



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10007

**CITY ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW  
NOTICE OF COMPLETION FOR THE  
FINAL GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
WILLETS POINT DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

**Lead Agency:** Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development

**Lead Agency  
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**CEQR No.:** 07DME014Q

**SEQR Classification:** Type I

**Date Issued:** September 12, 2008

**Location:** The project area is in a portion of Willets Point, Queens. The 61.4-acre industrial site is generally bounded to the east by the Van Wyck Expressway and an undeveloped lot owned by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), to the south by Roosevelt Avenue, to the west by 126th Street, and to the north by Northern Boulevard.

Pursuant to the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR), Mayoral Executive Order 91 of 1977, as amended, and the CEQR Rules of Procedure found at Title 62, Chapter 5 of the Rules of the City of New York, and the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), Article 8 of the State Environmental Conservation Law and its implementing regulations found at Title 6 NYCRR Part 617, a Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS) has been prepared for the actions described below and is available for public review at the offices listed on the last page of this notice. On March 30, 2007, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development issued a Positive Declaration and Notice of Intent to Prepare a Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement for the Willets Point Development Plan. A draft Scope of Work for the GEIS was issued and distributed on March 30, 2007. A public scoping meeting was held for the proposed Plan on May 1, 2007, at the Flushing Branch of the Queens Public Library at 41-17 Main Street, Flushing, New York. Written comments were accepted through May 14, 2007, and a Final Scope of Work, reflecting comments made during scoping, was issued on April 16, 2008 and the Notice of Completion for the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) was issued on April 18, 2008. A public hearing on the DGEIS was held in conjunction with the City Planning Commission's public hearing pursuant to the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP)

on August 13, 2008 at Tishman Auditorium of Vanderbilt Hall, 40 Washington Square South in Manhattan, New York. Written comments on the DGEIS were accepted until 5:00 PM on August 25, 2008. A Statement of Findings (SOF) for the FGEIS will be issued no sooner than September 23, 2008.

## **A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development, with the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the New York City Department of City Planning (DCP), proposes to rezone, create an urban renewal area, and implement the Willets Point Development Plan (“proposed Plan”) in Willets Point, Queens. The approximately 61-acre Willets Point Development District (“District”) would be redeveloped with residential, retail, hotel, convention center, entertainment, commercial office, community facility, open space, and parking uses. In addition, the proposed Plan would connect the Van Wyck Expressway with the District. Although there is currently no specific development plan, the maximum permitted development under the proposed Plan would be 8.94 million gross square feet (gsf).

### **PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED**

The proposed Plan’s main goal is to transform a largely underutilized site with substandard conditions and substantial environmental degradation into a lively, mixed-use, sustainable community and regional destination.

Site conditions within the District have hindered redevelopment efforts for decades, and present numerous challenges to any future development efforts in the Willets Point Development District. Two of the greatest challenges are site contamination and site elevation; up to seven feet of fill are required to raise the grade of the District so that it is out of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 100-year floodplain.

The proposed Plan evolved from the Downtown Flushing Development Framework, which outlined the following redevelopment goals for the Willets Point area:

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

The City has adopted these goals in the proposed Plan and also aims to achieve the following goals, which are consistent with the vision of the Downtown Flushing Development Framework:

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

### **PROPOSED ACTIONS**

The proposed Plan would require a number of City, State, and federal approvals. The discretionary actions required or that may be required for the proposed Plan include:

#### *CITY DISCRETIONARY APPROVALS*

- The adoption of a Willets Point Urban Renewal Plan (URP) by HPD to define District boundaries and the area to be redeveloped, and to establish maximum development envelopes.
- Acquisition of property in accordance with the URP.
- Disposition of property within the District for development in accordance with the URP.
- A change to the underlying zoning of the District to a C4-4 district, which would allow for the range of uses anticipated.
- Creation of a zoning Special District to further guide development in the District and a maximum permitted FAR of 3.4 would apply across the entire District.
- Demapping of some or all streets within the District, pursuant to CPC approval to allow maximum flexibility in the creation of the redevelopment site plan.
- Possible acquisition of property by the City pursuant to EDPL.
- Possible approval by the Borough Board of the business terms of the disposition pursuant to Section 384(b)(4) of the City Charter.

#### **STATE/FEDERAL DISCRETIONARY APPROVALS**

- Review and approval of a Freeway Access Modification Report by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for new access ramps to and from the Van Wyck Expressway, a highway on the Interstate System.

#### **COMPONENTS OF THE PROPOSED PLAN**

The proposed Plan envisions residential and retail space as the core uses in the District. Office, hotel, and convention center uses would complement these main uses and enhance Flushing and Corona's roles as regional economic centers. Community facilities and open space would provide amenities and improve the quality of life for residents and visitors.

The URP prescribes a maximum permitted floor area of 8.94 million gsf in the District but allows flexibility in the combination of uses to be developed, and prescribes separate maximum permitted floor areas for residential and commercial uses in the District, including 5,850,000 gsf of residential use and 3,160,000 gsf of commercial

use. The zoning Special District would ensure the development of a dynamic, pedestrian-oriented community by determining the placement of uses, building heights and setbacks, street hierarchies, streetscape design, and basic site planning and design provisions.

Since the flexibility provided in the URP could result in a variation in the future development in the District, this FGEIS analyzes two development scenarios—the proposed Plan, which includes an approximately 400,000-square-foot convention center, and the No Convention Center Scenario, in which the convention center is replaced with an additional 350,000 sf of residential use and 50,000 sf of retail use.

## **DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS**

The proposed Plan would be guided by the Special Willetts Point District urban design regulations, addressing such elements as the location of uses, building heights and setbacks, street hierarchies, streetscape design, and other site planning and design provisions.

## **B. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **ANALYSIS APPROACH**

For each technical analysis in the GEIS, the assessment includes a description of existing conditions, an assessment of conditions in the future without the proposed Plan, and an assessment of conditions with the proposed Plan. It is assumed that the proposed Plan would be constructed starting in late 2009 and would be built out by 2017. Thus, conditions in the future with the proposed Plan are evaluated in comparison with conditions in the future without the proposed Plan for the 2017 analysis year.

This FGEIS assesses the reasonable worst-case impacts that may occur as a result of the proposed Plan. Since the flexibility provided in the URP could result in a variation in the uses included in the maximum development envelope, this FGEIS analyzes two development scenarios: the proposed Plan, which includes an approximately 400,000-square-foot convention center; and the No Convention Center Scenario, in which the convention center is replaced with an additional 350,000 gsf of residential use and 50,000 gsf of retail use.

### **CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS—POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON CITI FIELD LOTS B AND D**

The District is located directly across 126th Street from Citi Field, which is currently under construction. It is anticipated that if the proposed Plan is approved, additional development could occur on Citi Field parking lot B (Lot B) and on Lot D, a surface parking lot south of Roosevelt Avenue that is currently used by commuters, as well as for Mets games and USTA National Tennis Center events. While specific development plans have not yet been proposed, it is anticipated that approximately 280,000 sf of office and 184,500 sf of retail could potentially be developed on Lot B, and that a five-level parking garage containing approximately 1,543 parking spaces could be developed on Lot D. The Lot B development could include a one-story retail structure and a 10-story office building.

The cumulative projected maximum development for both the Willetts Point Development Plan and the Lot B and D development is a total of 9,404,500 gsf of new development and 8,243 parking spaces. For most technical areas in this FGEIS, impacts associated with the Lot B development program and associated Lot D parking are assessed under “Probable Impacts of the Proposed Plan.” Since the development program and precise timing of development for Lots B and D is unknown, the construction impacts associated with these properties cannot be addressed in this FGEIS. However, given that any

future development on Lots B and D would require separate approval and environmental review processes, these impacts would be examined in greater detail as part of any subsequent environmental review process for those properties.

## **C. PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PLAN**

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

#### *LAND USE*

The proposed Plan would dramatically change land uses in the District by replacing predominantly low-density auto-related and industrial uses with a new mixed-use neighborhood that includes residential, retail, office, hotel, and convention center uses. Additionally, community facilities and open space would support the residential and commercial uses, and improve the quality of life for area residents and visitors.

While the proposed Plan would result in a significant land use change, the effects of this change would not be adverse. The proposed convention center and commercial uses would enhance Flushing and Corona's roles as regional economic centers, and would attract visitors to the area. The proposed Plan would create synergy between the new Citi Field and the proposed District through a pedestrian-oriented regional entertainment and commercial center along 126th Street. The proposed residential, commercial office, retail, hotel, community facility, open space, and parking uses are prevalent in nearby areas, especially Downtown Flushing, and would be compatible with much of the land use study area.

Although some of the uses proposed for the District would not be compatible with the industrial activities permitted on the adjacent MTA property, the placement of high-density mixed-use or residential districts next to heavy manufacturing districts is not uncommon in the City, and would not constitute a significant adverse impact. The proposed Plan would also not be consistent with the industrial uses located along the waterfront to the north and east of the District. However, these uses are separated from the District by the Whitestone Expressway and Northern Boulevard, as well as the Flushing River. Furthermore, as a result of ongoing development trends, it is expected that some of these properties would be redeveloped even without the proposed Plan. New development would likely include higher-density residential and commercial uses and waterfront access, which would be compatible with land uses under the proposed Plan.

If the proposed Plan is approved and the District is redeveloped into a new mixed-use community and regional destination, it is likely that this could generate increased demand for additional development on nearby Lots B and D. Based on existing land use patterns and zoning regulations in the surrounding area, it is unlikely that the proposed Plan and development on Lots B and D would alter land use patterns in the primary study area. Given the recent trend to redevelop underutilized sites near the Flushing River waterfront, it is possible that the proposed Plan and new development on Lots B and D could encourage further redevelopment of some nearby underutilized sites along the Flushing River. Such a change would not constitute an adverse impact on land uses in the study area because the potential new uses (including primarily residential, retail, and other commercial uses) would reflect a continuation of an existing trend, would be compatible with other uses in the area, and would conform to existing zoning and public land use policies. Overall, the proposed Plan would not result in significant adverse land use impacts.

*Zoning and Public Policy*

As described above, the proposed Plan would result in a change to the underlying zoning of the District from an existing M3-1 district (and a small area zoned R3-2) to a C4-4 district, and would include the creation of a zoning Special District. As part of the proposed Plan, HPD would also create a URP to define District boundaries and the area to be redeveloped in accordance with the City's redevelopment goals.

The proposed C4-4 is consistent with the zoning that exists throughout much of the Downtown Flushing area. Some of the uses permitted in the proposed C4-4 district (such as residential and community facility uses) would not be compatible with the M3-1 zoning of the adjacent MTA property. However, as described above, it is not uncommon for new higher-density residential and commercial districts to be located next to older heavy manufacturing districts near the waterfront. The other M3-1 districts located on the Willets Point peninsula are separated from the District by the Whitestone Expressway and Northern Boulevard.

The presence of a denser mixed-use development in the District could possibly generate further redevelopment of nearby underutilized sites along the eastern bank of the Flushing River, which were rezoned to C4-2 to allow denser mixed-use development. However, redevelopment in this area is already under way, and is expected to conform to existing zoning and public policies. No significant adverse zoning impacts would result from the proposed Plan.

In terms of public policy, the proposed Plan represents a critical step in implementing the Downtown Flushing Development Framework and would advance a number of the Framework's fundamental goals, including: the creation of a regional destination that would enhance economic growth in Downtown Flushing; improvement of environmental conditions; and integration of new development in the District with surrounding amenities, including the Flushing Bay Promenade, the new Citi Field, Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, and Downtown Flushing.

The proposed Plan would be consistent with and vital to the advancement of several of the goals of PlaNYC, which aims to create a more sustainable New York by the year 2030. The proposed Plan would also be consistent with the coastal policies set forth in the New York City Waterfront Revitalization Program. Overall, the proposed Plan is not expected to result in significant adverse impacts on land use, zoning, and public policy.

*NO CONVENTION CENTER SCENARIO*

As with the proposed Plan, the No Convention Center Scenario would change the development potential of the District in a manner consistent with the proposed URP and Special Willets Point District. The effects of the No Convention Center Scenario on land use conditions would be largely the same as with the proposed Plan. As with the proposed Plan, the No Convention Center Scenario would not have significant adverse land use or zoning impacts.

With respect to public policy, the No Convention Center Scenario, like the proposed Plan, would advance several of the Downtown Flushing Development Framework's fundamental goals, including improvement of environmental conditions, integration of new development in the District with surrounding amenities, and the provision of housing affordable to a mix of incomes. Although this scenario does not include a convention center, the primary regional attraction in the No Convention Center Scenario would be the pedestrian-oriented entertainment and commercial center, which would create a synergy between the new

Citi Field and the proposed District, and attract and retain visitors to the area. Overall, the No Convention Center Scenario would not result in significant adverse impacts on land use, zoning, or public policy.

## **SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

Development resulting from the proposed Plan would generate substantial economic benefits for New York City and New York State and would not cause any significant adverse impacts related to direct residential displacement, indirect residential displacement, direct business and institutional displacement, indirect business and institutional displacement, or effects on specific industries.

### *DIRECT RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT*

The one residential unit (one household) in the District would be displaced under both the proposed Plan and the No Convention Center Scenario. The displacement of one household would not have the potential to result in significant adverse impacts due to direct residential displacement. Should the proposed Plan be approved, this household would be provided with relocation assistance.

### *INDIRECT RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT*

The proposed Plan would not result in significant adverse impacts due to indirect residential displacement. It would introduce 5,500 new residential units, or an estimated 14,795 new residents, to the study area. Under the No Convention Center Scenario, 5,850 units, or an estimated 15,737 residents, would be introduced to the study area. Either scenario would represent a substantial addition to the study area population and, compared with the existing study area population, the population that would be introduced by the proposed Plan could include a larger proportion of households at higher incomes.

A detailed analysis of indirect residential displacement determined that the study area contains an estimated 2,134 households (approximately 5,726 residents) in eight Census tracts (381, 853, 865, 867, 871, 875, 889.02, and 907) that are considered to be “at risk” of indirect residential displacement if their rents were to increase. However, there are a number of reasons why indirect residential displacement of the population identified as at risk would not actually take place in the future as a result of the proposed Plan. First, the District is geographically separated from the identified at-risk population, limiting its potential to influence residential trends in those areas. Planned residential developments located between the District and the identified at-risk population (i.e., Flushing Commons and Sky View Parc) are likely to have a greater influence on residential market trends in those tracts than the proposed Plan. Second, by adding new housing units, the proposed Plan could serve to relieve rather than increase market pressure in the study area. Third, the proposed Plan and the No Convention Center Scenario would introduce 1,100 and 1,170 affordable housing units, respectively, to the study area. Although the population that would be introduced by the proposed Plan may include a larger proportion of households at higher incomes as compared with the existing study area population, the proposed Plan’s affordable housing component would ensure that a substantial portion of the new population would have incomes that would more closely reflect existing incomes in the study area.

### *DIRECT BUSINESS AND INSTITUTIONAL DISPLACEMENT*

The proposed Plan would not result in significant adverse impacts due to direct business and institutional displacement. Under either scenario (with or without the convention center), the proposed Plan would directly displace approximately 260 businesses and institutions (approximately 1,711 employees) that provide a variety of products and services within numerous economic sectors, including manufacturing,

wholesale trade, retail trade, transportation and warehousing, accommodation and food services, and repair and maintenance. The majority of businesses that would be displaced (87 percent, or 227 of 260 businesses) are in auto-related sectors. Other industries with a notable presence include food wholesalers and waste transfer facilities.

Although the proposed Plan would displace businesses and institutions that 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 are not unique; similar services and products are provided throughout Queens, the City, and the region. In addition, the vast majority of these businesses and institutions would be able to relocate to other properties within Queens or the City. Although rental costs would likely increase—as a result of the significantly lower rents currently paid in the District compared with other manufacturing areas, and a competitive industrial real estate market citywide—most of these businesses would remain viable elsewhere.

Although the proposed Plan and the resulting business and institutional displacement would alter the neighborhood character within the District, this change in neighborhood character is one of the key goals of the proposed Plan and would not substantially alter the neighborhood character of the study area as a whole. The economic sectors with the highest employment in the study area (those which define the character of the area in an economic sense) are not found within the District. In fact, the new uses resulting from the proposed Plan would be comparable to those in the surrounding study area.

Should the proposed Plan be approved, businesses currently located in the District would be offered a relocation package by NYCEDC, which would include financial coverage for certain moving costs, re-establishment fees, and use of brokerage services to find alternative locations. NYCEDC is currently working with owner-occupied businesses in the District to identify viable relocation properties within New York City and has been engaged in outreach to tenant businesses since January 2008. In addition, the City has selected a business relocation consultant to supplement the relocation assistance that NYCEDC is providing. Since publication of the DGEIS, the City has identified viable relocation sites for three businesses and also has reached an agreement to acquire two additional properties, although no relocation sites for the tenant businesses have been identified. In addition, NYCEDC has retained LaGuardia Community College (LAGCC) to develop a Workforce Assistance Plan for District workers who would be displaced by the proposed Plan. The program would provide displaced workers with services such as job training and job placement services, English as a Second Language (ESL) and General Educational Development (GED) coursework, and additional social services.

#### *INDIRECT BUSINESS AND INSTITUTIONAL DISPLACEMENT*

The proposed Plan would not result in significant indirect business and institutional displacement impacts due to increased rents under either scenario (with or without the convention center). While the introduction of new residents, workers, and visitors to the District would alter existing economic patterns within the District, these changes would not lead to substantial indirect business displacement within 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—especially convention center and hotel visitors—would shop and dine primarily at retail establishments in the District. The proposed Plan would therefore not result in substantial changes in demand for goods and services that would alter economic conditions in the broader study area. The proposed Plan would 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.

A detailed analysis was undertaken to assess whether the proposed Plan could affect neighborhood character by affecting the viability of neighborhood shopping areas through competition, thereby becoming an environmental concern. Retail establishments within the District are expected to draw a large portion of their repeat business from District residents as a result of more convenient access, shorter travel time and distance, and shoppers' propensity to take advantage of a major shopping resource close to home. The competition analysis assesses capture rates within Primary (five-mile radius) and 1½-Mile Trade Areas to determine potential effects due to competition. A capture rate is a measure that compares expected spending by consumers in a trade area (retail demand) with the volume of retail sales in the trade area.

The analysis finds that the proposed Plan would not substantially raise retail capture rates within the Primary Trade Area and, therefore, would not have the potential to adversely affect competitive stores in the Primary Trade Area. The analysis concludes that within the Primary Trade Area, the proposed Plan would increase the capture rate by 12 percent over existing conditions, and that all retail categories except building materials and garden supplies (which has a capture rate in excess of 100 percent even under existing conditions since sales figures include sales to contractors as well as individual households) would remain within the 70 to 80 percent capture rate range characteristic of trade areas that are satisfying the retail demand of trade area households. Given that the proposed Plan would not substantially raise retail capture rates within the Primary Trade Area, and that capture rates in the future with the proposed Plan would be influenced by the presence of several large new projects in the Primary Trade Area (notably, Sky View Parc and Rego Park Mall) that due to their scale and mix of retail offerings would draw from areas not included within the Primary Trade Area, the proposed Plan would not have the potential to significantly affect competitive stores in the Primary Trade Area.

Within the 1½-Mile Trade Area, the analysis focuses on grocery stores in particular, because grocery stores often serve as anchors for local retail concentrations, and it is assumed that the proposed Plan could include retailers (such as a supermarket or wholesale club) whose product offerings substantially overlap with typical grocery store offerings. The analysis concludes that local residents would continue to shop at existing grocery stores for their convenience, specialized goods and services familiar to their ethnic communities, and public transit accessibility. Although a potential supermarket or wholesale club in the District could compete with nearby supermarkets and grocery stores within the 1½-Mile Trade Area, it is not expected to have a substantial negative effect on nearby grocery stores, nor would it jeopardize the viability of any retail strips in the study area.

Therefore, the amount of indirect business displacement due to competition from the proposed Plan would be minimal, is not expected to jeopardize the viability of any neighborhood retail strips, and is not expected to diminish the level of services provided. Therefore, the proposed Plan would not result in significant adverse impacts due to competition.

#### *EFFECTS ON SPECIFIC INDUSTRIES*

The proposed Plan would not result in significant adverse impacts on any specific industry under either scenario (with or without the convention center). Although a large concentration of auto-related uses (227 businesses) would be displaced from the District, these displaced businesses and their associated employment would not significantly impact the industry as a whole. The potentially displaced businesses and employment represent less than 5 percent of citywide employment within the auto-related sectors,

and the businesses could relocate within the City, potentially in other auto-related clusters, thereby maintaining existing business and employment counts within the industry. Additionally, with 3,642 auto-related businesses within New York City, auto-related goods and services are available elsewhere. Therefore, the potential displacement of these uses from the District would not jeopardize the viability of any industries that rely on those services.

*ECONOMIC AND FISCAL BENEFITS AND PUBLIC COSTS*

Construction period impacts would include the displacement of the existing economic activity from the site and the construction activity associated with developing the proposed Plan or the No Convention Center Scenario.

*Existing Economic Activity to Be Displaced*

In the future with the proposed Plan, although existing businesses would be displaced from the site, this economic activity would continue within the City to the extent that those businesses are relocated here. The proposed Plan would directly displace approximately 1,711 employees. The total employment associated with the economic activity on the site, including off-site jobs generated from the on-site activity, is estimated to equal 2,538 permanent jobs within New York City and a total of 2,981 jobs in New York State. The direct wages and salaries from the annual operation of the existing activity on the site are estimated at \$70.93 million (all amounts in 2007 dollars). Total direct and generated wages and salaries resulting from the annual operation of the existing economic activity on the site are estimated at \$106.98 million in New York City and a total of \$125.62 million in New York State.

The direct effect on the local economy from the operation of the existing economic activity on the site, measured as economic output or demand, is estimated at approximately \$352.07 million annually. The total economic activity, including indirect expenditures (those generated by the direct expenditures), that result from the operation of the existing activity on the site is estimated at \$675.01 million annually in New York State, of which \$556.30 million annually occurs in New York City. The annual operation of the existing activity on the site has tax revenues associated with it, including property tax-related revenues and non-property-tax revenues. The operation of the existing activity on the site is estimated to generate approximately \$25.11 million annually in non-property-related tax revenues for New York City, MTA, and New York State. In addition, in fiscal year 2007/2008, the City is estimated to receive property tax revenues from the existing development on the site equal to approximately \$2.49 million.

*Employment and Economic Benefits from Construction Activity*

The development of either the proposed Plan or the No Convention Center Scenario would result in the substantial investment of funds into the area. The direct employment from construction activity is estimated at about 17,017 person-years of employment for the No Convention Center Scenario or 17,561 person-years of employment for the proposed Plan. (A person-year is the equivalent of one employee working full-time for one year.) Total direct and generated employment from construction activity is estimated at 25,883 to 26,736 person-years in New York City and 32,157 to 33,199 in the larger New York State economy, with the first figure in each case for the No Convention Center Scenario and the second for the proposed Plan.

The direct wages and salaries during the construction period are estimated at \$1.13 to \$1.17 billion. Total direct and generated wages and salaries resulting from construction activity are estimated at \$1.67 to \$1.73 billion in New York City and \$2.04 to \$2.11 billion in the broader New York State economy. The total effect on the local economy from construction activity, measured as economic output or demand, is

estimated at \$6.94 to \$7.20 billion in New York State, of which \$5.30 to \$5.50 billion would occur in New York City. In total, the construction activity is estimated to generate approximately \$345.87 to \$352.94 million in tax revenues for New York City, MTA (which collects a 0.25 percent sales tax and tax surcharges on business and utility taxes within the City and MTA 12-county region), and New York State, including about \$220.88 to \$226.10 million for New York State and MTA, and about \$124.99 to \$126.84 million for New York City. In addition, New York City would receive mortgage recording fees both from the developers and from the owners of the condominium portion of the residential property, and the City would receive real-property-related revenues (i.e., real estate tax payments) during the development period.

### *Employment and Economic Benefits from Annual Operation*

The completion and annual operation of either scenario would have associated with it permanent employment, wages and salaries, other effects on the local economy, and tax revenues for New York City, MTA, and New York State. The direct on-site employment in the completed development is estimated at approximately 7,220 to 7,251 permanent jobs (with, again, the first number corresponding to the No Convention Center Scenario and the second to the proposed Plan). This employment would represent an increase of 5,388 to 5,419 over the area's existing employment of 1,711. Total direct and generated jobs from the annual operation of the completed development are estimated at 10,691 to 11,843 jobs within New York City and 12,340 to 13,526 jobs in New York State.

The direct on-site wages and salaries from the operation of the completed development are estimated at \$313.02 to \$317.69 million annually (all figures in 2007 dollars). Total direct and generated wages and salaries are estimated at \$472.41 to \$510.36 million in New York City and \$547.13 to \$588.88 million in New York State. The direct on-site effect on the local economy from the completed development, measured as economic output or demand, is estimated at approximately \$1.18 to \$1.30 billion annually. The total economic activity, including indirect expenditures (those generated by the direct expenditures), that would result from the operation of the completed development is estimated at \$2.21 to \$2.49 billion in New York State, of which \$1.90 to \$2.17 billion would occur in New York City.

The operation of the completed development is estimated to generate approximately \$134.75 to \$144.62 million annually in non-property-related tax revenues for New York City, MTA, and New York State, including approximately \$77.03 to \$82.24 million for New York State and MTA, and about \$57.72 to \$62.38 million for New York City. For either scenario, the above non-property-related tax receipts do not include income tax paid by the residents of the residential portion of the Plan or income tax from secondary employment generated by such residents. Such revenue would be additional. In addition, the City would receive annual property tax revenues. These revenues would be expected to be changing from year to year, and in any year would be based on the taxable assessed value and the applicable tax rate.

### *Public Sector Costs*

The developer of the proposed Plan would fund all site preparation, infrastructure improvements, and construction within the District, with the exception of the new pump station if constructed within District boundaries. It is anticipated that the City would fund certain infrastructure improvements that are necessary to support the proposed Plan, including the pump station and modified access to and from the Van Wyck Expressway. Costs associated with these City-funded improvements are preliminarily estimated at approximately \$150 million.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Neither the proposed Plan nor the No Convention Center Scenario would directly displace any existing community facilities or police or fire facilities.

### *SCHOOLS*

The proposed Plan would be located within Zone 2 of Community School District 25 (CSD 25).

The analysis of high schools considers the impact on the entire Borough of Queens. The assessment finds that neither the proposed Plan nor the No Convention Center Scenario would have a significant adverse impact on elementary or middle schools within the one-mile study area or within Zone 2 of CSD 25 in the analysis year of 2017, or high schools in Queens.

### *Proposed Plan*

The proposed Plan would introduce approximately 5,500 residential units to Zone 2 of CSD 25, with 20 percent of the units anticipated to be set aside for affordable housing. Based on the projected public school pupil ratios from Table 3C-2 in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the proposed Plan would generate approximately 858 elementary and 418 intermediate students within Zone 2 of CSD 25 by 2017.

The proposed Plan would include the development of a new public school that would alleviate the potential elementary school seat shortfall created by the Plan. In the future with the proposed Plan, an approximately 850-seat school would be constructed to alleviate the elementary school shortfall. With the inclusion of an approximately 850-seat school, elementary schools within the one-mile study area would operate at 103 percent capacity, with a shortfall of approximately 95 seats, which would exist in the future without the proposed Plan. With the 850-seat school, Zone 2 schools would have capacity for 6,442 students and elementary schools within Zone 2 would operate at 102 percent capacity, with a shortfall of approximately 156 seats, which would exist in the future without the proposed Plan. Elementary schools within CSD 25 as a whole would operate at 94 percent of capacity, with a total enrollment of 17,704 elementary students and 1,175 available seats. Therefore, in the future with the proposed Plan the utilization rate in each study area would not change from the future without the proposed Plan. The *CEQR Technical Manual* considers an increase in utilization rate above 5 percent as a significant adverse impact. Therefore, the proposed Plan would not result in any significant adverse impacts on public elementary schools within the one-mile study area, Zone 2, or within CSD 25.

These new project-generated intermediate school students would increase enrollment in the one-mile study area to 1,485 students and in Zone 2 to 2,051 students. Schools within the one-mile study area would operate at 102 percent of capacity, with a deficit of 26 seats. Schools in Zone 2 of CSD 25 would operate at 81 percent of capacity with a surplus of 466 seats. Intermediate school enrollment within CSD 25 would increase to 4,588 by 2017 and would operate at 59 percent of capacity, with a surplus of 3,162 seats. Therefore, the middle schools within Zone 2 and throughout CSD 25 would operate below capacity, but increased enrollment attributable to the proposed Plan would not be expected to result in significant adverse impacts on public intermediate schools. While the utilization rate within the one-mile study area would increase by approximately 38 percent, the one-mile study area would have a shortfall of only 26 seats. This shortfall could be easily be accommodated by the significant surplus of school seats available in both Zone 2 and throughout CSD 25. Therefore, the proposed Plan would not result in any significant adverse impacts on public intermediate schools within the one-mile study area.

*No Convention Center Scenario*

The No Convention Center scenario would introduce approximately 5,850 residential units to Zone 2 of CSD 25, with 20 percent of the units anticipated to be set aside for affordable housing. The No Convention Center Scenario would generate approximately 913 elementary and 445 intermediate students.

As with the proposed Plan, the No Convention Center Scenario would include a new K-8 public school that would alleviate the potential project-generated elementary school shortfall. Under this development scenario, an approximately 900-seat school would be provided. The approximately 913 elementary school students generated by the No Convention Center Scenario would cause school enrollment within the one-mile study area to increase to 3,510 students, while enrollment within Zone 2 of CSD 25 would increase to 6,653 students. With the inclusion of the approximately 900-seat school within the District, elementary schools within the one-mile study area would have an operating capacity of 103 percent and the zone would have an operating capacity of 102 percent, with approximately 100 and 161 seat deficits, respectively, which would exist in the future without the proposed Plan. Elementary schools within CSD 25 as a whole would operate at 94 percent of capacity. Therefore, the elementary school utilization rate for both study areas would not increase from the future without the proposed scenario conditions. Finally, elementary schools within the entire CSD 25 would operate at 94 percent capacity with 1,170 seats. Therefore, the No Convention Center Scenario would not result in any significant adverse impacts on public elementary schools within Zone 2 or within CSD 25.

*Intermediate/Middle Schools*

The No Convention Center Scenario would introduce approximately 445 intermediate students in the one-mile study area and in Zone 2 of CSD 25. The additional students would increase enrollment within the one-mile study area to 1,512 students. M.S. 237—the only school located in close proximity to the one-mile study area—would operate at 104 percent with a shortage of 53 seats.

With the additional students introduced by the No Convention Center Scenario, 2,079 intermediate school students would be enrolled in Zone 2 of CSD 25, which would operate at 83 percent of capacity with a surplus of 439 seats. Intermediate school enrollment within CSD 25 would increase to 4,615 and would operate at 60 percent of capacity, with a surplus of 3,135 seats. Therefore, the middle schools within Zone 2 and throughout CSD 25 would operate below capacity, but increased enrollment attributable to the No Convention Center Scenario would not be expected to result in significant adverse impacts on public intermediate schools. While the utilization rate within the one-mile study area would increase by approximately 41 percent, the one-mile study area would have a shortfall of only 50 seats. This shortfall could be easily be accommodated by the significant surplus of school seats available in both Zone 2 and throughout CSD 25. Therefore, the No Convention Center Scenario would not result in any significant adverse impacts on public intermediate schools within the one-mile study area.

*LIBRARY AND HEALTH CARE FACILITIES*

The analysis considered the proposed Plan's impact on Flushing Library, the only library within a ¼-mile radius of the District. No significant adverse impacts are anticipated in the study area in 2017 as a result of the proposed Plan or the No Convention Center Scenario. The analysis also considered the proposed Plan's impacts on Flushing Hospital Medical Center and the New York Hospital Medical Center of Queens, which are both located in close proximity to the study area. No significant adverse impacts on area hospitals are anticipated in the study area in 2017 as a result of the proposed Plan or the No Convention Center Scenario.

*DAY CARE FACILITIES*

While the assessment found that the proposed Plan for the District would not result in significant adverse impacts on public schools, libraries, or health care facilities, it 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, as part of the developer's agreement, that a future developer consult with the New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) to determine the appropriate way to meet demand for publicly funded day care services generated by affordable housing development in the District.

*POLICE AND FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES*

A detailed analysis of police and fire protection services is usually only conducted if a proposed project would affect the physical operations of, or access to and from, a fire station or police precinct house. The proposed Plan would not physically affect either type of facility. Therefore, the proposed Plan would not result in significant adverse impacts to police or fire protection services. In response to comments on the DGEIS, the analysis considers the adequacy of emergency response times to the District. The analysis concludes that emergency responders are and would remain able to adequately serve the District.

**OPEN SPACE**

Neither the proposed Plan nor the No Convention Center Scenario is expected to result in significant adverse open space impacts.

The proposed Plan would create a minimum of eight acres of publicly accessible open space. In the future with the proposed Plan, the area surrounding the District would continue to have adequate active and passive open space resources. Although open space ratios would decline, for the most part the open space ratios would exceed existing City guidelines. Only the active open space ratio per 1,000 residents and the passive open space ratio per 1,000 workers would be below the recommended ratio; the total open space ratios would be well above City goals. The open space ratios indicate that workers and residents would have adequate open space to meet their needs in the future with either the proposed Plan or the No Convention Center Scenario. Furthermore, these quantitative analyses do not consider the extensive open space resources just beyond the study area boundaries, particularly the numerous active recreational amenities in the remaining portions of Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. Based on the open space analysis presented in this chapter, neither the proposed Plan nor the No Convention Center Scenario is expected to result in significant adverse impacts on study area open spaces.

**SHADOWS**

The shadows analysis concludes that while some incremental shadow would be cast onto Flushing Bay, the Flushing Bay Promenade, and the Flushing River in some seasons, none of these resources would receive incremental shadow on all four analysis days. Furthermore, throughout the spring, summer, and fall seasons, incremental shadow would be limited to an hour or less on any given resource and would cover relatively small areas. In the winter, when shadows are longest, over two hours of project-generated shadow would be cast on Flushing Bay and the Flushing Bay Promenade in the morning, but large areas of these resources would remain free of incremental shadow during these times, and would receive sunlight for the remainder of the analysis day. Therefore, there would be no significant adverse shadow impacts as a result of either the proposed Plan or the No Convention Center Scenario.

A shadows screening analysis was performed, and concluded that the potential development in Lots B and D would not cause a significant adverse impact on any sun-sensitive resources.

## **HISTORIC RESOURCES**

Both the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) have determined that the District is not sensitive for archaeological resources. Therefore, neither the proposed Plan nor the No Convention Center Scenario has the potential to affect archaeological resources.

The former Empire Millwork Corporation Building—located within the boundaries of the District and which is now in use by Fodera Foods—was found by OPRHP to be eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places (S/NR). Demolition of this building under the proposed Plan or the No Convention Center Scenario would therefore constitute a significant adverse impact on architectural resources.

One of the key aspects of the Special District regulations and the URP is to allow for flexibility of uses and building locations within the District; retaining the former Empire Millwork Corporation Building would limit this flexibility. Keeping the building would also be challenging from a site grading and engineering perspective, since the proposed Plan seeks to raise the elevation of the District above the FEMA 100-year floodplain. If this site were not raised, it would be significantly more vulnerable to flooding because it would remain below the 100-year floodplain level and because the surrounding topography would be raised, directing water run-off into lower areas. Raising the grade in a majority of the District while maintaining the existing grade on the former Empire Millwork Corporation Building site would require special engineering measures to protect the building during site preparation and construction to prevent future flooding on the site, and to visually and functionally integrate the building with the rest of the District despite the differences in grade.

Demolition of the former Empire Millwork Corporation building would constitute a significant adverse impact on historic resources. Measures to mitigate this impact would be developed in consultation with OPRHP. These measures could include recording the building through a Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS)-level photographic documentation and accompanying narrative.

There are no architectural resources located on Lots B or D, and the sites were determined not sensitive for archaeological resources during the environmental review process for the Citi Field project. Therefore, any development on Lots B or D would not affect archaeological or architectural resources.

## **URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES**

Both the proposed Plan and the No Convention Center Scenario would dramatically alter and greatly improve the urban design and general appearance of the District. The site is currently underdeveloped with low-scale buildings primarily related to automotive repair, as well as larger industrial buildings. The proposed Plan and the No Convention Center Scenario would result in new buildings of various heights, and introduce active uses that would increase the vitality of the District and increase pedestrian traffic to the District and the surrounding area. The appearance of the District would also be improved by providing new streets and streetscape elements. The District and surrounding area would be integrated by creating a new pedestrian-scaled street network and adding new publicly accessible open spaces. A new street pattern—including two main connector streets, a primary retail street, two secondary retail streets, residential streets, eastern perimeter street, and service streets—and new block forms would be established in the District.

Overall, the District would be transformed into a mixed-use area with retail, entertainment, and restaurant uses, and by creating a pedestrian-friendly environment that would complement the proposed residential area. The proposed Plan would significantly alter the urban design of the District, and would ultimately have a beneficial impact on the overall appearance and feel of the District.

In terms of visual resources, neither the proposed Plan nor the No Convention Center Scenario would have a significant adverse impact on visual resources, including Flushing Bay, the Flushing Bay Promenade, Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, and the 1964 World's Fair structures.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER**

The proposed Plan would dramatically change neighborhood character in the District. The new, active mix of residential, retail/entertainment, office, open space, hotel and conference center, and community facility uses would be an improvement over conditions in the future without the proposed Plan. Development within the District would be scaled to enhance pedestrian activity, with prescribed streetwall heights and locations, mandatory pedestrian circulation space, and other design elements to enhance building façades. The Special District would also mandate the provision of street trees, adequate sidewalks, and planted medians, and the development of a minimum of eight acres of publicly accessible open space. The proposed Plan would also include environmental remediation, grading and elevating the District above the floodplain, the installation of new sanitary and storm sewer lines, and the creation of a new connection to the Van Wyck Expressway.

The proposed convention center and commercial uses would enhance Flushing and Corona's roles as regional economic centers, and would attract visitors to the area. The proposed residential, commercial office, retail, hotel, community facility, open space, and parking uses would be consistent with the uses and character in the surrounding area, particularly those within the dense commercial center of Downtown Flushing. Additionally, the site planning and urban design of the District would serve to integrate the District with surrounding entertainment and recreational uses.

Although the proposed residential and community facility uses would not be compatible with industrial uses on the adjacent MTA property, it is not uncommon to find this type of juxtaposition in older manufacturing districts near the waterfront. Traffic, transit, pedestrian, and noise conditions would be adversely affected by the proposed Plan, but not (particularly with the mitigation measures proposed) to the degree that neighborhood character would experience significant adverse impacts.

Overall, the redevelopment of Lots B and D and the proposed Plan would result in an improvement in neighborhood character and would not have a significant adverse impact.

The effects of the No Convention Center Scenario on neighborhood character would be largely the same as with the proposed Plan; overall, it would not result in significant adverse neighborhood character impacts.

### **NATURAL RESOURCES**

Neither the proposed Plan nor the No Convention Center Scenario would result in significant adverse impacts on terrestrial natural resources, wetlands, aquatic resources, endangered species, threatened species, or species of special concern. In fact, development would offer benefits to natural resources (such as improved habitat) and is expected to include sustainable design elements.

## **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

The District has a long history of industrial, automotive, manufacturing, and commercial uses. Evidence of contaminants on this site includes volatile and semivolatile organic compounds, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), heavy metals, pesticides, herbicides and rodenticides. Throughout the District, asbestos-containing materials, lead-based paint, and PCB-containing equipment are likely to be present inside buildings. In addition, soil and groundwater have been impacted in varying degrees, possibly resulting in vapor intrusion issues within the buildings.

Development within the District under the proposed Plan would involve the demolition of the existing structures, roadways, and specific existing above- and below-ground utilities; and excavation, disturbance, and removal of much of the existing fill and soil.

By implementing remediation measures (such as removal and/or capping of contaminated soils), performing work under appropriate health and safety procedures, and engineering/institutional controls (such as installing vapor barriers under new buildings and restrictions on change in use), it is expected that potential exposure to hazardous materials would be minimized, and thus no significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials would occur during or after construction of the proposed Plan or the No Convention Center Scenario. E-designations and subsequent Restrictive Declarations would require these engineering and institutional controls. The E-designations would also require mandatory construction-related HASPs, which would be subject to review and approval by DEP. All remedial plans would be required to be in accordance with all applicable City, State, and federal regulations.

Although some hazardous materials would likely remain in the subsurface following construction of the proposed Plan and development of Lots B and D, with the remedial measures for both the District and Lots B and D, there would be no exposure pathways and thus no further potential for significant adverse impacts.

## **WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM (WRP)**

Both the proposed Plan and the No Convention Center Scenario would be consistent with citywide policies for fostering residential and commercial development, creating public access in the coastal zone, and protecting sensitive natural and historic resources. Thus, the proposed Plan would be consistent with the City's 10 WRP policies and standards.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

Although the proposed Plan would generate new demand on infrastructure, the municipal systems serving the District and surrounding area, as enhanced under the proposed Plan, would have adequate capacity to meet the needs of the proposed Plan and Lots B and D.

### *WATER SUPPLY*

The proposed Plan and anticipated development on Lots B and D would increase water demand by approximately 4.36 million gallons of water per day (mgd). This additional demand would not result in a significant adverse impact on the City's water supply system. This projected flow would be supplied by the existing 72-inch water main serving the District, which may need to be relocated as a result of the proposed Plan, depending on the site plan that is ultimately selected.

Under the proposed Plan, the existing 72-inch prestressed reinforced concrete pipe (PRCP) water main within Willetts Point Boulevard would remain in place. In order to provide acceptable access to the

existing main, the developer would provide a permanent easement mapped on the City map. The width and designation of this easement shall be determined in consultation with New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and in accordance with DEP requirements.

*SANITARY SEWAGE*

Under the proposed Plan, the District would be connected to the City's sanitary sewer system, replacing the current reliance on septic tanks. Sanitary wastewater from the District would be conveyed to a new sanitary pump station, which would most likely be constructed within the District. Sanitary wastewater from Lots B and D would be connected to the pumped discharge utilized by Citi Field subject to the verification of its adequacy. The new District pump station would be designed and constructed to DEP standards. A new force main would be constructed to convey sanitary flow from the District to the existing 96-inch-diameter City sewer at 108th Street (which flows to the Bowery Bay Water Pollution Control Plant [WPCP]). This new force main route would cross beneath 126th Street and the Grand Central Parkway.

The proposed Plan and the anticipated development on Lots B and D would result in an increase of sanitary flow to the Bowery Bay WPCP of approximately 2.8 mgd. The projected available capacity at the Bowery Bay WPCP in 2017 is 28 mgd. The Bowery Bay WPCP has adequate capacity to meet the increased demand associated with the proposed Plan.

*STORMWATER*

Prior to redevelopment of the site, an amended drainage plan would be prepared by the developer to comprehensively address all the surface runoff and separate handling of the sanitary dry flow that would be generated as a result of the proposed Plan, and drainage features to be included in the development of the District. This drainage plan would accommodate the City's current drainage plan for the area, and easements associated with highway drainage, and would be subject to prior review and approval by DEP.

The proposed Plan would maintain separate stormwater and sanitary sewer systems, in accordance with the City's goals to reduce combined sewer overflow (CSO) events. Since the existing area is largely impervious (the District and Lots B and D are currently largely built with impervious structures including buildings, paved surfaces, and roads, which create surface runoff), its conversion to a high density mixed-use district would not significantly change the overall runoff conditions within the area. The overall stormwater runoff volume in the future with the proposed Plan for the District and Lots B and D would therefore remain largely unchanged from the current runoff volume of 366 cfs. Approximately 327 cfs would be generated from the District with an additional 39 cfs from Lots B and D. Stormwater generated within the District is currently directed without any detention to the two existing outfalls on 126th Street and 127th Street. The current runoff from the District is more than the allowable flow per drainage plan to these two outfalls. The current stormwater conveyance system is not sized to accommodate the uncontrolled runoff being generated, resulting in street flooding during storm events. To eliminate these stormwater management issues, the proposed Plan would require the construction of a new stormwater conveyance system, including piping, sustainable design features, and an adequately sized detention tank, or other equivalent means, to accommodate the 5.13 acre-feet of stormwater to meet the allowable flow to the outfall. Approximately 4.20 acre-feet of the total required detention would be required for the District, with an additional 0.93 acre-feet for Lots B and D. In addition to an amended drainage plan, the developer would be required to prepare a site stormwater management plan, to be reviewed and approved by DEP, that would specify Best Management Practices and sustainable design features that the project would include.

With the implementation of adequate stormwater management features, stormwater flow could be controlled to remain within the capacity of the two existing outfalls without the need to modify these outfalls. If it is determined that the capacity of the two existing outfalls, as supplemented by stormwater management features selected for the detailed development is not adequate, a new outfall would be proposed to augment the existing system.

The proposed Plan would require coverage under the current State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) general permit program for stormwater discharges from construction activities, as well as post construction (Build) conditions. Prior to the initiation of construction activities, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be developed pursuant to the requirements of the general permit and would be enforced throughout the sequence of construction activities and after construction is complete. Since Flushing Bay is a regulated water body, stormwater would have to be pre-treated prior to discharge to ensure that applicable discharge criteria would be met after construction is completed. Such pre-treatment measures would be subject to DEP review and approval. These actions would ensure that pollution prevention measures are in place during and after construction activity and enable adequate control of potential sources of pollution relating to stormwater management.

#### **GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION**

Given the District's location within the 100-year floodplain, the potential effects of global climate change on the proposed Plan have been considered. Although a large range of sea level rise is possible depending on the precise emissions and response scenarios used for global modeling, there is sufficient information to suggest an increment of approximately 1.6 feet by the end of the century based on warming and some ice cap, sea ice, and glacial melting. The proposed elevation of 14 feet under the Plan is well above that stillwater level, so an increase of 1.6 feet would not impact the project area under normal conditions.

The main components that inform infrastructure planning are storm surge and the frequency of severe storms. These components are much more uncertain at this time.

The current 100-year floodplain is currently the only regulatory standard relating to elevation of new development. Under the proposed Plan, the District would be raised above the floodplain, reducing the District's vulnerability to storm surges as compared to existing conditions. The City has established an interagency group to work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to revise the Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the City. It is anticipated that the map revisions will be completed in 2010. Subsequent development within the District will reflect any changes to the floodplain elevations.

The City is also engaged in several initiatives related to better assessing potential local climate change impacts and developing City-wide strategies to adapt to projected effects of climate change.

The development would include a number of features, in addition to the requirements of the building code and current DEP drainage standards, designed to absorb or retain stormwater and reduce the potential for flooding. These features would form part of a site stormwater management plan that would be reviewed by DEP in light of its developing understanding of the effects of climate change on infrastructure. Furthermore, the developer would be required to submit to the City, prior to the placement of fill, an assessment of the appropriate grade for the District in light of all available information concerning potential sea level and other changes due to climate change. If appropriate and if warranted by data

available at that time, the City would have the authority to require an increase in the proposed grade of the District at that time, but other measures could be used if more appropriate.

As detailed local climate change projections become available and are adopted into the City's infrastructure design criteria, such criteria would be incorporated into the development program. In addition, the City's agreement with the developer would require the preparation of an engineering study prior to commencement of construction that would assess the feasibility of implementing adaptation strategies for climate change impacts into the design of the development program in light of the most current climate change projections. Based on that engineering study, the City would require the developer to implement the adaption strategies that it determines are practicable.

### **SOLID WASTE AND SANITATION**

No significant adverse impacts on solid waste and sanitation services would result from the proposed Plan and the anticipated development on Lots B and D. Similarly, although the No Convention Center Scenario would result in a marginally higher demand for solid waste and sanitation services, this scenario would also not have a significant adverse impact. The municipal systems serving the District have adequate capacity to meet the projected increases in demand. In addition, proposed local improvements in City services would address the needs of the Plan.

The proposed Plan would displace two waste transfer businesses from the District—Tully Environmental and Crown Container. The permitted capacity of Crown Container is small, and the waste generated at that facility could be absorbed at other facilities. Tully Environmental currently processes putrescible municipal waste under a contract with the City. The North Shore marine transfer station (MTS) is expected to be operational by 2011, and will have the capacity to process the waste currently handled by Tully. If Tully were displaced from the District before the North Shore MTS became operational, New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY) waste currently processed by Tully would temporarily be transported to facilities in New Jersey in DSNY trucks. Therefore, the displacement of the two waste transfer businesses would not significantly impact the waste transfer industry within Queens or New York City.

### **ENERGY**

The proposed Plan and the anticipated development on Lots B and D would increase demands on electricity and gas. However, relative to the capacity of these systems and the current levels of service within New York City, these increases in demand would be insignificant. Improvements would be made to the local electric and gas distribution grids that would ensure proper service to the District. Therefore, the cumulative demands of the proposed Plan and the anticipated development on Lots B and D would not result in a significant adverse impact on the supplies of electricity and gas in the region or the City as a whole, and with the future improvements to the distribution network, no impact would occur locally with respect to electrical or gas utilities. The No Convention Center Scenario would result in marginally lower energy demand and thus would also not result in a significant adverse impact.

## TRAFFIC AND PARKING

### *VEHICULAR TRAFFIC*

The future baseline (future No Build) volumes, to which the traffic generated by the proposed Plan and Lot B would be added, and the future levels of service are expected to be significantly worse than existing conditions due directly to the approximately 90 background developments planned in the study area and a projected background traffic growth of approximately 11.5 percent. Therefore, traffic generated by the proposed Plan and Lot B would be in addition to high baseline volumes and poor levels of service at many of the analysis intersections and along key sections of the highway network, resulting in numerous significant impacts.

The proposed Plan and Lot B are expected to be a significant traffic generator on the highways surrounding the District—including the Grand Central Parkway, the Van Wyck Expressway, and the Whitestone Expressway—and the local street network. The Build volume increments generated by the proposed Plan and Lot B would be 3,685 vehicles per hour (vph) in the AM peak hour, 5,434 vph in the midday peak hour, and 6,752 vph in the PM peak hour on a typical weekday without a Mets home game. The volume increment generated by the proposed Plan and Lot B during a typical Saturday midday peak hour without a Mets home game would be 7,099 vph—the highest increment of all the analyzed peak hours. For peak hours with a Mets home game, the proposed Plan is expected to generate 5,199 vph in the weekday PM (evening) pre-game peak hour, 5,544 vph in the Saturday midday pre-game peak hour, and 5,128 vph in the Saturday PM (afternoon) post-game peak hour.

As a result, of the 29 intersections analyzed, the proposed Plan and Lot B are expected to have significant traffic impacts at 21 intersections in the weekday AM peak hour, 17 in the weekday midday peak hour, 23 in the weekday PM peak hour, and 21 in the non-game-Saturday midday peak hour. During the PM pre-game weekday peak hour there would be significant traffic impacts at 24 intersections and during the Saturday pre-game and post-game peak hours there would be significant impacts at 23 intersections.

Although the proposed Plan would include new access ramps to and from the Van Wyck Expressway at the northeastern corner of the District, it is projected that some sections of the highway mainlines and critical ramp junctions would be significantly impacted as well. Furthermore, the new access ramps are expected to reduce the use by project-generated traffic of certain local streets to access the District. However, project generated traffic would also cause significant traffic increases and level of service degradations on the Van Wyck Expressway mainline in both directions in the vicinity of the District.

Table I presents a summary of significant adverse traffic impacts and their ability to be mitigated.

The overall finding of the traffic mitigation analysis is that the majority of analyzed locations would be significantly impacted, and that the need for a broad range of mitigation measures would be substantial. Approximately one-half, or less, depending on the peak hour, of the significantly impacted locations could be fully or partially mitigated with traffic signal operation changes, such as signal phasing and/or timing changes, or the signalization of an unsignalized intersection, and limited parking prohibitions, while an additional location could be fully mitigated with a turn prohibition. Using signal timing modification measures, installation of new traffic signal equipment, limited parking prohibitions, and a minor turn prohibition, significant impacts occurring in one or more of the analysis peak hours could be fully or partially mitigated at the following traffic study area locations:

**Table 1**  
**Traffic Impact Mitigation Summary—Year 2017**

Study Intersections	Without a Mets Game				With a Mets Game		
	Weekday AM	Weekday Midday	Weekday PM	Saturday Midday	Weekday PM Pre-game	Saturday Midday Pre-game	Saturday PM Post-game
No Significant Impact	7	11	5	7	4	5	5
Fully Mitigated Impact	7	8	7	6	9	7	8
Partially Mitigated Impact	3	2	3	3	2	4	3
Unmitigated Impact	12	8	14	13	14	13	13

- Astoria Boulevard at 108th Street (fully mitigated);
- Northern Boulevard at Prince Street (fully mitigated);
- Northern Boulevard at Main Street (partially mitigated);
- Northern Boulevard at Union Street (partially mitigated);
- Northern Boulevard at Parsons Boulevard (partially mitigated);
- 126th Street at 34th Avenue (partially mitigated);
- Roosevelt Avenue at 108th Street (fully mitigated);
- Roosevelt Avenue at 111th Street (fully mitigated);
- Roosevelt Avenue at Parsons Boulevard (partially mitigated);
- Sanford Avenue at College Point Boulevard (fully mitigated);
- Sanford Avenue at Union Street (fully mitigated);
- Sanford Avenue at Parsons Boulevard (partially mitigated);
- College Point Boulevard at 32nd Avenue (fully mitigated);
- Northern Boulevard service road at College Point Boulevard (fully mitigated); and
- Boat Basin Road at World’s Fair Marina (fully mitigated).

During game-day peak periods, modifications to the traffic control measures currently implemented by New York City Police Department (NYPD) traffic enforcement agents near Shea Stadium would be required at critical intersections in the vicinity of Citi Field in addition to the more standard types of mitigation measures listed above. This complete set of mitigation measures represents the standard range of traffic capacity improvements that are available to improve operating conditions and mitigate impacts, and that are deployed by the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) and/or NYPD.

In order to verify the need for, and effectiveness of, the proposed mitigation measures identified in the FGEIS, the lead agency would develop and conduct a detailed traffic monitoring plan at full buildout of the proposed Plan. The lead agency would inform NYCDOT of the progress of the Plan’s development and submit for NYCDOT’s review and approval a scope of work that would include all locations where significant traffic impacts have been indentified in the FGEIS where NYCDOT believes improvement measures will be warranted. Data collection to be conducted for the monitoring plan would include 24-hour Automatic Traffic Recorder (ATR) machine counts, manual turning movement counts, vehicle classification counts, pedestrian counts, intersection geometry and field information, signal timing and signal progression, and any relevant information necessary for conducting the traffic monitoring plan. In

the areas where parking prohibitions would be needed to mitigate significant impacts, such as Downtown Flushing and Corona, curbside utilization surveys will be conducted to determine the number of vehicles that would be displaced and where the displaced vehicles would be accommodated. Additionally, the traffic monitoring program would include an origin-destination survey to be performed for the destination retail component of the project. The traffic monitoring program would also include intersection capacity and level of service analyses and signal progression analyses to determine whether actual future Build conditions have, in fact, resulted in significant traffic impacts and verify the need for mitigation measures identified in the FGEIS or similar measures recommended in the traffic monitoring plan.

### *Effects of Traffic Mitigation on Air Quality and Noise*

With regard to air quality, analysis results show that with the proposed traffic mitigation measures, future concentrations of pollutants with the proposed Plan and the anticipated development on Lot B would not result in any significant adverse air quality impacts, the exceedance of *de minimis* thresholds for CO, or the PM<sub>2.5</sub> interim guidance criteria.

In terms of noise,  $L_{eq(1)}$  noise levels due to project-generated traffic with or without the proposed traffic mitigation plan would exceed the *CEQR Technical Manual's* impact criteria and result in significant adverse noise impacts during the non-game Saturday midday time period at noise receptor 3 (World's Fair Marina Park). There would be no feasible or practicable measures to mitigate this impact. Noise barriers or berms are impractical at this location due to space constraints. As a result, this would be an unmitigatable significant adverse impact.

While this noise level increase does exceed the CEQR threshold for a significant impact, the resultant  $L_{eq}$  of 72.4 dBA is not an uncommon level for a park in New York City. Noise levels of this magnitude frequently occur at parks or portions of parks that are adjacent to heavily trafficked roadways. The noise levels and the impacts shown exclude noise from aircraft operations at LaGuardia Airport, which is adjacent to the District. Excluding aircraft noise results in lower baseline levels and therefore a more conservative analysis, as the project-generated noise causes a larger increase on a lower baseline level. If the noise from aircraft operations were included in the baseline noise levels, it is unlikely that the impact identified at the World's Fair Marina Park would occur.

The noise impact with the traffic mitigation measures would occur at the same location and time as would occur without mitigation. While the addition of a traffic signal at this location would increase noise levels, and increase the magnitude of the impact during the Saturday midday time period, the changes in noise levels are less than a decibel, and would have no perceptible effect.

### *PARKING*

The proposed Plan would provide sufficient new off-street and on-street parking as part of the development to service its demand. The proposed Plan would include the demapping and realignment of the local street network within the boundaries of the District, which is expected to increase the available on-street parking supply. Moreover, the proposed Plan's expected parking needs would be provided within the District. Consequently, it is not expected that traffic generated by the proposed Plan would have to seek parking opportunities outside of the District.

The Citi Field Lot B development project would displace 660 existing parking spaces for game-day stadium traffic. These spaces would be replaced within a new parking structure on Lot D, located on the south side of Roosevelt Avenue to the east of the South Lot. Within the footprint of the new structure, a total of 1,543 spaces would be constructed, 573 of which would replace the existing Lot D surface spaces

lost to the new structure. The remaining 970 spaces would accommodate Mets game day traffic and the Lot B development and would be sufficient to accommodate the maximum parking demand.

#### *NO CONVENTION CENTER SCENARIO*

As compared with the proposed Plan, the No Convention Center Scenario would have approximately 6 percent more residential development and approximately 3 percent more retail development, and would result in an overall reduction equal to approximately 7 to 14 percent of the total number of generated trips during each of the peak hours. The greatest trip reductions would be in the weekday PM peak hour, the weekday evening pre-game peak hour, and the Saturday afternoon post-game peak hour. Since the assignment of convention center trips assumes predominant use of the highway routes to and from the District, it is expected that the No Convention Center Scenario would show some improvement in highway levels of service, but would not necessarily mean a reduction in the number of significant impacts on the highways. There would also be level of service improvements at highway ramp approaches to the intersections on 126th Street at 34th Avenue and at Northern Boulevard due to the reduction in convention center traffic to and from the highway network.

#### **TRANSIT AND PEDESTRIANS**

The proposed Plan and anticipated development on Lot B would result in significant adverse transit impacts on the street-level stairway on the north side of Roosevelt Avenue at the Willets Point-Shea Stadium subway station, and for the Q48 and Q66 bus routes. The proposed Plan and Lot B would also result in significant adverse pedestrian impacts at the east crosswalk at the intersection of Northern Boulevard and 126th Street; at the north, east, and west crosswalks at the intersection of Roosevelt Avenue and 126th Street; and for the north crosswalk at the newly signalized intersection of Roosevelt Avenue and the Lot B driveway.

To mitigate the projected street-level stairway impact, a 4.25-foot widening from its existing width of 8 feet to 12.25 would be required. The implementation of this mitigation measure would be coordinated with MTA/New York City Transit (NYCT) to allow enough time for design and specification approvals by MTA/NYCT and for the construction that would address the increased demand that would result from development of the proposed Plan and Lot B by 2017.

To mitigate the projected bus impacts on the Q48 bus route, 14 additional or 20 total eastbound buses and 8 additional or 13 total westbound buses would be required during the AM peak period. During the PM peak period, 27 additional or 31 total eastbound buses and 24 additional or 28 total westbound buses would be required. To mitigate the projected bus impacts of the Q66 route, 9 additional or 24 total eastbound buses would be required during the AM peak period and 3 additional or 14 total eastbound buses would be required during the PM peak period. The above considers potential service improvements to only the bus routes currently serving the immediate vicinity of the District. While MTA/NYCT routinely monitor changes in bus ridership and would make necessary service adjustments where warranted, the projected service demand is significant in magnitude. These service adjustments are subject to the agencies' fiscal and operational constraints and, if implemented, are expected to take place over time. Recognizing that these improvements may not be operationally viable or adequate in accommodating the projected future demand from developments planned for the District, discussions were initiated with NYCT to explore opportunities to extend existing bus routes from adjacent neighborhoods (e.g., downtown Flushing) and/or create new bus routes. Potential bus service improvements discussed include: 1) increasing service frequency on the Q19 and providing westbound stop/loop service to Willets Point; 2) extending some or all bus routes that currently terminate in

downtown Flushing to Willets Point, including the Q12, Q13, Q14, Q15, Q16, Q17, Q26, Q27, and Q28; and 3) possibly extending the limited QBx1 along Roosevelt Avenue and rerouting the X15 through Willets Point. To accommodate these potential service improvements, new bus stops and layover areas would be needed in and around the District. The City will collaborate with MTA/NYCT during and after this environmental review process to establish development guidelines and provisions to ensure that adequate bus service improvements would be implemented.

To mitigate the projected crosswalk impacts at the Roosevelt Avenue intersections with 126th Street and the Lot B driveway, restriping the existing crosswalks to widen the available crossing width would be necessary. However, because the extent of these widenings is limited, per NYCDOT standards, by the widths of the adjoining sidewalks, the projected significant adverse pedestrian impacts at the north, east, and west crosswalks at Roosevelt Avenue and 126th Street, and at the north crosswalk at the newly signalized intersection of Roosevelt Avenue and the Lot B driveway may remain unmitigated or partially mitigated.

### **AIR QUALITY**

The proposed Willets Point Development Plan and the anticipated development on Lots B and D would not result in any significant adverse air quality impacts from either mobile or stationary sources.

The maximum predicted pollutant concentrations and cumulative concentration increments from mobile sources with the proposed Plan and the anticipated development on Lots B and D would be in compliance with the applicable guidance thresholds and ambient air quality standards. The parking facilities associated with the proposed Plan and on Lot D would also not result in any significant adverse air quality impacts. Similarly, emissions associated with the parking facilities on Citi Field parking Lot C, closest to the proposed District, and with the traffic along the elevated portion of Northern Boulevard adjacent to proposed uses would result in concentrations in the proposed District that would be in compliance with applicable standards and thresholds. Thus, the proposed Plan and Lots B and D would not result in significant adverse impacts from mobile source emissions.

Based on stationary source screening analyses, there would be no potential for significant adverse air quality impacts from the heat and hot water systems of the proposed Plan and the anticipated development on Lot B, provided that restrictions described in the text are imposed on the placement of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) stacks of some uses. Nearby existing sources from manufacturing or processing facilities were analyzed for their potential impacts on the development that would be introduced under the proposed Plan. The results of that industrial source analysis conclude that there would be no significant adverse air quality impacts from existing industrial uses within 1,000 feet of the District.

### **NOISE**

Traffic generated by the proposed Plan and Lots B and D would result in a significant increase in noise levels only at the World's Fair Marina Park during the Saturday midday time period. As a result of the proposed Plan and the potential anticipated development on Lot B, a substantial amount of additional traffic would pass by this park when accessing the westbound Grand Central Parkway. There would be no feasible or practicable measures to mitigate this impact. Noise barriers or berms are impractical because of space constraints. As a result, this would be an unmitigable significant adverse impact.

While this noise level increase does exceed the CEQR threshold for a significant impact, the resultant  $L_{eq}$  of 72.4 dBA is not an uncommon level for a park in New York City. Noise levels of this magnitude frequently occur at parks or portions of parks that are adjacent to heavily trafficked roadways.

The noise levels shown and the impacts shown exclude noise from aircraft operations at LaGuardia airport, which is adjacent to the study area. If this noise were included in this analysis, baseline levels would increase such that it is unlikely that an impact would occur at this location during this time period.

To meet CEQR interior noise level requirements, buildings in the District would be required through a Restrictive Declaration to provide between 30 and 37 dB of building attenuation (e.g., using double-glazed windows with good sealing properties; alternate ventilation, such as central air-conditioning; and additional building insulation).

Citi Field Lot B could potentially be developed with a commercial use that would be subject to CEQR interior noise criteria. However, any future development at Lot B would be subject to a separate approval and environmental review process, and any required building attenuation would be developed at that time. Lot D could potentially be developed with a parking garage, which would not require noise attenuation measures.

The noise attenuation requirements for the No Convention Center Scenario would be the same as with the proposed Plan. The No Convention Center Scenario would likely generate less traffic than the proposed Plan, and therefore, is not expected to generate any additional noise impacts.

## **CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS**

The construction of the proposed Plan would take place from 2009 to 2017. Because the District is isolated from the surrounding neighborhoods, no significant adverse impacts related to land use, neighborhood character, or community facilities are expected.

The proposed Plan contemplates demolition of the former Empire Millwork Corporation Building. Demolition of this historic resource would constitute a significant adverse impact on architectural resources. As discussed above, measures to fully or partially mitigate this adverse impact would be explored.

The preparation and enforcement of a Health and Safety Plan (HASP) is expected to prevent any significant adverse impacts from hazardous materials. The installation of a vapor control system, if necessary, would prevent vapors from volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that may remain in the soil from entering the buildings and harming public health.

Traffic from construction would be substantially less than traffic generated by the full operation of the proposed Plan at most intersections, with the exception of the intersection of College Point Boulevard at Roosevelt Avenue, 126th Street at Roosevelt Avenue, and 126th Street at 24th Avenue. These intersections would experience slightly higher traffic volumes due to limited availability of direct highway access to the District, as the new access ramps to/from the Van Wyck Expressway would not yet be constructed. Impacts at some locations could be addressed with the early implementation of measures to mitigate significant adverse impacts from the proposed Plan. Nevertheless, unmitigatable impacts could occur at some locations that have been identified as having unmitigatable impacts from operation of the Plan.

Air pollutant emissions from construction equipment and trucks would be reduced to the extent practicable by the enforcement of Local Law 77 of 2005, which requires all City-sponsored construction to reduce construction-related emissions of diesel particulate matter (DPM) by using the best available technology (BAT) to control emissions, and which applies to this project, as well as other measures. The

District is large, and much of it is well-removed from publicly accessible locations where people would be expected to be present for extended durations. Although the majority of the construction would not affect the public, residents and workers in some of the buildings completed early in the Plan would be located adjacent to construction sites during construction of the later buildings. Measures would be taken to address both the emissions levels and the location of sources relative to such receptor locations, to ensure that significant impacts on air quality during construction would not occur. These measures would include minimizing the use of diesel equipment; ensuring that all nonroad diesel engines with a power rating of 50 horsepower (hp) or greater and controlled truck fleets would utilize the best available tailpipe technology for reducing DPM emissions; locating large emission sources further than 50 feet from sensitive receptors, to the extent practicable; and ensuring that comprehensive fugitive dust control plans are implemented.

For noise impact determination purposes, significant adverse impacts are based on whether maximum predicted incremental noise levels at sensitive receptor locations off-site would be greater than the impact criteria suggested in the *CEQR Technical Manual* for two consecutive years or more. While increases exceeding the CEQR impact criteria for a shorter period of time may be noisy and intrusive, they are not considered to be significant adverse noise impacts. The District is large, and much of it is well-removed from any sensitive receptor. Previous analyses, such as those prepared for the Manhattanville and Atlantic Yards projects, have found that significant adverse noise impacts occur only at sensitive receptors that are close to and with a direct line of sight to the construction activity. In addition, little night work is expected, and any exceedances of the CEQR criteria at sensitive locations would occur during the day. Therefore, no long-term significant adverse noise impacts are expected from construction activities.

The new access road and ramps to the Van Wyck Expressway would be completed over approximately two years, starting in the fourth quarter of 2011 and ending in the third quarter of 2013. The agreement with the developer would stipulate that following approval of the Van Wyck Expressway ramps, but prior to completion of ramp construction, buildings within the District would not be occupied until completion of the Van Wyck Expressway improvements, unless it is demonstrated that earlier occupancy of the buildings would not result in significant adverse impacts that have not already been described in this FGEIS.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH**

The proposed Plan and anticipated development on Lots B and D would not result in any significant adverse public health impacts related to air quality, noise, or hazardous materials.

## **D. UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS**

### **HISTORIC RESOURCES**

As described above, the proposed Plan contemplates demolition of the former Empire Millwork Corporation Building. Demolition of this building would constitute a significant adverse impact on this historic resource. Measures to partially mitigate this impact, which could include archival photo documentation, would be developed in consultation with OPRHP. However, this impact would not be completely eliminated. Therefore, it would constitute an unavoidable significant adverse impact on this historic resource as a result of the proposed Plan.

## TRAFFIC

Out of the 29 intersections analyzed in the traffic study area during the seven peak hours, all significant adverse traffic impacts could be fully mitigated with the following exceptions:

- In the weekday AM peak hour, there would be three partially mitigated intersections—Northern Boulevard at Parsons Boulevard, 34th Avenue at 126th Street, and Sanford Avenue at Parsons Boulevard—and 12 unmitigatable intersections, including: Northern Boulevard at 108th, 114th, 126th, Prince, Main, and Union Streets; Roosevelt Avenue at 114th, 126th, Prince, and Main Streets, and at College Point Boulevard; and 126th Street at the new Willetts Point Boulevard.
- In the non-game weekday midday peak hour, the Northern Boulevard intersection at Union Street and Parsons Boulevard would be partially mitigated, and 8 intersections could not be mitigated, including: Northern Boulevard at 126th Street; 34th Avenue at 126th Street; Roosevelt Avenue at 114th, 126th, Prince, and Main Streets, and at College Point Boulevard; and 126th Street at the new Willetts Point Boulevard.
- In the non-game weekday PM peak hour, the Parsons Boulevard intersections at Northern Boulevard and Roosevelt Avenue, and at Sanford Avenue would be partially mitigated, and 14 intersections would not be mitigated, including: Northern Boulevard at 108th, 114th, 126th, Prince, Main, and Union Streets; 34th Avenue at 126th Street; Roosevelt Avenue at 114th, 126th, Prince, Main, and Union Streets, and at College Point Boulevard; and 126th Street at the new Willetts Point Boulevard.
- In the non-game Saturday midday peak hour, there would be three partially mitigated intersections—Parsons Boulevard at Northern Boulevard, Roosevelt Avenue and Sanford Avenue—and 13 unmitigatable intersections, including: Northern Boulevard at 108th, 126th, Main, Prince, and Union Streets; 34th Avenue at 126th Street; Roosevelt Avenue at 114th, 126th, Prince, Main, and Union Streets, and at College Point Boulevard; and 126th Street at the new Willetts Point Boulevard.
- In the weeknight pre-game peak hour, Northern Boulevard at Parsons Boulevard and 34th Avenue at 126th Street could only be partially mitigated, and 14 intersections could not be mitigated, including: Northern Boulevard at 108th, 114th, 126th, Prince, Main, and Union Streets; Roosevelt Avenue at 114th, 126th, Prince, Main, and Union Streets, and at College Point Boulevard; Sanford Avenue at Parsons Boulevard; and 126th Street at the new Willetts Point Boulevard.
- In the Saturday pre-game peak hour, Northern Boulevard at Union Street and at Parsons Boulevard, Sanford Avenue at Parsons Boulevard, and 34th Avenue at 126th Street would be partially mitigated, while 13 intersections could not be mitigated at all, including: Northern Boulevard at 108th, 114th, 126th, Prince, and Main Streets; Roosevelt Avenue at 114th, 126th, Prince, Main, and Union Streets, and at College Point Boulevard; College Point Boulevard at the Northern Boulevard service road; and 126th Street at the new Willetts Point Boulevard.
- In the Saturday post-game peak hour, there would be three partially mitigated intersections—Northern Boulevard at Parsons Boulevard, Roosevelt Avenue at Parsons Boulevard, and Sanford Avenue at Parsons Boulevard—and 13 intersections could not be mitigated, including: Northern Boulevard at 108th, 114th, 126th, Prince, and Union Streets; 34th Avenue at 126th Street; Roosevelt Avenue at 114th, 126th, Prince, Main, and Union Streets, and at College Point Boulevard; and 126th Street at the new Willetts Point Boulevard.

## PEDESTRIANS

The significant adverse pedestrian impacts at the north, east, and west crosswalks at the intersection of Roosevelt Avenue and 126th Street, and at the north crosswalk at the newly signalized intersection of Roosevelt Avenue and the Lot B driveway during the weekday midday peak period, the weekday PM peak period, the weekday pre-game peak period, the Saturday non-game peak period, the Saturday pre-game peak period, and the Saturday post-game period could be mitigated by restriping these crosswalks to achieve wider crossing widths. If such widenings could not be achieved, the projected significant adverse impacts during these time periods would remain unmitigated or partially mitigated.

## NOISE

As described above, noise levels due to project-generated traffic would result in a significant adverse noise impact during the non-game Saturday midday time period at noise receptor 3 (World's Fair Marina Park). There would be no feasible or practicable measures to mitigate this impact. Noise barriers or berms are impractical because of space constraints. As a result, this would be an unmitigatable significant adverse impact.

## E. ALTERNATIVES

This FGEIS examines five alternatives to the proposed Plan: a No Action Alternative; a No Unmitigated Impact Alternative; a Flushing Bridge Alternative; a Municipal Services Alternative; and a Staged Acquisition Alternative.

The No Action Alternative represents conditions that would exist if the proposed Plan were not implemented. The No Unmitigated Impact Alternative examines the level of development that would be necessary to avoid all the potential unmitigated impacts associated with the proposed Plan. The Flushing Bridge Alternative assesses the proposed Plan with construction of a new pedestrian bridge connecting the District and Downtown Flushing. The Municipal Services Alternative evaluates conditions that would be likely to occur if the District was not rezoned but additional municipal services were provided to the District. The Staged Acquisition Alternative assumes that properties in the District would be acquired and infrastructure developed over time.

### NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

The No Action Alternative would avoid some of the adverse environmental impacts of the proposed Plan. However, because this alternative would allow the continued industrial use of the District, it would not allow for development of affordable housing, community facilities, and public open space. It also would not comprehensively remediate contaminated soils and groundwater, nor provide new sanitary and storm sewers, and as a result, there would continue to be degraded water quality and potential impacts to aquatic biota through the continued recharge of wastewater, polluted stormwater, and sediments from the District to the Flushing River, Flushing Bay, and groundwater aquifers. Because the No Action Alternative would not develop new retail and entertainment uses, it would not generate the substantial economic and civic benefits resulting from the proposed Plan in the way of new jobs and tax revenues. Moreover, this alternative would not advance a number of the Downtown Flushing Development Framework's fundamental goals, including the creation of a regional destination that would enhance economic growth in Downtown Flushing and Corona, improvement of environmental conditions, and integration of new development in the District with surrounding amenities.

## **NO UNMITIGATED IMPACT ALTERNATIVE**

The No Unmitigated Impact Alternative explores modifications to the proposed Plan that would mitigate project impacts to historic resources, traffic, pedestrians, and noise:

- For historic resources, this alternative would avoid the demolition of the Empire Millwork Corporation Building that would occur with the proposed Plan. Although this could be achieved through adaptive reuse, exterior elements such as windows and façades would still need to be upgraded to comply with building codes and noise attenuation requirements. Furthermore, the building is located below flood elevation, and its site could not be raised if it would remain. Therefore, flood protection measures such as gates or pumps would be required to comply with flood insurance requirements. Overall, this alternative would reduce the footprint of any new development, which would result in greater density in the remainder of the District, fewer housing units, less open space, or some combination of these possibilities. The preservation of this resource would also significantly constrain the design of the proposed Plan in ways that could make future development of the District more difficult and may undermine the benefits of the proposed Plan. The former Empire Millwork Corporation Building could be demolished as-of-right under existing conditions, and mitigation measures such as photographic documentation would not be required.
- For traffic, the proposed Plan and anticipated development on Lots B and D would result in significant adverse traffic impacts that cannot be fully alleviated with practical mitigation measures. Because of existing congestion at a number of intersections, even a minimal increase in traffic would result in unmitigated impacts. Based on a sensitivity analysis of intersections within the study area, it was determined that the addition of five cars during the Saturday midday peak period would trigger an impact that cannot be fully mitigated. Thus, almost any new development in the District, including new industrial development that could be constructed as-of-right, would result in unmitigated traffic impacts, and no reasonable alternative could be developed to avoid such impacts.
- For pedestrian conditions, the proposed Plan and anticipated development on Lots B and D would result in significant adverse pedestrian impacts at four study area crosswalks that may not be fully mitigated because the widening of these crosswalks via restriping is limited by, per NYCDOT standards, the widths of the adjoining sidewalks. In order to make full mitigation possible, the incremental pedestrian volumes would have to be reduced by approximately 30 percent and the parking associated with the Lot B development would have to be located on the north side of Roosevelt Avenue. This would require a substantial reduction in the development program.
- In terms of noise, to avoid the significant adverse noise impact expected at one location (World's Fair Marina Park—Receptor 3) during a single analysis period, project-generated traffic increases on roadways adjacent to Receptor 3 would have to decrease. Traffic-generated volumes would need to decrease by approximately 29 percent on Boat Basin Road and 12 percent on World's Fair Marina to eliminate the significant impact at Receptor 3. Such reductions would necessitate a substantial reduction in the proposed Plan development program, and no reasonable alternative could be developed to avoid such impacts without substantially compromising the proposed Plan's stated goals. The noise level anticipated at World's Fair Marina Park in the future with the proposed Plan frequently occurs at parks or portions of parks that are adjacent to heavily trafficked roadways.

## **FLUSHING BRIDGE ALTERNATIVE**

The Flushing Bridge Alternative would result in the same development within the District as the proposed Plan, and any impacts and associated mitigation identified for the proposed Plan would also be the same

for the Flushing Bridge Alternative. The bridge itself would occupy land outside the District, including mapped wetlands along the Flushing River and within a parking lot at the foot of 37th Avenue. The bridge would need to be designed and engineered to minimize any effects on these wetlands, and subsequent investigation would be required to determine the potential for archaeological sensitivity and whether areas of soil disturbance contain hazardous materials. Like the proposed Plan, the Flushing Bridge Alternative would result in substantial public benefits from redevelopment of the District. The Flushing Bridge Alternative would also improve pedestrian access to the District, increase access to proposed open space, and help integrate new development in the District with surrounding amenities.

### **MUNICIPAL SERVICES ALTERNATIVE**

The Municipal Services Alternative would allow the continuation of industrial uses within the District but would provide for new public infrastructure (streets and utilities) to serve existing and future businesses. Unlike the proposed Plan, this alternative would not result in the creation of a dynamic, sustainable community that integrates regional attractions and residential, retail, and other uses. It would not provide for new affordable housing units, community facilities, or open space within the District. Also unlike the proposed Plan, the Municipal Services Alternative would not advance a number of the Downtown Flushing Development Framework's fundamental goals, including the creation of a regional destination that would enhance economic growth in Downtown Flushing and Corona, and integration of new development in the District with surrounding amenities.

Under the Municipal Services Alternative, the zoning of the District would not be changed, a URP would not be adopted, and a Special District would not be created. Similarly, the demapping or mapping of streets or acquisition of rights-of-way associated with the proposed Plan would not occur. As the improvements would largely be limited to public property, and existing private properties would remain developed with buildings at their current grade, this alternative presents more serious complications with respect to the feasibility of effectively upgrading the area's infrastructure than would whole-scale redevelopment of the District as would occur under the proposed Plan.

The existing storm sewer system in the area, which drains to outfalls at 126th Street and 127th Street, is insufficiently sized to accommodate the runoff that is currently being generated. To eliminate this deficiency, a new storm sewer system, including new piping and infrastructure, such as manholes and catch basins, would need to be installed. Based on the elevation of the existing streets and outfalls, and the various distances over which stormwater would be required to travel, there is not sufficient elevation in all areas of the District to make an adequately sized and properly functioning storm sewer system. A substantial portion of the streets in the southern portion of the District would have to be raised to a grade sufficient to allow the system to function hydraulically.

Unlike the proposed Plan, the Municipal Services Alternative would not result in the filling of District to flood elevation. The District streets would not be elevated to the 100-year floodplain elevation—to do so would be infeasible given that the grades of existing developed lots would remain at their current elevation. However, streets in a substantial portion of the District would need to be raised between approximately 1 and 3 feet. Such changes would create differences in elevation between the new streets and the existing lots that abut them, which would create a serious complication with respect to successfully engineering an effective drainage plan. Specifically, each lot would have to install pumps to convey stormwater from that lot into the new stormwater system, which would exist at a higher grade than the lot. Any private parcel requiring a pump and hook up to the stormwater system would be required to meet DEP pretreatment requirements. Pretreatment on certain lots may not be feasible due to lack of adequate space to install and operate the necessary equipment. While the provision of new storm

sewer lines and new or expanded outfalls would decrease the frequency and severity of flooding in the District (assuming that pumps are installed on privately owned lots), there would still be potential for flooding during storm conditions, since much of the District, including the new streets, would remain below the 100-year floodplain.

Because the District would remain built out with industrial uses, unlike the proposed Plan, an on-site detention tank or other comparable detention feature necessary to avoid expanding the existing outfalls or constructing a new outfall could not be provided. Therefore, in order to accommodate stormwater runoff generated onsite that is beyond the discharge capacity of the existing outfalls on 126th Street and 127th Street, these outfalls and sections of their piping would need to be reconstructed; alternatively a new outfall could be provided in combination with rebuilding the existing outfalls, although that option would be the least cost effective. In order for the new storm sewer system to meet the DEC discharge water quality requirements, pretreatment of stormwater would be necessary prior to the point of discharge.

Although any necessary remediation of hazardous materials would be undertaken in areas of utility construction, a comprehensive remediation plan for the District would not be implemented, and some soil and groundwater would continue to be contaminated.

Similar to the proposed Plan, the Municipal Services Alternative would require a new pump station and main to transmit sanitary flow from the District to the existing 96-inch-diameter City sewer in 108th Street (which flows to the Bowery Bay Water Pollution Control Plant [WPCP]). The new pump station would most likely be constructed within the southern area of the District on a lot purchased from private lot owners, or alternatively would be constructed at a location outside the District. The sanitary force main route would be directed across the area occupied by the Citi Field parking lots to connect to the nearest system at 108th Street en route to the Bowery Bay WPCP.

The Municipal Services Alternative would not change the allowable development density of the District; however, it is likely that some new industrial uses could occur within the District once the new infrastructure has been provided. This potential new development would generate vehicle trips (although less than the proposed Plan), and like the proposed Plan, the Municipal Services Alternative could result in significant adverse traffic impacts at a majority of study area locations, given the substantial no-build traffic in the study area even without development from the proposed Plan. The Municipal Services Alternative would not result in the business relocation associated with the proposed Plan and would not result in permanent direct residential or business displacement; however, it may result in some temporary displacement of businesses to provide for an on-site pump station. Due to the extensive sewer reconstruction that would be required, some temporary displacement and access impacts may be relatively long term.

### **STAGED ACQUISITION ALTERNATIVE**

The Staged Acquisition Alternative would result in a development program that is the same as the proposed Plan, but properties would be acquired and developed over time to allow the City additional time to find suitable relocation sites and to spread the cost of property acquisition and infrastructure improvements over time. It is anticipated that the western portion of the District would be developed by 2013, with the eastern portion of the site to be built out by 2017. There would be no lag time between development of the western and eastern portions of the District.

At full build-out, this Alternative would develop the District with the same gross floor area and mix of uses as the proposed Plan. In general, the most substantial differences between the Staged Acquisition Alternative and the proposed Plan are the timing of property acquisition and construction phasing. While

the necessary remediation, grading, and infrastructure improvements would take place across the District at the beginning stages of construction for the proposed Plan, they would occur more incrementally under this alternative. This could require additional safeguards to ensure that existing hazardous materials contamination on the eastern portion of the District would not migrate to the western portion of the District subsequent to the remediation of the western properties. It could also require a more complex stormwater management plan, since new storm systems put in place prior to 2013 would need to ensure adequate retention and discharge of stormwater in the western portion of the District, and after 2013 would need to be integrated with new stormwater systems put in place on the eastern portion of the site to ensure efficient District-wide stormwater management. Roadway access to the eastern portion of the site would need to be maintained for several years while the western portion of the site is being developed, and until such time when the City acquires the eastern properties for development under the full build-out.

The Staged Acquisition Alternative would have differences in the siting of certain uses and the layout of the District's street grid when compared with the proposed Plan. Under the Staged Acquisition Alternative, new connections to the Van Wyck Expressway would conform to the existing street network. The southern portion of 127th Street and all of 34th Avenue would remain in their current alignments. Willetts Point Boulevard would remain in place in order to allow access to existing utilities beneath it, and would remain open to vehicular traffic except for its southern end, which would serve as a pedestrian boulevard and open space.

The siting of uses would be the same under the Staged Acquisition Alternative and proposed Plan. The layout of the District's street grid would also be the same as under the proposed Plan. However, under the Staged Acquisition Alternative, new connections to the Van Wyck Expressway would conform to the existing street network. Before complete acquisition of the eastern portion of the District, east-west streets would be elevated above the floodplain in the western portion of the District, and would be graded to slope down to the existing streets to the east, allowing continued access to and from remaining businesses in the District. After acquisition of the eastern properties, streets in that area would be raised above the floodplain. Streets in the redeveloped western portion of the District that were constructed to slope down to existing eastern streets would be regraded to meet the new elevated streets to the east.

The Staged Acquisition Alternative, like the proposed Plan, would utilize E-designations and Restrictive Declarations to ensure that there would be no significant adverse impacts with respect to hazardous materials, noise attenuation, and air quality (specifically associated with the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems [HVAC]).

In general, traffic generated in 2013 under the Staged Acquisition Alternative would be approximately 60 to 70 percent of the traffic generated under the full build-out of the Proposed Plan, or the full build-out of the Staged Acquisition Alternative. An examination of eight critical intersections during the Saturday midday non-game and Saturday pre-game peak hours indicates that, in general, the extent of significant adverse traffic impacts in 2013 under the Staged Acquisition Alternative would be similar to those identified in 2017 with the proposed Plan. Mitigation measures for 2013 would also be similar to those identified for the proposed Plan in 2017.

In 2013, the number of transit and pedestrian trips generated as a result of the Staged Acquisition Alternative would be substantially fewer than those projected for the proposed Plan. Nonetheless, the Staged Acquisition Alternative in 2013 is expected to result in significant adverse impacts at the same street-level subway stairway. Although the amount of stairway widening necessary for mitigation would be less in 2013, it is anticipated that the full widening that would take place with the proposed Plan would also take place under this alternative by 2013. Compared with the proposed Plan, the Staged Acquisition

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Alternative in 2013 would have virtually the same significant adverse impacts on bus operations in the study area. However, under this alternative, the impacts would not be as severe, and fewer additional buses would be needed to mitigate the impacts. Similarly, this Alternative in 2013 would yield fewer and less severe significant adverse pedestrian impacts than the proposed Plan, and mitigation measures would be less.

Like the proposed Plan, this alternative in 2013 and 2017 would not result in any significant adverse air quality impacts from either mobile or stationary sources.

Noise levels in 2017 with the Staged Acquisition Alternative would be the same as for the full build-out of the proposed Plan. However, unlike the proposed Plan, there would be no significant adverse noise impacts in 2013 with the Staged Acquisition Alternative. As with the proposed Plan, window/wall attenuation measures would be included in buildings constructed by both 2013 and 2017 to achieve acceptable interior noise levels.

This Notice of Completion for the Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement for the Willetts Point Development Plan has been prepared in accordance with Article 8 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law.

### **F. CONTACT**

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The FGEIS is also available on the websites of the New York City Economic Development Corporation and the Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination:

<http://www.nycedc.com/willetspoint>  
and  
<http://www.nyc.gov/oec>.



Robert R. Kulikowski, Ph.D.  
Assistant to the Mayor  
On behalf of the Deputy Mayor  
For Economic Development

September 12, 2008  
Date