Chapter 19: Neighborhood Character

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers the impacts of the proposed Cornell NYC Tech project on neighborhood character. According to the June 2012 *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, neighborhood character is an amalgam of various elements that give neighborhoods their distinct "personality." These elements may include a neighborhood's land use, socioeconomic conditions, open space, historic and cultural resources, urban design, visual resources, shadows, transportation, and noise. Not all of these elements affect neighborhood character in all cases; a neighborhood usually draws its distinctive character from a few defining elements.

This analysis considers the impacts of the proposed project on the neighborhood character of the project site and the surrounding area, and relies on the analyses of the components of neighborhood character (i.e., land use, socioeconomic conditions, open space, historic and cultural resources, urban design, visual resources, shadows, transportation, and noise) as analyzed elsewhere in the environmental impact statement (EIS). As detailed in this chapter, the proposed Cornell NYC Tech project would substantially transform the character of project site and its relation to the larger area; however, these changes would not be considered adverse. Instead, the proposed project would add new activity, vibrancy, and vitality that would be compatible with the defining characteristics of the primary and secondary study areas' neighborhood character.

B. METHODOLOGY

An analysis of neighborhood character begins by determining whether a proposed project has the potential to result in significant adverse impacts in any technical area (land use, socioeconomic conditions, open space, historic and cultural resources, urban design, visual resources, shadows, transportation, and noise) or if a project would result in a combination of moderate effects to several elements that could cumulatively impact neighborhood character. If the answer is yes, a preliminary assessment is undertaken; the preliminary assessment first identifies the defining features of the neighborhood, and then assesses whether the project has the potential to impact these defining features, either through the potential for significant adverse impacts or a combination of moderate effects. If the preliminary assessment concludes that a proposed project has the potential to affect defining features of a neighborhood, a detailed assessment of neighborhood character is undertaken. The detailed assessment uses information from the preliminary assessment as a baseline and the future No-Action and future With-Action conditions are then projected and compared to determine whether a project would result in a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character. This assessment considers the incremental changes associated with the proposed project, compared to the No Action condition, for the 2018 and 2038 analysis years, in each relevant technical area.

As described in the relevant chapters of this EIS, the proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts in the areas of land use, zoning, and public policy; socioeconomic conditions; open space; shadows; urban design; or noise. However, the proposed project would result in potential significant adverse impacts in the areas of historic and cultural resources and transportation. Therefore, a preliminary assessment of neighborhood character impacts from the proposed project is provided below. The preliminary assessment describes the defining features of the neighborhood and then assesses the potential for the proposed project to impact these defining features. The preliminary assessment is followed by a detailed assessment which considers whether the proposed project would result in significant adverse neighborhood character impacts.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER COMPONENTS

As discussed above, the components of neighborhood character include land use, socioeconomic conditions, open space, historic and cultural resources, urban design, visual resources, shadows, transportation, and noise.

STUDY AREAS

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the study area for neighborhood character should be consistent with the study areas in the relevant technical areas, and may be modified, as appropriate, either to include any additional areas that may be affected by the project or to exclude areas that would clearly not be affected by the project. The project site and rezoning area are located south of the Ed Koch Queensboro Bridge, which acts as a physical divider between the southern portion of Roosevelt Island and the remainder of the Island. Accordingly, this chapter analyses two study areas: a primary study area that contains the area south of the Queensboro Bridge, including the project site, rezoning area, Sportspark, South Point Park, and ~~the future~~ Four Freedoms Park; and a secondary study area that contains the remainder of Roosevelt Island north of the Queensboro Bridge.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, neighborhood character impacts are rare and it would be under unusual circumstances that, in the absence of an impact in any of the relevant technical areas, a combination of moderate effects to the neighborhood would result in an impact to neighborhood character. Moreover, a significant impact identified in one of the technical areas that contribute to a neighborhood's character is not automatically equivalent to a significant impact on neighborhood character. Rather, it serves as an indication that neighborhood character may be significantly affected.

C. PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

DEFINING FEATURES

PRIMARY STUDY AREA

The character of the primary study area is primarily defined by institutional uses, open space and recreational resources, and the physical setting on the waterfront, with sweeping views of the East River, Manhattan, and Queens. Pedestrian activity in the primary study area is concentrated near the entrances to Sportspark and Goldwater Hospital, as well as the adjacent open space

resources, including the waterfront promenades, Four Freedoms Park, and South Point Park. Vehicular traffic is light in this area, and is primarily related to the hospital. ~~There is also current construction activity in this area, for Four Freedoms Park.~~

The northern boundary of the primary study area is the Queensboro Bridge, a towering structure that limits views to the secondary study area and bifurcates the Island. Underneath and south of the bridge is Sportspark, a major recreational amenity for Island residents. South of Sportpark is the Goldwater Hospital, a defining and physically dominant component of the area that was built in 1939. The hospital is a historic resource (State and National Register [S/NR]-eligible) with a weathered appearance. On the west side of the hospital complex, there are lawns and trees; by contrast, the east side of the hospital complex is primarily paved and contains few trees. South of the hospital, South Point Park is a passive natural area that contains two historic resources: the stabilized ruin of the Smallpox Hospital, a Gothic structure built in 1865; and Strecker Laboratory, which was built in 1892 and today houses subway electrical infrastructure. South of South Point Park is ~~the future site of~~ Four Freedoms Park, which features a memorial to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, as well as a seawall and a lawn. ~~is currently fenced off and under construction.~~ On the east and west sides of the primary study area north of South Point Park, along the waterfront, are promenades that extend into the secondary study area.

SECONDARY STUDY AREA

The character of the secondary study area contains many of the same elements as the primary study area, including substantial open space and recreational resources and a unique physical setting on the waterfront, with expansive views. However, whereas institutional uses predominate in the primary study area, the secondary study area is primarily residential in character, with ancillary retail and community facility uses. The northernmost portion of the area is institutional, as Coler Hospital is a prominent use in that area.

The residential uses in the secondary study area are generally characterized by mid- and high-rise apartment buildings. The original residential core of the Island consists of the four high rise residential complexes that were completed by 1976: Island House, Eastwood, Rivercross, and Westview. They are located in the middle of the Island, oriented towards Main Street, the primary thoroughfare on the Island, with neighborhood retail uses at the street level. More recent residential development includes Southtown, located south of the residential core, and Manhattan Park and the Octagon, located to the north of the residential core. In addition to residential and local retail uses in contemporary glass and masonry towers, Southtown contains passive open space areas and major transportation centers, including the Roosevelt Island Tram station and the Roosevelt Island subway station. The Octagon, the shortest of the residential buildings on the Island, contains residential wings that extend from the namesake historical building, in an area surrounded on most sides by open space. North of the Octagon is the Coler Hospital facility, which is similar in character to Goldwater Hospital. Community facilities are common in the study area, including schools, day care centers, and places of worship.

As noted above, the Island contains substantial open space resources, including the promenades that extend along the eastern and western waterfronts. Other notable open space resources in the secondary study area include Firefighter Field, the Southtown Commons, Blackwell Park, Capobianco Field, Northtown Plaza, Ecological Park, Octagon Park, and Lighthouse Park. Overall, as described in more detail in Chapter 5, “Open Space,” Roosevelt Island contains more than 40 acres of publicly accessible passive and active open space, in addition to private lawns and landscaping that are part of the residential developments.

Due to the physical limits to accessing the Island, its transportation facilities are important neighborhood features. The Roosevelt Island subway station, located on Main Street in the Southtown development, is a major center of activity. The subway station is in close proximity to the Roosevelt Island aerial tramway, which is located adjacent to the north side of the Queensboro Bridge, on Main Street. The tram connects Roosevelt Island to Second Avenue and East 59th Street in Manhattan, and has become a recognizable symbol of the Island. The only vehicular access to the Island is from the Roosevelt Island Bridge to Queens. On the north side of the Roosevelt Island Bridge is a Gristedes grocery store that is below a large 1,500-space multi-level parking garage called Motorgate. Motorgate was built pursuant to the original master plan for Roosevelt Island, which called for consolidation of parking facilities in one location, in order to create a pedestrian-oriented environment on the Island.

The Island contains six historic resources that are distinct from the Island's characteristic modernist architecture. Most of the resources are small in scale—south of the project site, the Smallpox Hospital and Strecker Memorial Laboratory, and north of the project site, the Blackwell House, the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, and the lighthouse at the northernmost tip of the Island—with the exception of the Queensboro Bridge, which is a towering structure that bifurcates the Island.

Overall, Roosevelt Island is a unique community that is shaped in part by its physical separation from Manhattan and Queens. The physical setting of the Island provides for sweeping scenic views, which are accessible to the public through a network of open spaces, most notably the waterfront promenades. The secondary study area is residential in character, and also contains supporting retail and community facility uses that are typically in the ground floors of high-rise apartment buildings. These defining features contribute to a distinctive neighborhood character.

POTENTIAL TO AFFECT THE DEFINING FEATURES OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Development of the first phase of the proposed project, consisting of 790,000 gross square foot (gsf), would be completed and operational in 2018. That development would be preceded by demolition of Goldwater Hospital. By 2038, the proposed project would result in the redevelopment of the project site with a 2.13 million gsf academic-oriented mixed-use development, including 2.5 acres of new publicly accessible open space (see Chapter 1, "Project Description").

The proposed project would have the potential to affect the defining features of the neighborhood as follows:

- Land Use. The proposed project would replace the vacant Goldwater Hospital complex with a sizable new academically focused mixed-use campus development that would include academic, corporate co-location, Executive Education Center, and residential uses.
- Socioeconomic Conditions. The proposed project would introduce a new population to a site that would be vacant in the No Action condition.
- Open Space. The proposed project would introduce a new academic and worker population that would use open space developed as part of the project and existing open spaces within Roosevelt Island.
- Shadows. The proposed project would replace a lower-scale vacant hospital complex with taller buildings of varying heights.

- Historic and Cultural Resources. The proposed project would replace the State and National Register-Eligible Goldwater Hospital complex with new buildings and open space.
- Urban Design and Visual Resources. The proposed project would replace the Goldwater Hospital complex with new buildings and open space.
- Transportation. The proposed project would introduce a new population that would increase activity—both pedestrian and vehicular—at the project site and in the surrounding neighborhood.
- Noise. The proposed project would increase vehicular activity at the project site and would thereby potentially result in increased noise levels and in the surrounding neighborhood.

As noted above, the primary study area is defined by institutional uses, open space and recreational resources, and the physical setting on the waterfront, with sweeping views of the East River, Manhattan, and Queens. Similarly, the secondary study area is defined by its primarily residential character, open space and recreational resources, and waterfront setting.

As detailed in other sections of this EIS, the proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts to land use, socioeconomic conditions, open space, shadows, urban design and visual resources, and noise. The proposed project would result in a significant adverse impact to historic resources due to the demolition of Goldwater Hospital, which could affect the neighborhood character of the primary and secondary study areas. The proposed project would also result in potential significant adverse transportation impacts, which could affect the neighborhood character of the primary and secondary study areas. As the proposed project could affect contributing elements of the character of the area, a detailed assessment of neighborhood character is warranted and is presented in the next section.

D. DETAILED ASSESSMENT

As per the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a detailed assessment of neighborhood character builds upon the preliminary assessment to project future No-Action and With-Action conditions, in order to determine whether the proposed project would result in significant adverse neighborhood character impacts.

FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED PROJECT

In the No-Action condition, the project site is assumed to be occupied by a vacant hospital complex for both the 2018 and 2038 analysis years. As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," patients and services currently housed in Goldwater Hospital will be relocated elsewhere independently of, and prior to, the proposed project. No redevelopment or reuse of the hospital site is currently anticipated in the No-Action condition. The land use conditions of the primary study area would change due to the removal of an active institutional use. Left vacant, the hospital complex could detract from the natural setting of the primary study area, and could therefore reduce the desirability and usability of the neighborhood's open space resources.

~~Also in the primary study area by 2018, Four Freedoms Park will be completed and opened to the public. This new open space resource is expected to positively affect neighborhood character by improving the quantity and quality of open space resources in the study area, which are a defining feature of the area. The new park is also expected to draw more visitors to the area, which will increase pedestrian activity.~~

In the secondary study area, 540 new residential units are expected to be built in Southtown by the 2018 analysis year. This new development is expected to be consistent with the existing neighborhood character of the secondary study area. The new buildings are expected to be similar in style and character to the existing Southtown development but taller at 21-, 25-, and 29 stories, and would represent the fulfillment of RIOC's master plan for the secondary study area. The development would reinforce the residential character of the area and would not be expected to affect the other defining features of the neighborhood.

No additional changes that would impact neighborhood character are currently anticipated between 2018 and 2038.

PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

As discussed above under "Preliminary Assessment," the proposed project would affect contributing elements of the primary and secondary study area's defining characteristics. This section analyzes the probable impacts of the proposed project on these defining characteristics with regard to each relevant technical area for the 2018 and 2038 analysis years.

LAND USE, ZONING, AND PUBLIC POLICY

Primary Study Area

While the proposed project would alter the land use composition of the project site by the 2018 and 2038 analysis years, the changes would not be considered adverse pursuant to the *CEQR Technical Manual*. Compared to the No Action condition, the proposed project would improve neighborhood character by replacing vacant buildings and vacant land with a vibrant mixed-use academic-oriented development. The proposed project would create a lively north-south pedestrian spine, improve the pedestrian experience on the project site, and maintain pedestrian access to the waterfront, a defining characteristic of the area.

The proposed 2.5 acres of publicly accessible open space that would be built by 2038 would provide an important amenity to residents and users of the Cornell NYC Tech campus, as well as the larger Roosevelt Island population. As existing open space and recreational resources are a defining element of the primary study area, this new open space would be compatible with surrounding uses and would be consistent with existing neighborhood character.

While some aspects of the primary study area would remain substantially the same after completion of Phase 1 and full build out in the 2018 and 2038 analysis years, including substantial open space and recreational resources and a unique physical setting on the waterfront, with expansive views, the overall character would be dramatically altered due to the replacement of an institutional use, the Goldwater Hospital facility (which would be vacant in the No-Action condition) with the Cornell NYC Tech campus's mix of academic, corporate co-location, Executive Education Center, and residential uses.

Secondary Study Area

The proposed project is not expected to result in significant changes to the neighborhood character of the secondary study area in either the 2018 or 2038 analysis year. The Queensboro Bridge acts as a physical barrier that would inhibit the proposed project from substantially altering the well established character of the area north of the bridge. While street-level activity in the secondary study area would change due to the additional pedestrian and vehicular traffic generated by the proposed project, the additional street-level activity would be concentrated in

areas of existing activity, such as Main Street and the area adjacent to the subway station, and would not be considered a significant adverse neighborhood character impact. This additional activity could positively affect the character of the secondary study area by supporting a greater range of local businesses and organizations and further animating street life. Overall, the land use changes associated with the proposed project would not result in any significant adverse neighborhood character impacts in either 2018 or 2038.

SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Primary Study Area

In the No-Action condition, the project site is assumed to be occupied by a vacant hospital complex in both the 2018 and 2038 analysis years. As the proposed project would develop a vacant site, it would not directly displace any businesses, institutions, or residents.

As the primary study area is not expected to contain any residents or businesses in the No Action condition, there would be no indirect significant adverse impacts from the proposed project in this area from Phase 1 or the full build out of the proposed project. The proposed project would change the socioeconomic character of the primary study area by adding new residents, academic activities, and businesses. This new socioeconomic activity would be expected to improve neighborhood character by contributing to the vibrancy and vitality of the primary study area in both the 2018 and 2038 analysis years.

Secondary Study Area

The proposed project would introduce new University-affiliated residents to the primary and secondary study areas in both the 2018 and 2038 analysis years. As discussed in Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions," these on-campus residential units would have minimal indirect effects in the secondary study area. The off-campus academic population could seek new housing opportunities in the secondary study area or to a greater extent within a reasonable commuting distance of the campus. These households, whether new to the market or representing households already in New York City, would participate in the private residential marketplace and would be dispersed over a larger area than just the secondary study area. Since the income profile of the academic and worker population is not expected to exceed that of the average household income of the study area, it is not expected that potential new demand would change the market profile such that it would result in indirect residential displacement. Therefore, the population introduced by both Phase 1 and the full build out of the proposed project would not be expected to result in significant adverse indirect residential displacement impacts.

The proposed project would not result in any significant adverse impacts due to indirect business displacement. The proposed project would introduce a substantial amount of new economic activity to the study area, and it also is expected to add economic variety and vitality to complement the growing residential population in the secondary study area after completion of Phase 1 and full build.

The proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts on specific industries. Both Phase 1 and the full build out of the proposed project would not directly displace any businesses, nor would it have substantial adverse effects on business conditions in any industry or any category of business within or outside the study area.

Therefore, the proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character due to socioeconomic conditions in either the 2018 or 2038 analysis year.

OPEN SPACE

The primary and secondary study areas' open spaces are a defining element of neighborhood character. The new resident and worker populations that would be introduced by Phase 1 and the full build out of the proposed project would place additional demands on these open spaces. As discussed in Chapter 5, "Open Space," while the ratio of open space per 1,000 non-residents (i.e., workers and students who live off-site) would decline in the With Action condition, this ratio would continue to well exceed the city's median community district open space ratio in the Full Build condition. As the proposed project would not result in a 5 percent decrease in an open space ratio in an area currently below the city's median community district open space ratio of 1.5, the changes in these ratios would not result in a significant adverse impact. The active open space ratio per 1,000 residents would decrease by greater than 5 percent, and this ratio would be below DCP planning guidelines. However, the study area would continue to be well-served by open space overall and as discussed in Chapter 5, "Open Space," the proposed project would require less active open space than a typical residential development project due to its relatively high daytime population and low proportion of school-aged children. Furthermore, the full build out of the proposed project would also provide a minimum of 2.5 acres of new publicly-accessible open space. This new open space would be in keeping with the character of the primary and secondary study areas, and would become an important neighborhood resource for residents of the Cornell NYC Tech campus and all of Roosevelt Island. Due to these factors, the proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts to neighborhood character due to open space resources in 2018 and 2038.

SHADOWS

With Phase 1 and the full build out of the proposed Cornell NYC Tech project, the waterfront promenade to the east and west of the project site would receive incremental shadows in all seasons ~~with the exception of the winter analysis day when the east promenade would not receive any incremental shadow with just Phase 1 development~~; the outdoor basketball court associated with Sportpark north of the project site would receive incremental shadows in all seasons; South Point Park would receive brief incremental shadows in the late spring and summer, and Firefighter Field would receive brief incremental shadows on the winter analysis day only. These incremental shadows would not result in significant adverse shadow impacts on any of these resources, and would not adversely affect neighborhood character.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Primary Study Area

The demolition of the Goldwater Hospital complex, which is eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, would result in a significant adverse impact on this architectural resource, but would not have a significant adverse effect on neighborhood character. As described above under Section C, "Preliminary Assessment," the existing defining features of the primary study area are the institutional uses, open spaces, and waterfront setting. Whereas the hospital is a defining and physically dominant feature of the primary study area under existing conditions, in the No Action condition, the hospital complex would be vacant, would detract from the physical setting of the project site, and would not contribute positively to

neighborhood character in either analysis year. The demolition of the hospital and its replacement with Phase 1 and the full build out of the Cornell NYC Tech campus would have beneficial land use effects on the primary study area. Due to these factors, although the demolition of the hospital complex would result in a significant adverse impact to this architectural resource, it would not be considered a significant adverse neighborhood character impact.

While the redevelopment of the project site with 9~~10~~ new tall buildings and landscaping elements at full build would alter the settings of the three architectural resources in the primary study area, the Strecker Memorial Laboratory and the Steam Plant would continue to be located in a varied context that typifies the study area's neighborhood character. In addition, the setting and views to the Queensboro Bridge would change with the redevelopment of the project site, however views of the bridge would not be fully obstructed and many prominent views to the bridge would remain available in both the 2018 and 2038 analysis years. Further, with the proposed project the three architectural resources in the primary study area would continue to be located in an area characterized by structures of different scales, architectural styles, and from different construction periods on Roosevelt Island. Therefore, these changes would not result in any significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character in the primary study area in either 2018 or 2038.

Secondary Study Area

The effect of the adverse impact related to the demolition of the vacant Goldwater Hospital complex would generally be limited to the visitors' and residents' experience in the primary study area, and would not resonate through the secondary study area. Neither the proposed Phase 1 development nor the full build out of the proposed project on the project site would adversely affect architectural resources on the remainder of Roosevelt Island, as the Queensboro Bridge acts as a physical and visual barrier between the primary and secondary study areas. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character due to historic and cultural resources in either 2018 or 2038.

URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Primary Study Area

Compared to the No-Action condition, the With Action visual appearance and thus the pedestrian experience of the development sites would change considerably with the Phase 1 development and with the full build out of the proposed project; however, as described in Chapter 8, "Urban Design and Visual Resources," the changes associated with both Phase 1 and the full build out of the proposed project would not meet the *CEQR Technical Manual* threshold for a significant adverse urban design impact. Rather, instead of a complex of vacant hospital buildings, the pedestrian would experience new, taller buildings with active ground-floor uses, including campus-related retail. New open spaces would visually enhance the experience of walking around the project sites. Greater levels of pedestrian activity generated by the proposed uses on the sites would be self-reinforcing, making the project area more inviting and appealing to visit, which would be beneficial to the character of the neighborhood.

With the development of the proposed buildings, the height and bulk of structures on the project site would change substantially with the Phase 1 development and with the full build out of the proposed project. While considerable, this change is not anticipated to be significantly adverse. The total FAR that could be developed on site would not change from the No-Action condition,

and the proposed development would comply with the bulk, height, lot coverage, and setback regulations of the proposed special district. Furthermore, as described below, the proposed development on the project site would be generally consistent with development on the north side of the Island. The proposed site plan for the full build out of the proposed project would not create strong streetwalls along the loop road except near the northern academic building, which is consistent with existing character of the area.

In both the 2018 and 2038 analysis years, views of the East River, Manhattan, and Queens would still be available from numerous vantage points within the project site and rezoning area in the With Action condition. Furthermore, the special district would require that a visual corridor of at least 50 feet be established through the project site that could provide views to both the Manhattan and Queens waterfronts. Therefore, both Phase 1 and the full build out of the proposed project would be appropriate for the project site's physical setting, which is a defining component of the character of the area.

Overall, the proposed project would enhance the pedestrian's experience of the project site and improve the urban design of the project site by replacing vacant buildings and vacant land with new active, mixed-use development by the 2018 and 2038 analysis years, which would be beneficial to the character of the neighborhood.

Secondary Study Area

The proposed project would have only minor urban design effects to the secondary study area in the 2018 and 2038 analysis years, and would not adversely affect the neighborhood character. The proposed open spaces associated with both Phase 1 and the full build out of the proposed project would visually enhance the experience of walking around the study area, and would help to integrate the new campus with the rest of the Island.

The majority of the buildings to be developed on the project site by 2018 and 2038 would be consistent with the taller buildings on the north side of the Island, which are generally towers on large, irregular sites within a landscaped setting. At approximately 320 feet in height, the proposed residential building would be taller than any of the buildings that would exist on the Island in the No-Action condition; however, it would be slightly lower than the height of the two Queensboro Bridge towers ~~anchorages~~ on the Island, which are approximately 350 feet tall. The location of the tallest building at the northern edge of the site is intended to link this residential tower to those on the north side of the Island, and to minimize the potential shadowing and wind effects of the structure on the remainder of the proposed buildings and open spaces.

While the context of on-Island views from north and south of the project site would change notably by 2018 and 2038 with the new development, these views are anticipated to be an improvement over the views in the No-Action condition, which would include vacant buildings on the project site. Existing view corridors and views to visual resources along the limited on-Island streets would not be obstructed by Phase 1 or the full build out of the proposed project, except for some views of the Queensboro Bridge; however, the bridge would remain highly visible throughout the rest of the study area. The waterfront promenade would continue to provide the most expansive views to on- and off-Island resources. The context of the limited views to the visual resources on the north side of the Island is not anticipated to change considerably. While Phase 1 and the full build out of the proposed project would result in substantial changes to the urban design of the project site and views to visual resources, these changes would not result in a significant adverse impact related to urban design and visual resources, and would not adversely impact neighborhood character.

TRANSPORTATION

As discussed in Chapter 14, "Transportation," and Chapter 22, "Mitigation," in the With Action condition, by 2038, two intersections on Roosevelt Island would experience significant adverse traffic impacts—West Road and Main Street and the Roosevelt Island Bridge Ramp and Main Street. Mitigation measures, including the installation of new traffic signals at both locations, have been identified and have been determined to be feasible. ~~will be further reviewed for the Final EIS by RIOC and NYCDOT; if these mitigation measures are not implemented, the impacts would remain unmitigated~~. While the proposed mitigation measures, if implemented, would be noticeable, they would not affect neighborhood character on Roosevelt Island. Phase 1 of the proposed project would not result in any significant adverse traffic impacts on Roosevelt Island.

The proposed project would result in significant adverse impacts to eastbound and westbound Q102 bus service, during the AM and peak periods in both the 2018 and 2038 analysis years. As discussed in Chapter 22, this impact could be mitigated by adding additional peak period bus service by 2018 and 2038. NYCT routinely monitors changes in bus ridership and makes the necessary service adjustments where warranted. Since the bus route is not a defining feature of the neighborhood, this transportation impact would not result in a significant adverse impact to neighborhood character.

Significant adverse pedestrian impacts are anticipated in the With Action condition in 2038 at two locations along West Road (the east sidewalk between Road 5 and the subway station and the east sidewalk between the tram station west bus stop and the Queensboro Bridge). Measures to mitigate this impact would include sidewalk widening~~; if the sidewalk widening is determined infeasible, these impacts would remain unmitigated~~. The pedestrian impacts~~, either mitigated or unmitigated,~~ would not be considered significant adverse neighborhood character impacts since such impacts would not change the defining features of the primary study area (i.e., the institutional uses, open spaces, and waterfront setting). Phase 1 of the proposed project would not result in any significant adverse pedestrian impacts.

In general, while both Phase 1 and the full build out of the proposed project would increase levels of vehicular and pedestrian activity on Roosevelt Island, this increased activity would not result in a significant adverse effect on neighborhood character on Roosevelt Island.

NOISE

As described in Chapter 17, "Noise," while noise levels in the study area would increase in the With Action condition in the 2018 and 2038 analysis years as compared to the No-Action condition—due to increased traffic—the magnitude of the increases would be imperceptible or barely perceptible to most listeners and below the *CEQR Technical Manual* threshold for a significant adverse noise impact. Therefore, there would be no significant adverse impact on neighborhood character with respect to noise in either 2018 or 2038.

E. CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the proposed project would result in a positive effect on the neighborhood character in the primary and secondary study areas with the completion of Phase 1 and full build out of the proposed project. Instead of a vacant hospital complex, the primary and secondary study areas would benefit from a new active, mixed-use academic oriented development, with a minimum of 2.5 acres of new publicly accessible open space by 2038. This development would be in keeping

with the defining characteristics of the neighborhood character of the primary and secondary study areas. By contrast, in the No Action condition, the vacant hospital complex could detract from the natural setting and open space resources of the study areas, which are defining neighborhood character features. Changes associated with Phase 1 and the full build out of the proposed project with regard to land use, zoning, and public policy; shadows; socioeconomic conditions; open space; urban design and visual resources; and noise are not expected to adversely affect neighborhood character.

With regard to historic and cultural resources, although the demolition of the hospital campus would result in a significant adverse impact to historic resources, it would not be considered a significant adverse neighborhood character impact. Absent the proposed project, the hospital complex would be vacant, would detract from the physical setting of the project site, and would not contribute positively to neighborhood character in either analysis year. The demolition of the hospital and its replacement with Phase 1 and the full build out of the Cornell NYC Tech campus would have beneficial land use effects on the primary study area. Therefore, demolition of the hospital complex would not be considered a significant adverse neighborhood character impact.

With regard to transportation, the proposed project would increase levels of vehicular and pedestrian activity on Roosevelt Island. While some significant adverse impacts (traffic, bus, and sidewalk) would require mitigation, the increased activity from the proposed project would not have a significant adverse effect on neighborhood character on Roosevelt Island in either the 2018 or 2038 analysis year.

Overall, the combined effect of changes to the defining elements would not create a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character in either the 2018 or 2038 analysis year. The major physical changes from the proposed project would occur only on the project site, which is physically separated from the secondary study area by the Queensboro Bridge. Within the primary study area, the neighborhood character would benefit from the 2.5 acres of new publicly accessible open space that would be provided on the project site by 2038, which would support a defining characteristic of the area. While the development on the project site by 2018 and 2038 would noticeably change the character of the area, these changes would not be considered adverse. Instead, Phase 1 and the full build out of the proposed project would add new activity, vibrancy, and vitality that would be compatible with the defining characteristics of the primary and secondary study areas' neighborhood character. ✷