of practicable mitigation to address any significant adverse impacts generated by the proposed project not previously identified in the FGEIS.

### **ANALYSIS APPROACH**

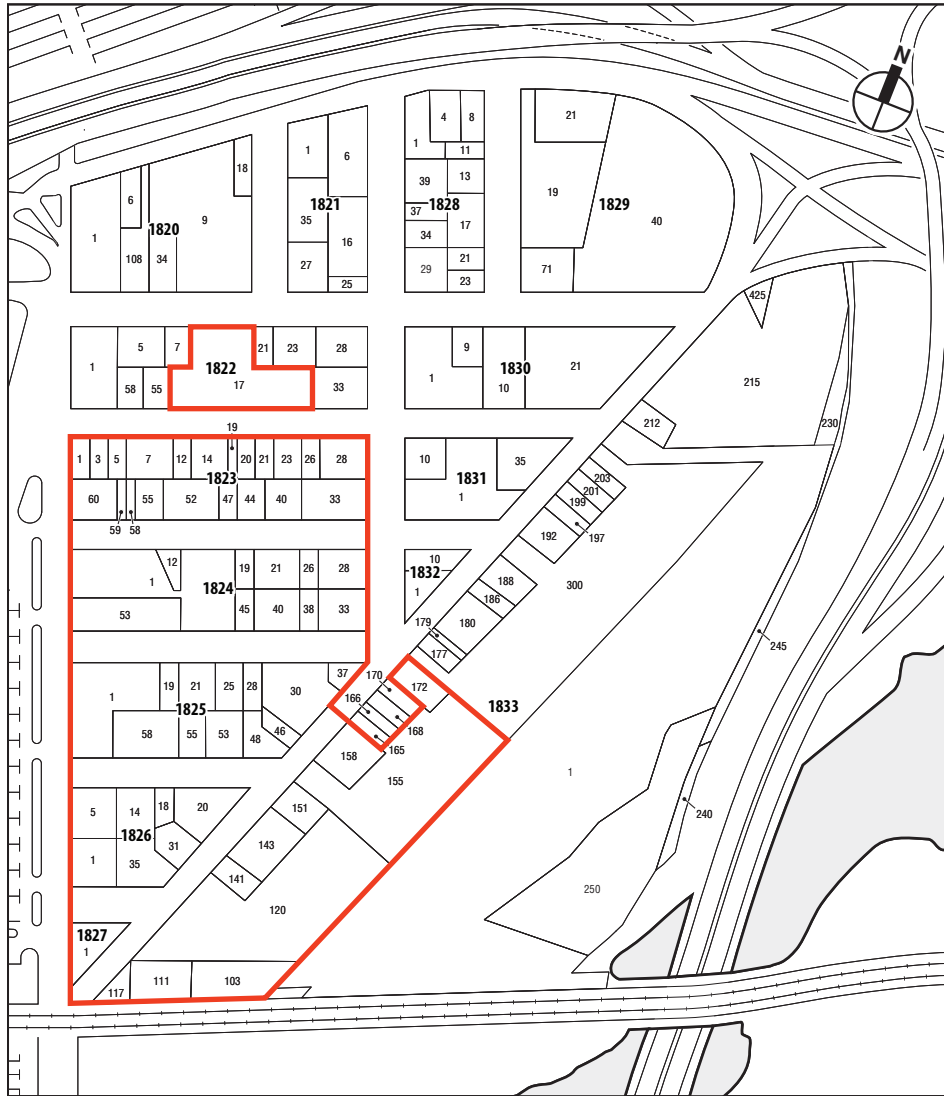
Each chapter of the SEIS will first summarize the conclusions of the FGEIS for that particular technical area. Then, the chapter will assess whether changes in the analysis years and background conditions, variations between the proposed project and the redevelopment assumed in the FGEIS, and new proposed actions could result in new or different significant adverse impacts than those disclosed in the FGEIS. Existing conditions will be updated as necessary and presented. Next, the chapter will project changed existing conditions forward into the future without the proposed project, incorporating the most recent information available on known

land-use proposals and, as appropriate, changes in anticipated overall growth. Finally, the future with the proposed project will be described, the differences between the future without and with the proposed project will be measured, and any significant adverse environmental impacts will be disclosed. To the extent that specific discretionary actions or program elements could potentially alter the conclusions in the FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda, the SEIS will focus on evaluating the potential significant adverse impacts of those actions or elements. The SEIS will also identify and analyze appropriate mitigation for any significant adverse environmental impacts.

#### REASONABLE WORST-CASE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

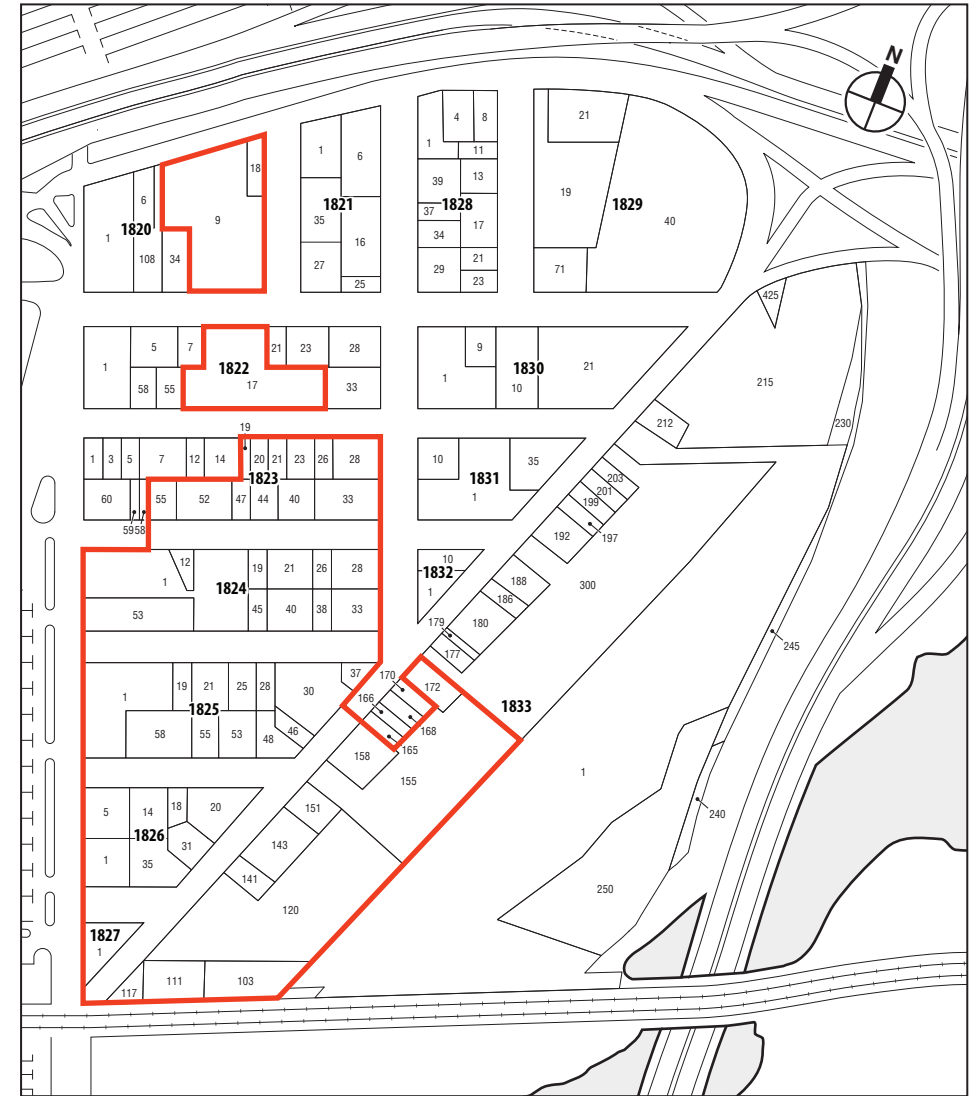
The proposed program detailed above, along with the potential development analyzed in the FGEIS for Lot B, will be analyzed as the reasonable worst-case development scenario (RWCDs) in the SEIS. It is currently anticipated that the assemblage of land within the Special Willets Point District for the Phase 1A and Phase 1B developments could take one of two forms, as shown in **Figure 7**. ~~In one scenario, the assemblage would include lots between 34th and 35th Avenues that total approximately two acres; in the alternative, the assemblage would not include these lots but instead would include an approximately two-acre lot on the north side of 34th Avenue that is currently owned by the city. As shown, both assemblage options would include Block 1823 (Lots 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 28, 33, 40, 44, 47, 52, and 55) Block 1824, Block 1825, Block 1826, Block 1827, Block 1833 (Lots 117, 111, 103, 120, 141, 143, 151, 155, 158, and 172), and Block 1822, Lot 17. In addition to the land common to the two assemblage options, Assemblage Option 1 would include the remaining lots on Block 1823, that is Lots 1, 3, 5, 7, 12, 14, 58, 59, and 60. Assemblage Option 2 would not include the land specific to Assemblage Option 1, but would instead include Lots 9 and 18, on Block 1820. In either scenario, the assemblage would total approximately 23 acres. However, for the purposes of a conservative analysis, the SEIS will assume that all of the potential project site area, totaling 25 acres, would be utilized for surface parking/off-season recreational use in Phase 1A and for development in Phase 1B. For Phase 2, the SEIS will assume that all of the development as noted in **Table 1 above and Table 2** has occurred, and all land comprising both assemblage alternatives taken for Phases 1A and 1B has been developed.~~

As noted above, the SEIS will analyze the potential development of parking, retail and office uses on Lot B, a portion of the CitiField leasehold along Roosevelt Avenue. The 2008 FGEIS anticipated that if the Willets Point Development Plan were approved and the District were redeveloped into a new mixed-use community and regional destination, additional development could occur on this lot. Any such program for Lot B is assumed to be developed as a collaborative effort between the City and the Queens Ballpark Company, LLC and would require an amendment to the current lease agreement and discretionary approval by IDA, acting through the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), which administers the IDA lease. This action would be the subject of a separate environmental review process subject to SEQRA and/or CEQR. This potential development is not part of the proposed program, and no specific development plans have been proposed; however, for the purposes of a conservative analysis, a conceptual program for Lot B will be analyzed as part of the RWCDs. The conceptual program to be analyzed is the same as proposed in the 2008 FGEIS: 184,500 sf of retail use and 280,000 sf of commercial use, which could include a one-story retail structure and a 10-story office building. The existing VIP/ADA parking spaces on Lot B are assumed to be replaced on site; accessory parking for the Lot B development is assumed to be included on Lot



**Assemblage Option 1**

NOTE: This Graphic has been corrected from the version that appears in the Draft Scope of Work



**Assemblage Option 2**

0 200 400 FEET  
SCALE

D, as analyzed in the FGEIS. For the purposes of the RWCDs, it is assumed that this development would be completed by 2032.

## **STUDY AREAS**

Each technical study must address impacts within an appropriate geographical area. These “study areas” vary depending on the technical issue being addressed. In most cases, the study areas for the SEIS for impacts arising from the proposed project will be different from those presented in the FGEIS because the geographic extent of the project site for the SEIS will extend west of West 126th Street.

## **FUTURE ANALYSIS YEAR AND BASELINE CONDITIONS**

The analysis of the proposed project will be performed for the expected year of completion of full build-out of the project, which is anticipated to be 2032. However, some project elements are anticipated for completion by 2018 and 2028, and those elements could result in significant adverse impacts prior to completion of the full development program. While the construction of the Phase 1B program is anticipated to take four years, the buildings within the Special Willets Point District are not expected to be constructed until ~~after~~ the Van Wyck Expressway ramp improvements have been completed, which is slated to be in 2024. Therefore, three future baseline conditions will be examined under the “future without the proposed project” in all technical chapters: the 2018, 2028, and 2032 ~~Without No Action S~~scenarios. For the purposes of a conservative impact disclosure analysis, this SEIS assumes that ~~in each Without Action scenario, no change is assumed to be made to any portion of the project site, and the existing uses on the project site would be maintained in each of the three No Action scenarios.~~

## **D. PROPOSED SCOPE OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (SEIS)<sup>1</sup>**

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The first chapter of the SEIS will introduce the reader to the project and set the context in which to assess impacts. The chapter will contain a project identification (description and location of the proposed project); description of current uses of the project site; a statement of purpose and need for the proposed project; a description of the proposed development program and project siting and design; and a discussion of approvals required, procedures to be followed, and the role of the SEIS in the process. The chapter is the key to understanding the proposed project and its impacts, and gives the public and decision-makers a base from which to evaluate the actions against both the With Action and the ~~Without No~~ Action scenarios.

The project description will consist of a discussion of key project elements, such as land use plans, site plans and elevations, and access and circulation. The section on required approvals will describe all discretionary actions required to develop the project. The project description will provide the context of the project with respect to issuance of the FGEIS and the subsequent

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<sup>1</sup> The following discusses the planned scope for the SEIS. If warranted, the SEIS may include additional technical analyses not described herein in order to assess the potential for significant adverse impacts resulting from the proposed project.

expansion beyond the Special Willets Point District, as well as the adjacent development of the new CitiField stadium.

This chapter will also discuss the framework for the analyses for the SEIS. It will identify the analysis years and project phasing, and describe the reasonable worst-case development scenarios that will be assessed in the SEIS.

The role of public agencies in the approval process will also be described. The role of the SEIS as a full disclosure document to aid in decision-making will be identified and its relationship to any other approval procedures will be described.

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

The FGEIS concluded that the Willets Point Development Plan would dramatically change land uses in the Special Willets Point District by replacing predominantly low-density auto-related and industrial uses with a new mixed-use neighborhood that includes residential, retail, office, hotel, convention center, community facility, and open space uses. The FGEIS concluded that the proposed urban renewal plan would define the District's boundaries and the area to be redeveloped in accordance with the City's redevelopment goals, and the Plan would advance a number of the fundamental goals of the Downtown Flushing Development Framework. The Plan also was found to be consistent with the City's 10 Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP) policies and standards. Overall, the Willets Point Development Plan was not expected to result in any significant adverse impacts on land use, zoning, or public policy.

The SEIS will address the proposed project and specific zoning and development program, and it will update the work undertaken for the FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda. The scope of work for the SEIS is as follows:

- A. Summarize the development history of the project site and surrounding area provided in the FGEIS. Describe existing conditions on the project site and the underlying zoning. The land use study areas for the SEIS will extend approximately ½ mile and ¾ mile from the project site's boundaries, distances that, based on *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, define the area in which the proposed development could reasonably be expected to create potential direct and indirect impacts.
- B. Update the existing conditions section of the FGEIS to reflect changes in the neighborhood since the analysis performed for the FGEIS. Describe predominant land use patterns, including a description of recent development trends in Corona and Flushing and anticipated projects within Flushing Meadows Corona Park, and other public policies that apply to the project site, including any applicable Special Zoning Districts and any formal neighborhood or community plans. Existing land use patterns will be highlighted.
- C. Based on the discussion provided in the FGEIS, describe the existing zoning and recent zoning actions in the study area. Update this discussion to reflect any recent changes in the area.
- D. Using the FGEIS as the baseline, update the list of future projects in the study area to reflect the new analysis years of 2018, 2028, and 2032, and describe how any changes in background projects might affect land use patterns and development trends in the study area in the future without the proposed project. Also, identify pending zoning actions (including those associated with ~~Without~~No Action projects) or other public policy actions that could affect land use patterns and trends in the study area as they relate to the project site.

- E. Describe and analyze the proposed zoning actions.
- F. Assess whether changes in background conditions, specific discretionary actions, and any differences between the proposed project and each of the three ~~Without~~**No** Action scenarios would result in significant adverse impacts on land use and land use trends, zoning, and public policy.
- G. Identify and analyze practicable mitigation measures for any significant adverse impacts resulting from the proposed project.

## **SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

The FGEIS concluded that by 2017, the Willets Point Development Plan would not result in any significant adverse impacts as measured by the following five socioeconomic areas of concern prescribed in the 2001 *CEQR Technical Manual*: 1) Direct displacement of a residential population; 2) Direct displacement of existing businesses and institutions; 3) Indirect (secondary) displacement of a residential population; 4) Indirect displacement of businesses and institutions due to either increased rents or competition; and 5) Adverse effects on specific industries not necessarily tied to a project site or study area. The socioeconomic analysis for the SEIS will address whether the proposed project—particularly the proposed expansion to include the Willets West development—would result in new or different socioeconomic findings than the FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda, as follows:

### ***DIRECT RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT***

The FGEIS found that the Willets Point Development Plan's displacement of one household, which would be provided relocation assistance, would not result in significant adverse socioeconomic impacts. The proposed project would result in the same displacement, and therefore, the proposed project would not result in significant adverse socioeconomic impacts due to direct residential displacement. No residential units are located on the expanded portions of the project site. No further assessment of direct residential displacement is required for the SEIS.

### ***DIRECT BUSINESS DISPLACEMENT***

The FGEIS found that the Willets Point Development Plan's displacement of approximately 260 businesses and 1,711 employees associated with the displaced business would not result in significant adverse socioeconomic impacts. Although the businesses were found to employ many workers and offer products and services valued by certain consumers, these businesses and institutions were determined not to be of substantial economic value to the region or City as defined under CEQR. The District's businesses were found not to be unique; similar services and products are provided throughout Queens, the City, and the region.

The proposed project would result in the same direct business displacement as analyzed in the FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda, and therefore, the SEIS does not require further assessment of potential impacts due to direct business displacement. The SEIS will provide a reporting of the businesses that remain on the project site, and the anticipated timing of their displacement.

#### *INDIRECT RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT*

The FGEIS's detailed analysis of indirect residential displacement determined that the Willets Point Development Plan would not result in significant adverse impacts due to indirect residential displacement. The Special Willets Point District is geographically separated from the at-risk population identified in the FGEIS, limiting its potential to influence surrounding residential trends. In addition, The FGEIS found that although the population that would be introduced by the Willets Point Development Plan may include a larger proportion of households at higher incomes as compared with the existing study area population, the Plan's 1,100 affordable housing units would ensure that a substantial portion of the new population would have incomes that would more closely reflect existing incomes in the study area.

The proposed project would develop more total residential units (5,850 vs. 5,500) and more affordable housing (35 percent of units) than analyzed in the indirect residential displacement analysis of the FGEIS, which considered the Convention Center Scenario. The increase in the affordable housing percentage was analyzed in the subsequent Technical Memorandum No. 2 (2008), and no significant adverse impacts were identified related to that change. However, ~~g~~Given the increase in the total number of residential units proposed and differences in the anticipated development schedule for residential units as compared with the analysis in the FGEIS, the SEIS will include a preliminary assessment to determine whether the proposed project could result in significant adverse impacts due to indirect residential displacement within a ½-mile study area. If the preliminary assessment does not rule out the potential for significant adverse impacts, a detailed analysis will be conducted that assesses the potential for indirect residential displacement in the context of existing conditions and evaluations of the future without and with the proposed project in 2018, 2028, and 2032.

#### *INDIRECT BUSINESS DISPLACEMENT DUE TO INCREASED RENTS*

The FGEIS found that the economic patterns generated by the Willets Point Development Plan would not lead to substantial changes in demand for goods and services that would alter economic conditions in the broader study area. Existing local retail establishments in the study area would continue to be more convenient to study area residents outside of the District, while the proposed Plan's residents and visitors would shop and dine primarily at retail establishments in the District. The Willets Point Development Plan was found to represent a continuation of existing trends toward the development of retail, office, hotel, and residential uses in the study area, rather than the introduction of a new trend that would change existing economic patterns in the study area.

The proposed project would introduce approximately 1.4 million gsf (one million sf gross leasable area) of entertainment and retail uses as part of Willets West, which was not analyzed in the FGEIS. The SEIS will therefore present a preliminary assessment to determine whether the additional commercial uses introduced by the proposed project could introduce trends that are substantially different from those identified in the FGEIS, and that could result in significant indirect business displacement due to increased rents. The study area for this SEIS analysis will extend ½ mile from the project site's boundaries, a distance that, based on *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, defines the area in which the proposed development could reasonably be expected to create potential indirect impacts. A detailed analysis will be conducted if the preliminary assessment cannot definitively rule out the potential for significant adverse impacts.

*INDIRECT BUSINESS DISPLACEMENT DUE TO RETAIL MARKET SATURATION*

The FGEIS analysis found that the Willets Point Development Plan would not substantially raise retail market capture rates within a 5-mile Primary Trade Area and, therefore, would not have the potential to adversely affect competitive stores in the Primary Trade Area. The proposed project would introduce approximately 1.4 million gsf (one million sf gross leasable area) of entertainment and retail uses as part of Willets West, which was not analyzed in the FGEIS. The SEIS will therefore ~~use~~replicate the depth of analysis in the FGEIS and apply the preliminary and detailed assessment methodologies of the 2012 CEQR Technical Manual methodology to perform a preliminary assessment that ~~estimates~~considers whether the retail introduced by the proposed project would result in capture rates in excess of 100 percent, ~~which is the CEQR Technical Manual threshold requiring detailed analysis. The detailed analysis, if required, will be framed in the context and that considers the mix of existing conditions and evaluations of the future without and with~~and planned retail uses in the surrounding areas as part of its evaluation of potential competitive effects of retail uses that would be introduced by the proposed project in 2018, 2028 and 2032.

*ADVERSE EFFECTS ON SPECIFIC INDUSTRIES*

The FGEIS found that the Willets Point Development Plan would not result in significant adverse impacts on any specific industry. Although a large concentration of auto-related uses would be displaced, these displaced businesses and their associated employment would not significantly impact the industry as a whole. The potentially displaced businesses and employment were found to represent less than five percent of city-wide employment within the auto-related sectors (including wholesale trade, retail trade, transportation and warehousing, and other services), and the businesses could relocate within the City, potentially in other auto-related clusters, thereby maintaining existing business and employment counts within the industry.

The proposed project would result in the same direct business displacement as analyzed in the FGEIS, and would not present any new or different uses that would alter the findings of the FGEIS with respect to potential effects on the auto industry. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in adverse effects on specific industries, and no further assessment of this issue of concern is required for the SEIS.

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

*POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES*

The FGEIS did not find a significant adverse impact on police and fire services. The *CEQR Technical Manual* requires a detailed analysis of impacts on police and fire services if a proposed action would affect the physical operation of, or access to and from, a station house or where a proposed project would create a sizeable new neighborhood where none existed before. As with the project presented in the FGEIS, the proposed project would not directly displace a station house and therefore would not adversely affect the physical operation of, or access to and from, a station house; however, it would create a sizeable new neighborhood. Therefore, the SEIS will update the FGEIS analysis of police and fire services.

### *SCHOOLS*

As with the project presented in the FGEIS, the number of units introduced by the proposed project would exceed the CEQR threshold for a detailed analysis of public schools. Therefore, the SEIS will update the schools analysis to reflect the development currently proposed. The analysis of public schools will include the following:

- A. Identify public elementary, intermediate, and high schools serving the project site and compile data on existing enrollment, capacity, available seats and utilization rates;
- B. Project conditions in the ~~Without~~No Action scenarios using School Construction Authority (SCA) enrollment projections, data on planned development projects in the study area, plans for changes in capacity, new programs, capital projects, and improvements; and
- C. Project future conditions with the proposed project by adding students likely to be generated by the project to the projections for the ~~Without~~No Action scenarios. Impacts will be based on the difference between conditions without and with the proposed project.
- D. If necessary, mitigation measures to avoid or reduce potential significant adverse impacts will be identified.

### *LIBRARIES*

The FGEIS did not find a significant adverse impact on libraries. The SEIS will evaluate whether the differences in the library user population under the proposed project as compared with the three ~~Without~~No Action scenarios would alter the FGEIS findings with respect to libraries.

### *OUTPATIENT HEALTH CARE FACILITIES*

The FGEIS did not identify any significant adverse impacts on outpatient health care facilities. The *CEQR Technical Manual* threshold for an analysis of outpatient health care facilities is if a proposed action would affect the physical operation of, or access to and from, a facility or where a proposed project would create a sizeable new neighborhood where none existed before. As with the project presented in the FGEIS, the proposed project would not directly displace any outpatient health care facilities and therefore would not adversely affect the physical operation of, or access to and from, such facilities; however, it would create a sizeable new neighborhood. Therefore, the SEIS will update the FGEIS analysis of outpatient health care facilities.

### *DAY CARE*

The FGEIS concluded that the Willets Point Development Plan could result in a significant adverse impact on the availability of day care services within a one-mile radius of the District. To mitigate the potential impact on day care facilities, NYCEDC would require that a future developer consult with the New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) to determine the appropriate way to meet the demand for publicly-funded day care services generated by the affordable housing development in the district.

The proposed project could generate up to 5,850 units of housing, of which approximately 35 percent could be affordable. Thus, the proposed project would be expected to introduce more than ~~5020~~ children eligible for publicly-funded day care. Therefore, the SEIS will update the FGEIS analysis of day care facilities.

## **OPEN SPACE**

The proposed project would introduce new employees associated with the commercial, retail, and community facility uses, and residential building maintenance. The proposed project also would generate a substantial number of new residents, such that it will exceed the CEQR threshold for an analysis of open space and will place added demand on existing open space and recreational facilities.

The FGEIS did not identify any significant adverse open space impacts. The proposed project's full build would create a minimum of eight acres of publicly accessible open space as well as, in Phase 1A, active recreational space within the Special Willets Point District for a minimum of six months per year during the major league baseball off-season and during selected periods when the Mets are visiting teams on the road. The recreational space is an interim use that will be developed upon in Phase 1B. A detailed assessment of the proposed project's effect on open space will be provided in the SEIS. The SEIS will update the FGEIS open space analysis and will assess the potential for impacts on open space, taking into account the specific open space acreage and proposed programming for the open space. The SEIS also will consider how the mapped parkland within the project site itself, which is currently used for parking associated with a public park use, would be affected. As in the FGEIS, the analysis will consider both passive and active open space resources, requiring two study areas. These study areas will have the same radius as in the FGEIS; thus, passive open space ratios will be assessed within ¼-mile radius and ½-mile radius from the project site. Active open space ratios would be assessed for the ½-mile residential study area. As recommended in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, both study areas comprise all census tracts that have 50 percent of their area located within ¼-mile radius and ½-mile radius of the project site. Since the area's open space ratios are anticipated to decrease by more than one percent, a detailed analysis will be performed as follows:

- A. Update the inventory of passive and active open spaces. The condition and use of existing facilities will be described based on the inventory.
- B. Update the demographic analysis of the worker and residential population in the commercial open space study area, and residential population in the residential open space study area, including information available from the 2010 Census.
- C. Based on the updated inventory of publicly accessible open space and residential and worker populations, existing open space ratios will be calculated and compared with City guidelines to assess adequacy.
- D. Assess expected changes in future levels of open space supply and demand in 2018, 2028 and 2032, based on other planned development projects within the study areas, using updated information from the "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy" task. Open space ratios will be developed for the three future ~~Without No~~ Action scenarios and compared with existing ratios to determine changes in levels of adequacy for the future without the proposed project.
- E. Based on the residential and worker populations added by the proposed project, assess effects on open space supply and demand. The assessments of impacts will be based on a comparison of open space ratios with the proposed project and its associated public space, and open space ratios in the future without the proposed project.
- F. Qualitatively evaluate the effects of the new open space on overall open space conditions in the study areas. Describe the type (active or passive), capacity, conditions, and distribution of existing open spaces and open space conditions in the future without the proposed project.

Compare future conditions without and with the proposed project by describing the programming elements of the new open space and evaluating its effects on capacity, overall conditions, and open space distribution within the study areas.

- G. Determine whether the proposed project, in comparison to the ~~Without~~No Action scenarios, would result in any significant adverse impacts.
- H. For any significant adverse impacts, identify and analyze appropriate mitigation measures as are deemed appropriate by the lead agency.

## SHADOWS

The FGEIS did not identify any significant shadows impacts for the Willets Point Development Plan. The SEIS will update the shadows analysis to account for the development currently being proposed.

The *CEQR Technical Manual* requires a shadows assessment for proposed actions that would result in new structures (or additions to existing structures) greater than 50 feet in height or located adjacent to, or across the street from, a sunlight-sensitive resource. Such resources include publicly accessible open spaces, important sunlight-sensitive natural features, or historic resources with sun-sensitive features. The project site is located within Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, a publicly-accessible open space. The shadows analysis in the FGEIS conservatively analyzed the entire Special Willets Point ~~d~~District extruded to the maximum heights allowable under Federal Aviation Administration height restrictions and zoning height and setback controls. Therefore, since no new height regulations are being introduced with the SEIS, this portion of the project site does not require further analysis.

The SEIS will conduct a preliminary assessment to determine whether the proposed development on portions of the project site outside the Special Willets Point ~~d~~District could cast shadows long enough to reach sunlight-sensitive park area or any other nearby sun-sensitive resources. The shadows assessment will be coordinated with the open space, historic and cultural resources and natural resources analyses. It will include the following tasks:

- A. Develop a base map illustrating the project site in relationship to publicly accessible open spaces, historic resources with sunlight-dependent features, and natural features in the area.
- B. Calculate the longest possible shadow that could result from the proposed project to determine whether it could reach any sunlight-sensitive resources at any time of year.

If the preliminary assessment cannot eliminate the possibility of new shadows on sunlight-sensitive resources, a detailed shadows analysis will be conducted to determine the extent and duration of the new shadows, and to assess their effects. The detailed analysis would include the following tasks:

- C. Develop a three-dimensional computer model of the elements of the base map developed in the preliminary assessment.
- D. Develop a three-dimensional representation of the proposed project.
- E. Using three-dimensional computer modeling software, determine the extent and duration of new shadows that would be cast on sunlight-sensitive resources as a result of the proposed actions on four representative days of the year.
- F. Document the analysis with graphics comparing shadows resulting from the ~~Without~~No Action condition with shadows resulting from the proposed project, with incremental

shadow highlighted in a contrasting color. Include a summary table listing the entry and exit times and total duration of incremental shadow on each applicable representative day for each affected resource.

- G. Assess the significance of any shadow impacts on sunlight-sensitive resources. If any significant adverse shadow impacts are identified, identify and assess potential mitigation strategies.

## **HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

The FGEIS concluded that there would be no adverse impacts related to archaeological resources, but there would be a significant adverse impact related to the anticipated demolition of the former Empire Millwork Corporation Building, which has been determined eligible for listing on the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places (S/NR). The SEIS will evaluate whether the differences in the project site and program under the proposed project as compared with the three ~~Without~~No Action scenarios would alter the FGEIS findings with respect to historic and cultural resources.

As part of the 2008 FGEIS and the 2001 *Shea Stadium Redevelopment FEIS*, the project site was reviewed for its potential archaeological sensitivity by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) (Special Willets Point District only). LPC and OPRHP have determined that the project site is not sensitive for archaeological resources. Thus, this analysis will focus on standing structures only.

The SEIS scope of work is as follows:

- ~~A. Define the area of potential effect (APE) for archaeological resources. As part of the FGEIS, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) determined that the District is not sensitive for archaeological resources. Seek a determination from LPC of the potential archaeological sensitivity of the portion of the APE that lies outside the boundaries of the District. Based on its review, LPC will either recommend that further archaeological evaluation is not warranted, or that the APE requires additional study.~~
- B. Define the study area for architectural resources. Within the study area for architectural resources, map and describe any known architectural resources (properties listed on or determined eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places [S/NR, S/NR-eligible], National Historic Landmarks, New York City Landmarks [NYCLs] and New York City Historic Districts [NYCHD], or properties pending such designation). Map and briefly describe any potential architectural resources within the study area, and consult with LPC for determinations of eligibility.
- C. If there have been any material changes from the circumstances considered in the FGEIS, assess the potential for impacts on any known or potential architectural resources, including visual and contextual impacts based on an assessment of the specific development program.
- D. Describe anticipated changes to the project site and the study area in the future without the proposed project.
- E. Assess the potential impact of the proposed project on any known or potential architectural resources, including any direct physical impacts and any visual or contextual impacts.

- F. Identify and analyze practicable mitigation measures for any significant adverse impacts resulting from the proposed project, in consultation with LPC.

## URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

The FGEIS concluded that no significant adverse impacts on urban design and visual resources would be expected from the Willets Point Development Plan. The SEIS will assess how the project would change the urban design and visual character of the project site and surrounding area, in comparison to the future without the proposed action. In addition, the SEIS will assess the degree to which the proposed project would change or restrict significant views of visual resources that are currently available from the project site and surrounding area. As detailed in the Staged Acquisition Alternative of the FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda, since development would occur more incrementally in the District under the proposed project, and there would not be an open space area buffering eastern portions of the Phase 1A and 1B development from the industrial uses that would remain in the eastern portions of the District to be developed later (as previously analyzed), for Phases 1A and 1B the SEIS will consider the contrast between the redeveloped portion of the District and the area that would remain largely industrial in nature.

Following the guidelines of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a preliminary assessment of urban design and visual resources will first be prepared. The preliminary assessment will determine whether the proposed project, in comparison to the previously-approved project, would create a change to the pedestrian experience that is sufficiently significant to require greater explanation and further study. The study area for the preliminary assessment of urban design and visual resources will be consistent with that of the study area for the analysis of land use, zoning and public policy. ~~The preliminary assessment will include a concise narrative of the existing project area, the future with the proposed actions condition, and the future without the proposed actions condition. The preliminary assessment will present photographs, zoning and floor area calculations, building heights, illustrative renderings and site plans, and view corridor assessments.~~

A detailed analysis will be prepared if warranted based on the preliminary assessment. As described in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, examples of projects that may require a detailed analysis are those that would make substantial alterations to the streetscape of a neighborhood by noticeably changing the scale of buildings, potentially obstructing view corridors, or competing with icons in the skyline. The detailed analysis would describe the project site and the urban design and visual resources of the surrounding area. The analysis would describe the potential changes that could occur to urban design and visual resources in the future with the proposed actions condition, in comparison to the future without the proposed action, focusing on the changes that could negatively affect a pedestrian's experience of the area. If determined to be necessary, an analysis will be performed to examine the effects of the project on pedestrian-level wind conditions. Mitigation measures to avoid or reduce potential significant adverse impacts will be identified, if necessary.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

The FGEIS did not identify any significant adverse natural resource impacts from the Willets Point Development Plan. For those areas of the project site that were not addressed in the FGEIS, e.g., the CitiField parking areas, the scope of work for this task will be as follows:

## **Willets Point Development Draft Scope of Work**

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- A. Describe existing natural resources (plants, wildlife, threatened, or endangered species, and floodplains) on the project site.
- B. Provide a general description of aquatic resources of Flushing Bay in the vicinity of the project site, including water quality and aquatic organisms (plankton, macroinvertebrates, fish, and threatened or endangered species).
- C. Assess the potential effects to natural resources from the proposed project, including the potential habitat provided by additional open space and the potential effects on migratory birds due to the size and heights of the proposed buildings.
- D. Assess the potential effects to aquatic resources of Flushing Bay (water quality and aquatic organisms) in the vicinity of the project site ~~associated with any~~ due to discharge of stormwater runoff from the project site or sewer discharges potential increases in combined sewer overflow events due to increased discharge of sanitary flow resulting from the proposed project, as evaluated under “Water and Sewer Infrastructure.”
- E. Assess the potential effects to East River water quality ~~from increases in treated at the Bowery Bay Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) due to sanitary effluent from the Bowery Bay Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and/or the on-site water reclamation facility that could result from the proposed project, as evaluated under “Water and Sewer Infrastructure.”~~
- F. Identify and analyze practicable mitigation measures for any significant adverse impacts resulting from the proposed project.

## **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

The FGEIS identified the potential for significant adverse impacts resulting from the presence of hazardous materials in the soil and groundwater on the site. Therefore, ~~redevelopment was to be performed in accordance with~~ a Remedial Action Plan (RAP) ~~was developed including soil excavation under and~~ a Construction Phase Health and Safety Plan (CHASP) followed by site capping and vapor control to prevent human contact with any remaining contamination following construction. The RAP/CHASP was to be approved by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) prior to starting subsurface disturbance for construction of the proposed project.

For those areas that were not addressed in the FGEIS, e.g., the CitiField parking areas, the potential for contamination (and determination of appropriate remedial measures that would be implemented during and following construction) will be determined by preparing ~~Phase I Environmental Site Assessments~~ preliminary environmental site assessments (including summaries of the results of past subsurface investigations) ~~and conducting Phase II subsurface investigations, to the extent that existing studies of these areas need to be supplemented.~~ New Phase II investigations ~~will be conducted~~ (as well as site-specific RAPs and CHASPs) would be prepared prior to starting subsurface disturbance for construction of the proposed project in accordance with scopes approved by DEP.

For those areas previously addressed by the FGEIS, ~~in addition to summarizing the previous findings of the FGEIS,~~ the SEIS will include a summary of any pertinent changes based on a review of updated regulatory database searches. The SEIS also will address the need for any changes to the ~~RAP/CHASP~~ previous findings based on the new phasing of the project, e.g., that initial phases of the project will be in use while other areas are unremediated or undergoing cleanup. As ~~detailed in the Staged Acquisition Alternative of the FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda, since remediation, grading, and infrastructure improvements would occur more incrementally in the District under the proposed project, and there would not be an open~~

~~space area buffering eastern portions of the Phase 1A and 1B development from the industrial uses that would remain in the eastern portions of the District to be developed later (as previously analyzed); such, additional safeguards could be required to ensure that existing hazardous materials contamination does not migrate to developed portions of the District subsequent to the remediation of those developed from unremediated areas to developed portions of the District. Additionally, the SEIS will address that redevelopment within the District could be subject to the additional jurisdiction of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) if properties are entered into NYSDEC's Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP).~~

The SEIS will also describe the mechanism (such as the use of E-designations) to ensure that the commitments described in the SEIS are implemented.

## **WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE**

The FGEIS concluded that no significant impacts would occur in the water supply and sewage treatment system as a result of the Willets Point Development Plan. Since the areas in which the project is expanding are located in a separately sewered area and would exceed 100,000 square feet of commercial/public and institutional/community facility use above the ~~Without~~No Action scenarios, the SEIS will update the analysis to determine whether the proposed project, in comparison to the ~~Without~~No Action scenarios, would result in any significant adverse impacts. For any areas of analysis resulting in significant adverse impacts, the analysis will identify practicable mitigation measures.

- A. The existing stormwater drainage system and surfaces (pervious or impervious) on the project site will be described, and the amount of stormwater generated on the site will be described using DEP's volume calculation worksheet.
- B. The existing sewer system serving the development site will be described. The existing flows to the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) that serves the site will be obtained for the latest 12-month period, and the average dry weather monthly flow will be presented. Existing capacity information for pump stations, regulators, etc., downstream of the affected drainage area will be presented based on available information.
- C. Changes to the site's stormwater drainage system and surface area expected in the future without the proposed project will be described. Any changes to the sewer system that are expected to occur in the future without the proposed project will be described based on information provided by DEP. As described above, work is currently underway by the City on the construction of a sanitary sewer main and reconstruction of a storm sewer and outfall to support the redevelopment of Willets Point.
- D. Assess future stormwater generation from the proposed project and assess the project's potential to create impacts. The assessment will discuss any planned sustainability elements and best management practices (BMPs) that are intended to reduce stormwater runoff from the site. Changes to the site's proposed surface area (pervious or impervious) will be described, and runoff coefficients and runoff for each surface type/area will be presented.
- E. Sanitary sewage generation for the project will be described for the existing condition, ~~without~~No aAction condition and the proposed project. The effects of the incremental demand on the system will be assessed to determine if there will be any impact on operations of the WPCP.

- F. Based on the assessment of future stormwater and wastewater generation, the change in flows and volumes to the combined sewer system due to the proposed project will be determined.
- G. A more detailed assessment may be required if increased sanitary or stormwater discharges from the proposed project are predicted to affect the capacity of the existing sewer system, exacerbate Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) volumes/frequencies, or contribute greater pollutant loadings in stormwater discharged to receiving water bodies. The scope of a more detailed analysis, if necessary, will be developed based on conclusions from the preliminary infrastructure assessment (described above) and in coordination with DEP.

### **SOLID WASTE AND SANITATION SERVICES**

The FGEIS concluded that no significant impacts would occur in the solid waste handling system as a result of the Willets Point Development Plan. The SEIS will update this analysis to account for the proposed project and will determine whether the proposed project, in comparison to the ~~Without~~No Action scenarios, would result in any significant adverse impacts. For any areas of analysis resulting in significant adverse impacts, the analysis will identify practicable mitigation measures.

- A. Existing and future New York City solid waste disposal practices will be described, including the collection system and status of landfilling, recycling, and other disposal methods.
- B. The incremental impacts of the development's solid waste generation on the City's collection needs and disposal capacity will be assessed.
- C. The proposed project's potential impact to the Tully Putrescible Solid Waste Transfer Station as it relates to capacity needed for DSNY-managed refuse and to capacity needed in the city and region for refuse collected by private haulers also will be analyzed. The Tully facility currently receives DSNY-managed refuse on short-term contracts from Queens Districts 3, 7, 11 and 13. As per the New York City Solid Waste Management Plan, construction of DSNY's North Shore Marine Transfer is nearing completion and will take DSNY-managed refuse from Queens Districts 7 through 14 when it is operational in 2013.

### **ENERGY**

The FGEIS concluded that no significant impacts would occur in the energy supply as a result of the Willets Point Development Plan. The SEIS will update this analysis to account for the proposed project and will determine whether the proposed project, in comparison with the ~~Without~~No Action scenarios, would result in any significant adverse impacts. For any areas of analysis resulting in significant adverse impacts, the analysis will identify practicable mitigation measures.

- A. The energy systems that would supply the proposed development with electricity and/or natural gas will be described.
- B. The energy usage for the proposed development will be estimated. The effect of this new demand on the energy supply systems will be assessed.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

The FGEIS concluded that the Willets Point Development Plan would result in significant adverse impacts to intersections on the local street network, segments and connections on the

area's highway network, stairway access at the Mets–Willets Point subway station, line-haul capacity on local bus routes, and pedestrian flow at nearby crosswalks. The FGEIS presented the analysis of potential transportation impacts in two separate chapters, "Traffic and Parking" and "Transit and Pedestrians." For the SEIS, and in accordance with CEQR guidance, these chapters will be combined into one chapter, but in an order that is similar to that of the FGEIS. The scope of work below summarizes the transportation elements that will be studied in the SEIS. Many of these would be identical to those assessed in the FGEIS.

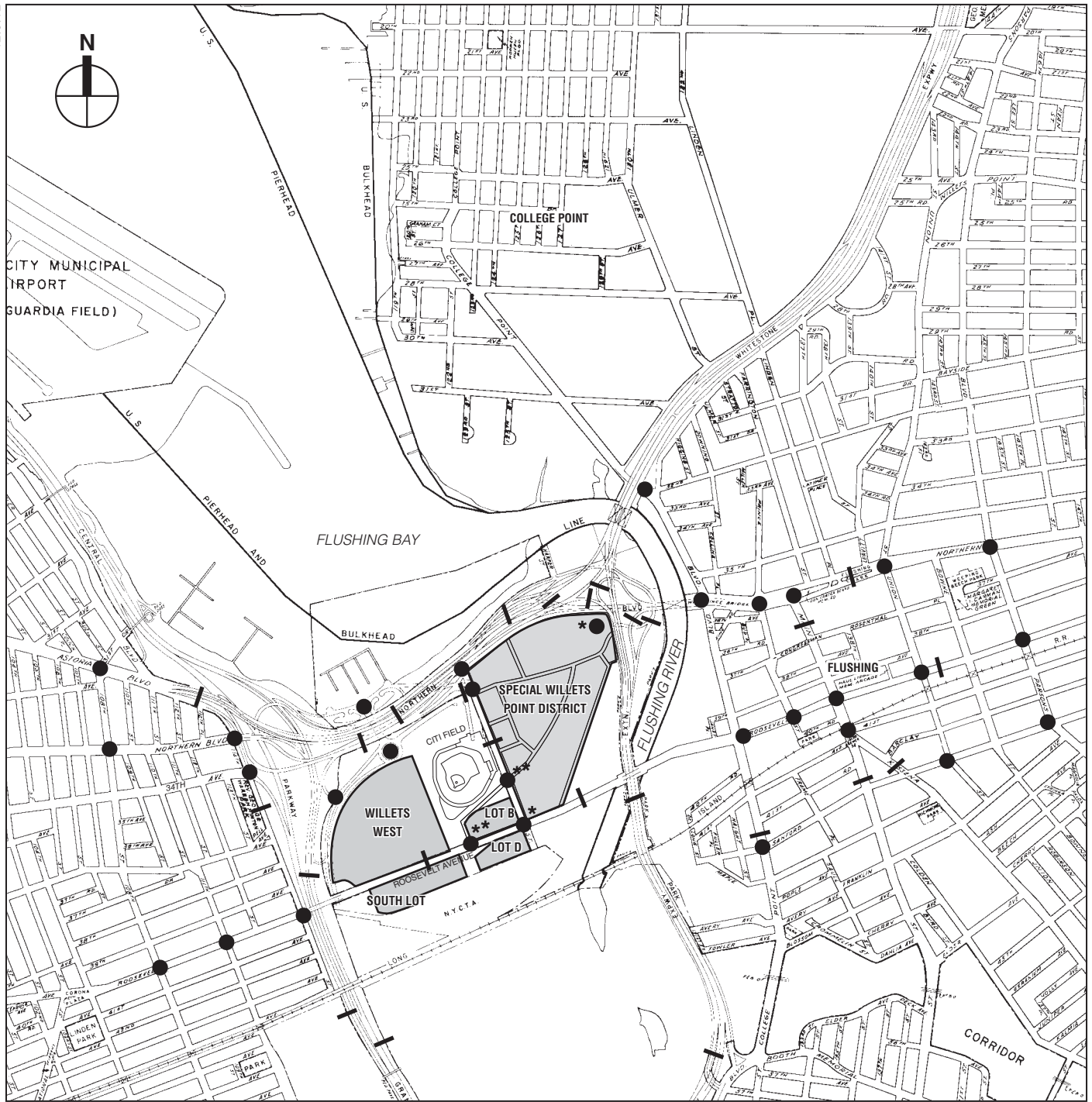
#### *TRAFFIC AND PARKING*

The primary objective of the traffic and parking analysis is to assess the proposed project's potential impacts on the area's roadway network and parking resources, and to identify and evaluate appropriate mitigation measures to address such impacts. The SEIS's traffic and parking studies shall include the following subtasks:

- A. Identify appropriate primary and secondary traffic study areas. The primary study area is the focus of more intense traffic activity generated by the proposed project closer to CitiField and 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 CitiField and 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 8**).

##### *Street Network*

- 1) 108th Street at Astoria Boulevard;
- 2) 108th Street at Northern Boulevard;
- 3) 114th Street at Northern Boulevard;
- 4) 126th Street at Northern Boulevard;
- 5) Prince Street at Northern Boulevard;
- 6) Main Street at Northern Boulevard;
- 7) Union Street at Northern Boulevard;
- 8) Parsons Boulevard at Northern Boulevard;
- 9) 114th Street at 34th Avenue;
- 10) 126th Street at 34th Avenue;
- 11) 108th Street at Roosevelt Avenue;
- 12) 111th Street at Roosevelt Avenue;
- 13) 114th Street at Roosevelt Avenue;
- 14) CitiField/Lot B at Roosevelt Avenue (With Action condition only);
- 15) 126th Street at Roosevelt Avenue;
- 16) College Point Boulevard at Roosevelt Avenue;
- 17) Prince Street at Roosevelt Avenue;
- 18) Main Street at Roosevelt Avenue;
- 19) Union Street at Roosevelt Avenue;
- 20) Parsons Boulevard at Roosevelt Avenue;
- 21) Main Street at Kissena Boulevard;
- 22) College Point Boulevard at Sanford Avenue;
- 23) Union Street at Sanford Avenue;
- 24) Parsons Boulevard at Sanford Avenue;



- Project Site**
- *Intersection to be Analyzed*
- \* *Existing/No Action Conditions Only*  
NOTE: Intersection of Existing Willets Point Blvd. and 126th Street (Unsignalized) is Analyzed together with Intersection of Roosevelt Avenue and 126th Street in Existing and No Action Conditions
- \*\* *With-Action Condition Only*
- *Automatic Traffic Recorder Location*

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SCALE

## **Willels Point Development Draft Scope of Work**

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- 25) College Point Boulevard at 32nd Avenue/Whitestone Expressway service road;
- 26) Willels Point Boulevard at 126th Street (unsignalized, analyzed as one intersection with #15 [Roosevelt Avenue and 126th Street] in existing/~~Without~~No Action conditions only);
- 27) Boat Basin Road at World's Fair Marina (unsignalized);
- 28) Willels Point Boulevard at Northern Boulevard (unsignalized/existing/~~Without~~No Action conditions only);
- 29) College Point Boulevard at Northern Boulevard (unsignalized);
- 30) The Grand Central Parkway ramp at West Park Loop/Stadium Road (unsignalized);
- 31) New Willels Point Boulevard at 126th Street (With Action condition only); and
- 32) Shea Road (Boat Basin) at Shea Road/Parking Lot Entrance/Exit.

### *Highway Network*

- 1) Grand Central Parkway mainline in both directions between LIE and Roosevelt Avenue;
  - 2) Van Wyck Expressway mainline in both directions between LIE and Roosevelt Avenue;
  - 3) Whitestone Expressway mainline in both directions between Northern Boulevard and Linden Place;
  - 4) Ramp from World's Fair Marina/Boat Basin Road to the Grand Central Parkway;
  - 5) Ramps from the northbound Van Wyck Expressway to eastbound and westbound Northern Boulevard;
  - 6) Ramp from the northbound Whitestone Expressway to the southbound Van Wyck Expressway;
  - 7) Ramp from westbound Northern Boulevard to the southbound Van Wyck Expressway;
  - 8) Ramp from eastbound Astoria Boulevard and eastbound Northern Boulevard to the northbound Whitestone Expressway;
  - 9) Ramps from the southbound Whitestone Expressway to the eastbound and westbound Grand Central Parkway;
  - 10) Ramp from westbound Northern Boulevard and southbound Whitestone Expressway to westbound Astoria Boulevard;
  - 11) Ramp from eastbound Astoria Boulevard and the Grand Central Parkway to the northbound Whitestone Expressway and eastbound Northern Boulevard;
  - 12) Ramp from the eastbound Grand Central Parkway toward Stadium Road and the northbound Whitestone Expressway; and
  - 13) Ramp from the southbound Whitestone Expressway to westbound Northern Boulevard.
- B. For the purposes of vehicular traffic analysis, a network-wide analysis will be conducted. The proposed project assumes that access locations to the CitiField retail uses would be the same as exists currently for the portion of the CitiField parking lot, all existing streets within the District would be demapped by the completion of Phase 2, and any future streets proposed would be private streets. The traffic analysis would thus evaluate critical network intersections and highway locations, and assess key entry points from the public streets to the private street network.
- C. 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 CitiField and 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.

- D. Determine the peak traffic analysis hours. As with the FGEIS, seven peak traffic analysis periods, as listed below, will be studied for the SEIS. For most, but not all, conditions below, the peak hour is the same or nearly the same as that studied in the FGEIS. For Saturday analyses on Met game days, a peak late afternoon peak hour will be studied in place of the early afternoon peak hour analyzed in the FGEIS.
- 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 night game—pregame arrivals);
  - Saturday afternoon peak hour (with Mets late afternoon game—pregame arrivals); and
  - Saturday evening peak hour (with Mets late afternoon game—postgame departures).

If warranted, additional peak period(s) may be identified and analyzed in the EIS.

- E. Examine the collected data (described below) and compare the hourly data with projected peak hour trip generation for the proposed project to determine the exact hours to be analyzed.
- F. Assemble data on existing traffic volumes. New counts will be conducted via a combination of 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. Travel speed and delay runs will be conducted 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. Existing speeds will be examined for each peak hour.
- G. Determine existing traffic operating characteristics—volume-to-capacity (v/c) ratios, average vehicle delays, and levels of service using Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) (version 5.5) procedures. Findings will be presented in graphical and tabular forms.
- H. Determine the volume of traffic that can be expected to be generated by other development (~~Without~~No Action) projects for each of the analysis years (~~currently anticipated to be~~ 2018, 2028, and 2032). These traffic volumes will be assigned to the primary and secondary study area intersections and combined with an annual background traffic growth rate of 0.5 percent per year for the first 5 years (2012 to 2017) and 0.25 percent per year thereafter, in accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual*, to develop future ~~Without~~No Action traffic volumes. The ~~Without~~No Action projects will be identified in conjunction with DCP and their trip generations will be quantified using standard travel demand forecasting methodologies, incorporating where appropriate the approved travel characteristics developed for the proposed project. Changes to the roadway network likely to occur by the future analysis year will also be identified and reflected in the traffic volume network.
- I. Determine future ~~Without~~No Action 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 (in a format similar to the FGEIS).
- J. Determine the volume of traffic that would be generated by the proposed project. Using previously approved travel characteristics from the FGEIS and other travel demand factors where appropriate, trip generation estimates will be developed for the various uses proposed for CitiField and the District by various time periods and modes of transportation. These

estimates will be presented for the three project phases and form the basis on which the entire transportation impact assessment will be conducted.

- K. 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. This task will consider the parking logistics associated with each phase of the proposed project and the anticipated availability of the new access ramps to and from the Van Wyck Expressway (under Phases 1B and 2). Future With Action traffic volume maps will be prepared for each analysis condition.
- L. Determine future With Action intersection 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 (in a format similar to the FGEIS).
- M. Determine future With Action highway traffic conditions—travel speed, density, and levels of service—using CORSIM procedures. Findings will be presented in tabular forms (in a format similar to the FGEIS). CORSIM files will be provided to NYCDOT for its review and approval.
- N. Identify potential significant traffic impacts for all three project phases by comparing future ~~Without~~No Action and With Action 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.
- O. Prepare future conditions traffic volume and speed-and-delay data needed for the air quality and noise analyses.
- P. Conduct an inventory of existing off-street parking lots and garages within the parking study area examined in the FGEIS, which was generally bounded by College Point Boulevard, West Park Loop/Stadium Road, and the Grand Central Parkway north of Flushing Meadows-Corona Park and south of Flushing Bay. This study area constitutes a region within approximately ¼ mile from the boundary of the District. The locations of these parking facilities, and their capacities and occupancy levels during representative peak weekday and weekend conditions will be identified. Projected utilization levels under the future ~~Without~~No Action condition for the three analysis years will also be determined.
- Q. Identify the typical parking regulations within ¼ 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 ~~Without~~No Action conditions.
- R. Prepare a parking impact assessment. The amount of on- and off-street parking planned for the proposed project will be identified for the three project phases and compared to the parking accumulation profiles developed for the individual components and the overall development program. The impact assessment will focus on the adequacy of parking by time of day for weekday and weekend no-game and with-game conditions, location of access/egress points, and means of controlling/directing traffic to appropriate parking locations.
- S. Assess vehicle/pedestrian safety conditions by reviewing the most recent three years of crash data from NYSDOT for intersections in the vicinity of the project site and all traffic study locations. High crash locations will be identified in accordance with criteria prescribed by the *CEQR Technical Manual*. At locations where the proposed project is anticipated to generate notable vehicular and pedestrian traffic, future safety conditions will be evaluated. Where appropriate, safety improvement measures will be recommended to address unsafe conditions.

## TRANSIT AND PEDESTRIANS

The transit and pedestrians analysis will incorporate project-related components, assess the proposed project's potential impacts on the area's transit services and pedestrian facilities, and evaluate appropriate mitigation measures to address such impacts. The specific elements of this analysis are outlined below.

- A. 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 Q19, Q48, and Q66 bus routes. (Service to the Mets–Willets Point LIRR station is available on game days only.) A detailed analysis of control areas and circulation elements at the Mets–Willets Point 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 three nearby bus routes along the northern and southern borders of CitiField and 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, the sidewalks, crosswalks, and corner reservoirs along Roosevelt Avenue, 114th Street, 126th Street, and Northern Boulevard will be analyzed.
- B. Determine the peak analysis periods. As with the FGEIS and detailed above for traffic, seven peak periods were selected for analysis. For transit, typically only conditions during the commuter peak periods are evaluated. However, due to the level of cumulative activities anticipated for Mets game day arrival and departure, a detailed assessment of transit operations during other time periods, where appropriate, will also be prepared. To assess pedestrian conditions, a detailed analysis will be conducted for all game day and non-game day peak time periods described for the traffic assessment.
- C. Assemble data on existing transit station usage, ridership levels, and pedestrian volumes. New data will be collected at the Mets–Willets Point subway station, at nearby bus routes, and at surrounding pedestrian elements. These data will be supplemented by information developed for other studies and information obtained from the MTA.
- D. Determine existing transit and pedestrian operating conditions. A detailed analysis will be conducted for the transit and pedestrian elements described above and presented for the appropriate critical time periods. Station elements will be assessed in terms of service capacities; subway and bus line-haul conditions will be measured against their guideline capacities; and pedestrian facilities will be analyzed for their processing flow rate and pedestrian time space. The analysis results will be tabulated and described.
- E. Determine future transit and pedestrian operating conditions. Future ~~Without~~No Action and With Action analyses for each of the three development phases will be conducted incorporating background growth, trips associated with other developments in the area, increments induced by the proposed project, different pedestrian flow patterns, and relevant 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 or improvement of service frequencies, will be recommended and discussed with the appropriate approval agencies (e.g., MTA and NYCDOT).

## **AIR QUALITY**

### *MOBILE SOURCE ANALYSIS*

Since the proposed project includes development beyond that analyzed as part of the FGEIS, and since the traffic analysis will be updated, the SEIS will also update the mobile source air quality analysis. The mobile source air quality impact analysis will address the potential effects of traffic-generated emissions on pollutant levels (carbon monoxide [CO] and particulate matter [PM<sub>2.5</sub>]) at representative locations within the study area.

The analysis will consist of predicting—using computerized dispersion modeling techniques—the effects of traffic with and without the proposed project on PM<sub>2.5</sub> and CO levels at intersection locations within the study area. If significant impacts are predicted to occur due to the proposed project, traffic measures to alleviate those impacts will be developed. The following specific tasks will be performed:

- A. Collect and summarize existing ambient air quality data for the study area. Ambient air quality monitoring data published by the NYSDEC will be compiled for the analysis of existing conditions. Appropriate ambient background levels for the pollutants analyzed will be selected for the study area.
- B. Calculate emission factors. Select emission calculation methodology and “worst-case” meteorological conditions. Compute vehicular ~~cruise and idle~~ emission factors for the intersection modeling using the EPA-developed ~~MOBILE6.2~~ MOVES model<sup>1</sup> and applicable assumptions based on guidance by EPA, NYSDEC and DEP. Compute re-suspended road dust emission factors based on the EPA procedure defined in AP-42 and the latest *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance.
- C. Select appropriate analysis sites. Based on the background and project-increment traffic volumes and levels of service, select intersections for analysis, representing locations with the worst potential total and incremental pollution impacts. These intersections may be different from those analyzed in the FGEIS due to changes in the proposed program.
- D. Model pollutant dispersion. Use EPA’s CAL3QHC intersection model to predict the maximum change in CO concentrations, and the refined CAL3QHCR intersection model to predict the maximum change in PM<sub>2.5</sub>.
- E. Perform an analysis of CO for the proposed project’s parking facilities. The analyses will use the procedures outlined in the *CEQR Technical Manual* for assessing potential impacts from proposed parking facilities. Cumulative impacts from on-street sources and emissions from parking garages will be calculated, where appropriate.
- F. Evaluate impacts. Evaluate potential impacts by comparing predicted pollutant levels with applicable criteria, comparing the predicted CO increment with *de minimis* criteria, and comparing the PM<sub>2.5</sub> increments with the City’s interim guidance criteria. If significant adverse impacts due to CO concentrations are predicted, refine results by performing detailed dispersion analysis at affected locations using EPA’s refined CAL3QHCR intersection model and compare refined results to benchmarks.

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<sup>1</sup> EPA, Motor Vehicle Emission Simulator (MOVES), User Guide for MOVES2010b, June 2012. The MOVES model replaced the MOBILE6.2 emissions model, as the required model for regulatory purposes, subsequent to the publication of the Draft Scope of Work.

- G. Identify and analyze mitigation measures. For locations where significant adverse impacts are predicted, identify and analyze appropriate mitigation measures as identified by the lead agency.

#### STATIONARY SOURCE ANALYSIS

The FGEIS included specifications for heating and hot water system exhaust placement and fuel use to avoid the potential for significant adverse impacts on air quality. The FGEIS specifications were based on generic project plans and screening analysis. For the SEIS, the potential for significant adverse impacts on air quality will be evaluated using specific project information, such as proposed building floor area, location, height, and type of use, and detailed air quality modeling. Where needed, the FGEIS specifications for the heating and hot water systems will be revised.

The FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda assessed the potential for air quality impacts on the proposed project from existing industrial and manufacturing uses. Because the extent and the phasing of the proposed project are different from what was previously approved, the potential for impact from industrial sources will be evaluated with updated information.

The following specific tasks will be performed:

- H. Analyze emissions from the proposed project heating and hot water systems. Perform an analysis of the effect of emissions from the proposed project's heating and hot water systems on other project components (project-on-project impacts) and existing uses within the surrounding area (project-on-existing impacts). The analysis will be performed using the AERMOD model and will consider plume impingement conditions (i.e., when the wind blows from the stacks toward buildings) and wake effects (i.e., when the wind blows from buildings toward the stacks). Five years of meteorological data from LaGuardia Airport will be used for these simulation analyses. Predicted values will be compared to applicable standards and criteria.
- I. Assess the need for update of the industrial source analysis. A search of federal and state air permits, and the DEP's Bureau of Environmental Compliance (BEC) files will be performed to determine if there are sources of toxic air pollutant emissions within 400 feet of the proposed project. Based on this information, a determination will be made as to whether a detailed analysis of industrial stationary source air quality issues is necessary. The analyses conducted as part of the FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda will be updated as needed to include any uses that are within 400 feet of the project components that were previously not studied, as well as to account for the different phasing of the proposed project.
- J. Update industrial source analysis. If manufacturing or processing facilities that were not analyzed as part of the FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda are identified within 400 feet of the proposed project or if the proposed project phasing would potentially affect the conclusions of the analyses previously performed, an update to the industrial source assessment will be performed using the *CEQR Technical Manual* methodology. The short-term and annual concentrations of critical pollutants at sensitive receptor sites will be predicted and compared with the short-term guideline concentrations (SGC) and annual guideline concentrations (AGC) reported in NYSDEC's DAR-1 AGC/SGC Tables guidance document to determine the potential for significant impacts. In the event that exceedances of guidance concentrations are predicted more refined dispersion modeling (using EPA's

AERMOD dispersion model) would be employed and measures to reduce pollutants to within guidance levels will be examined.

### **GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

In 2008, when the FGEIS was certified, greenhouse gas (GHG) assessments were not required by CEQR and thus such an assessment was not included in the FGEIS. The 2011 Technical Memorandum #4 that analyzed the Updated Plan included a quantified assessment of GHG emissions and measures to reduce those emissions. Technical Memorandum #4 also discussed the potential effects of climate change on the neighborhood and identified strategies to make the development more resilient to those potential effects.

For the SEIS, in accordance with updated *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, GHG emissions generated by the proposed project will be quantified, considering the changes to the proposed project compared to the program analyzed in the FGEIS, and an assessment of consistency with the City's established GHG reduction goal will be performed. Emissions will be estimated for the 2032 analysis year and reported as carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) metric tons per year. GHG emissions other than carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) will be included if they would account for a substantial portion of overall emissions, adjusted to account for the global warming potential (GWP). Construction-related emissions will be discussed qualitatively. Relevant measures to reduce energy consumption and GHG emissions, including construction and materials related emissions and operational emissions, will be discussed and included in the emissions estimates to the extent practicable. Since the proposed project is in the floodplain, the potential impact of climate change on sea level and storm surge in the vicinity of the proposed project and the implications of this for the proposed project will be discussed, using the latest publically available information from the New York City Panel on Climate Change (NPCC). Measures that would be considered to make the project more resilient to the potential effects of climate change will also be discussed.

### **NOISE**

The FGEIS found that the Willets Point Development Plan would be expected to result in a significant adverse increase in noise levels only at the World's Fair Marina Park north of the District and only during the Saturday midday time period. In addition, to meet CEQR interior noise level requirements, the analysis prescribed between 30 and 37 dB of building attenuation for buildings within the District, which would be ensured through E-designations and/or subsequent Restrictive Declarations on the District.

Because the development proposed for the Willets Point/CitiField area has changed, because the traffic analysis will be updated to reflect existing conditions and 2018, 2028, and 2032 ~~Without No~~ Action conditions, and to account for the new guidance in the 2012 version of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the SEIS will update the noise analysis, as follows:

- A. Select appropriate noise descriptors. Appropriate noise descriptors to describe the noise environment and the impact of the proposed development will be selected following CEQR criteria, which recommend the use of L<sub>10</sub> and 1-hour equivalent (L<sub>eq(1)</sub>) noise descriptors.
- B. Select receptor locations for noise monitoring, where the proposed development would have the greatest potential to affect ambient noise levels and locations representative of the proposed project's buildings and open spaces.
- C. Determine existing noise levels, primarily based on noise monitoring. Perform 20-minute measurements at each receptor location during three time periods, which will represent the

- periods most in likely to result in maximum project noise impacts. Measurements will be made using a Type I noise analyzer and would include measurements of hourly  $L_{eq}$ ,  $L_1$ ,  $L_{10}$ ,  $L_{50}$ , and  $L_{90}$  values.
- D. Determine future noise levels without the proposed development at the receptor locations during each of the three build years, using existing noise levels, acoustical fundamentals, and mathematical models, including proportional modeling techniques and/or FHWA's Traffic Noise Model (TNM), where appropriate.
  - E. Determine future noise levels with the proposed development at the receptor locations during each of the three build years, using existing noise levels, acoustical fundamentals, and mathematical models, including proportional modeling techniques and/or FHWA's Traffic Noise Model (TNM), where appropriate.
  - F. Compare existing and future noise levels, both with and without the proposed development, with various noise standards, guidelines, and other noise criteria. Compare future noise levels with the proposed project to noise levels in the three ~~Without~~No Action scenarios to determine project impacts (based on the criteria contained in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a change of 3 dBA or more will be considered a significant impact).
  - G. Evaluate the potential for parking lots included in the proposed project to result in elevated noise levels due to noise generated at existing sensitive noise receptors and/or receptors included in the proposed projects.
  - H. Evaluate the potential for significant adverse impacts associated with stationary source noise from the proposed project's mechanical equipment.
  - I. Determine the level of building attenuation needed to achieve CEQR interior noise standards, and where necessary, recommend design measures that could be implemented to attain these interior noise levels at the project site.
  - J. Determine whether open space areas created as part of the proposed project would experience acceptable exterior noise levels according to CEQR noise exposure guidelines, using a combination of measured and calculated noise levels at the proposed open space areas.
  - K. Identify and analyze appropriate mitigation for any significant adverse impacts generated by the proposed project not previously identified in the FGEIS.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH**

The FGEIS found that the Willets Point Development Plan would not result in any significant adverse public health impacts related to air quality, noise, or hazardous materials.

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a public health analysis is not necessary for most projects. Where no significant unmitigated adverse impact is found in other CEQR analysis areas, such as air quality, water quality, hazardous materials, or noise, no public health analysis is warranted. If an unmitigated significant adverse impact is identified in one of these CEQR analysis areas, the lead agency may determine that a public health assessment is warranted for that specific technical area. Thus, if any unmitigated significant adverse impacts to air quality, water quality, hazardous materials, or noise are identified in this SEIS, a public health analysis will be prepared.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER**

The FGEIS found that the proposed changes with the Willets Point Development Plan, while significant, would result in an improvement in neighborhood character and would not have a significant adverse impact. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, an assessment of

neighborhood character is generally needed when a proposed project has the potential to result in significant adverse impacts in land use, socioeconomic conditions, open space, urban design and visual resources, historic and cultural resources, shadows, transportation, and/or noise, or when the project may have moderate effects on several of the elements that define a neighborhood's character. The SEIS will update the neighborhood character assessment presented in the FGEIS. A preliminary assessment will first be prepared, to identify the defining features of the neighborhood and determine whether the proposed project would have the potential to affect these defining features, either through the potential for a significant adverse impact or a combination of moderate effects in relevant technical areas. If the project has the potential to affect the defining features of the neighborhood, a detailed assessment of neighborhood character will be prepared consistent with the methodologies of the *CEQR Technical Manual*.

## **CONSTRUCTION**

The FGEIS concluded that there would be no significant adverse impacts related to construction, except for construction-period noise impacts. The SEIS will update the FGEIS analysis of potential construction-related impacts, according to *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines. The likely construction schedule for development in the District and an estimate of activity on-site will be described. The construction assessment for the proposed project 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. The analysis will focus on construction impacts lasting more than two years. Technical areas to be analyzed include:

- **Transportation.** Most of the proposed project's construction would be contained within the CitiField parking lots and the District. However, the volume of construction workers driving to/from and the volume of construction vehicles entering and leaving the area are expected to be substantial during various phases of construction. Furthermore, with the proposed project developed in three phases, there would be cumulative effects resulting from completed portions of the proposed project and continuing construction activities and parking logistics that will require careful coordination and sequencing. The anticipated construction activities, site and parking logistics, and combined effects of construction and operational traffic will form the basis of the SEIS analysis for transportation-related construction impacts. It is expected that a quantitative traffic analysis will be prepared for the construction of the project's Phase 2 development. The need to analyze the prior phases in detail will depend primarily on how the cumulative construction and operational trip-making compares to the operational build-out of the latter phases and will also account for the District's new highway connections to the Van Wyck Expressway. Parking, transit, and pedestrian conditions during construction will be addressed qualitatively via comparisons to conclusions made for the build-out of the proposed project's three development phases.
- **Air Quality.** The construction air quality impact section will contain a detailed qualitative discussion of emissions from construction equipment and construction generated traffic (mobile sources) for Phases 1A and 1B of the proposed project. This analysis will qualitatively review the projected activity and equipment in the context of intensity, duration, and location of emissions relative to nearby sensitive locations, and identify any project-specific control measures required to further reduce the effects of construction and to ensure that significant impacts on air quality do not occur. A quantitative air quality analysis will be conducted to determine the potential for air quality impacts due to onsite construction activities and mobile sources for Phase 2 of the proposed project. A dispersion analysis of onsite construction activities will be performed to determine the potential for air quality impacts on sensitive

receptor locations, including residences, schools, open spaces, and completed portions of the proposed project. Air pollutant sources would include combustion exhaust associated with non-road engines (e.g., cranes, excavators) and trucks operating on-site, as well as onsite activities that generate fugitive dust (e.g., excavation, demolition). The pollutants of concern include carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matter (PM), and nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). To formulate the reasonable worst-case scenario for analysis of Phase 2 construction activities, the highest emission averaged over annual and short term (24 hours or less) periods will be identified for modeling. A mobile source analysis will also be performed for nearby roadway intersections using information provided in the traffic analysis. The pollutants of concern include CO and PM. The potential for significant impacts will be determined by a comparison of model predicted total concentrations to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, or by comparison of the predicted increase in concentrations to applicable CEQR thresholds. The air quality analysis will include a discussion of the strategies to reduce project related air pollutant emissions associated with construction activities which would be included in the construction plan and be applied during the construction period. If significant adverse impacts are identified, mitigation measures will be identified and analyzed.

- Noise. For Phases 1A and 1B of the proposed project, noise levels during construction will be estimated based on information about the construction program. For Phase 2 of the proposed project, a quantified analysis will be prepared that will examine potential noise impacts due to construction-related stationary and mobile sources. Noise-sensitive receptor locations (both at-grade and elevated), including residences, schools, places of worship, open spaces, and other noise-sensitive land uses, near the project sites and created by the proposed project will be selected for analysis. Existing noise levels will be determined by noise measurements performed at at-grade receptor locations, and by use of a combination of measurements and mathematical models for elevated receptor locations. One representative worst-case time period (~~i.e. e.g.~~ day) in each year of construction will be selected for analysis. During each analysis time period, noise levels due to construction activities at each sensitive receptor will be predicted. Noise levels associated with construction of Phase 2 of the proposed project would be combined with the operational noise level increments from Phases 1A and 1B, to determine the cumulative noise level increases during the construction period of Phase 2. Noise levels with project-related construction activities will be compared to No Build noise levels to determine project impacts. Based on the criteria contained in the 2012 *CEQR Technical Manual*, a change of 3-5 dBA or more for two or more consecutive years will be considered a significant noise impact. Based on the results of the construction noise analysis, if necessary, the feasibility, practicability, and effectiveness of implementing measures to mitigate significant construction noise impacts will be examined.
- Hazardous Materials. Construction of the proposed project 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 project may need to relocate existing or build new public infrastructure, particularly water and sewer connections, as well as electric, gas, and telephone lines; thus, the services to the neighborhood during this potential relocation or construction will be addressed.
- Other Technical Areas. As appropriate, this section will discuss the other areas of environmental assessment for potential construction-related impacts.

## **MITIGATION**

The FGEIS identified significant adverse impacts in the following areas: historic resources; traffic; subway stations; bus line haul; pedestrian facilities; and noise. The FGEIS also identified mitigation measures that could be implemented to address these significant adverse impacts.

The SEIS will reexamine the mitigation measures identified in the FGEIS to account for the changes in the proposed project program, changes to background conditions, and updates to analysis methodologies. Where impacts are identified, practicable mitigation measures specific to those impacts will be developed.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

The FGEIS analyzed five alternatives to the proposed plan: a Without-Action Alternative; a No Unmitigated Impacts Alternative; a Flushing Bridge Alternative; a Municipal Services Alternative; and a Staged Acquisition Alternative.

The specific alternatives to be analyzed in an EIS are typically finalized with the lead agency as project impacts become clarified. If significant adverse impacts are identified, the SEIS will consider a reasonable range of alternatives which could reduce or eliminate such impacts. The alternatives may include a lesser-density alternative and a no-unmitigated-impacts alternative. The alternatives analysis will be qualitative, except where significant adverse impacts of the proposed project have been identified. In those cases, the impacts and related mitigation for the alternative will be compared with those of the development program in the SEIS. Additional alternatives may be developed as project impacts are identified through analysis.

## **GROWTH-INDUCING ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

From the analyses contained in the SEIS, this chapter will identify the growth-inducing aspects of the proposed project.

## **IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES**

From the analyses contained in the SEIS, this chapter will identify the irreversible and irretrievable commitments of environmental resources.

## **UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS**

From the analyses contained in the SEIS, this chapter will identify all unavoidable and unmitigable significant adverse impacts.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Once the SEIS technical sections have been prepared, a concise executive summary will be drafted. The executive summary will use relevant material from the body of the SEIS to describe the proposed project, its environmental impacts, measures to mitigate those impacts, and alternatives to the proposed project. \*

**Willetts Point Development  
Responses to Comments on the Draft Scope of Work**

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**A. INTRODUCTION**

This document summarizes and responds to comments on the Draft Scope of Work (“Draft Scope”) for the preparation of the Willetts Point Development Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (“SEIS”). Oral and written comments were received during the public meeting held by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development, on Thursday, September 27, 2012. Written comments were accepted through the public comment period, which ended on Friday, October 26, 2012.

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 responses to relevant comments. As is standard practice, 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 SEIS. Where more than one commentator expressed similar views, those comments have been grouped and addressed together. It is noted that for the Draft Scope, many of the comments offered substantive concerns, issues, and recommendations about the overall plan itself, but not specifically on EIS technical issues. In these instances, the responses include either an acknowledgment of the comment (“Comment noted.”) or an indication that the comment raised issues beyond City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) and the technical scope of the SEIS.

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

**ELECTED OFFICIALS**

1. Julissa Ferreras, Council Member, 21st District, Queens, oral comments presented by Annie Meredith (Ferreras)
2. Helen Marshall, Queens Borough President, written comments dated September 19, 2012 and oral comments presented by Irving Poy (Marshall)
3. Michael Simanowitz, New York State Assembly Member, 27th District, Queens, oral comments presented by Munir Avery (Simanowitz)

**ORGANIZATIONS**

4. Association for a Better New York, written comments dated September 27, 2012 (ABNY)
5. Asian Americans for Equality, written comments dated September 27, 2012 and oral comments presented by Shelma Jun (AAFE)

## **Willets Point Development**

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6. C.O.M.E.T, written comments dated September 27, 2012 and oral comments presented by Christina Wilkinson (COMET)
7. Good Jobs New York, written comments dated September 27, 2012 and oral comments presented by Bettina Damiani (GJNY)
8. Make The Road New York, written comments and oral comments presented by María Álvarez (MTRNY)
9. New York Building Congress, written comments dated September 27, 2012 (NYBC)
10. New York City Park Advocates, oral comments presented by Geoffrey Croft (NYCPA)
11. New York League of Conservation Voters, written comments dated September 27, 2012 (NYLCV)
12. Jackson Heights Green Alliance, oral comments presented by Will Sweeney (JHGA)
13. Partnership for New York City, written comments dated September 27, 2012 and oral comments presented by Jessica Walker (PNYC)
14. Pratt Center for Community Development, written comments dated October 9, 2012 and oral comments presented by Joan Byron (Pratt)
15. Queens Community House, oral comments presented by Anna Dioguardi (QCH)
16. Queens Economic Development Corporation, written and oral comments presented by Seth Bornstein (QEDC)
17. Queens Housing Coalition, oral comments presented by Ivan Contreras (QHC)
18. Real Estate Board on New York, oral comments presented by Ryan Baxter (REBNY)
19. United Brotherhood of Carpenters, oral comments presented by Thomas McKeon (UBC)
20. Willets Point Sunrise Co-operative, oral comments presented by Ramon Leon and Tirso Mier (Sunrise)
21. Urban Justice Center, written comments dated October 9, 2012 by Edward W. De Barbieri (Urban Justice)
22. Walmart Free NYC, written comments dated October 9, 2012 (Walmart Free NYC)
23. Willets Point United, written comments by Gerald Antonacci and David Antonacci, dated October 6, 2012 and October 9, 2012 and oral comments presented by Gerald Antonacci (WPU-Antonacci); Michael B. Gerrard, written comments dated October 2, 2012 and oral comments (WPU-Gerrard); Brian Ketcham, P.E., written comments dated September 27, 2012 and oral comments (WPU-Ketcham)

## **INTERESTED PUBLIC**

24. Joseph Ardizzone, member of Willets Point United, written and oral comments presented by (Ardizzone)
25. Jake Bono, member of Willets Point United, written comments dated October 5, 2012 and oral comments (Bono)
26. Andros Charidemou, member of Willets Point United, written comments dated September 27, 2012 and oral comments presented by (Charidemou)

27. Cisco (only name provided), SEIU 32BJ member, written and oral comments (Cisco)
28. Donovan Finn, PhD, written comments dated October 9, 2012 (Finn)
29. Michael Galluccio, oral comments (Galluccio)
30. Francelina Guerrero, oral comments (Guerrero)
31. Martha Guoletuan, oral comments (Gualetuan)
32. Anesia Eonne, oral comments (Eonne)
33. Ethan Goodman, Wachtel Masyr & Missry, written comments dated October 9, 2012 (Goodman)
34. Olaris Gutierrez, member of Make The Road New York, written and oral comments (Gutierrez)
35. Ben Haber, written and oral comments (Haber)
36. Sunny Hahn, written and oral comments (Hahn)
37. Marilyn Hoyt, written comments dated September 27, 2012 and oral comments (Hoyt)
38. Ky J Kim, written comments dated October 9, 2012 (Kim)
39. Phil Konigsberg, written comments dated September 27, 2012 and oral comments (Konigsberg)
40. Steven Moyano, oral comments (Moyano)
41. Marco Neira, oral comments (Neira)
42. Arturo Olaya, oral comments (Olaya)
43. Joseph Perez, SEIU 32 BJ member, oral comments (Perez)
44. Jackie Paterno, member of Willets Point United, written and oral comments (J. Paterno)
45. Ralph Paterno, member of Willets Point United, written and oral comments (R. Paterno)
46. Carlos Perdomo, written comments dated September 27, and oral comments (Perdomo)
47. Irene Prestigiacomo, member of Willets Point United, oral comments (Prestigiacomo)
48. Tana Quilluj, oral comments (Quilluj)
49. Len Scarola, member of Willets Point United, written comments dated September 27 and oral comments (Scarola)
50. Luzmaria Vicente, oral comments (Vicente)

## **C. COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

### **PROCESS/CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

**Comment 1:** A SEIS is not appropriate in light of the scale of the proposed development, as well as the deviation from the Willets Point FGEIS. This proposal to develop a surface parking lot west of the Citi Field baseball stadium into an entertainment and retail development approximately 1.4 million square feet requires its own separate independent and comprehensive EIS. (AAFE)

**Response:** The proposed Willets West development is part of a multi-phased project and an SEIS is an appropriate process for this project's environmental review. It will provide a comprehensive assessment of potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed modifications to and phasing of the 2008 Willets Point Development Plan ("the 2008 Plan") for the Willets Point Special District ("the District"), as well as the proposed development on Willets West and on the parcel south of Roosevelt Avenue. As noted in the Draft Scope, the SEIS will also account for updates to background conditions since the 2008 FGEIS, changes to the anticipated timeline for project completion, as well as reflect the latest updates to the impact assessment methodologies as outlined in the 2012 *CEQR Technical Manual*.

**Comment 2:** The EIS needs to be done again and there needs to be a new New York City Uniform Land Use Review Procedure ("ULURP"). The current plan does not have any connection to the 2008 Plan. The 2008 Plan dealt with development in the Willets Point District; it now includes a mall on parkland. (JHGA)

The Draft Scope, on page 9, lists five discretionary public approvals that are required in order to proceed with the proposed project. Excluded from that list is the approval of the New York City Council pursuant to ULURP. The Draft Scope also does not mention any involvement of other ULURP decision makers. This omission raises the prospect that the proposed project will not be subject to the entire ULURP process, and/or the evaluation by the New York City Council. The Final Scope of Work must unambiguously disclose each and every approval that is necessary to the proposed project. (WPU-Antonacci)

The proposal to amend the Willets Point Development with a SEIS, therefore avoiding the city's ULURP process is unprofessional, unethical, and a gross miscarriage of the city's own policies and regulations. (Finn)

The brief description of the project's approval process is opaque in giving statutory citations without describing the actual steps involved in the new ULURP process. That should be corrected. (WPU-Gerrard)

**Response:** The proposed project will result in development in the 61-acre District as substantially similar to the project described and analyzed in the 2008 FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda. The proposed project also includes the

development of land beyond the District, at Willets West and south of Roosevelt Avenue. The SEIS will assess the potential for impacts on all land comprising the proposed project including assessment of the potential for impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods resulting from the development in the District as well as development from additional parcels beyond the District. As indicated on page 9 of the Draft Scope, the project is expected to seek a special permit pursuant to Zoning Resolution Section 124-60 to allow surface parking and recreational uses within the District. The applicant is proposing to develop interim parking uses on a portion of the land within the District to accommodate the stadium's parking demand during the initial phase of the area's proposed redevelopment. This special permit requires approval under the City's ULURP process. Should the City Planning Commission approve the special permit, the City Council may exercise its right to call up the matter and also vote on approval of the special permit. Language has been added to the Draft Scope to clarify that the special permit triggers ULURP and to indicate the decision-making bodies that may vote on the matter through that process.

**Comment 3:** The proposed USTA National Tennis Center ("NTC") expansion, and the proposed stadium for Major League Soccer ("MLS"), as well as the changes in timing and phasing of development in the District being proposed under this SEIS scope, should be the subject of a comprehensive EIS. (Pratt)

Before any of the projects are given approval, there should be a cumulative impact of all three proposals because they could have a huge impact on Flushing Meadows Corona Park. (NYCPA)

The EIS must consider the impact of the proposed project, the USTA stadium expansion, and the proposed soccer stadium in all the pertinent analysis sections, including construction impacts, traffic and open space etc. (Ferrerias, Finn)

**Response:** The proposed NTC expansion is a separate, independent project with its own timeline and requires its own discretionary approvals and environmental review. The proposed MLS soccer stadium at Flushing Meadows Corona Park is still in the preliminary stages of planning. The MLS soccer stadium project will also require its own separate discretionary approvals, including its own comprehensive environmental review. Approvals and implementation of those two projects are independent of this proposed Willets Point Development Project. However, the SEIS for the Willets Point Development Project will acknowledge and account for the potential of both these projects as background baseline developments and, in consultation with the lead and reviewing agencies, will include the appropriate assessment of cumulative effects in all the relevant technical analysis areas including, but not limited to, construction impacts, transportation, and open space.

## **Willets Point Development**

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**Comment 4:** If the Willets West site is to be put into play, all potential uses, including housing should be considered. Housing at Willets West might represent the best use of public funds, and the best return on private investment. (Pratt)

**Response:** The SEIS will evaluate the environmental impacts associated with the program as proposed.

**Comment 5:** Willets Point Development was sold under false pretenses and is a violation of basic property rights. The current project should be totally scrapped and a new set of plans promulgated. (Prestigiacomio)

**Response:** Comment noted. This is not a comment on the Draft Scope. The process of developer selection and the business terms are beyond the scope of this project's environmental review.

**Comment 6:** Upon close review of the Willets Point Development Draft Scope issued by the lead agency, it appears as though Figure 7: District Land Assemblage Options for Phases 1A/B and its accompanying description on pp 11-12: Future Analysis Year and Baseline Conditions, incorrectly depicted one of the Assemblage Options for the project. The corrections are attached. We request that the final scope include the correct figure and revised text to clarify these Options. Since the Draft Scope as issued fully identified all tax blocks and lots that could potentially be included in Phase 1A/B, and further since the Reasonable Worst-Case Development Scenario ("RWCDs") described in the Draft Scope would not change as a result of this correction, this correction does not substantively affect the analyses proposed for study in the SEIS. (Goodman)

**Response:** Comment noted. The corrections have been made and are reflected in the Final Scope of Work.

**Comment 7:** I fully support this project the way the Mayor envisions it. However, I'd like to make sure that it happens the way that it should be, grand, beautiful and efficient in every way so that it will benefit the greater communities instead of a handful of individuals or companies. (Hahn)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 8:** The Draft Scope, on page 12 states: "this SEIS assumes that in each Without-Action scenario, no change is assumed to be made to any portion of the project site, and the existing uses on the project site would be maintained." But the assumptions are inappropriate, because of the installation of sanitary and storm water sewer main lines along 126th Street directly adjacent to Willets Point property. All "without-action" scenarios must take into account the likelihood that some existing Willets Point property owners will seek to connect to the new sewer main lines. As part of the SEIS analysis, the City must assess what owner-development would likely occur, even "without action" on the part of the City,

now that the sewer main lines exist. That analysis should include outreach to all Willets Point private property owners, to discuss intentions to connect to the sewer systems and enhance the uses of their properties, in the event that the City's proposed Willets Point development does not occur. (WPU-Antonacci)

**Response:** The SEIS will assess the potential impacts of the proposed project compared against a future baseline. The Draft Scope assumes that each phase of the proposed project would be compared against a scenario where there is no redevelopment on those respective parcels and the existing uses on non-affected parcels remain in their existing operation; thus, disclosing the greatest potential for adverse effects from the proposed action and providing for a more conservative analysis than under the assumptions that the Willets Point properties may independently be developed. For example, the SEIS will not assume the presence and operation of the Phase 1A project including a completed Willets West development as a baseline for comparing impacts of the Phase 1B project. The Phase 2 analysis will similarly not assume that the Phase 1B components are in place and then determine potential impacts merely by incrementally adding the remaining Phase 2 developments; this would not result in a conservative assessment of the cumulative effects of the project, disclose the reasonable worst-case potential for impacts or identification of appropriate mitigation measures. While there may be the potential for existing owners in the District to redevelop their properties under the District regulations, assuming such redevelopments in the Without Action baseline would diminish the potential impacts that would be attributable to the proposed project.

#### **RFP, BIDDING DOCUMENTS, LEASE TERMS, CB7 INVOLVEMENT**

**Comment 9:** The SEIS needs to address that the "historic" living wage provision negotiated between labor unions and the City, and agreed to in writing by the City, was mysteriously dropped from the Request for Proposal (RFP). (J. Paterno)

The City failed to honor a written agreement with labor unions regarding living wage for retail workers at Willets Point. (WPU-Antonacci, R. Paterno)

The living wage provisions promised to the unions may well be omitted as well as the promise not to use eminent domain. (Haber)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope. Living wage provisions are not a socioeconomic impact issue under CEQR guidance and thus, are outside the scope of this project's environmental review.

**Comment 10:** The SEIS needs to address that the \$5 million mitigation fund called for by the Community Board and agreed to in writing by the City, was also mysteriously reduced to just \$1 million in the RFP. (WPU-Antonacci, J. Paterno)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope. During the public approval process of the 2008 Plan, a mitigation fund for the entire District of \$5 million was

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intended to provide for the cost of studies and improvements which address traffic issues relating to the Project. The RFP described the traffic mitigation fund as having a value of \$1.025 million instead of \$5 million because the RFP contemplated the development of 12.5 acres. Thus, the \$1.025 million represented a pro-rated amount based on the total Willets Point District area of 61 acres. Based upon a pro-rated share of the acreage to be developed, the developer's contribution to the traffic mitigation fund is expected to \$1.87 million.

**Comment 11:** The New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) refuses to disclose what firms responded to the RFP or publicly release the actual chosen plan of Sterling and Related is really the best available. (Prestigiacomo, J. Paterno)

Lease terms for the proposed project should be fully disclosed to the public as they are being negotiated, not after the fact. Since a developer has already been designated, there is no justification for secrecy. (Pratt)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope. The proposal responses have been released pursuant to requests made pursuant to the State's Freedom of Information Law (FOIL).

**Comment 12:** We are to believe that the best attainable deal for this area is one that gives over \$200 million worth of property to one developer, free of charge, delays any housing until 2025, contains an opt out clause so that there may never be any housing, requires that parkland be sacrificed, and that expands the project from 62 to 109 acres. (J. Paterno)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope. The business terms of the proposed project are outside the SEIS scope of analysis, which examines the potential for the proposed project to result in significant adverse impacts based on the *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines. Moreover, the proposed project would not result in the sacrifice of parkland. As described in further detail in response to comment 57, below, the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation ("DPR") has previously received the legislative authority to enter into leases for the use of the portion of the project here known as Willets West. The statute authorizes the DPR Commissioner to enter into leases, contracts and other agreements for a multitude of purposes, including for any purpose which is of such a nature so as to foster or promote amusement, entertainment or the improvement of trade and commerce. The proposed use fits within the uses allowed by the statutory provision.

**Comment 13:** The new development plans for the Willets Point area are proceeding without the involvement of Queens Community Board 7's (CB7's) participation in this process. The original community board conditional approval in June 2008

included the agreement that CB7 would be part of any official proceedings going forward and according to published documents. (Konigsberg)

The FEIS repeatedly states that the Willets Point Advisory Committee, chaired by Helen Marshall and includes Queens CB7, would participate in the developer selection process. CB 7 was promised in writing that they would participate in developer selection. In response to FOIL, Helen Marshall's office is unable to produce any record documenting the involvement of the Advisory Committee in selecting the developers. It appears that the procedure for selection of the developer that is specifically described within the FGEIS was not followed. At the very least, the SEIS must address and explain this discrepancy. (J. Paterno)

**Response:** Comment noted. Community Board participation in developer selection is outside the scope of this project's environmental review.

**Comment 14:** The members of the Flushing Willets Point Corona Local Development Corporation should have been prohibited from bidding on the project. One of the LDC members won the bid and was given \$200 million in free property. (WPU-Antonacci)

NYCEDC and former Borough President Claire Shulman both admitted to the New York Attorney General that they were acting as illegal lobbyists. They spent about \$1.5 million dollars of tax payers' money for illegal lobbying. They have to give us an explanation about where the money came from and what the money was spent on. (Charidemou)

It has been found that the local development corporation headed by Claire Schulman was prohibited by law from lobbying. As part of this scoping and economic evaluation of this project, it is imperative that the City justify its gift to a real estate company that engaged in illegal behavior that ultimately rebounded to its own benefit. (Prestigiacomo)

The proposed Willets Point Development continues to rely on the approvals procured in the context of a process obviously tainted by illegal activity on the part of the City entity responsible for promulgating the project, as well as prospective developers. All prior project approvals should be annulled and the newly configured project should be subject to comprehensive—and lawful—land use review. Similarly, the existing FGEIS should be discarded, not supplemented; and an appropriately comprehensive and accurate environmental impact statement should be prepared that is neither mired in any prior iteration of the proposed project nor purposefully biased to satisfy the outcome desired by developers. (WPU-Antonacci)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope and is outside the scope of this project's environmental review.

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### **PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING AND LANGUAGE ACCESS**

**Comment 15:** There should be a big official presentation to point out what they are doing and at which site they are going to do it. (Eonne)

**Response:** The location and program of the proposed project are identified in the project description included in the EAS and Draft Scope. Those documents were available in hardcopy at the hearing and were published on the websites of the Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination (MOEC) and NYCEDC and available for review in hardcopy. Additionally, the public notice of the hearing was published 30 days in advance of the hearing both in English and in Spanish.

**Comment 16:** NYCEDC must make every effort to provide language access to ensure direct interaction with communities affected by this project, including translation services for all meetings in their entirety and written materials all regarding the redevelopment process (Ferrerias).

There has been no planning about how to interface with the community. A substantial portion of the people who live in the neighborhoods, use the park, and work in Willets Point do not speak English. This is in direct violation of the Mayor's 2008 Language Access Policy, the Executive Order 120. NYCEDC must take efforts to provide language access to ensure direct interaction with the communities affected by this project. This should be completely rethought and the City should have this hearing all over again with the proper equipment and the proper personnel, in the proper location that doesn't have fans and problems with speakers. (JHGA)

Pursuant to the Mayor's 1008 Language Access Policy and the *CEQR Technical Manual*, NYCEDC must make efforts to provide language access. I urge NYCEDC to require that all materials and meetings pursuant to this redevelopment process be made available, in hard copy and on the internet, in the following languages: English, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Korean, Italian, Urdu, and French Creole. (Finn)

It is welcome that the City provided interpreters proficient in several languages so that non-English speakers could testify at the September 27, 2012 scoping hearing. However, there was no simultaneous translation provided, which prevented monolingual Spanish and other non-English speakers from comprehending and understanding what was said at the scoping hearing. This is a significant issue that must be resolved as it relates to fairness and fundamental due process as tenant businesses and workers are displaced. (Urban Justice)

The scoping meeting is a good example of how we're not prepared to make this process move forward with no translation of any presentations and no full language access. (QCH)

If we really wanted to involve the community, how do you not have equipment provided to the people so they can understand? (Moyano)

**Response:** The City has complied and will comply with all applicable rules and regulations regarding the language accessibility of these documents. The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development had determined that, for the proposed project, CEQR public notices were to be made available in Spanish. The translated notices for the public scoping meeting were published in a widely circulated Spanish-language newspaper. Although no requests were received from the community for translators of a specific language or for special translation equipment, Spanish, Chinese-Mandarin/Cantonese and Bengali language translators were on hand to provide oral translations to the general public and from the public to the lead agency at the scoping meeting held on September 27, 2012. Subsequent to the public scoping meeting, a project summary was translated into those three languages noted above and posted on MOEC's and NYCEDC's websites. The end of the public comment period on the Draft Scope was extended to October 26, 2012, 10 days after the translated remarks were posted on the agencies' websites.

**Comment 17:** During the public scoping meeting held on September 27, 2012, Dr. Kulikowski stated on the record that the introductory remarks made during that meeting "will be translated into Mandarin, Cantonese, Bengali and Spanish, and will be available on the web site of EDC." However, as of the date of this writing [October 6, 2012], no such translation appears to be available at the web site of NYCEDC. Significantly, the introductory remarks included important statements that are not found within the Notice of Public Scoping, within the Draft Scope of Work, or within other published documents pertaining to the project. To correct this, the City must publish the translations promised, then extend the deadline for the public to submit written comments pertaining to the Draft Scope of Work. (WPU-Antonacci)

**Response:** The Spanish, Chinese, and Bengali translated version of the introductory remarks were posted on MOEC's and NYCEDC's websites on October 16, 2012 and the deadline for the public to submit written comments on the Draft Scope was extended from October 9, 2012 to October 26, 2012.

**Comment 18:** The Final Scope of Work must explain why the City administration has specified two inconsistent sets of persons and addresses – one set within the Notice of Public Scoping, and an altogether different set during the public scoping hearing – where the public is to deliver its written comments on the Draft Scope of Work. (WPU-Antonacci)

**Response:** While the notices identified different places to which comments could be sent, this had no impact because comments sent to either places were equally considered. Written comments on the Draft Scope could have been sent to either MOEC or NYCEDC contacts. Comments received by either agency were accepted and equally considered.

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### **SUBSIDIES**

**Comment 19:** The City needs to provide public with information on taxpayer investments spent to-date and expected to be allocated, including direct and as-of-right subsidies and use of city-owned land. (GJNY)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope. The discussion of taxpayer investments is outside the scope of this project's environmental review.

**Comment 20:** The NYC Industrial Development Agency (IDA) must have a separate hearing for subsidies. They cannot be approved by the Deputy Mayor's office. When tax subsidies are proposed through the IDA, the total cost associated with this project such as environmental clean-up, infrastructure, compensation to businesses displaced (and associated re-training programs) and as-of-right subsidies must also be made public in future analyses. (GJNY)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope. However, if any discretionary benefits are to be provided by the IDA, the IDA will hold separate public hearings for such subsidy applications.

**Comment 21:** If taxpayer support of Citi Field failed to promote the multiplier effect of economic development in the immediate area of Willets Point, the city should re-evaluate the strategy by which this and other similar projects are happening throughout the city. (GJNY)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope and is outside the scope of this project's environmental review. However, it should be noted that every project requesting or receiving governmental support is independently evaluated for its economic benefits.

### **SOCIOECONOMICS**

**Comment 22:** Willets West is proposed to have 1 million square feet of retail space. The analysis in the SEIS should look at the mix of available retail and commercial uses in the surrounding areas to consider which sectors may be affected by the new development. The new retail and commercial uses in Willets West should provide goods and services not already available in this area of the city. (Marshall)

**Response:** The SEIS will conduct a detailed retail analysis. As described in the Draft Scope, the FGEIS analysis found that the Willets Point Development Plan would not substantially raise retail market capture rates within a 5-mile Primary Trade Area and, therefore, would not have the potential to adversely affect competitive stores in the Primary Trade Area. The proposed project would introduce approximately 1.4 million gsf (one million sf gross leasable area) of entertainment and retail uses as part of Willets West, which was not analyzed in the FGEIS. The SEIS will therefore replicate the depth of analysis in the FGEIS

and apply the preliminary and detailed assessment methodologies of the 2012 *CEQR Technical Manual* to perform an assessment that considers the mix of existing and planned retail uses in the surrounding areas as part of its evaluation of the potential competitive effects of retail uses that would be introduced by the proposed project.

**Comment 23:** The EIS should disclose whether a mall this size – it would be the largest in New York City – can be viable without significant subsidy, including subsidy in the form of substantially below-market rent. Less than a mile away another large mall, Sky View, an 800,000 square foot retail development, opened in 2010 and remains only partially leased up. (Pratt)

There has been a mall, Sky View Mall on Roosevelt Avenue, a quarter-of-a-mile away, and it is half-empty. The Queens Center Mall has recently expanded. Both malls should be studied. [JHGA]

**Response:** The financing of the proposed project is beyond the scope of a CEQR assessment. However, Chapter 3, “Socioeconomic Conditions” of the SEIS will estimate the expenditure potential of the area’s residential population and the retail sales occurring within the study area in order to determine whether the proposed project’s retail could saturate the area’s retail market. See also the response to Comment (Marshall) 22, above.

**Comment 24:** The original FGEIS concluded that the Willets Point Development Plan would “not result in any significant adverse impacts” on “indirect displacement of businesses and institutions due to either increased rents or competition.” Given the addition of almost one million square feet of commercial development over the original proposal, it is highly likely that existing businesses, especially small businesses along Roosevelt Avenue and Northern Boulevard will be heavily impacted and a careful analysis is required. (Ferrerias, Finn, AAFE)

**Response:** See the response to Comment (Marshall) 22, above. The analysis of indirect business displacement due to competition will consider the potential effects on businesses along portions of Roosevelt Avenue and Northern Boulevard.

**Comment 25:** The use of a ½-mile or even a ¾-mile buffer as an appropriate delineation of the study area is questionable. The urban fabric in this part of Queens is fragmented by major highways, and the residential and commercial areas all begin within the ½-mile buffer, but extend well beyond it. Small, locally-owned businesses in these areas are highly vulnerable to unfair competition from national, formula-based chains operating in subsidized space, and benefiting from the pull of big-box anchors. (Pratt)

**Response:** The SEIS will use 2012 *CEQR Technical Manual* methodology to determine the appropriate study areas for analysis. The assessment of indirect business displacement due to retail market saturation will include the ½-mile study area

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surrounding the project site, and in addition, will extend well beyond the ½-mile buffer to include an approximately 5-mile primary trade area.

**Comment 26:** The Draft Scope points out that approximately 260 businesses and 1,711 employees will be displaced because of the development, but notes that displacement will not result in significant adverse socioeconomic impacts. But it will impact the families of those 260 small business owners, and 1,711 workers, who rely on these businesses for shelter, food, clothing, and other necessities of life. The Draft Scope of Work is silent with respect to these impacts on household economies supported by the small business activity that several thousand families rely on. (Urban Justice)

There are many people who live off of those businesses in Willets Point and there will be a negative impact on people. (Quilluj)

The Draft Scope leaves out any serious analysis of the loss of this industry on the consumers who rely on these businesses for affordable, convenient, vehicle repair. Using basic macroeconomics one deduces that 1,711 workers are meeting the substantial consumer demand for affordable auto repair. The displacement of these workers will cause substantial market disruption to consumers who patronize Willets Point services causing consumers to drive farther, incur greater expenses in time and loss of income, and frustration (Urban Justice)

**Response:** As described in the Draft Scope, the purpose of the SEIS is to address the proposed modifications to the previously-approved 2008 Plan for the approximately 61-acre District in Queens. The proposed project would result in the same amount and type of direct business displacement as analyzed in the FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda, and therefore, the SEIS does not require further assessment of potential impacts due to direct business displacement. The SEIS will provide a summary of the conclusions reached in the FGEIS for all areas of socioeconomic analysis. It will also include a detailed assessment of any areas where there are potential for significant adverse impacts. The SEIS will also provide a reporting of the businesses that remain on the project site, and the anticipated timing of their displacement.

**Comment 27:** The City has stated that the businesses are “not of substantial economic value to the region or City.” The SEIS must analyze the severe loss of businesses and jobs that will result from a failure to relocate the businesses in groups, contrary to their needs. (Ardizzone)

The CEQR standards fail to adequately capture the extent of employment and the effects of economic activity at Willets Point. Concluding that the businesses are “not a substantial economic value” is ridiculous and we demand better standards of review. (R. Paterno, WPU-Antonacci)

**Response:** The 2012 *CEQR Technical Manual* suggests that an assessment of direct business displacement is warranted if a project would directly displace a business that is unusually important because its products or services are uniquely dependent on its location; based on its type or location, it is the subject of other regulations or publicly adopted plans aimed at its preservation; or it serves a population uniquely dependent on its services in its present location. All of these factors were analyzed in the FGEIS, and the project that is now proposed would result in the same amount and type of direct business displacement as analyzed in the FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda. The SEIS will provide a detailed assessment of any areas where there are potential for significant adverse impacts. It will also include discussion of the businesses that remain on the project site, and the anticipated timing of their displacement.

**Comment 28:** The FGEIS has wrongly concluded that “The District’s businesses are not unique” (FGEIS, p. S-16) and “The proposed Plan would not result in significant adverse impacts on any specific industry.” (FGEIS p. S-18). The SEIS must accurately analyze Bono’s central role in the sawdust re-purposing industry. Bono Sawdust is a unique manufacturing business that processes millions of pounds of sawdust byproducts every year, converting it into popular products such as animal bedding and sweeping compound. This is a green business which takes what would otherwise be waste product and it converts to clean, saleable merchandise. We know of no other local company equipped with this specialized machinery required to physically separate sawdusts into all grades. The machinery to do this is integrated into and throughout the skeleton of the existing building, which was custom constructed specifically for this purpose. Considering the unusually high degree of customization of the building which this business requires, to recreate this unique business from scratch at another location using new materials and expert labor would require an extraordinary financial investment. (Bono, WPU-Antonacci)

**Response:** As described in the FGEIS, Bono Sawdust is one of two businesses operating within New York City that manufacture sawdust-based sweeping compounds and industrial absorbents. The FGEIS found that there is the potential for relocation of this business within the City, as its manufacturing operations are not tied to a unique location in order to be viable. Sawdust is only one of many absorbent compounds utilized for the cleanup of oil and other industrial spills. More commonly utilized materials include kitty litter-like clay compounds (often referred to as “Quick Dry” or “Oil Dry”), fiberclay (a recycled paper compound), and absorbent pads and rolls. These absorbent materials, and sawdust-based sweeping compounds, are readily available through other businesses and distributors within the City and the region that deliver products directly to customers. Moreover, the displacement of this business as part of the Phase 2 development plan would not harm overall business activity within the

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absorbent and sweeping compound industry, or within industries that utilize these products. The proposed project would result in the same direct business displacement as analyzed in the FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda, and therefore, the SEIS does not require further assessment of potential impacts due to direct business displacement. The SEIS will provide a reporting of the businesses that remain on the project site, including Bono, and the anticipated timing of their displacement.

**Comment 29:** The Master Agreement between NYCEDC and the City specifies as a goal of NYCEDC is “the retention, growth, and attraction of industrial firms and in urban renewal areas,” and “the elimination of substandard ... conditions that impede such retention, growth, and attraction.” Pursuant to the terms of that contract, businesses such as Bono Sawdust must be supported, not threatened. The proposed development plan completely disregards this contractual goal and obligation of NYCEDC. (Bono)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope.

**Comment 30:** This study needs to pay special attention to the effect of this new development on rising house costs and the time line for the affordable housing needs to be moved up. (QCH)

**Response:** The socioeconomic conditions chapter of the SEIS will assess the project’s effects on population and housing characteristics, and will include a detailed analysis of the potential for indirect residential displacement due to increased rents. With respect to affordable housing, the RWCDs for Phase 1B and Phase 2 of the proposed project include the development of a mixed-use community that contains thousands of housing units, hundreds of which are anticipated to be affordable housing units. The completion of buildings in this mixed-use community is not anticipated to occur until the Van Wyck Expressway transportation links to the area are anticipated to be complete by 2024. Furthermore, it is anticipated that the affordable housing will require the supportive development of the retail, office, school, community facility and open space uses that will surround it. As such, plans do not currently call for the construction of stand-alone affordable housing in this isolated area without concurrent construction of the other uses that would support such housing.

**Comment 31:** For too long, Willets Point has been left out of the kind of private sector investment that would bring meaningful economic opportunity to our citizens and crucial revitalization to this important section of Queens. REBNY urges that review of this project move forward expeditiously so that the real work of bringing this important initiative to the people of Queens can get underway. (REBNY)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope. However, the review of the project will move forward at a pace that would conform with CEQR requirements and other applicable regulations.

**Comment 32:** The plan will be a major engine for economic growth for New York City, will generate local employment and business opportunities, and improve the overall quality of life for local residents. The plan will ultimately create 7,100 permanent jobs and 12,000 direct construction jobs with MWBE and local hiring goals of 25 percent. The project will generate tens of millions of dollars in tax revenues for our schools, police and senior citizen services – precisely what our City needs as we emerge from a five year recession. (ABNY)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 33:** Queens does not need more entertainment centers because we have enough places already. Hotels are not necessary either. The more important thing is housing for low-income families – not the expensive apartments that those with low-incomes cannot afford. We also need low income housing for seniors to live comfortably for the rest of their lives. You must keep the parkland together (Kim).

We need housing. (Vicente)

**Response:** Comment noted. The purpose of the CEQR analysis is to assess the potential environmental effects of the uses that are proposed. If the project as proposed is found to generate significant adverse environmental impacts, alternative uses and densities may be considered as part of the alternatives analysis.

#### **JOB CREATION AND WAGES**

**Comment 34:** Numerous statements by various officials, especially in June of 2008, implied that an agreement or agreements would guarantee a certain level of job standards for the construction and permanent jobs at Willets Point. However, the status of those agreements seems unclear and to avoid confusion should be made public. Unless those details are made public who will hold those developers and businesses accountable? (GJNY)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope and job standards contained in agreements between the City and the developer are outside the scope of this project's environmental review.

**Comment 35:** The sewer construction was awarded to a firm based out of New Jersey, not to a firm located in Queens or even New York City. So much for good Queens jobs. (R. Paterno)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope and the location of firms that may be selected to construct the proposed project is outside the scope of this project's environmental review. Further, it should be noted that the City and NYCEDC

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are precluded by law from selecting construction companies based on where their business is located.

**Comment 36:** The City should work with the labor community to ensure reasonable wage and benefit standards for all jobs created. It is not nearly enough to create new jobs. (Simanowitz)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope. While the wages and benefits of all jobs created by the proposed project are expected to comply with all local, state and federal employment regulations, an assessment of the specific wage levels of jobs created by the proposed project is beyond the scope of analyses set forth in the *2012 CEQR Technical Manual*.

**Comment 37:** We don't need another mall in this area. We already have several malls and we know another mall would just create low paying, part-time jobs. Most of them work part-time and have to have two or three jobs to survive. Many people don't have health insurance because the only health insurance plans they offer are so expensive that we can't afford them. What the Queens community needs is better jobs with good benefits. (Gutierrez, MTRNY)

**Response:** Comment noted. Employment-related benefits are beyond the scope of this project's environmental review. However, it is expected that all commercial tenants of the proposed project will comply with all applicable local, state and federal laws with respect to workers' rights, wages and benefits.

**Comment 38:** If this project is successfully completed, it will create over 7,000 permanent jobs. This includes many building service jobs that pay good wages and health and retirement benefits. (Perez)

I support this project, because I know that out of the 7,000 permanent jobs created, the building service jobs will be good jobs like mine, which provide decent wages and benefits. This will create economic growth that benefits all New Yorkers. (Cisco)

The City estimates the project will create 12,000 construction jobs and over 7,000 permanent positions. Moreover, the development will greatly expand the City's tax base, generating millions of dollars of new real estate and income taxes. (NYBC)

I work at Sky View Parc for Related. The development of Willets Point will allow for permanent jobs in the area that pay good wages and provide access to quality, affordable health care. We need to support responsible developers like Related and Sterling and recognize projects like this one that will help families earn the wages and benefits they need to get a foothold up in the middle class. (Perdomo)

**Response:** Comments noted.

**Comment 39:** Without increased commerce, there are no job gains. Businesses create employment opportunities at every level from semi-skilled to skilled to management levels. We hope that's the case in Willets Point. And additionally, new businesses will increase their tax base. For years taxes have gone out of the City. People have left the City for many reasons and we want to keep them here in New York and in Queens. (QEDC)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 40:** The plan to transform Willets Point from Queens' biggest eyesore to one of the centers of economic growth in our City is exactly the kind of sustainable development New York City needs. The project will lead the way in revitalizing and expanding the Queens economy and will create thousands of jobs at a time when they're most needed. (PNYC)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 41:** If our public officials were truly interested in creating jobs, we have plenty of work. How about starting with taking care of the park? They should be supporting the hiring of desperately needed permanent workers to maintain programs and secure Flushing Meadows Corona Park. (NYCPA)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope. Addressing the maintenance needs of Flushing Meadows Corona Park is beyond the scope of this project's environmental review.

**Comment 42:** It is not easy for our youngsters or our grownups to find jobs. What jobs does the Mayor guarantee for us? (Guerrero)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope. However, the proposed project is expected to create a substantial number of jobs both during the construction phase and upon project operations. The SEIS will disclose the number of jobs that are anticipated during each of the three analytical phases of the project.

**Comment 43:** Walmart-Free NYC believes that the Willets Point development has the potential to bring significant opportunity to the surrounding neighborhood. We suggest that mechanisms be put in place to ensure that any developer associated with the project would bring in tenants with a proven track record of supporting worker's rights, good wages, and affordable benefits, and meet local hiring standards to benefit community members. We were happy to hear that the developers of Willets Point shared publicly in a statement and press, that: "We have not had any talks with Walmart ... and we have absolutely no intention of discussing this site with them." (Walmart Free)

**Response:** The SEIS will assess the potential for the proposed project to result in significant adverse socioeconomic impacts pursuant to *CEQR Technical Manual* standards. While specific tenants are not yet known, this assessment will include

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an analysis of potential direct and indirect impacts of a range of types of retailers and other commercial tenants. It is expected that all commercial tenants of the proposed project will comply with all applicable local, state and federal laws with respect to workers' rights, wages and benefits.

### **RELOCATION/ RELOCATION ASSISTANCE**

**Comment 44:** Efforts to assist the existing businesses and workers of Willets Point are critical. (Marshall)

The existing businesses in the Willets Point community should be treated fairly and the City should ensure the relocation in as smooth and painless a transition as possible. It is my hope that the City will continue to do outreach to those businesses that currently remain within the Phase 1 area and get them re-situated as soon as possible. (Simanowitz)

Page S-17 of the Final Generic EIS states: "no relocation sites for the tenant businesses have been identified." If the City has managed to identify relocation sites for the tenant businesses, that must be disclosed in the SEIS. If property in Maspeth is being considered, that must be disclosed in the SEIS. The SEIS must acknowledge that relocation sites have not yet been found, four years after the original EIS that assumed that all the businesses could be readily relocated. (Ardizzone, WPU-Antonacci)

The original EIS assumed that all the businesses could be readily relocated. Four years later relocation sites have not yet been found for my clients and others. The Supplemental EIS must acknowledge this reality and its consequences. (WPU-Gerrard)

**Response:** Since the approval of the 2008 Plan, the City has been undertaking an extensive outreach effort to the existing businesses and their workers. NYCEDC has contracted with Cornerstone Group, a business relocation expert, to provide relocation assistance and advisory services free of charge to affected businesses on city-owned property in the Phase 1 footprint of the District. Cornerstone Group commenced its most recent round of outreach to affected Willets Point businesses on City-owned property in September 2012 and their outreach in Willets Point is ongoing. They have already identified potential relocation sites and will continue to work with eligible businesses to provide relocation assistance. The identification of potential sites for relocation will not be provided in the SEIS, as the public release of such information could jeopardize negotiations with existing property owners. As stated in the Draft Scope, the SEIS will provide a reporting of the businesses that remain on the project site, and the anticipated timing of their displacement.

**Comment 45:** The SEIS must acknowledge the inter-dependent nature of the automotive tenant businesses, and must realistically analyze the severe loss of business and jobs

that will result from a failure to relocate the businesses in groups. (WPU-Antonacci)

Relocation of the businesses in groups has been recommended by numerous reports, and is necessary. And yet, no plan has been announced by the City for group relocation of the businesses. (Ardizzone)

We want relocation as a group. (Sunrise)

After over four year of meeting with the City tenant business owners lack any group relocation options. The Draft Scope of Work for a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement does absolutely nothing to address the need expressed by tenant and workers for a group relocation plan that allows existing businesses to remain in operation once relocation occurs. The relocation assistance promised through Cornerstone Group has to date been nonexistent. Moreover, all attempts to engage Cornerstone to develop a meaningful group relocation plan where existing businesses can relocate together has been met with severe ambivalence and at times hostile defensiveness. (Urban Justice)

**Response:** As noted in the response to the above comment, NYCEDC has contracted with Cornerstone Group, a business relocation expert, to provide relocation assistance and advisory services free of charge to affected businesses on city-owned property in the Phase 1 footprint of the Willets Point District. Cornerstone Group commenced its most recent round of outreach to affected Willets Point businesses on City-owned property in September 2012 and their outreach in the Willets Point is ongoing. They have already identified several potential relocation sites, including several large sites that may be appropriate for multiple tenants, and will continue to work with eligible businesses to provide relocation assistance, including to businesses who are interested in relocating as a group. With respect to the request to address group relocation in the SEIS, please see response to Comment 26 (Urban Justice/Ouilluj), above.

**Comment 46:** The tenant small businesses and workers in Willets Point are primarily low-income. Of the 260 businesses it is estimated that 95 percent are Latino-owned. Of the 1,711 workers 98 percent are immigrants. By failing to enter into meaningful negotiations over group relocation the City has shown discriminatory behavior towards Latino business owners and immigrant workers. (Urban Justice)

**Response:** There is no basis for the claim that the City is acting in a discriminatory nature towards the businesses and workers in the District. Since 2008, the City has initiated a Worker Assistance Program (WAP) to assist workers who would be displaced by the development of the District. NYCEDC has contracted with Cornerstone Group, a business relocation expert, to provide relocation assistance and advisory services free of charge to affected businesses on city-owned property in the Phase 1 footprint of the District. Cornerstone Group commenced its most recent round of outreach to affected Willets Point

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businesses on City-owned property in September 2012 and their outreach in Willets Point is ongoing. They have already identified potential relocation sites and will continue to work with eligible businesses to provide relocation assistance. The SEIS will describe the programs and ongoing discussions that the City has with the businesses and workers.

**Comment 47:** What all the businessmen in Flushing are wondering is if you can't place the people in Willets Point, how are you going to place the much greater number of workers – Kent Electroplating, Logo, and plumbing, the lumber yards, Shea trucking – on the other side of the creek, Flushing, that they want to develop. (Galluccio)

**Response:** Development of property located on the eastern side of the Flushing River is not within the scope of this project or SEIS.

**Comment 48:** We need employment and we are basically being displaced without giving any hope of getting employment for income. (Sunrise)

**Response:** As detailed in the response to Comment 26 (Urban Justice/Ouilluj) above, the proposed project would result in the same direct business displacement as analyzed in the FGEIS and subsequent technical memoranda, and therefore, the SEIS does not require further assessment of potential impacts due to direct business displacement. As noted in the FGEIS, however, to assist affected Willets Point workers, NYCEDC has contracted with LaGuardia Community College, which has for the past 6 years and will continue to administer the Willets Point Worker Assistance Program (WAP). A variety of services are available at no charge to workers who have enrolled in the program including educational classes, job training, referrals to immigration services, and other job preparation services including job placement in fields such as construction, maintenance, food service, transportation and delivery, and healthcare.

**Comment 49:** Another critical part of the redevelopment plan for Willets Point is assisting the current workers. NYCEDC, in conjunction with the Department of Small Business Services, retained LaGuardia Community College to develop and manage the Worker Assistance Program for impacted employees of Willets Point. Since its inception in 2008, this program has provided a variety of critical services at no cost to interested Willets Point Workers. Over 550 workers have already registered for the program. (ABNY)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope. However, as noted above, the WAP, administered by LaGuardia Community College on behalf of NYCEDC, has successfully provided a variety of services at no cost to Willets Point Workers who have enrolled in the program. Approximately 600 Willets Point workers have enrolled in the program, and delivery of program services is ongoing.

**Comment 50:** In similar instances City and State agencies have found tremendous social and economic impact from the retention of approximately the same number of workers. In February 2012 City and State allocated \$100 million to retain 2,000 jobs at Fresh Direct, but would not save 1,711 jobs at Willets Point. We are baffled at the disparate treatment government agencies take when presented with the opportunity to fawn over large corporations and demur and turn their heads when poor, hardworking, minority-owned small business owners demand meaningful assistance in relocating to retain almost the same number of jobs. (Urban Justice)

**Response:** NYCEDC has contracted with Cornerstone Group, a business relocation expert, to provide meaningful relocation assistance and advisory services free of charge to affected businesses in Willets Point. The Cornerstone Group commenced its most recent round of outreach to affected businesses on city-owned property in the Phase 1 footprint of the District. They have identified potential relocation sites for affected Willets Point businesses throughout the City, including several large sites that may be appropriate for multiple tenants. The Cornerstone Group will continue to work with eligible business to provide relocation assistance, including to businesses who are interested in relocating as a group. It is beyond the scope of this SEIS to address funds allocated to City and State projects beyond the project area described in the scoping document.

**Comment 51:** Lack of success with job placement. According to the e-mails from LaGuardia College, they told the workers, “sorry, we can't find you a job.” (WPU-Antonacci)

The job retraining program offered through LaGuardia Community College has been an utter failure given its total lack of job placement following skill retraining. This program ignores the fact that tenant businesses and workers already have skills and can do business to feed their families – they need to be relocated so they can continue working, not retrained for work that does not exist. (Urban Justice)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope. However, it should be noted that the WAP, administered by LaGuardia Community College, on behalf of NYCEDC, has successfully provided a variety of services at no cost to Willets Point Workers who have enrolled in the program. Approximately 600 Willets Point workers have enrolled in the program, and delivery of program services is ongoing.

The WAP is also capable of helping to facilitate job placement. On a weekly basis, LaGuardia Community College identifies potential job opportunities, which are provided to Willets Point workers who have enrolled in the program and who have expressed interest in finding employment beyond the District. LaGuardia Community College has successfully placed over two dozen participants in the WAP into jobs in various industries. It is also expected that

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many workers will be able to retain their jobs at relocated businesses and NYCEDC has contracted with Cornerstone Group, a business relocation expert, to provide relocation assistance and advisory services free of charge to affected businesses in Willets Point.

**Comment 52:** I called the City numbers and they transferred me to three numbers and at the end, the last person didn't know about it [information on relocation services]. (Olaya)

**Response:** Comment noted. This is not a comment on the Draft Scope, however, information regarding relocation services can be obtained by contacting Cornerstone at 212-768-1435.

**Comment 53:** They said eminent domain is the last resort. They already tried to use eminent domain without seriously negotiating with all the remaining property owners. (WPU-Antonacci)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope. However, since the 2008 approval of the Plan, the City has undertaken outreach and has been negotiating with property owners in the District. As noted in the Draft Scope, the results of the outreach efforts and without the exercise of eminent domain, the City has acquired, or is in contract to purchase, approximately 95 percent of the land area within the proposed Phase 1A/1B footprint (Assemblage Option 2). NYCEDC will continue its outreach to the remaining property owners within the Phase 1A/1B footprint.

**Comment 54:** The City is still threatening eminent domain for this project. The abuse of eminent domain to facilitate a non-essential project for the benefit of Wilpons is outrageously illegal. (Bono)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope. The City uses eminent domain sparingly and only as a last resort. As noted in Comment 53, the City has acquired, or is in contract to purchase, approximately 95 percent of the land area within the proposed Phase 1A/1B footprint (Assemblage Option 2), and the City continues to seek negotiated acquisitions.

## **HOUSING**

**Comment 55:** Community needs affordable housing. The decision to delay the construction of affordable housing until after the mall is completed is unacceptable. [Ferreras]

We do not need a mall. We need affordable housing. Every day local tenants come into my office with concerns about how they're going to make their rent payments. (QCH)

Housing is the linchpin of this development but we're not going to have housing until 2025 and the developer can opt out of the affordable housing component (WPU-Antonacci; Haber).

One concern stems from the delay in housing construction until 2025. While 35 percent of the housing will be affordable, we must do more to expedite construction of these units. Our City simply cannot afford to wait as middle income families are leaving in droves. We must make this a priority. (Simanowitz)

In 2008, after a hard fight with three or four different grassroots organizations, the City administration promised the construction of affordable housing. Now after four years at Willets Point, there is nothing in my community. Affordable housing in Queens is a priority. (QHC)

**Response:** The purpose of the SEIS is to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the project as proposed. It should be noted that affordable housing is one of a number of important goals for the proposed project. The remediation of the Willets Point Phase I area, the development of Willets West and the activation of 126<sup>th</sup> Street combined will catalyze further development of the area in the future phases, including affordable housing. The RWCDs for Phase 1B and Phase 2 of the project include the development of a mixed-use community that contains thousands of housing units, hundreds of which are anticipated to be affordable housing units. The affordable housing will require the supportive development of the retail, office, school, community facility and open space uses that will surround it. As such, plans do not currently call for the construction of stand-alone affordable housing in this isolated area without the other uses that would support such housing.

#### LEASE FOR PARKLAND

**Comment 56:** The SEIS must clarify that the Downtown Flushing Task Force never endorsed, or even considered, the sacrifice and development of parkland let alone doing so without following the statutory parkland alienation procedure. (COMET, WPU-Antonacci)

**Response:** The proposed project does not include the sacrifice and development of parkland resources. The parking lot is not open to the public and provides no benefit to the community as an open space or recreational resource, except to the extent that the leaseholder has held events in the parking lot in its proprietary capacity, and as such there will be no deprivation of valued park uses as a result of its development. The proposed project does not propose any statutory parkland alienation approval because authorization is already provided under existing legislation. As discussed in further detail in response to Comment 57, below, DPR has the legislative authority to enter into leases for the use of the portion of the project here known as Willets West. The statute authorizes the DPR Commissioner to enter into leases, contracts and other agreements for a multitude of purposes, including for any purpose which is of such a nature so as to foster or promote amusement, entertainment or the improvement of trade and

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commerce. The proposed use fits within the uses allowed by the statutory provision.

**Comment 57:** The developers and the City cannot be allowed to rely on a 1961 amendment to the City Administration Code to completely circumvent the required parkland alienation process. According to the handbook on parkland alienation (page 8), published by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, parkland is impressed with a public trust, requiring legislative approval before it can be alienated or used for an extended period for non-park purposes. (COMET, WPU-Antonacci)

From page 5 of Handbook on Parkland Alienation: “State Parks advises the Governor regarding each alienation bill that is passes by the Legislature. The memorandum provided by State Parks contains information about the proposed alienation and the Agency’s recommendation on whether the bill should be signed into law.” It is very clear that the State Parks Department is intended to have a prominent role in evaluating whether or not proposed parkland alienation should be allowed – in this case, sacrificing parkland for the construction of a million square foot shopping mall (COMET; WPU-Antonacci).

Mall doesn’t fall within the definition of “edification” without new alienation legislation. (Pratt)

The parkland that for this irresponsible project was never alienated as required under State law, nor are they planning to. The Law Department stated that while the term parkland alienation is frequently used to describe State legislation that authorizes either the disposition or non-park use of parkland, the laws themselves rarely incorporate that term. That’s not exactly true. The 2005 language for the Yankee Stadium debacle was very explicit. So was the Van Cortland Park alienation and the 1984 Bryant Park alienation. (NYCPA)

**Response:** DPR has previously received the legislative authority to enter into leases for the use of the portion of the project here known as Willets West in furtherance of entertainment, trade and commerce for the benefit of the City, and therefore additional parkland alienation approval is not required for the Proposed Project. Specifically, Section 18-118 of the Administrative Code (originally codified as Section 532-15.0) was enacted by the New York State Legislature under Chapter 729 of the Session Laws of 1961 and authorizes, among other things, alienation of the Citi Field parking area and permits the uses now under consideration as part of the proposed project. The statute authorizes the DPR Commissioner to enter into leases, contracts and other agreements for a multitude of purposes, including for any purpose which is of such a nature so as to foster or promote amusement, entertainment or the improvement of trade and commerce. The statute declares that such purposes, as well as others set forth in the statute, are for the benefit of the people of the City and for the improvement of, among other things, their health, welfare, recreation and prosperity, and for

the improvement of trade and commerce, and are further declared to be public purposes. The proposed use fits within the uses allowed by the above statutory provision. Lastly, the term, “alienation,” is not required in a statute to authorize the sale or lease of parkland.

**Comment 58:** The use of the Citi Field parking would require a renegotiation of the lease for that parkland. The City should examine whether a mall is actually the best use of this irreplaceable resource – from a social, environmental, and even economic standpoint. (Pratt)

**Response:** The purpose of the SEIS is to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. In accordance with CEQR guidance, if the SEIS analysis finds that the proposed project has the potential to result in significant adverse impacts, then alternatives to the proposed project that minimize or avoid such an impact would be considered as part of the Alternatives analysis and compared with how well they would meet the goals and objectives of the proposed project.

**Comment 59:** It is unclear from the public materials that transferring the use of the parking lots to retail will generate significant income for the Parks Department. (GJNY)

**Response:** The business terms of the proposed project are outside the SEIS scope of analysis, which examines the potential for the proposed project to result in significant adverse impacts based on the *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines.

**Comment 60:** At the public scoping meeting, it was implied that since the public is already being denied access to the parkland property that is the proposed site of the Willets West mall, the SEIS analysis may conclude that future use of that property as the site of the Willets West mall will not result in a net loss of “public open space for the community” – a loss that would otherwise be considered a significant adverse impact. No lawful authority to limit, restrict or prevent public access to that parkland property has been cited, including any lawful authority to erect a fence around any portion of the perimeter of the property, and/or otherwise prevent public access to the property. The SEIS analysis must not rely on existing conditions that effectively deny public access and prevent the parkland property from functioning as “public open space for the community,” unless there is a lawful basis for implementing those conditions. If there is not, then the parkland property must be considered open to the general public, and must be considered as providing public open space for the community – and those conditions must actually be implemented at the site. (WPU-Antonacci)

**Response:** The Citi Field parking lot that is proposed for redevelopment at Willets West, as well as certain other parking lots in the area that are within the mapped boundaries of Flushing Meadows Corona Park, are the subject of agreements among the City of New York, IDA and the Queens Ballpark Company L.L.C. (“QBC”) (an affiliate of the project applicant) that are authorized by Chapter

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729 of the Session Laws of 1961. These agreements, which have been in place since 2006 (and which superseded agreement that had been in place since 1961), give QBC the lawful authority to use and control public access to these areas and as such there is a lawful basis for their current function. The land was occupied by Shea Stadium and associated parking and circulation space until it was replaced by Citi Field in 2009, and it is now occupied exclusively by surface parking and other activities that QBC operates or permits in its proprietary capacity. Pursuant to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, non-publicly accessible space is not considered an open space resource, and therefore, the Citi Field parking lot redevelopment would not be considered in the Open Space impact assessment.

**Comment 61:** During the public scoping meeting, the Applicant's representative stated on the record: "The current Citi Field parking lot on which Willets West is proposed for construction is not currently open to the general public, nor does it currently provide any public open space for the community." That significant statement is *not* found within the published documents pertaining to the proposed project. Moreover, contrary to representations made during the public scoping meeting, that statement has *not* been translated into Mandarin, Cantonese, Bengali and Spanish and made available on the website of NYCEDC, such that all members of the public may be aware of the statement and have adequate time to consider it, when preparing written comments to the Draft Scope of Work. (WPU-Antonacci)

**Response:** Translations of the project overview (which included the quoted statement) presented at the public scoping meeting were provided on the NYCEDC and MOEC websites on October 16, 2012. Members of the public were provided with an extended time to submit written comments. Further, page 17 of the Draft Scope acknowledges the status of the Citi Field parking lot: "The SEIS also will consider how the mapped parkland within the project site itself, which is currently used for parking associated with a public park use, would be affected." Please also see response to comment 60 (WPU-Antonacci), above. A comprehensive assessment of public open space in the area will be included in the SEIS, which will also be published on the NYCEDC website. A comment period will also be provided for the public to provide comments on the draft SEIS subsequent to its publication.

### **OPEN SPACE**

**Comment 62:** The proposal to build a mall in the park is just one of three proposals for big developments in the Flushing Meadows Park. We need to look at the impact of all three proposals together because they could have a huge impact on the park. (Gutierrez)

Willets Point, National Tennis Center, and Major League Soccer projects would expand the footprint of paved and privatized land within the Flushing Meadows

Corona Park, and diminish the amount of green space available to the public for active uses. (Pratt)

**Response:** The SEIS will assess the impact of any change in open space associated with the proposed project. The NTC project is located within the ½-mile open space study area and will be considered, along with other discrete projects, as part of the No Action condition in the analysis of the adequacy of open space. The *CEQR Technical Manual* indicates that the No Action condition should consider any projects built or approved to be constructed by a project's build year. The proposed MLS stadium is still in preliminary planning stages and has not entered into any public review process. However, the analyses in the SEIS will account for the potential presence of the MLS project in the No Action condition based on the current conceptual program.

**Comment 63:** SEIS should study means of access to these open and public spaces by residents of the Corona and Flushing, Queens area. (Ferrerias)

**Response:** The SEIS will describe the proposed project open spaces and their connections to existing open spaces.

**Comment 64:** Flushing Meadow Park is the only green space the community has. It is where parents can take their children to play and exercise. This project will result in less open space for the children. (MTRNY, MEBarrera, Guerrero, MZJaramillo, RReyes)

**Response:** The SEIS will assess the impact of a potential change in open space resource demand and utilization associated with the proposed project on nearby open spaces including Flushing Meadows Corona Park and the addition of 8 acres of publicly-accessible open space within the District, as well as the newly created interim recreation space. While the proposed project site for the Willets West development is mapped as parkland, it does not function as a public open space amenity. As noted in the response to Comment 60 (WPU-Antonacci), the land was occupied by Shea Stadium since 1961 and associated parking and circulation space until it was replaced by Citi Field in 2009, and it is now occupied exclusively by surface parking.

**Comment 65:** The Draft Scope of Work ignores the open space that is being destroyed by the proposed development, including Phase 1A creation of parking. This parking area displaces existing broad streets that constitute open space that is sometimes used by workers and business owners for recreational activity. The destruction of this open space without any state action is wholly unlawful and premature. (Urban Justice)

**Response:** The Draft Scope sets forth the parameters for the analysis of potential significant adverse open space impacts in the SEIS. This analysis will include an identification of existing open space resources in the vicinity of the proposed

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project and an assessment of any direct impact from the loss of an open space resource due to project development. The SEIS analysis of proposed project's direct and indirect effects on open space will rely on the *CEQR Technical Manual* definition of passive open space, which includes plazas or medians with seating, a percentage of beach areas (sunbathing), picnicking areas, greenways and esplanades (sitting, strolling), paths, accessible restricted use lawns, gardens, and church yards or cemeteries with seating, and publicly accessible natural areas used, for example, for strolling, dog walking, and bird watching. Pursuant to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, streets are not considered open space resources and therefore their removal would not be considered in the Open Space impact assessment. General changes to the street network and layout of blocks, if any, would be considered in the SEIS as part of the assessment of the potential for significant adverse Neighborhood Character and Transportation impacts.

### *PROPOSED OPEN SPACE*

**Comment 66:** With regard to the newly proposed off-season public active recreation space, the study should be conducted in warmer months when they would be in use. It should look at whether there is adequate lighting for these facilities, public safety concerns and pedestrian access to the facilities. (Ferrerias)

**Response:** The SEIS will describe the Phase 1A interim active recreational use to be utilized during major league baseball off-season and potentially during selected other times of year, and will provide an illustrative site plan for the recreational uses that could be provided.

**Comment 67:** There should be community input on the design of this recreation space. (Ferrerias)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope. Queens Development Group (QDG), the project sponsor, has and will continue to solicit community input on the design of the recreation space.

**Comment 68:** In Phase 1A, the Scope proposes an "off-season public active recreation space" to be sited on surface parking lot east of stadium. However, there is no mention of the cost to use these facilities, which will be run by a private operator under special permit, and these uses should not be attributed as an amenity unless they are adequately described in the plan and their user costs fully explained. (Finn)

**Response:** The fee structure for use of the proposed seasonal active recreation uses within the District in Phase 1A has not yet been determined and is not subject to environmental review. Since these uses will be active for only half of the year, for conservative assessment purposes they will not be included in the quantitative assessment of Phase 1A open space resources in the SEIS.

**Comment 69:** The Scope indicates that this development area will be built incrementally, i.e. block-by-block. Parks and open spaces are often the last components to be completed in large developments, and sometimes they are not completed at all due to financing challenges. (Finn)

The SEIS should explicitly state the phasing of open space during project construction. Open spaces should be built out in step with block-by-block development and not saved for last. (Ferrerias, Finn)

**Response:** The phasing for construction of the open space will be described in the SEIS. Phase 1B and Phase 2 are planned to be developed in compliance with all regulations of the NYC Zoning Resolution, which requires that open space be developed in tandem with the opening of new buildings in the District. In compliance with this requirement, open spaces are anticipated to be developed along with development of the Phase 1B and Phase 2 buildings.

#### **VAN WYCK RAMP APPROVALS**

**Comment 70:** The ramps were approved by the New York State Department of Transportation (“NYSDOT”) and the Federal Highway Administration (“FHWA”) for a 62-acre development. The ramps now need to be reapproved for 108.9-acre development. (WPU-Antonacci, Scarola)

FHWA’s approval of the Van Wyck ramps was explicitly based on an Environmental Assessment (“EA”) for the prior Willets Point project. The FHWA will need to do a new environmental review. The SEIS should reflect these additional steps. (WPU-Gerrard)

**Response:** The Access Modification Report (“AMR”) was approved by FHWA, upon recommendation for approval by NYSDOT. The Van Wyck Ramp project analyzed in the EA and the AMR, and discussed in FHWA’s issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact (“FONSI”), have not changed. The Willets Point Development Project is a background development project for the EA and changed after FHWA had issued the EA, FONSI and AMR. This Draft Scope and Supplemental EIS will address a change to the schedule and scope of the background project. If the proposed changes to the Willets Point Development Project are approved by the City, FHWA will be apprised of the changes to the background project as they relate to the EA, FONSI and AMR.

**Comment 71:** FHWA violated the National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) by not doing a full EIS for the ramp approval for the old Willets Point project. That violation would be made worse by not doing a supplemental review. The federal statute of limitations for challenging such violations is six years, so we have plenty of time. (WPU-Gerrard)

**Response:** This is not a comment on the Draft Scope of Work. However, pursuant to NEPA, FHWA reviewed the potential for impacts as a result of their approval of

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the construction of new access ramps to the Van Wyck Expressway to serve the District as well as existing traffic. Following a detailed review of the proposed change to the highway network, the FHWA issued a FONSI and an approved AMR.

**Comment 72:** The City itself needs to conduct a full review of the revised project's effects on the Van Wyck Expressway, since the City is the proponent of the new ramps and has promised to pay for them. The City has never indicated how much the ramps would cost. This should be revealed in the SEIS. Especially in a time of fiscal austerity, it is irresponsible to commit to what is in no doubt a multi-hundred-million-dollar expenditure without disclosing to at least two or three significant digits what the cost is expected to be, and whether the money would come from general City revenues or from other sources. (WPU-Gerrard)

**Response:** The SEIS will conduct a detailed review of the proposed project's effects on the local street and highway network, including the Van Wyck Expressway. Furthermore, the financial costs of the proposed project are not part of the scope of environmental review pursuant to the *CEQR Technical Manual*. However, it should be noted that the City has committed to providing funding for the design and construction of the proposed Van Wyck Expressway ramps.

**Comment 73:** The FONSI for the ramps and the Environmental Assessment (EA) on which it was based embody a fundamental conceptual error. They assume that the Willets Point project will be built, and they assess whether the ramps will improve traffic conditions against that future baseline. But since the City of New York has consistently said that the construction of the full project is contingent on the approval and construction of the ramps, the baseline for analysis should be the future without the Willets Point project at all. The City and the FHWA should analyze and compare 1) future conditions on the Van Wyck without the Willets Point project or the ramps, and 2) future conditions on the Van Wyck with the Willets Point and the ramps. (WPU-Gerrard)

**Response:** The comment appears to relate to the scope of the EA and FONSI issued by FHWA, but not to the Draft Scope.

**Comment 74:** The FGEIS approved in 2008 reported significant project traffic impacts along local access roads, on nearby expressways and along the Van Wyck Expressway assuming that half of Willets Point traffic could be accommodated on the Van Wyck. NYCEDC then issued a draft AMR assuming that just 16 percent of Willets Point traffic would divert to the Van Wyck, reporting much reduced traffic impacts than were reported in the FGEIS. How could this be? You have the original FGEIS traffic plus 2,000 hourly trips displaced from the Van Wyck to local access roads-was this an error or an intentional manipulation of the data for a different audience, the FHWA? (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** It is unclear what the commenter's estimates of hourly trips are based on. The comment appears to relate to the scope of the EA and FONSI issued by FHWA, but not to the Draft Scope. It should be noted, however, that NYSDOT and FHWA require a different analysis of modified or new access to and from the existing highways network than required under New York's State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) or CEQR. Thus, the AMR framework includes travel demand modeling and simulation to understand the potential effects within a larger regional area and much further into the future than is typically done in the SEQRA/CEQR process. Whereas the project's environmental assessment of project-generated traffic impacts will conform with the *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance of using Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) (version 5.5) procedures, accounting for traffic generated by other nearby development projects, and applying prescribed annual background traffic growth rate, the AMR framework utilized the Best Practices Model ("BPM"), which is a travel demand forecasting model for the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council ("NYMTC") region. The BPM macro-model comprises data and projections from 28 counties in the tri-state region. The traffic analysis performed for the AMR analyzes the regional highway impacts of the ramps themselves, whereas the potential impacts that may be identified in the SEIS are associated with the proposed project modifications on a more localized basis. Thus, the methodologies and inputs for both analyses are different with no inherent discrepancies or data oversight in the impact assessments between the Willets Point FGEIS and the AMR documents. Both reports utilized the same relevant baseline data with respect to the Willets Point Plan and other background information, but the focus on the local effects of the Plan and the regional effects of the proposed Willets Point ramps on the Van Wyck Expressway necessitate the use of different modeling methodologies and time horizons.

**Comment 75:** NYCEDC proposed to illegally segment the project; build only 1.4 million square feet--much of it retail mall space--prior to building the Van Wyck ramps. I prepared a detailed traffic simulation model of this Phase 1 proposal that showed it too would create severe traffic congestion. NYCEDC then decided to bulldoze their way forward by issuing a NEPA EIS for the Van Wyck Ramps this time assuming a third of Willets Point trips would use the Van Wyck. This time they failed to account for the diversion of 1,000 trips onto local access roads again under reporting project traffic impacts. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** It is unclear what the commenter's estimates of diverted trips are based on. There is no segmentation as suggested by the commenter. Subsequent to the issuance of the FGEIS, additional studies were conducted to evaluate partial development of the District prior to the completion of the Van Wyck ramps. The findings were summarized in Technical Memorandum 4, developed in accordance with CEQR. One of the purposes of the SEIS is to address the potential impacts associated with a revised development plan, which includes

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development of Phase 1A ahead of the completion of the Van Wyck ramps. The SEIS will fully analyze the potential effects of Phase 1A, Phase 1B, and the full buildout in Phase 2 for the Willets Point Development Plan. Also as noted in response to Comment 70, the Van Wyck Ramp project was analyzed in an EA and AMR. Upon review, FHWA issued a FONSI and approved the AMR.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

**Comment 76:** The City needs to hire a new and independent traffic consultant. The original traffic work was seriously flawed. And provide the funds to community groups so that they can also hire their own consultants to provide the appropriate check on the City's consultants. (Prestigiacomo)

**Response:** The commenter does not identify specific flaws in the methodology or the conclusions of the traffic analysis provided in the 2008 FGEIS. The analysis in the FGEIS was, and the SEIS will be, reviewed by the lead agency and the city agencies with appropriate technical expertise to determine that the conclusions of the SEIS follow the methodology establishing in this scope of work and the *CEQR Technical Manual*.

**Comment 77:** In 2010, left turn prohibitions were implemented at Union Street and Main Street where they intersect with Northern Boulevard. Bowne Street, which is located between Union Street to the west and Parsons Boulevard to the east, also intersects Northern Boulevard, Roosevelt Avenue and Sanford Avenue. These intersections on Bowne Street should also be studied and reviewed because the traffic patterns at those intersections have also been affected by the 2010 changes. (Marshall)

**Response:** The SEIS will incorporate the recent geometric and operational changes implemented in downtown Flushing as part of its analyses. As with the FGEIS, the Bowne Street corridor is not expected to serve a substantial amount of the traffic generated by the Willets Point project, except for through traffic along Northern Boulevard, Roosevelt Avenue, and Sanford Avenue. The intersections for detailed analysis have been reviewed and approved by NYCDOT, and the Bowne Street intersections have not been included in the intersections for analysis.

**Comment 78:** We assume the project's traffic projections will be based on the reasonable worst case development scenario, but that should be made explicit. (WPU-Gerrard)

**Response:** As with any EIS prepared under CEQR, reasonable worst-case development scenarios (RWCDs) are examined as conservative analyses to project potentially significant impacts. Page 11 of the Draft Scope describes the assumptions for the RWCDs for analysis.

**Comment 79:** A mall of this size generates thousands of car trips per day—tens of thousands on peak shopping weekends. And peak traffic to this mall would inevitably coincide with peak days for other destinations, including game days at Citi Field and at the proposed soccer stadium, if it is built. (Pratt)

**Response:** Reasonable worst-case development scenarios will be examined for the appropriate time periods and background conditions to project potential significant impacts, including game days and non-game days.

**Comment 80:** A mall of the type and size proposed is by definition a *regional* destination, and will have traffic and transit impacts in a much larger area than the Traffic Study Area delineated in the draft scope. Traffic impacts should be analyzed over an area extending *at least* to the interchanges between the Long Island Expressway and the Grand Central/Northern State Parkways and the Van Wyck Expressways, as well as along arterial streets for at least a mile from each of the highways bounding the site. This analysis should be performed not only for the subject project, but for the full range of scenarios in which the NTC expansion and/or the MLS Stadium are also constructed, including the possibility of multiple games or events taking place on the same days. Transit impacts should similarly be evaluated for scenarios combining all three proposed projects. The degree to which impacts can be mitigated and the cost and other impacts of proposed mitigations should be fully disclosed and clearly presented. (Pratt)

**Response:** The SEIS traffic study area will include a mix of local intersections and highway elements. As presented in the Draft Scope, this study area, which extends beyond Willets Point into adjacent Corona and Flushing, will be reviewed by NYCDOT to determine its appropriateness to evaluate potential impacts from the currently proposed project. Similarly, potential impacts on transit and pedestrian facilities will also be assessed. The transportation analyses will follow *CEQR Technical Manual* procedures, take into consideration future projects that are expected to occur independent of the proposed project, including the NTC expansion and the MLS Stadium, and assess potential impacts during critical time periods. This will be discussed in the SEIS. Where the identified impacts can be addressed with the implementation of feasible mitigation measures, the related analyses and description of the recommended measures will be detailed in the SEIS.

**Comment 81:** This new plan fails to take into account not only the total impact of all the proposed uses, but also surrounding developments that will choke Queens roads and mass transit facilities for decades to come. (Prestigiacomio)

**Response:** The SEIS will account for the proposed project components and other projects within large areas in adjacent Flushing, Corona, and Flushing Meadows Corona Park that are anticipated to be completed within the proposed project's analysis years and disclose the potential impacts. Where impacts are identified, potential

## **Willets Point Development**

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mitigation measures will be examined and, if determined to be feasible, they will be implemented to the greatest extent practicable.

**Comment 82:** Transportation impacts on the No. 7 train and local side streets should be considered. (Ferrerias)

Though the No. 7 train is accessible, the No. 7 will continue to operate at unacceptable levels of crowding, even if new technologies allow for more frequent service. Mall shopping trips differ drastically from trips to traditional retail streets, and skew heavily toward driving. (Pratt)

**Response:** As discussed in the Draft Scope, potential transportation impacts on the No. 7 subway line, the Willets Point subway station, area bus routes, and key roadway components (intersections and highway facilities) will be part of the SEIS analyses.

**Comment 83:** The FGEIS found that the Willets Point Development Plan would result in significant adverse impacts to intersections on the local street network, segments and connections on the area's highway network, stairway access at the Mets-Willets Point subway station, line-haul capacity on local bus routes and pedestrian flow at nearby crosswalks. While mitigation was proposed in the initial FGEIS, there appears to have been no consideration of these impacts or any attempt to mitigate them, in the revised proposal, which will only substantially increase strain on all of these resources. I urge careful scrutiny of these impacts, and urge that design revisions and exactions be considered in order to minimize harms associated with these changes. (Finn)

**Response:** The SEIS will evaluate the currently proposed project using the latest accepted *CEQR Technical Manual* procedures. Where impacts are identified, feasible mitigation measures will be explored to address those impacts, similar to what was done for the FGEIS.

**Comment 84:** There are three and only three major vehicular arteries that service the Willets Point and Downtown Flushing areas and they are frequently choked to capacity. There is no way these roadways can be enlarged to accommodate any substantial increase in vehicular traffic. Ramps can only bring and exit vehicular traffic to and from Willets Point, but do not and cannot deal with what awaits the vehicles once they are on the highway assuming they ever get there. (Haber)

**Response:** The SEIS will provide an analysis of critical roadways, including local intersections and affected highway elements, in Willets Point and surrounding areas.

**Comment 85:** The SEIS should include a table comparing the assumptions, methodologies and other inputs of the traffic study used there and all the prior traffic studies for this project. (WPU-Gerrard)

**Response:** The assumptions, methodologies, and other inputs will follow the latest *CEQR Technical Manual* procedures and be subject to review and approval by the lead agency and NYCDOT. The SEIS will provide a comparison of identified impacts and those disclosed in the FGEIS.

**Comment 86:** The traffic analysis should include point-to-point travel time projections under the various alternatives, including the no action alternative. Only this way will it be possible to understand the effect on emergency services, on airport access, and on other essential trips. Merely presenting speeds and volume-capacity ratios does not suffice to reveal true operational impacts. (WPU-Gerrard)

**Response:** The traffic analysis approach outlined in the Draft Scope of Work conforms to *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, which does not call for the use of point-to-point travel time projections.

**Comment 87:** It was found that the project would generate 80,000 car and truck trips per day and would massively clog area highways and local roads. The new development scenario is simply a massive mall and in combination with the original 62 acres will create an even greater environmental challenge. (Prestigiacomo)

**Response:** It should be noted that the “80,000 car and truck trips per day” statement was made by a commenter on the FGEIS and does not accurately correspond to the number of vehicle and truck trips reported in the FGEIS. This SEIS will fully analyze the currently proposed project and disclose the potential impacts under CEQR methodology.

**Comment 88:** Let me remind you of a few examples taken directly from the Final Generic EIS of what just a 62-acre development would do without the huge Willets West mall. In a weekday a.m. peak hour, 17 of the 27 analyzed signalized intersections will deteriorate to a Level of Service E or F. That's F, representing fail. Fail means your car doesn't move. During weekday p.m. hours, traffic on the ramp from westbound Northern Boulevard to the southbound Van Wyck Expressway will be adversely impacted as follows: The speed will decrease from 28.9 miles per hour to 1.4 miles per hour. The Level of Service will decrease three levels, from C to F, fail. How much worse must this get before decision makers realize that we don't want these kinds of conditions and this development just does not fit? The Supplemental EIS must show how much worse all that will be. Our roads and highways are already jammed. The last thing we need is a massive auto-dependent development that will further erode the quality of our life. (Scarola)

**Response:** As required under CEQR guidance, the potential impacts of the currently proposed project on critical roadways, including local intersections and affected highway elements, in Willets Point and surrounding areas will be studied and disclosed. And to the extent practicable, mitigation measures will be explored to alleviate the identified impacts.

## **Willets Point Development**

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**Comment 89:** The Willets Point area is geographically well-positioned for growth. Willets Point is close to both LaGuardia and JFK airports, has superior regional access via #7 train, LIRR, and highway system, and is adjacent to some of most dynamic and popular destinations in Queens. (ABNY)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 90:** Now NYCEDC wants to move forward but has added another 1.4 million square feet of retail and entertainment space in what is called Willets Point "West". Willets Point at 11 million square feet would add 80,000 to 100,000 auto and truck trips a day; Willets Point "West" will increase this impact by about 45,000 daily auto and truck trips. The FGEIS reports the original Willets Point project will gridlock the area. Clearly the addition of more traffic generating retail will make these conditions worse. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** CEQR methodology analyzes peak hour conditions, not total daily trips. It is unclear what the commenter's estimates are based on. The SEIS will provide estimates of trips associated with various phases of the currently proposed project and detailed analyses on their potential impacts. In accordance with CEQR, these projections and analyses will be reviewed by the lead agency and NYCDOT.

**Comment 91:** Pages 3 and 10 of the Draft Scope of Work state, "The SEIS will analyze the extent to which the development and discretionary actions as proposed could potentially result in any significant adverse environmental impacts not previously identified in the FGEIS." This suggests that NYCEDC will attempt to bury the real impacts and bury the many flaws and errors disclosed by Willets Point United in a confusing and disorienting comparison of numbers that, in other attempts (for example, Fresh Direct in the Bronx) has made full disclosure of real project impacts an illusion. A concocted comparison intended to minimize project impacts cannot be permitted for the proposed expanded project (another 1.4 million square feet and 2,900 parking spaces), which demands a full environmental impact statement based on new information and clearly stated assumptions that are vetted by Willets Point United's engineer. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** The SEIS will provide an all-new identification of potential significant impacts and will also provide a comparison of how significant impacts associated with the new project differ from those identified in the FGEIS for the earlier plan. A full environmental impact statement will be prepared and will be reviewed by the lead agency and NYCDOT; and it will be made available to the public who will be able to comment on it, as is required under the CEQR process.

**Comment 92:** NYCEDC is proposing to add another 1.4 million square feet for an entertainment and retail center with approximately 200 new stores in what they call Willets Point "West". Considering NYCEDC is proposing nearly 3 million

square feet of retail space there is every likelihood they will include one or more big-box retail stores like Wal-Mart. The resulting number of car and truck trips that would be generated by Willets Point "West" without a Wal-Mart would total approximately 35,000 daily car and truck trips over 24-hours and about 2,600 pm peak hour trips. These totals would increase to about 45,000 a day with a Wal-Mart SuperCenter with 3,600 trips during the pm peak hour for Willets Point "West" alone. The combined total of the original Willets Point's 11 million square feet plus the approx. 2 million square feet of Willets Point "West" (both including parking) including a Wal-Mart Supercenter would therefore be about 125,000 daily vehicular trips with pm peak hour trips totaling about 11,000 auto and truck trips. NYCEDC is assuming that about a third of this total would be diverted to the Van Wyck Expressway. Can anyone imagine what the Van Wyck would look like with nearly 4,000 more cars and trucks during the evening peak hours? Or what local access roads will look like once it became clear that the Van Wyck cannot accommodate so much more traffic? (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** The SEIS will fully document projected conditions on the Van Wyck Expressway with and without the proposed project for each phase of development. The commenter's assumptions and projections are unsubstantiated including his opinions as to what specific tenants will occupy the site which would not be known for a number of years. The SEIS will define all key analysis assumptions and those assumptions and resulting findings will be reviewed by the lead agency and NYCDOT.

**Comment 93:** The scoping document is missing a number of locations where traffic counts should be taken. The following should be added: the Whitestone Expressway east of Linden Place, Grand Central Parkway east of LaGuardia airport, the Long Island Expressway plus the intersection of the westbound exit from the Whitestone Expressway to College Point Blvd. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** Traffic counts will be conducted to allow for a full analysis of an appropriate highway network that will allow for the assessment of traffic conditions along the key routes leading to and from the development sites. Most of the locations that the commenter listed, except for the Whitestone Expressway exit to College Point Boulevard, are beyond the influence of potentially impacted areas on the highway network. The highway study area locations for the SEIS will be the same as those listed in the FGEIS, which have been vetted and approved by NYCDOT.

**Comment 94:** Traffic counts along expressways should be done using infrared counters for each lane (preferable) or all counts should be videotaped so that tube counts can be calibrated (tube counts at low (congested) speeds are notoriously inaccurate) and previous arguments that affected expressways can accommodate Willets

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Point project traffic contradict NYMTC and other recent reports that many Queens expressways are the worst in the nation. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** The appropriate data will be collected for use in the SEIS analyses and appropriate data collection tools and procedures will be used, all of which will be vetted by the lead agency and NYCDOT as part of the environmental review process of the SEIS.

**Comment 95:** Speed runs along all nearby expressways should be taken including along the Long Island Expressway, the Whitestone Expressway and the Grand Central Expressway east of LaGuardia airport (in addition to those locations listed in the draft Scope of Work). Speed runs should be done over a number of days and time periods to get an accurate estimate of travel speeds in accordance with the NYC 2012 *CEQR Technical Manual*. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** The appropriate speed runs will be conducted in accordance with CEQR procedures to provide input for calibration of the highway analysis model and for mobile source air quality analyses, including key highway mainline segments and ramps along the Grand Central Parkway, Van Wyck Expressway, and Long Island Expressway, and along the southbound Whitestone Expressway.

**Comment 96:** NYCEDC is planning on using the Corsim traffic simulation model to estimate operational characteristics of local roads and expressways. Since no one outside the consulting community can actually review Corsim records (let alone NYMTC BPM model data sets) it is essential that NYCEDC convert all files to Synchro 7 format in order to provide full disclosure of the technical analyses. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** Local intersections will be analyzed with the latest approved Highway Capacity Software (HCS) and highway elements will be analyzed with CORSIM, similar to what was done in the FGEIS. These analysis tools were approved by NYCDOT for the FGEIS and will be used for the preparation of the SEIS. Synchro, which according to the commenter has been used for his independent analyses to comment on the FGEIS and this scoping document, is not the appropriate modeling system for analyzing highway elements and especially cannot appropriately characterize operations at highway and local street junctures.

**Comment 97:** It is essential that each scenario and time period considered conduct a detailed study area cordon count to insure all traffic movements have been accounted for. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** The SEIS will provide estimates of trips associated with various phases of the currently proposed project and detailed analyses on their potential impacts, and, as part of the analysis process, will verify that the traffic volume networks

account for all project-generated trips. These projections and analyses will be vetted under CEQR by the lead agency and NYCDOT.

**Comment 98:** The ability of the Van Wyck to accommodate diverted Willets Point auto/truck trips must be evaluated for both directions for both through moving vehicles and for critical access/egress ramps. Considering that the FGEIS for Willets Point reported severe traffic impacts along the Van Wyck and nearby ramps assuming approximately half of Willets Point traffic was diverted to the Van Wyck and that independent analysis using the Synchro model for weekday pm peak hour traffic diversions demonstrated severe impacts in both directions assuming just 16 percent of Willets Point auto/truck trips were diverted to the Van Wyck, it is critical that a convincing case be made that the Van Wyck Expressway diversions- an action upon which the entire Willets Point project depends- can actually work as reported by the NYCEDC. If this cannot be proven, then what other mitigation can be proposed that can accommodate Willets Point traffic without severely impacting travel through the project area on both local access roads and along nearby expressways at all time periods? Vehicles denied access to an expressway is a standard output for analysis using the Synchro model. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** The Van Wyck Expressway's ability to accommodate projected future traffic will be addressed in the SEIS and potential significant traffic impacts, if any, will be identified. As noted in previous responses, the trip projections and analyses associated with the currently proposed project will be reviewed by the lead agency and NYCDOT in accordance with CEQR procedures.

**Comment 99:** The SEIS must investigate spill-over traffic problems, quantify the effects, establish the impact on local traffic diversion and conceptualize mitigation measures (for example, double decking the Van Wyck expressway, substantially reducing the size of the project or substantially cutting the amount of retail, the primary generator of Willets Point traffic). (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** The SEIS traffic analyses will account for spill-over traffic, just as was done in the FGEIS. The SEIS will also disclose potential significant traffic impacts and mitigation needs will be identified.

**Comment 100:** The FGEIS and all follow-up reports on Willets Point traffic mentioned above rely on trip generation rates that are adopted from earlier EIS's and that largely date back 10, 20 and even 50 years into the past to periods in NYC history that are no longer relevant to contemporary analyses. NYCEDC must undertake trip counts that include door counts by time of day by land use type by mode for land use types typical for the Willets Point and Willets Point "West" projects- for example, extensive counts that were taken for Atlantic Yards by Phil Habib Associates and for the Babies Hospital at Presbyterian Hospital and for Dan Brodsky's residential development in Manhattan by Konheim & Ketcham. It is

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insane for NYC to continue to rely on data collected in the 1960's and 1970's for properties in Manhattan to analyze major developments in Queens 40 and 50 years later for very different socio-economic conditions. It is simply not professional and will continue to undermine the integrity of the Willets Point project as has occurred for the FGEIS, the AMR and other documents prepared for Willets Point and the Van Wyck ramps. This problem is emphasized in NYC's *2012 CEQR Technical Manual*. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** The SEIS will provide estimates of trips associated with various phases of the currently proposed project using travel demand factors established under CEQR procedures and approved for this project. The projections and analyses will be vetted under CEQR by the lead agency and NYCDOT.

**Comment 101:** Since the proposed “Entertainment Development” use- 400,000 square feet- is not described in any detail and since this land use type is not listed in the *2012 CEQR Technical Manual* nor in the latest ITE Trip Generation manual, trip generation rates must be developed from manual counts at existing “entertainment” facilities in similar locations, and only after this land use has been specified in more detail. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** The referenced “400,000 square feet of Entertainment Development” is not a component described in the Draft Scope. The SEIS will provide estimates of trips associated with various components of the currently proposed project. These projections and analyses will be vetted under CEQR by the lead agency and NYCDOT.

**Comment 102:** Assumptions for modal split reported in the FGEIS appear extremely optimistic regarding the proportion of travelers choosing to use public transit. NYCEDC must provide supporting documentation to demonstrate convincingly that a large proportion of residents and even shoppers would chose transit and that available transit capacity can accommodate this amount of demand. More likely is that more Willets Point residents and shoppers than assumed in the FGEIS will, instead, choose the automobile resulting in increased demand for parking and a far greater number of auto trips resulting in increased congestion along local access roads and on nearby expressways. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** The SEIS will provide estimates of trips associated with various phases of the currently proposed project. As noted above, these projections and analyses will be reviewed under CEQR by the lead agency and NYCDOT.

**Comment 103:** Population and job growth are not fully accounted for. The draft Scope assumes background traffic growth of 0.5 percent per year for the first 5 years and 0.25 percent per year thereafter- compounded- or a 6 percent increase in background traffic between 2012 and 2032. NYMTC's latest demographic projections report an increase in population for Queens between 2012 and 2032 of approximately 16 percent and for jobs by approximately 15 percent. The effect of population

and job growth on travel through the Willets Point area is not limited to Queens as the surrounding expressways move traffic to and from Long Island and Manhattan and points north and south. The growth in jobs and population for Manhattan total 10 percent and 13 percent respectively; for Long Island the growth figures are 11 percent for jobs and 12 percent for population. Daily travel behavior is roughly proportional to population growth; peak hour travel is roughly proportional to the number of jobs. These totals exceed by more than double what is proposed to be considered for the SEIS traffic and transit analysis. If the SEIS proceeds as proposed it will underestimate future background growth in traffic and transit by tens of thousands of daily trips. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** The referenced “background” traffic growth of 0.5 percent per year for the first five years and 0.25 percent per year thereafter” are recommended assumptions from the *2012 CEQR Technical Manual*, and refer to general background traffic growth in the area, to which traffic generated by site-specific developments expected to be built by the proposed project’s analysis years are added. Once the traffic expected to be generated by significant development projects proposed in the area are added to the base background growth of 6 percent in traffic, the aggregated traffic growth may well match or exceed the other estimates noted by the commenter. It should also be noted that the SEIS will provide future trip projections in a more detailed and micro-approach in accordance with CEQR methodology, whereas NYMTC’s projections are more regional or macro-oriented. These two projection methodologies are different and would not provide meaningful basis of comparison.

**Comment 104:** The SEIS plans on relying on the flawed transit analysis included in the FGEIS. As has been demonstrated by independent review by Willets Point United, the FGEIS analysis - for whatever reason -cut the number of trips actually entering the Number 7 subway line during peak hours by 2/3rds. In other words, the FGEIS under estimated subway impacts by three times. Moreover, the FGEIS failed to consider the line haul impacts along the No. 7 line. And no analysis was done for Long Island Railroad (LIRR) capacity constraints. The SEIS must correct for all these problems. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** The comment is incorrect. Like the FGEIS, the SEIS will provide detailed analyses, including line haul impacts, of the No. 7 line incorporating the projected trips for the currently proposed project. Both the trip projections and analyses will be vetted by the lead agency, NYCDOT, and NYC Transit. As for the LIRR, since there is no regular service outside of game days at Citi Field and during the U.S. Open, an analysis of its operations is not warranted under CEQR guidelines.

**Comment 105:** Three million square feet of retail mall development - entirely auto-dependent - will require much more parking than is planned for the "new" Willets Point

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project. For example, "Mall of America" in Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minn. provides more than 25,000 parking spaces for a "retail entertainment" center of slightly more than 2 million square feet (and with a far smaller concentration of people available in close proximity than for Willets Point). Moreover, the FGEIS depended on the "sharing" of residential parking with retail shopping in order to justify reducing parking to well below what NYC requires for projects of this scale. The SEIS is going to have to make a very convincing case that 9,200 parking spaces will accommodate the approximately 250,000 daily visitors at the 13 million square foot project (including parking). (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** The SEIS will provide parking demand projections and evaluate parking supply and demand needs in accordance with CEQR guidelines. The projections and analyses will be vetted by the lead agency and NYCDOT.

**Comment 106:** The FGEIS and TM4 failed to evaluate traffic movements within the project itself. Independent analysis of the proposed Phase I project (TM4) demonstrated that the layout for that project, with all parking concentrated at the hotel at the southeast part of the site near 126th Street and Roosevelt Avenue would produce internal grid lock conditions spilling out onto local access roads. The SEIS must evaluate internal project travel conditions and demonstrate that parking will be effectively distributed to avoid the problems identified for the Phase 1 proposal without the Van Wyck Expressway ramps. The proposal on the table now could more than double the problems demonstrated for the earlier Phase I project. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** Streets within the District would be demapped and would no longer remain as public streets. Private streets would then be constructed within the District based on general design guidelines, which will ensure that the streets adequately serve circulation needs for future users. In addition, the FGEIS contained a commitment from New York City to conduct a traffic monitoring plan that would ascertain actual traffic conditions and respond with appropriate mitigation, if necessary. It is expected that such a plan will also be part of the proposed project. Such a plan can also be used to monitor internal conditions once the design is finalized and the development is being built and occupied. Accordingly, the SEIS provides a detailed assessment of the key corridors and intersections leading to and from the District and bordering the District, and which are most prone to impacts requiring mitigation analysis. Transportation issues associated with Phase 1A of the proposed project, which would be completed prior to the construction of the Van Wyck Expressway ramps, will also be studied.

**Comment 107:** Project generated traffic accidents are not accounted for. The SEIS, if it accounts for traffic accidents at all, will simply do what was done in the FGEIS, summarize local accidents and call it a day. However, traffic accidents grow in

proportion to any increase in travel. This issue was discussed in detail in the 286 page report provided to NYSDOT and the NYCEDC 16 months ago. The problem cannot be ignored. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** There are many factors that contribute to accidents, not solely traffic levels, including signage, roadway geometry, sight lines, intersection control, pavement conditions, crosswalk markings, curbside usage, and driver/pedestrian behavior. The traffic safety assessment in the FGEIS was prepared in accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, as will be the assessment for this SEIS. This assessment, which will be vetted by the lead agency and NYCDOT, will examine the causes of high accident locations in the study area and provide recommendations on how safety improvements can be made.

#### HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

**Comment 108:** The very distinct, horrible smell of chemicals, toxins, compounds, whatever was in the air at Ground Zero after 9/11 reminded us of walking through Willets Point. One of the things to me that's most important that not one person spoke on, is everybody in the community's health, especially the little ones (UBC).

**Response:** One of the goals of the proposed project is implementation of a comprehensive site remediation to eliminate environmental hazards and their potential threat to public health that is represented by current conditions at the site. The SEIS will detail existing contamination at the project sites and discuss possible remediation procedures and how adverse impacts to construction workers, the surrounding community and the environment will be avoided both during construction (e.g., through the use of health and safety procedures and off-site disposal of contaminated soils) and following construction (e.g., by incorporating vapor controls into the new buildings and capping with imported clean soil in landscaped areas).

**Comment 109:** I applaud a company when a developer comes in and is going to clean up this site. It's going to take many years to make that happen. The government won't come in with money. Unfortunately it's going to take a private developer. I hope you grasp that opportunity because they are going to look at your long term interests whether or not you realize it or not. (UBC)

**Response:** Cleanup will most likely proceed in phases immediately preceding the construction of new buildings. As noted, the proposed project is planned to be completed over a several year period and remediation will be completed in a manner: 1) to prevent contamination from migrating to areas that have been remediated; 2) to prevent impacts to residents and occupants from areas to be remediated in later stages of the project; and 3) so as to avoid impacts to residents and occupants both during remediation and construction of other areas of the project. The "Hazardous Materials" and "Construction" chapters of the SEIS will describe the phasing of the comprehensive remediation efforts to be undertaken.

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**Comment 110:** Willets Point is a huge brownfield site that should have been cleaned up years ago. We all know about the lack of sewers, which is a concern because of the pollution and smells in this area from the combined sewer overflows. More importantly, there is widespread petroleum contamination, with additional potential contamination from paints, cleaning solvents, and automotive fluids. These environmental hazards are made worse by a high water table that spreads pollution throughout the site. The simple fact of the matter is that every day that contamination is allowed to sit in the soil and groundwater is another day that Flushing Creek and Flushing Bay are made worse. (NYLCV, ABNY)

**Response:** The SEIS will address the needed cleanup of the Willets Point area related to soil and groundwater, which are known to be contaminated as noted in the comment. The SEIS will also discuss the new sanitary and storm water infrastructure that will be required to serve the proposed project. .

**Comment 111:** The EIS should fully examine the degree to which the project as proposed, particularly the surface parking proposed as part of Phase 1A, would foreclose the possibility of a full remediation of the affected portion of the site, and thus limit the extent to which ecological restoration of the Flushing River, its floodplain, and adjoining wetlands can be accomplished in the future. This is particularly significant in light of proposals by Major League Soccer to acquire such land as replacement parkland. (Pratt)

**Response:** The SEIS will address the potential for remediation of certain portions of the project site to affect remediation of other areas. The phased remediation of the District would not preclude any future ecological restoration of Flushing River, floodplain or adjoining wetlands.

**Comment 112:** On numerous occasions City officials testified to decision-makers that phased development was impractical, because contaminants alleged to be present throughout the entire Willets Point site would too easily re-contaminate any property sectioned off for remediation and development. The SEIS must explain and justify how a phased approach to the development of Willets Point is suddenly the best way to develop the site. (WPU-Antonacci)

**Response:** The SEIS will address the potential for adverse impacts relating to phased development (and associated phased cleanup) in terms of impacts from unremediated areas on the already-developed areas (i.e., re-contamination).

**Comment 113:** The SEIS must analyze the feasibility, expense and other implications of installing effective permeability barriers, as necessary to accomplish phased development. The SEIS must assess how the need to implement permeability barriers will affect construction and any impacts of construction; as well as the effectiveness of permeability barriers (or lack thereof) and the risk that the feared re-contamination will occur. (WPU-Antonacci)

**Response:** There has not yet been sufficient site characterization to determine whether, and to what extent, permeability barriers will be needed to protect public health and the environment, while development is ongoing. Accordingly, the SEIS will discuss, on a conceptual level, the range of strategies that may be utilized depending on the contamination found to be present once those studies are completed. Any final remedial plan (including the remediation of each area and the design of vapor barriers, building foundations and/or venting systems) will be subject to regulatory agency approval and will be fully protective of public health and the environment.

#### **SOLID WASTE / INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Comment 114:** The SEIS must study the impacts on solid waste handling as a result of the plan. The increase in automobile traffic and pedestrian volume as well as the development itself will take place in an area where the Department of Sanitation is already visibly unable to keep up with the demands placed on it by existing uses. (Ferrerias)

EDC should analyze carefully and critically how the new development will impact the existing, already unmanageable, situation. (Finn)

**Response:** The effects of the proposed project on solid waste handling will be analyzed as discussed in the Draft Scope, following the guidelines set forth in Chapter 14, “Solid Waste and Sanitation Services” of the *CEQR Technical Manual*.

**Comment 115:** The Draft Scope of Work of the Supplemental EIS indicates that the City intends to analyze specifically how the Tully Solid waste transfer station would be impacted by the proposed development project. The City has therefore opened the door to analyzing impacts on particular businesses and industries that were not adequately been analyzed before. (Bono)

**Response:** As noted in the Draft Scope, the Tully Putrescible Solid Waste Transfer Station currently receives DSNY-managed refuse on short-term contracts from Queens Districts 3, 7, 11 and 3. The analysis of the proposed project effects on this specific business is required, following the guidelines set forth in Chapter 14, “Solid Waste and Sanitation Services” of the *CEQR Technical Manual*. The effects on other businesses and industries will be analyzed as proposed in the Draft Scope, consistent with CEQR guidelines.

**Comment 116:** The condition of the roads, the sidewalks, the electricity, we don’t have all those services that New York City taxpayers deserve. (Neira)

I have been at Willets Point for years without water, without proper sewage systems. (Guoletuan)

**Response:** Deteriorated conditions in the District have existed for more than half a century, and have multiple causes. These conditions have been a driver for numerous

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previous studies and planning efforts to redevelop the area. As these efforts have stalled, the substandard conditions in the area have continued. The FGEIS has documented the substandard conditions in the District and described the remediation and development that would replace those substandard conditions with a vibrant mixed-use community in a portion of the neighborhood. This SEIS will provide an update on those conditions. As discussed in the Draft and Final Scope, work is currently underway by the City on the construction of a sanitary sewer main and reconstruction of a storm sewer and outfall to support the redevelopment of Willets Point, which currently lacks this basic infrastructure.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER**

**Comment 117:** 2008 FGEIS found that the Willets Point Development would have no significant impact on “community character” but we find it hard to believe that the addition of a 1.4 million square foot retail center and its necessary infrastructure within the community’s largest open park space will not have a negative impact on its character. (AAFE)

**Response:** As stated in the Draft Scope, the SEIS will update the neighborhood character assessment presented in the FGEIS, and include an assessment of the potential effects of the proposed Willets West entertainment and retail center on the character of the study area.

**Comment 118:** The new development plan that now includes a mall would have significant impacts on the community’s character and air quality. The SEIS should determine how the creation of the largest mall in NYC and in an area with already chronic traffic congestion could affect community character, air quality and health-related impacts related to poor air quality. (Ferreras, Finn)

The proposed changes to the original Willets Point plan, including almost one million additional square feet of commercial development, will have a major impact on our local neighborhoods. And a full new study of those additional impacts with the air quality, transportation and economic impacts needs to be completed. (QCH)

**Response:** The SEIS will assess the potential for significant impact from the proposed project, including the commercial development, on community character, transportation, and air quality following the *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance. The effects on air quality would be compared with the national health-based standards and measures to avoid the potential for health-related impacts would be developed where warranted.

**Comment 119:** Most blighted areas are surrounded by blighted areas. This blighted area is surrounded by success. This development is ready for the next move to make this a destination but also a high quality neighborhood, a place that aspiring

people can bring their families, and tourists and residents can come and enjoy themselves year round. (Hoyt)

**Response:** Comment noted. As described in the Draft Scope, the proposed project is intended to remediate and transform the area, which is largely separated from adjoining neighborhoods by major highways, into a thriving new neighborhood and regional destination.

**Comment 120:** The junkyards, garbage and sanguine water have made the Iron Triangle one of the most undesirable locations in the borough. The proximity to the waterfront at Flushing Meadow Corona Park only exacerbates the very serious negative environmental impacts. It is important to the entire area and the borough that we work to revitalize this location. (Simanowitz)

**Response:** Comment noted.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

**Comment 121:** The SEIS must assess the extent to which the parkland property that is the proposed site of the Willets West mall and the Willets Point Phase 1 property that is the proposed site of the interim parking lot and subsequent development lie within the FEMA 100-year floodplain or the 10 percent annual flood ZONE AE; and the SEIS must disclose the developer's plans to raise the elevation of the Willets West mall and the proposed interim parking lot and/or the proposed subsequent development to above the 100-year floodplain, or to otherwise address floodplain issues affecting the proposed development. The potential greater susceptibility of nearby areas and roadways – e.g., Northern Boulevard, Roosevelt Avenue, and 126th Street – to increased and debilitating flooding because there is no plan to raise their elevations, while future proposed developments adjacent to them are to be raise, must also be analyzed within the SEIS. (WPU-Antonacci)

**Response:** The SEIS will describe the existing and any future proposed modifications to the FEMA 100-year floodplain within the project site, describe the activities that would occur within the existing or proposed modifications to the 100-year floodplain as a result of the proposed project, including any proposed placement of fill material, and assess the potential for the proposed project to affect floodplain resources within and adjacent to the project site.

**Comment 122:** For each instance in which the perimeter of the Willets Point Phase 1 area is adjacent to property that is not to be developed (either as part of the proposed Phase 1, or permanently), the SEIS must explain and assess the grading/transition measures that will not impact access or drainage to those properties, that will be implemented by the developers. (WPU-Antonacci)

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**Response:** The SEIS will describe the grading and transition plan between the Phase 1 District boundaries and the adjacent properties that would not be developed in Phase 1. The discussion will describe maintenance of access to the existing properties as well measures to ensure appropriate drainage.

### **GREENHOUSE GASES AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

**Comment 123:** The proposed project contravenes the laudable goals of PlaNYC 2030 and the good work of the Office of Long Term Planning and Sustainability to reduce car trips and the concomitant greenhouse gas emissions. (Pratt)

**Response:** The SEIS will include an assessment of the proposed project's consistency with PlaNYC goals. The SEIS will also include an assessment of GHG emissions from vehicle trips generated by the proposed project and identify features of the project and measures that would be implemented to minimize those emissions.

**Comment 124:** Willets Point was supposed to be the next green neighborhood, but the proposed development is a massive mall with no more support from environmental organizations. (Prestigiacomio)

**Response:** The SEIS will describe that proposed project's sustainable design features.

**Comment 125:** Since the original EIS was written four year ago, new projections have appeared for future sea level rise in the New York region. The supplemental EIS should include a new analysis of the effect of sea level rise and storm surge on the needed elevations for the site and the fill that would be required. (WPU-Gerrard)

**Response:** As described in the Draft Scope, a discussion of sea level rise will be included, and options to make the project more resilient to the potential effects of climate change will be presented.

**Comment 126:** The SEIS would fail to account for the increased energy use of travel to and from the project. The NYSDOT now requires a full analysis of both transportation energy use and transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions for all of their projects. NYC should require no less. When completed this project will generate about 180 million vehicle miles of additional travel, most in Queens. It will also disrupt the travel of millions of daily travelers moving through Queens on nearby expressways, slowing travel and further increase fuel consumption. The proposed Willets Point project, at about 13 million square feet, will result in the consumption of an additional 11 million gallons of gasoline and diesel fuel annually. The resulting greenhouse emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>e) from cars and trucks alone will total 89,000 tons per year. (WPU-Ketcham)

**Response:** There is no detailed information or analysis provided by the commenter regarding the referenced projection of additional travel. The SEIS will provide a detailed GHG analysis following procedures outlined in the *CEQR Technical*

*Manual*, which will include a calculation of projected vehicle miles traveled and the associated resulting GHG emissions.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH**

**Comment 127:** While the proposed SEIS scope would follow standard procedures for estimating added traffic volumes and congestion, it will inevitably find (as did the 2008 EIS) that not all impacts can be fully mitigated, and that residents of the densely populated communities of Corona, Elmhurst, and Flushing will have to live with the added air pollution, noise, and degradation of their health and quality of life. The EIS should fully identify these health impacts, so that decision-makers can fully take into account their economic and human costs, and understand the magnitude of the environmental justice challenge that the proposed project represents. (Pratt)

**Response:** While 2008 EIS disclosed the potential for impacts from traffic and noise, and described mitigation measures to reduce the significant adverse traffic impacts, it did not identify a potential for a significant adverse impact on air quality or public health. The SEIS will analyze the potential for significant adverse impacts on public health, and identify improvements or mitigation measures required to minimize significant impacts.

## **IMPROVEMENTS AND MITIGATION COMMITMENTS**

**Comment 128:** SEIS must carefully weigh the potential impacts that have been identified in relation to this redevelopment and spell out the improvements and mitigations required to address them. (Marshall)

**Response:** The SEIS will discuss the potential for significant adverse impacts and identify potential improvements and mitigation measures that would be required to address those potential significant adverse impacts. Where there are no feasible or practicable measures to fully mitigate these impacts, the SEIS will describe these impacts as unmitigated significant adverse impacts.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

**Comment 129:** An additional alternative should be studied: A no-condemnation alternative that would involve building the project without taking any properties via eminent domain. (WPU-Gerrard)

**Response:** As described in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the purpose of the alternatives analysis is to consider a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project that have the potential to reduce or eliminate a proposed project's impacts, while considering the goals and objectives of the proposed actions. As noted in the Draft Scope, since the 2008 approval of the Plan, the City has undertaken outreach and has been negotiating with property owners in the Willets Point District. Without the exercise of eminent domain, the City has acquired, or is in contract to purchase, approximately 95 percent of the land area within the

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proposed Phase 1A/1B footprint (Assemblage Option 2). The City would continue its outreach efforts as the development of the District moves forward. The analysis of a no-condemnation alternative would not result in meaningful differences in the overall environmental impacts resulting from development pursuant to the District's Urban Renewal Plan through either condemnation or negotiated acquisition. Furthermore, the potential for development of individual properties and their various development timelines present myriad challenges in the general ability to meet project goals under the comprehensive redevelopment plan, particularly as they relate to the implementation of comprehensive site remediation; need for grade transitions to the new floodplain elevations; integration of the Phase 2 parcels into the planned water, sewer, and drainage infrastructure as well as the street network.

**Comment 130:** If the Citi Field parking lot is now to be put in play for major development, a full range of alternatives should be considered. And the community needs to be part of that process. (QCH)

A comprehensive Environmental Impact Study would give full consideration to ALL of the alternatives for development of the parkland now used as parking for Citi Field, not only the proposed 1.4 million square foot shopping mall. (Pratt)

The SGEIS should consider real alternatives to the proposed action. If this site is to be used for commercial purposes, for instance, that should generate a new lease with the Mets, in which case any new use, including affordable housing, could be considered. The EIS should not be limited to only a business-as-usual scenario as the only other potential course of action other than the mall. (Finn)

Any EIS should also fully consider *alternative uses* for what is now the Citi Field parking lot site, rather than simply comparing impacts of a pre-determined build scenario to a lesser-density or no-unmitigated-impacts "straw man" scenario. In particular, the feasibility of either a residential and commercial development that would deliver housing, community facilities, and retail space earlier, at less cost, with business displacement and with less environmental risk than developing the District as described in the original FGEIS, should be examined. (Pratt)

**Response:** As described in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the purpose of the alternatives analysis is to consider a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project that have the potential to reduce or eliminate a proposed project's impacts, while considering the goals and objectives of the proposed actions. The alternatives analysis is not intended to compare the relative merits of the proposed project to other uses not currently contemplated.