

2.7 URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

2.7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers the potential of the Proposed Project to affect urban design and visual resources of the Project Area and the surround study areas.

The *CEQR Technical Manual* defines urban design as the totality of components that may affect a pedestrian's experience of public space. As noted in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the following elements play an important role in that experience:

- **STREETS.** For many neighborhoods, streets are the primary component of public space. The arrangement and orientation of streets define the location and flow of activity in an area, set street views, and create the blocks on which buildings and open spaces are organized. The apportionment of street space between cars, bicycles, transit, and sidewalk is critical to making a successful streetscape, as is the careful design of street furniture, grade, materials used, and permanent fixtures, including plantings, street lights, fire hydrants, curb cuts, or newsstands.
- **BUILDINGS.** Buildings support streets. A building's streetwalls form the most common backdrop in the city for public space. A building's size, shape, setbacks, lot coverage, placement on the zoning lot and block, the orientation of active uses, and pedestrian and vehicular entrances all play major roles in the vitality of the streetscape. The public realm also extends to building façades and rooftops, offering more opportunity to enrich the visual character of an area.
- **VISUAL RESOURCES.** A visual resource is the connection from the public realm to significant natural or built features, including views of the waterfront, public parks, landmark structures or districts, otherwise distinct buildings or groups of buildings, or natural resources.
- **OPEN SPACE.** For the purpose of urban design, open space includes public and private areas such as parks, yards, cemeteries, parking lots and privately owned public spaces.
- **NATURAL FEATURES.** Natural features include vegetation and geologic, topographic, and aquatic features. Rock out-croppings, steep slopes or varied ground elevation, beaches, or wetlands may help define the overall visual character of an area.
- **WIND.** Channelized wind pressure from between tall buildings and downwashed wind pressure from parallel tall buildings may cause winds that jeopardize pedestrian safety.

In an urban design assessment, the *CEQR Technical Manual* suggests consideration of whether and how a project may change the experience of a pedestrian in the project area. The assessment focuses on the components of a proposed project that may have the potential to alter the arrangement, appearance, and functionality of the built environment. The analysis of urban design relies on drawings, maps, renderings, and most importantly, photographs and photographic montages taken from pedestrian eye level. These representations allow the public to see what a project would look like.

In general, an assessment of urban design is needed when the project may have effects on one or more of the elements that contribute to the pedestrian experience described above. The *CEQR Technical Manual* also notes that there is no need to conduct an urban design analysis if a proposed project would be constructed within existing zoning envelopes, and would not result in physical changes beyond the bulk and form permitted "as-of-right." However, as the Proposed Project and subsequent development within the rezoning area will result in physical changes to the proposed rezoning area beyond the bulk and form currently permitted as-of-right within the existing zone, it has the potential to result in development that could alter the arrangement, appearance, and functionality of the built environment, and therefore, change the experience of a pedestrian in the Project Area. As such, further assessment is warranted.

2.7.2 METHODOLOGY

The *CEQR Technical Manual* notes that there are two main types of analyses for urban design and visual resources: a preliminary assessment, and a detailed assessment. Additionally, the *CEQR Technical Manual* also states general conditions requiring a separate pedestrian wind assessment.

2.7.2.1 Preliminary Assessment

A preliminary assessment is appropriate when there is the potential for a pedestrian to observe, from the street level, a physical alteration beyond that allowed by existing zoning, including projects that permit the modification of yard, height and setback requirements, or for projects that result in an increase in built floor area beyond what would be allowed 'as-of-right' or in the future without the proposed project. The purpose of the preliminary assessment is to determine whether any physical changes proposed by the project may raise the potential to significantly and adversely affect elements of urban design.

The *CEQR Technical Manual* states that the preliminary analysis should provide the following information, if known:

- A concise narrative of the existing project area, the future With-Action condition, and the future No-Action condition;
- Aerial photograph of the study area (a current online map is sufficient);
- Zoning calculations of existing and the future With-Action conditions;
- Floor area calculations;
- Lot and tower coverage;
- Building heights;
- Ground-level photographs of the site area with the immediate context (three is sufficient);
- A three-dimensional representation of the future With-Action condition streetscape – (lines drawn over a photograph indicating the location size and general shape is sufficient, see illustration below); and
- If view corridors exist within the study area, describe the proposed project as it relates to visual resources including, as appropriate, proximity, orientation, height, bulk, etc.

If the preliminary assessment shows that changes to the pedestrian environment are sufficiently significant to require greater explanation and further study, then a detailed analysis is often appropriate.

Conditions that merit consideration for further analysis of visual resources include:

- When the project partially or totally blocks a view corridor or a natural or built visual resource and that resource is rare in the area or considered a defining feature of the neighborhood; or
- When the project changes urban design features so that the context of a natural or built visual resource is altered (for example, if the project alters the street grid so that the approach to the resource changes; if the project changes the scale of surrounding buildings so that the context changes; if the project removes lawns or other open areas that serve as a setting for the resource).

A preliminary assessment is warranted for this project. The purpose of the preliminary assessment will be to determine whether any physical changes proposed by the project may raise the potential to significantly and adversely affect elements of urban design. As suggested by CEQR, the above elements are included for the preliminary analysis.

2.7.2.2 Detailed Assessment

Under CEQR procedures, detailed analyses are generally appropriate for area-wide rezonings that include an increase in permitted floor area or changes in height and setback requirements, general large scale developments, or projects that would result in substantial changes to the built environment of a historic district or components of an historic building that contribute to the resource's historic significance. The *CEQR Technical Manual* notes that the lead agency must use its discretion to determine if a more detailed analysis is needed. Examples may include projects that would allow a project to potentially obstruct view corridors, compete with icons in the skyline, or make substantial alterations to the streetscape of a neighborhood by noticeably changing the scale of buildings. As shown in the performed preliminary assessment, a detailed assessment is not warranted for the Proposed Project.

2.7.2.3 Pedestrian Wind Condition Assessment

Additionally, *CEQR Technical Manual* notes that a study of wind conditions and their effect on pedestrian level safety may be warranted under certain circumstances for projects involving the construction of large buildings at locations that experience high wind conditions. The proposed zoning changes would map new residential and commercial zoning districts in Staten Island, which would facilitate new development that would relate to the existing scale and character of the surrounding mixed-use neighborhood. The Proposed Project is not expected to result in the construction of large or unusually tall buildings. The maximum building height permitted in the proposed C4-1 zoning district is governed by the sky exposure plane (after a 30-foot maximum base height), while R3-2 zoning districts allow a maximum building height of 35 feet. Moreover, although the Arthur Kill waterfront is not far from the Project Area, the proposed rezoning area is not located immediately adjacent to the waterfront. Therefore, a study of wind conditions and their effect on pedestrian level safety is not warranted.

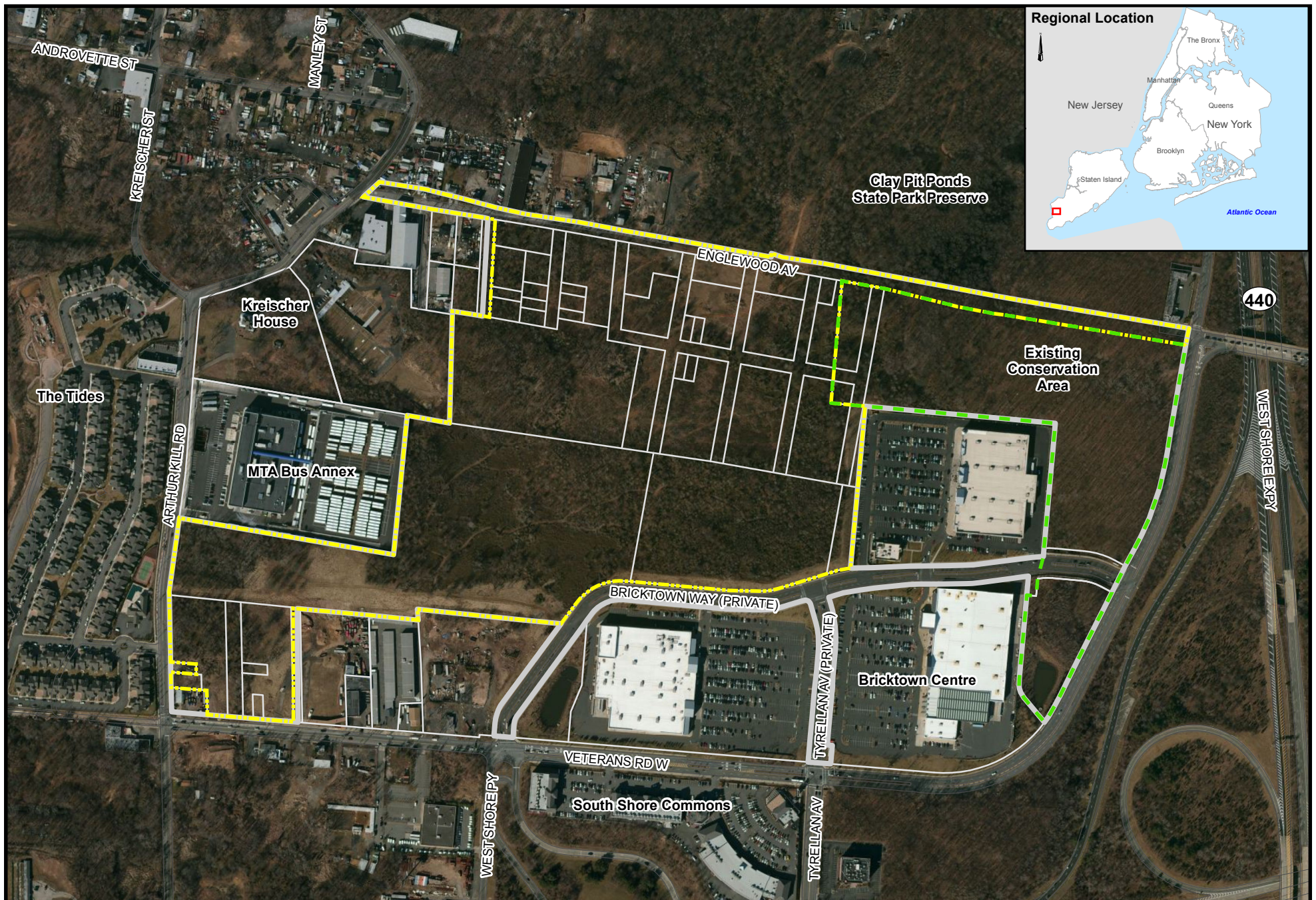
2.7.3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

As discussed above, a preliminary assessment is warranted to determine whether any physical changes proposed may raise the potential to significantly and adversely affect elements of urban design. The elements of the preliminary assessment are provided below.

2.7.3.1 Narrative of the Existing Project Area

An aerial image of the Project Area is provided in **Figure 2.7-1** ("Aerial of the Existing Site and Surrounding Area"). The entire Project Area is vacant, undeveloped and covered with vegetation, as illustrated in **Figure 2.7-2** ("Key to Photographs") and **Figure 2.7-3** ("Photographs"). The degree of vegetation varies across the Project Area, with the majority of it covered by trees and other vegetation (see *photos 1 through 4*). Open-field areas are located within the northern portion of the Project Area (see **Chapter 1**, "Project Description"). The western portion of the site contains some vacant open areas, with trees along the east side of Arthur Kill Road.

The Project Area, as well as the majority of the surrounding study area, is currently zoned M1-1, a light-performance and low-density manufacturing zoning district that is generally mapped as buffers between higher-density manufacturing districts and residential or commercial districts. Nearly all industrial uses are allowed in M1 districts if they meet the stringent M1 performance standards. Light industries typically include woodworking shops, automotive shops and wholesale service and storage facilities. Offices, hotels and most retail uses are also permitted, as are certain community facilities, such as hospitals or houses of worship, either as-of-right or by special permit. M1-1 districts permit a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of up to 1.0 for manufacturing and commercial uses, and of up to 2.4 for community facilities. Required parking varies by use.



AECOM

Legend

- Project Area
- Conservation Area
- Development Area
- Property Line

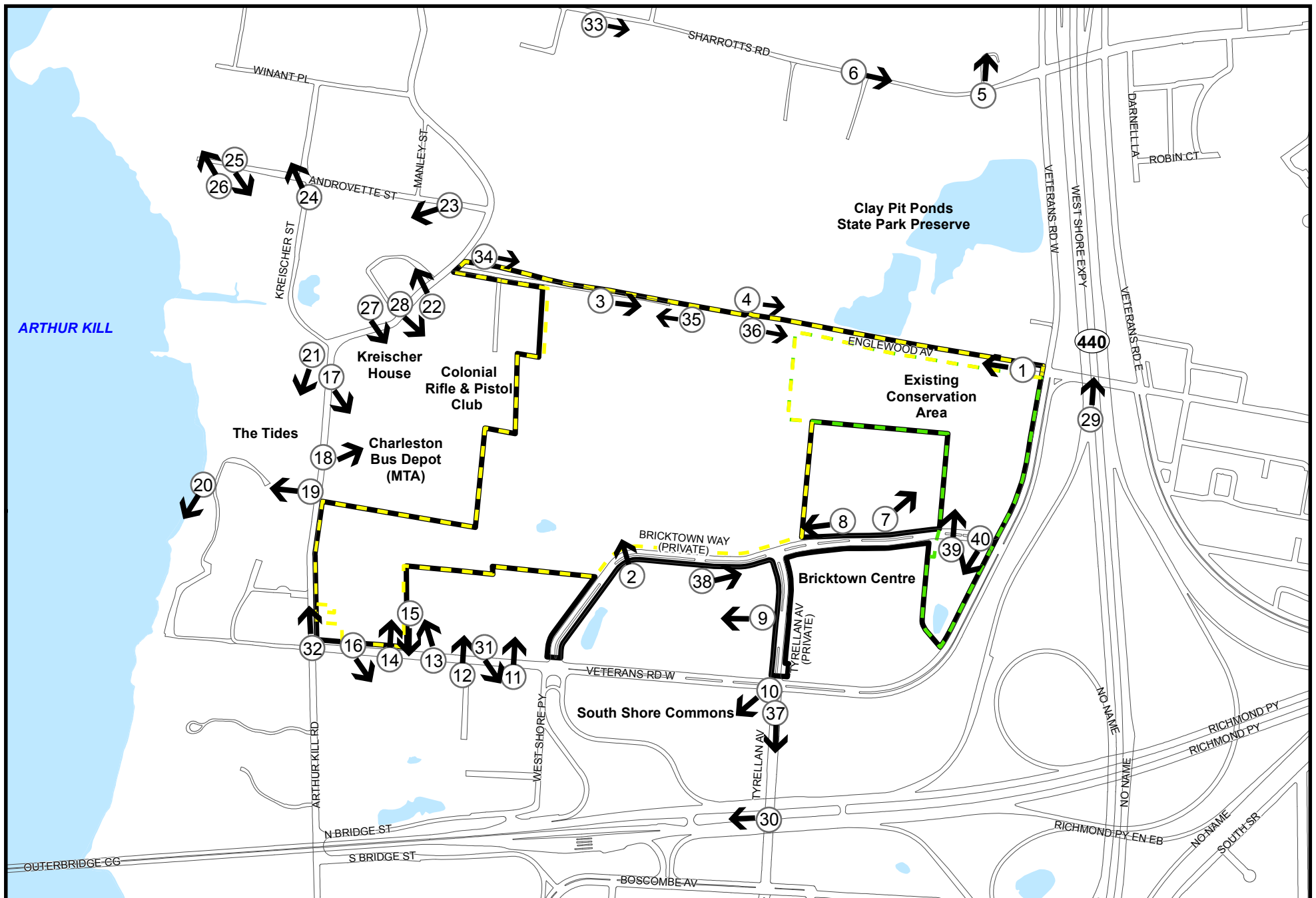
Source: Bing Aerial Map.

0 125 250 500
Feet
1 inch = 500 feet



Charleston Mixed-Use
Development

Figure 2.7-1
**Aerial of Existing Site
and Surrounding Area**



AECOM

Legend

- Project Area
- Development Area
- Conservation Area

3 → Photograph Location

0 175 350 700
Feet
1 inch = 700 feet



Charleston Mixed-Use
Development

Figure 2.7-2
Key to Photographs

Photograph 1



View looking west into the Project Area from the terminus of Englewood Avenue at Veterans Road West.

Photograph 2



View looking north into the Project Area from Mohr Street.

Photograph 3



View looking east along Englewood Avenue and the northern border of the development sites within the Project Area.

Photograph 4



View looking east from the terminus of Englewood Avenue into the Project Area.

Photograph 5



View of Clay Pit Ponds State Park.

Photograph 6



View looking east along Sharrotts Road through Clay Pit Ponds State Park

Photograph 7



View of the Bed, Bath and Beyond retail store within Bricktown Center, located north of Mohr Street.

Photograph 8



View of the Applebee's Restaurant building within Bricktown Center, located north of Mohr Street.

Photograph 9



View of the Target retail store within Bricktown Center, located south of Mohr Street and north of Veterans Road West.

Photograph 10



View of the South Shore Commons retail stores, located south of Mohr Street and west of Tyrellan Avenue.

Photograph 11



View of an existing one-story industrial building along the north side of Veterans Road West, south of the Project Area.

Photograph 12



View of an existing one-story automotive building along the north side of Veterans Road West, south of the Project Area.

Photograph 13



View of industrial buildings and vacant areas along the north side of Veterans Road West, south of the Project Area.

Photograph 14



View of vacant areas along the north side of Veterans Road West near Arthur Kill Road, including part of the Project Area.

Photograph 15



View of industrial and vacant areas along the south side of Veterans Road West, south of the Project Area.

Photograph 16



View of a one-story community facility/institutional building located on the south side of Veterans Road West.

Photograph 17



View of the MTA bus depot looking southeast from Arthur Kill Road.

Photograph 18



View of the MTA bus depot looking northeast from Arthur Kill Road.

Photograph 19



View into the entrance of the Tides at Charleston residential gated community along the west side of Arthur Kill Road.

Photograph 20



View of the public esplanade along the Arthur Kill waterfront, west of the Tides at Charleston residential community.

Photograph 21



View of one-story retail stores along the west side of Arthur Kill Road at Kreischer Street.

Photograph 22



View of one-story commercial buildings along the west side of Arthur Kill Road, across from Englewood Avenue.

Photograph 23



View of two-story residences along the south side of Androvette Street, west of Arthur Kill Road.

Photograph 24



View of a converted two-story community facility building at the northwest corner of Androvette and Kreischer Streets.

Photograph 25



View of a two-story residence and open area along the south side of Androvette Street.

Photograph 26



View of a one-story warehouse storage building along the north side of Androvette Street, near the Arthur Kill waterfront.

Photograph 27



View of the former Kreischer mansion along the east side of Arthur Kill Road at Kreischer Street.

Photograph 28



View of the entrance to the Colonial Rifle and Pistol club along the east side of Arthur Kill Road, adjacent to the Project Area.

Photograph 29



View of the West Shore Expressway from the overpass along Englewood Avenue.

Photograph 30



View looking west towards the Outerbridge Crossing.

Photograph 31



View looking southeast across Veterans Road West.

Photograph 32



View looking north along Arthur Kill Road.

Photograph 33



View looking east along Sharrotts Road from Arthur Kill Road.

Photograph 34



View looking east along Englewood Avenue from Arthur Kill Road past Gatton Street.

Photograph 35



View looking west along Englewood Avenue towards Arthur Kill Road.

Photograph 36



View at the terminus of Englewood Avenue, looking east into the Project Area.

Photograph 37



View looking south along Tyrellan Avenue from Veterans Road West.

Photograph 38



View looking along Mohr Street, a private street providing access to the retail stores of Bricktown Center.

Photograph 39



View of the conservation area, to be mapped as parkland as part of the Proposed Action.

Photograph 40



View of the conservation area, to be mapped as parkland as part of the Proposed Action.

Both the Project Area and the surrounding study area are also located within the Special South Richmond Development District (SRD), enacted in 1975 to guide development in this area. The SRD special district maintains the densities established by the underlying zones, but ensures that new development is compatible with existing communities and minimizes the destruction of natural and recreational resources that define the community.

No buildings are located within the Project Area, and as such, zoning calculations of existing floor area, lot and tower coverages, and building heights are not applicable.

2.7.3.2 Narrative Description of the Surrounding Study Area

The study area comprises an area one-quarter mile around the entire Project Area, including the adjacent Conservation Area. This study area is generally bounded to the north by development along Sharrots Road and Kreischer Street (to the northwest), to the east by Veterans Road West and development adjacent to the service roadways, to the south by Richmond Parkway and the Outerbridge Crossing, and to the west by the waterfront along Arthur Kill.

The study area contains a mixture of developments and vacant areas covered with natural features. Vacant and undeveloped areas can generally be found north of the Project Area, with designated open space and conservation areas northeast and east of the site towards the West Shore Expressway, including Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve ("CPPSPP") (see photos 5 and 6).

Moving clockwise, one-story commercial and retail stores, including large big-box retail stores, are generally located southeast and south of the site along Veterans Road towards the Outerbridge Crossing (see photos 7 through 10). A mixture of industrial, transportation and facility uses within one- and two-story buildings, as well as tracts of vacant and undeveloped land, are generally located southwest and west of the Project Area around Arthur Kill Road (see photos 11 through 18).

A gated residential community of two-story homes (the Tides) is located within the western portion of the study area along the Arthur Kill waterfront, with a public esplanade along the waterfront (see photos 19 and 20). A mixture of additional detached one- to three-story residences and one- and two-story commercial and industrial storage buildings and open lots are situated northwest of the Project Area along Androvette and Kreischer Streets, part of the neighborhood historically known as Kreischerville (see photos 21 through 28).

The main elements that play an important role for urban design and affect the pedestrian's experience in the surrounding study area, as noted in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, are discussed below.

Streets

The Charleston neighborhood and the surrounding study area are accessible from two limited access roadways: the West Shore Expressway (Route 440); and the Korean War Veterans Parkway. The West Shore Expressway is a north-south highway that typically operates with two moving lanes in each direction (see photo 29). At its southern end, it connects to the Korean War Veterans Parkway and continues into New Jersey via the Outerbridge Crossing over the Arthur Kill waterfront (see photo 30), while to the north, it connects to the Staten Island Expressway (I-278) before continuing into Bayonne, New Jersey, via the Bayonne Bridge over the Kill Van Kull. The Korean War Veterans Parkway is also a limited access east-west roadway that typically operates with two lanes in each direction, flanked on both sides by Drumgoole Road East and West which function as service roadways to the Parkway. Entrance and exit ramps at the West Shore Expressway/Korean War Veterans Parkway interchange provide access to and from both roadways in the vicinity of the Project Area and the surrounding study area, notably Veterans Road West, Boscombe Avenue and Sharrots Road.

Within this section of Staten Island, the local roadway network surrounding the Project Area contains a series of smaller networks that contain both straight and curved streets in both typical and non-typical grid formats, separated by larger arterials and highways. Veterans Road West is a two-way arterial road that operates from Arthur Kill Road west of the Project Area to Woodrow Road to the north, bordering the southern side of the Project Area (see *photo 31*). It is the major roadway connecting the existing Bricktown Centre to the nearby parkways and the surrounding road network. Veterans Road West becomes a three-lane one-way southbound road north of Englewood Avenue. South of Englewood Avenue, Veterans Road West operates with two lanes in each direction until terminating at Arthur Kill Road. The S74, S84, and S78 buses are also routed along Veterans Road West between Arthur Kill Road and Tyrellan Avenue before terminating at Bricktown Centre. Paralleling the West Shore Expressway on the east is Veterans Road East, which functions as a counterpart to Veterans Road West. It operates two-way with three northbound and two southbound lanes south of Englewood Avenue, and one-way northbound with three moving lanes north of Englewood Avenue.

Boscombe Avenue is a relatively short, two-way east-west road that parallels Route 440 on the south from Page Avenue to a dead-end east of Tyrellan Avenue. The roadway provides access to and from both the West Shore Expressway and the Korean War Veterans Parkway via northbound entrance and exit ramps. Boscombe Avenue typically operates with two travel lanes in each direction.

Arthur Kill Road is the main roadway within the western portion of the area, forming a north-south spine within this section of Staten Island (see *photo 32*). The roadway typically operates with one moving lane in each direction, plus parking along certain roadway segments. The S74 and S84 buses are routed along Arthur Kill Road north of Veterans Road West, as well as the S78 bus along its length south of Veterans Road West. The S55 also runs along a short segment of Arthur Kill Road from Bloomingdale Road to the Arthur Kill Correctional Facility.

The northern border of the study area parallels Sharrotts Road, a two-way east-west road which typically operates with one moving lane in each direction from Bloomingdale Road to a point west of Arthur Kill Road (see *photo 33*).

Paralleling Sharrotts Road to the south is Englewood Avenue (see *photos 34 through 36*). The two-way, east-west roadway is partially built east of Arthur Kill Road for approximately one-quarter of a mile, allowing access to existing private developments that are located due north and northwest of the proposed area for development. The roadway is part of the Project Area and borders the northern side of the proposed area for development as part of the Proposed Project. The roadway is discontinuous as much of the segment between Veterans Road West and Arthur Kill Road has not yet been built. Englewood Avenue is built and continues east of Veterans Road West across the West Shore Expressway. Past the West Shore Expressway, the existing segments of Englewood Avenue typically operate with one travel lane plus parking in each direction.

Tyrellan Avenue, a two-way north-south local roadway, provides similar access across the West Shore Expressway from Boscombe Avenue to Bricktown Centre past the South Shore Commons retail stores (see *photo 37*). The roadway typically operates with one travel lane plus parking in each direction. Tyrellan Avenue's northern terminus is Bricktown Way, a private street that provides access through Bricktown Centre to Veterans Road West (see *photo 38*).

Buildings

Buildings within the surrounding study area vary in terms of use, form, heights and setbacks. Southeast of the Project Area is the 42-acre Bricktown Centre and the South Shore Commons shopping centers (see *previous photos 7 through 10*). These commercial centers are developed with large retail big-box stores. Bricktown Centre contains approximately 400,000 square feet of retail space within three big-box stores in 30-foot-tall, one-story buildings. All of these stores are surrounded by large surface parking lots. The South Shore Commons comprises of one and two-story retail stores located south of Bricktown Centre and Veterans Road West, also occupied with a mixture of retail stores. A four-story office building

with front and side yard accessory parking is located on the east side of Tyrellan Avenue opposite South Shore Commons.

Development along Veterans Road West, from Bricktown Way to Arthur Kill Road, contains various developed commercial, industrial and other properties, situated between several parcels of vacant land (*see previous photos 11 through 16*). Starting from the intersection with North Bridge Street at the southwest corner of Veterans Road, the South Shore Carrier Annex is a U.S. Postal Service facility. The facility contains a one-story warehouse building surrounded by surface parking for mail trucks and employee vehicles. A portion of the facility surrounds a two-story detached residence also set back from Veterans Road West. Moving westward, the southern side of the roadway contains open storage areas for commercial and industrial uses, as well as stables for horseback riding, followed by a commercial medical facility within a one-story building, and then additional vacant areas at Arthur Kill Road.

The western portion of the study area contains a mixture of residential, commercial and industrial uses, along with vacant and natural areas, all generally situated between Arthur Kill Road to the east and the Arthur Kill waterfront to the west (*see previous photos 19 through 28*). The Colonial Rifle and Pistol Club is located directly west of the Project Area, along the east side of Arthur Kill Road, south of Englewood Avenue. Due west of the club is a detached three-story residence at the intersection of Kreischer and Arthur Kill Avenues, a designated historic resource as the last remaining mansion of Kreischer Hill (*see Chapter 2.6*).

The MTA Charleston Bus Depot is located along the east side of Arthur Kill Road, south of the Colonial Rifle and Pistol Club and the designated historic residence. The depot is situated directly adjacent to and west of the Project Area and separated from it by a surrounding retaining wall. The depot contains an 87,000-square-foot, two-story building where 220 express buses are serviced and maintained, and also includes outdoor parking for the buses and employee vehicles around the depot building (*see previous photos 17 and 18*).

The Tides at Charleston, a gated residential complex with 190 single-family, two-story units for residents 55 years and older, is located in the far western portion of the study area, adjacent to the Arthur Kill waterfront, west of Arthur Kill Road (*see previous photos 19 and 20*). One-story commercial retail stores with front yard surface parking lots (*see previous photo 21*) are located adjacent to the Tides, along the west side of Arthur Kill Road at Kreischer Street. Other one-story buildings occupied by local retail stores are located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Arthur Kill Road and Veterans Road West, adjacent to and surrounded by open industrial uses.

The northwest portion of the study area, historically known as Kreischerville, is located generally west of Arthur Kill Road, and north of the westerly extension of Englewood Avenue. Detached one- and two-story single-family homes are located northwest of the Project Area along Androvette, Kreischer and Manley Streets, Winant Place and Englewood Avenue, as well as along these portions of Arthur Kill Road. Several parcels within the area contain one- and two-story commercial and industrial storage buildings, along with open storage lots containing parked trailers or automotive vehicles, generally scattered along residential and commercial occupied parcels along Englewood Avenue, Arthur Kill Road, and Marjorie Street (*see previous photos 23 through 26*).

Visual Resources and View Corridors

The Project Area does not contain any notable or designated visual resources or view corridors. Within the surrounding study area, views along the Arthur Kill waterfront are available from the publically accessible waterfront esplanade adjacent to the Tides residential development (*see previous photo 20*). Views along area roadways, including Veterans Road West, Arthur Kill Road and Kreischer Street, provide opportunities for pedestrians to view existing development in the area.

Open Space and Natural Features

The surrounding area contains several open space resources with varying natural features. Directly east of the northern portion of the proposed development sites is a 20-acre conservation area, which is part of the Proposed Project to be mapped as parkland (*see photo 39 and 40*). The conservation area is situated south of Englewood Avenue and west of the West Shore Expressway.

Located north of Englewood Avenue is CPPSPP, a 260-acre nature preserve that contains a variety of natural habitats, such as wetlands, ponds, sand barrens, spring-fed streams and woodlands (*see previous photos 5 and 6*). The only New York State park on Staten Island, the preserve is managed to retain its ecological integrity and to provide educational and recreational opportunities. Educational programs, such as nature walks, pond ecology, bird-watching and tree and flower identification, are offered by the Preserve, with many activities geared to schoolchildren. Designated trails allow for picnics and hikes, along with horseback riding along five miles of bridle paths for nearby stables. The Preserve also contains an Interpretive Center, a fully- accessible building that features displays of the history of the park and its natural elements.

The Tides at Charleston contains an approximately 2,500 linear-foot (approximately 27,733 square feet of area) publicly accessible waterfront open space adjacent to the Arthur Kill waterfront, west of Arthur Kill Road. While the waterfront walkway is privately owned and maintained, it is accessible to the public pursuant to a restrictive declaration. The walkway includes seating surrounded by trees and other plantings (*see previous photo 20*).

Bloomington Park is an approximately 139-acre city-owned park located on the south shore of Staten Island, east of the West Shore Expressway, offering recreational and natural areas, including playground equipment, dog runs, fitness paths and bathroom amenities.

2.7.4 FUTURE NO-ACTION CONDITION

The technical analyses and consideration for urban design and visual resources forecast these conditions to the 2015 and 2020 years for the purposes of determining potential impacts. The assessments below include future conditions without the Proposed Project in both the years 2015 and 2020 (the “Future without the Proposed Project” or “Future No-Action Condition”) and the future with the proposed project (or “With Action Condition”).

2.7.4.1 Year 2015 Analysis

Project Area

Under the Future No-Action Condition, if the Proposed Project is not approved, the Project Area is expected to remain in its existing vacant condition. No other projected or potential development is planned or considered likely to occur in the Project Area by the 2015 analysis year of the proposed Charleston Mixed-Use Development.

Study Area

Several other developments changes are anticipated to occur within the study area by the years 2015 and 2020. Staff and records from the NYC Economic Development Corporation, Department of City Planning, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, and the local community board were consulted to identify new construction projects that are proposed in the study area. In total, it is anticipated that there will be approximately 70 new residential units and approximately 155,704 square feet of added commercial space.

Within the identified surrounding study area, known projects that are planned to occur in the future without the Proposed Project are listed below, as well as shown in **Figure 2.1-4** (“No-Action Projects”)

within **Chapter 2.1**, “Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy”. Those projects expected to be completed by the year 2015 are as follows

- *236 Richmond Valley Road*. Approximately 5,000 square feet of commercial office development is planned at 236 Richmond Valley Road (Block 1791, Lot 250). This development is expected to be a one-story building with adjacent surface parking.
- *245 Richmond Valley Road*: Approximately 8,000 square feet of commercial development with 28 parking spaces is planned at 245 Richmond Valley Road (Block 7580, Lot 21). This development is expected to be a one-story building with adjacent surface parking.
- *Veterans Road West at Tyrellan Avenue*: Approximately 58,030 square feet of commercial retail space with 193 parking spaces is planned for development in the southeast corner of the Veterans Road West/ Tyrellan Avenue intersections, currently a vacant site. It is expected that this development would contain a series of connected two or three buildings that are one-story tall, surrounded by surface parking.
- *4830 Arthur Kill Road*: Approximately 14,674 square feet of new floor area would be constructed as an extension to an existing commercial retail development, along with an additional 48 parking spaces, is planned at 4830 Arthur Kill Road (Block 7584, Lot 85). It is expected that the addition would generally be situated as a one-story extension behind the existing building, adjacent to the additionally planned surface parking.

In addition, a new public school (P.S. 62) is under construction on the northwest quadrant of the Woodrow Road/Bloomington Road intersection. This project, however, lies outside the study area for Urban Design. .

The above separately planned projects would alter the urban design elements on the individual project sites for each no-action project, as well as change pedestrian views along those sections of Richmond Valley Road, Veterans Road West, Tyrellan Avenue and Arthur Kill Road, under the Future No-Action Condition by the 2015 analysis year. However, the existing surrounding study area already contains commercial developments similar in use, lot coverage, bulk and form as these separately planned projects with planned one-story commercial retail buildings. Other existing one-story commercial buildings are located in the areas surrounding these separately planned projects. The above separately planned projects would also not alter the street network or any open spaces or natural features within the area. As such, significant changes to the pedestrian experience are not expected under the Future No-Action Condition by the 2015 analysis year.

2.7.4.2 Year 2020 Analysis

Project Area

Under the Future No-Action Condition, if the Proposed Project is not approved, the Project Area is expected to remain in its existing vacant condition. No other projected or potential development is planned or considered likely to occur in the Project Area by the 2020 analysis year of the proposed Charleston Mixed-Use Development.

Study Area

Within the surrounding study area, those projects expected to be completed by the year 2020 are as follows:

- *Veterans Plaza Food Store*: An approximately 70,000 square foot supermarket is planned on a parcel north of Veterans Road West on the western side of Bricktown Way. The project includes a zoning change from M1-1 to C8-2. The recently approved rezoning would allow for the food store with accessory surface parking for 233 vehicles. It is expected that this project would include one

large building, either one- or two-stories tall, with surface parking surrounding the majority of the new building.

- *Gateway Cathedral Residential Project*: Approximately 70 residential units with 105 parking spaces are planned as part of the Gateway Cathedral residential development project at 200 Boscombe Avenue (Block 7577, Lot 3). The arrangement and layout of the residential units are not known; however, it is expected that the residences would be part of either semi-attached homes or within an apartment-type building, and parking would be accommodated within surface lot(s). On the community facility portion of that site, the proposal reduces parking from 715 spaces to 618 spaces to allow room for a soccer and ball field. A six-foot-wide easement for pedestrians would provide a link between sites.
- *Veterans Road Realty*: Approximately 51,020 square feet of commercial floor area (mostly retail) is proposed within two new buildings, with accessory parking for 170, on a site located at the corner of Veterans Road West, east of Waunner Street.

It should also be noted that the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) is advancing the design of improvements to the southbound West Shore Expressway (WSE) ramp system and adjacent surface street intersections north of Englewood Avenue just north of the Project Area. The purpose of these improvements is to improve access to and from the Charleston commercial district, improve traffic safety and alleviate congestion along the WSE and on the surrounding street system. Their construction may affect the visual perception of the study area. These improvements were not identified during the scoping process, but will be further discussed and analyzed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)

The above additional separately planned projects would alter the urban design elements on the individual project sites for each project, as well as change pedestrian views along those sections of Veterans Road West, Bricktown Way and Boscombe Avenue, under the Future No-Action Condition by the year 2020. However, the existing surrounding study area already contains commercial developments similar in use, bulk and form as these separately planned projects, as well as other residential units and community facilities in the surrounding area. The above separately planned projects would also not alter the street network or result in significant changes to any existing open spaces or natural features within the area by the 2020 analysis year, but rather include additional open space resources at part of the Gateway Cathedral project. As such, significant changes to the pedestrian experience are not expected under the Future No-Action Condition by the 2020 analysis year.

2.7.5 FUTURE WITH-ACTION CONDITION

The Proposed Project would result in changes to urban design elements within the Project Area, which is currently vacant and undeveloped. The Proposed Project would promote the development of an approximately 66-acre city-owned parcel (the Development Area), construct a new public street (Englewood Avenue), and map as parkland an existing Conservation Area located in Charleston, Staten Island.

Component developments of the Proposed Action are expected to be completed over several years. The first build year for analysis includes the construction of Retail Site "A" and Fairview Park, which are expected to be completed by the year 2015. Construction of the remainder of the sites is expected to be completed by the year 2020, including the developments of Retail Site "B", the school, and the senior housing, as well as Englewood Avenue and other road construction.

2.7.5.1 Year 2015 Analysis

By the year 2015, the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation would develop an approximately 23-acre park site with active and passive recreational space. This new park would be mapped along with the adjacent approximately 20-acre Conservation Area for approximately 43-acres of new mapped parkland.

The Conservation Area would remain in its natural state. A private developer has also been selected to develop the 11-acre Retail Site “A” with up to approximately 195,000 square feet of commercial space for medium- and large-format retail stores, along with a new approximately 15,000 square foot library branch that will share parking with the retail stores.

The Proposed Project includes zoning changes over substantial portions of the Project Area, as discussed in further detail in **Chapter 2.1-1**. Zoning map changes are expected to be completed by the year 2015, though developments within the proposed zones would be constructed by both the 2015 and 2020 years.

As previously noted, the Project Area is located in an M1-1 zoning district. Under the Future With-Action Condition, two new zoning districts would replace portions of the M1-1 district. An R3-2 district would be mapped along an approximately 15-acre portion of the northern edge of the Project Area. R3-2 districts are the lowest- density zones in which multiple dwellings are allowed. These range over a variety of housing types, including garden apartments and row-houses. The proposed zoning change would accommodate the future residential and school portions of the Proposed Project.

Two C4-1 districts would be mapped over the proposed retail sites (Retail Sites “A” and “B”) and would facilitate the planned retail developments. C4 districts are mapped in regional commercial centers located outside of central business districts. In these areas, specialty and department stores, theaters and other commercial and office uses serve a larger region. The C4-1 district, in particular, is typically mapped in outlying areas, such as the Staten Island Mall, that require large amounts of parking. The proposed zoning change to C4-1 would accommodate the retail portions of the Proposed Project, which are less appropriate under the current M1-1 zoning than the proposed C4-1 zoning district that allows for unrestricted commercial uses of any size. These components are expected to be constructed as-of-right per C4-1 bulk regulations.

The Proposed Project also includes the rezoning of two privately-owned lots (Block 7494, Lots 1 and 88) within the southwest corner of the Project Area at the intersection of Veterans Road West and Arthur Kill Road. These two lots are currently zoned M1-1 and would be rezoned to C4-1 as part of the rezoning for the adjacent Retail Site “B” parcel. Lot 1 is a 0.30 acre lot (13,280 square feet). Lot 88 is a 0.09 acre lot (4,000 square feet) located to the north along the east side of Arthur Kill Road. Both lots are used for contractor open storage and parking. Under the proposed C4-1 zoning, Lot 88 could be developed with a 1,000 square foot retail use and 7 required parking spaces, and Lot 1 could be developed with approximately 3,500 square feet of retail use and 23 parking spaces. However, the sites could also be developed under the existing M1-1 regulations with lower requirements for accessory parking spaces allowing for higher densities on each site. The likely development under the existing zoning regulations would double on Lot 88 to 2,000 square feet with a parking requirement of 7 spaces, and on Lot 1 approximately 5,500 square feet of retail could be developed with about 18 required parking spaces. These sites would be rezoned but are not part of the area to be developed and are not included in the Development Area. As the existing M1-1 zoning allows for a higher intensity of development the change of zoning to C4-1 will not induce additional new development on these sites, but rather they would continue to be occupied with their current uses as pre-existing non-conforming uses in the new C4-1 zone, which will encompass a larger area around these sites to promote the long-term redevelopment of this area with commercial uses.

Additionally, the mapping of Fairview Park would remove zoning from those portions of the Project Area. The private parcels fronting on Veterans Road West and on Arthur Kill Road would remain within M1-1 zoning districts.

The *CEQR Technical Manual* states that determining the significance of an urban design impact requires consideration of the degree to which a project would result in a change to the built environment's arrangement, appearance, or functionality such that the change would negatively affect a pedestrian's experience of the area. One important consideration is a project's context: for example, the scale and use of surrounding buildings. However, matching context is not necessarily the sole benchmark for measuring urban design impacts, and this subject is further assessed in the “Neighborhood Character”

chapter. Key considerations in the assessment of the significance of a visual resource impact may include whether the project obstructs important visual resources and whether such obstruction would be permanent, seasonal, or temporary; how many viewers would be affected; whether the view is unique or do similar views exist; or whether it can be seen from many other locations.

The changes and proposed buildings resulting from the Proposed Project by the study year of 2015 would be fully consistent with the general urban design elements and other patterns of the study area.

Streets

Approximately 12.3 acres of the overall Project Site would involve the mapping and construction of new streets by the 2015 and 2020 analysis years. By the 2015 analysis year, for Retail Site "A", access would be provided by the mapping of portions of privately-owned Bricktown Way and Tyrellan Avenue that are within the Project Area (approximately 6.4 acres) as mapped streets. The mapping of these streets would allow for the extension of the greenway to connect with the proposed library and Fairview Park. The mapping of these streets would not alter the built roadway network, and significant changes would not occur, and the Proposed Project would not result in any other significant changes to the surrounding street network.

Buildings

By the 2015 analysis year, the Proposed Project would result in changes to the area with new buildings. A series of an estimated five one-story buildings would be built on Retail Site "A", around the western, northern and eastern boundaries of that site, with surface parking provided in the middle and southern sections.

The area for the development of Retail Site "A" would be rezoned to a C4-1 district to facilitate the planned retail development. C4-1 district regulations permit commercial buildings up to a maximum FAR of 1.0. The proposed commercial buildings on Retail Site "A" would be constructed as-of-right per C4-1 bulk regulations. A private developer has been selected to develop this approximately 11-acre site with up to approximately 195,000 square feet of commercial space for medium- and large-format retail stores, along with up to approximately 633 parking spaces (including shared parking for the library and parkland). The public library would be adjacent to proposed access points into the proposed park in the northwestern corner of the site. Retail Site "A" would be accessed from Bricktown Way/Tyrellan Avenue, currently privately owned streets that would be mapped as part of the Proposed Project.

The proposed retail uses on Site "A" would also be supported by the surrounding residential community at large, and would support and complement existing retail uses in the immediate area, including adjacent to this portion of the Project Area. Directly east and south of the Retail Site "A" are one-story retail stores of Bricktown Centre. This type of use and expected building form that would result from the Proposed Project is found in the immediate area surrounding the project area, and would therefore be compatible with them in the year 2015.

This site will also include an approximately 15,000-square-foot branch of the New York Public Library within one of the five new buildings, which will share parking with the retail uses. The public library is planned to be situated within the northern middle of the buildings, adjacent to proposed access points into the proposed park.

Open Space and Natural Features

The proposed park would provide amenities for the growing residential communities in the area. The removal of the M1-1 zone over the park, and then the parkland mapping and the development, would fit in well with the surrounding mixed-use community. Several of the proposed park structures (e.g., comfort stations, etc.) would also be situated within the center of the site, away from area streets, but near access points to the proposed public library. The park would contain a multi-purpose field, tennis courts, junior baseball fields and a passive trail system. This new park would also be mapped along with the adjacent approximately 20-acre Conservation Area (north and east of Bricktown Centre) for approximately 43

acres of new mapped parkland. This parkland, which would serve the surrounding residential communities, would also fit in well with the other open spaces and natural areas of this section of Staten Island, including CPPSPP, a 260-acre nature preserve located north of Englewood Avenue.

Visual Resources and View Corridors

The Proposed Project would also not block any existing view corridors or views to/from any natural areas with rare or defining features under the 2015 year analysis. As previously noted, the Project Area does not contain any notable or designated visual resources or view corridors. Within the surrounding study area, views along the Arthur Kill waterfront are available from the publically accessible waterfront esplanade adjacent to the Tides residential development. Views along area roadways, including Veterans Road West, Arthur Kill Road and Kreischer Street, provide opportunities for pedestrians to view existing development in the area. These views would not be altered as a result of Proposed Project by the 2015 analysis year. The development of these sites would not block any views to the waterfront or along the area roadways, as the proposed developments would be confined to each respected site. Three-dimensional representations of the streetscapes surrounding the proposed park and Retail Site "A" are provided in **Figures 2.7-4**. As shown, pedestrian views of these sites along Veterans Road West would be altered, but not significantly impacted under the year 2015 analysis. The area is currently undeveloped, and the Proposed Project will allow more people to interact with and view nature, by bringing more people to the overall area, which includes the new park as well as the Conservation Area. The proposed construction of the new park would also create a new open space and visual resource for the area, helping to connect the public realm to the public park.

Year 2015 Analysis Conclusions

The Proposed Project would not result in any of the conditions that would merit further detailed assessment of urban design and visual resources. While the Proposed Project would result in the construction of new developments by the 2015 analysis year, the proposed park structures and buildings of Retail Site "A" would be similar to the surrounding buildings within the study area. Several other one- and two-story retail buildings are found in the surrounding area, including directly adjacent to and across the street (east and south) as part of the adjacent Bricktown Centre. The proposed buildings would also adhere to and comply with zoning requirements of the new zoning districts, and the retail structures would be constructed "as-of-right" to the C4-1 zone. In addition, the Proposed Project would not alter or result in substantial changes to the built environment of a historic district, or effect the components of an historic building that contribute to the resource's historic significance by the 2015 analysis year.

The Proposed Project would also not block any view corridors or views to/from any natural areas with rare or defining features. Pedestrian views of these development sites along Veterans Road West would be altered, but not significantly impacted. The development of these sites would also not block any views to the waterfront or along the area roadways, as the proposed developments would be confined to each respected site. The proposed construction of the new park would create a new open space and visual resource for the area, helping to connect the public realm to the public park.

Therefore, the Proposed Project is not expected to result in any significant adverse urban design or visual resource related impacts by the 2015 analysis year, and further detailed assessments are not warranted.

2.7.5.2 Year 2020 Analysis

Construction of remainder of the sites is expected to be completed by the year 2020, including the developments of Retail Site "B", the school, and the senior housing, along with the Englewood Avenue and other road constructions. The changes and conceptual proposed buildings resulting from the Proposed Project by the study year of 2020 are also expected to be fully consistent with the general urban design elements and other patterns of the study area.

By the year 2020, an additional 7.3-acre site along Arthur Kill Road would be developed as Retail Site "B" with an anticipated 90,000 square feet of neighborhood retail space. Along Englewood Avenue, the City

Birds Eye Perspectives



Birds eye perspectives showing three-dimensional representations of the entire Development Area

Note: For illustrative purposes only.

Three-Dimensional Rendering



Three-Dimensional Rendering



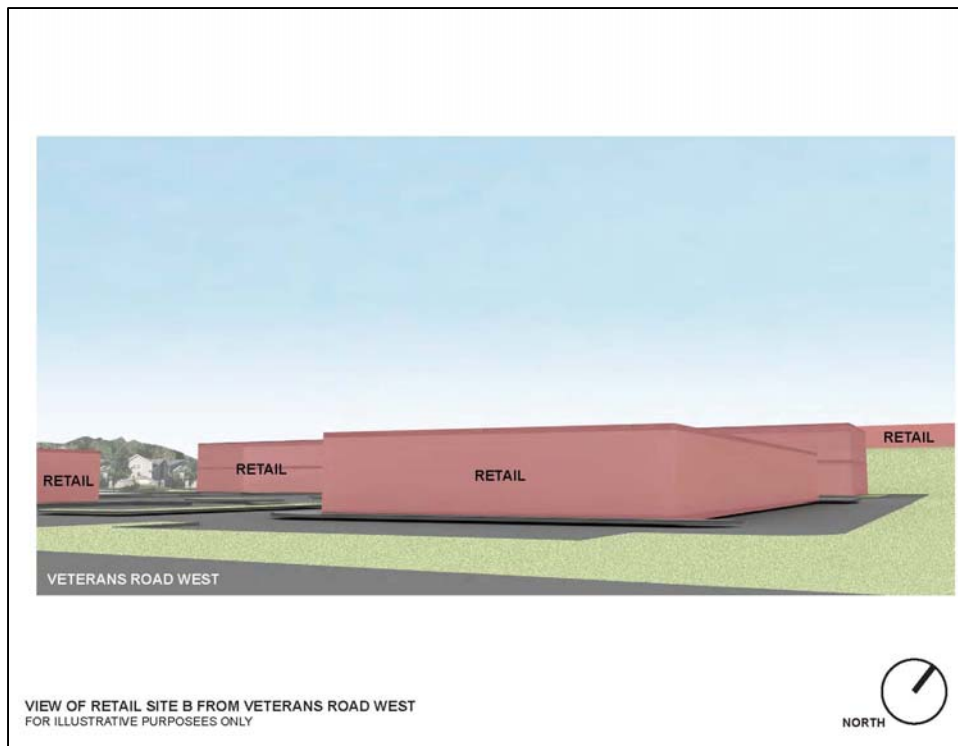
View looking west along Bricktown Way towards the Retail Site “A” portion of the Development Area.

Note: For illustrative purposes only.

Existing Photograph



Three-Dimensional Rendering



View looking northwest along north side of Veterans Road West toward the Retail Site "B" portion of the Development Area

Note: For illustrative purposes only.

Existing Photograph



Three-Dimensional Rendering



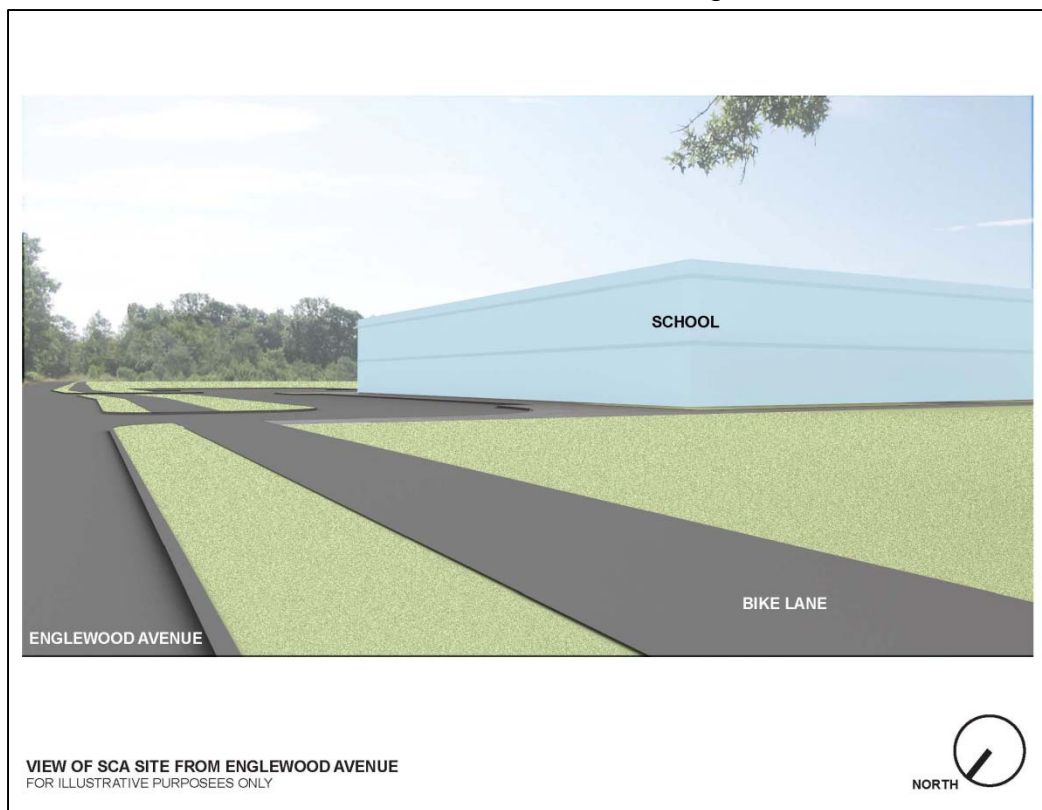
View looking east along east side of Arthur Kill Road toward the Retail Site "B" portion of the Development Area

Note: For illustrative purposes only.

Existing Photograph



Three-Dimensional Rendering



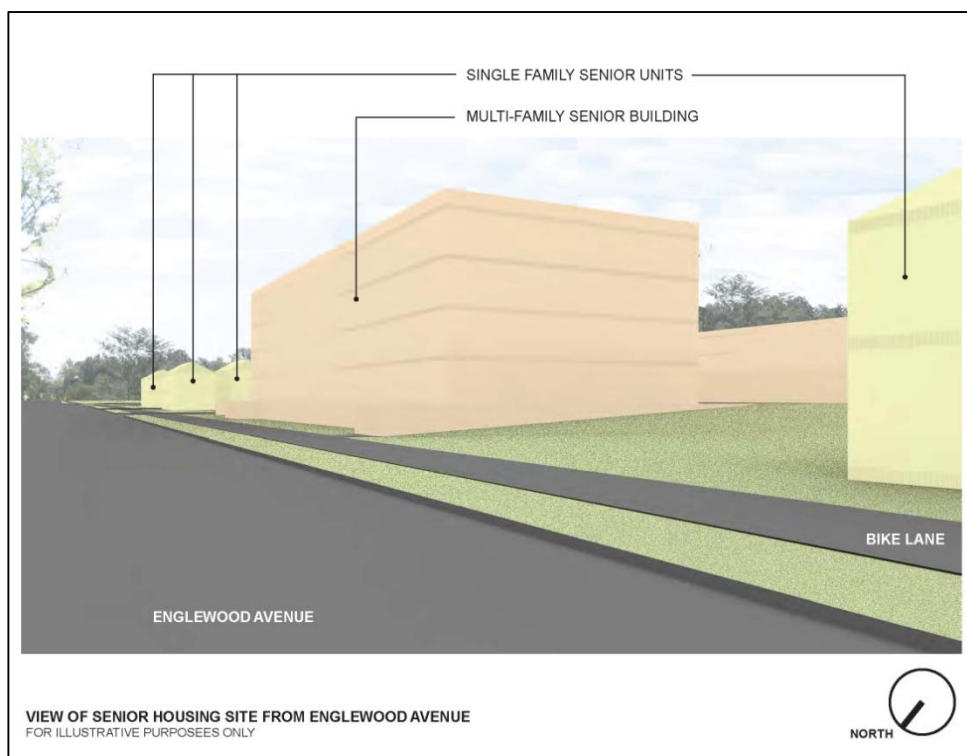
View looking east from the current eastern terminus of Englewood Avenue toward the proposed School Site portion of the Development Area

Note: For illustrative purposes only.

Existing Photograph



Three-Dimensional Rendering



View looking east along south side of improved Englewood Avenue toward the proposed Senior Housing portion of the Development Area

Note: For illustrative purposes only.

will offer an approximately 9.1-acre site to developers for senior housing in the future for up to 162 units, consisting of 80 affordable multi-family rental units and 82 age-restricted for-sale detached units. To the east of the senior housing, the NYC School Construction Authority would construct a combined elementary/middle school on the approximately 5.9-acre site with an approximately 750-seat capacity for kindergarten through 8th grade. Englewood Avenue will be mapped and constructed across the northern border of the Project Area and will connect Veterans Road West on the east to Arthur Kill Road on the west. The fully-constructed length of Englewood Avenue would include bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Streets

By the year 2020, the existing Bricktown Way and Tyrellan Avenue would be mapped. Englewood Avenue will be mapped and constructed to a width of 80 feet for a net new distance of approximately 1,800 feet across the northern border of the Project Area and will connect Veterans Road West on the east to Arthur Kill Road on the west. The fully-constructed length of Englewood Avenue would be approximately 3,265 feet and would include bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

By the 2020 analysis year, the Proposed Project would not result in any other significant changes to the surrounding street network. The Proposed Project would not alter the arrangement or orientation of any other streets in the area or block any set street views. The mapping and construction of Englewood Avenue along the northern border of the Project Area would alter views down the roadway. Currently, view of the existing vegetative areas are found looking eastward from Arthur Kill Road down the built but non-mapped portion of Englewood Avenue. Under the Proposed Project, the realigned roadway would continue to Veterans Road West, and views would continue eastward for pedestrians looking down the roadway corridor, past CPPSPP. The street network would be enhanced with new bicycle and pedestrian facilities, as well as the new views along Englewood Avenue. The new mapping and street construction would not, however, result in changes to any other urban design features that would alter the context or approach of any natural or built visual resource.

Buildings

By the 2020 analysis year, the Proposed Project would result in changes to the area with additional new buildings. A series of eight or nine new one-story retail stores would be built on Retail Site "B" along the east side of Arthur Kill Road. This site consists of approximately 7.3 acres and will be privately developed in the future, with an anticipated 90,000 square feet of neighborhood retail space and up to approximately 300 parking spaces. The area for the development of Retail Site "B" would be rezoned to a C4-1 district to facilitate the planned retail development, and the proposed commercial buildings on Retail Site "B" are expected to be constructed as-of-right per C4-1 bulk regulations. The proposed retail uses on Retail Site "B" would be supported by the surrounding residential community at large, as well as the new senior housing, and would support and complement existing retail uses in the immediate area.

The 9.1-acre site for senior housing would be rezoned to R3-2 along the northern border of the site, adjacent to Englewood Avenue, to allow for the construction of up to 162 senior housing units, along with approximately 192 parking spaces. The proposed senior housing component would include a series of two-story semi-detached residences surrounding a community center and multi-family buildings along Englewood Avenue. Additional discretionary actions may further be required to construct the senior housing units (see **Chapter 1**).

Adjacent to the senior housing site is the 5.9-acre site for the proposed public school, which would also be rezoned to R3-2. It is expected that the NYC School Construction Authority would construct a combined elementary/middle school with an approximately 750-seat capacity for kindergarten through 8th grade, along with an estimated 60 parking spaces. Although plans are not available, the proposed school building is expected to be constructed as-of-right per R3-2 bulk regulations, although further public review per the New York City School Construction Authority's process may be required. The school would be located directly north of and adjacent to the proposed park that would be operational by the year 2015, before the 2020 analysis year when the school would be operational.

Open Space and Natural Features

The proposed park is expected to be completed by the 2015 analysis year, several years before the remaining Proposed Project components are completed by the 2020 analysis year. The park would be situated in the center of the developments, with the Retail Site “B” stores to the west and the senior housing and proposed school building to the north. Access into the open space would be available from these areas, as well as from the Retail Site “A” area to the southeast that would be constructed at the same time as the park.

Visual Resources and View Corridors

The full build-out of the Proposed Project would not block any existing view corridors or views to/from any natural areas with rare or defining features. The development of the remaining retail, housing, school and other components of the Proposed Project would not alter any views to or from the Arthur Kill waterfront or significantly alter views along Veterans Road West. The new retail development would be noticeable along the east side of Arthur Kill Road. Three-dimensional representation(s) of the streetscapes are provided in **Figure 2.7-4**. As shown, it is expected that while such development would alter views along the roadway, they would not block any views. The proposed development on Retail Site “B” would be confined to its site, as would the other developed components of the senior housing. Pedestrian views of these sites along Arthur Kill Road and Veterans Road West, as well as the newly constructed Englewood Avenue by the 2020 year, would be altered from current conditions, particularly looking east down Englewood Avenue, where views currently terminate at the undeveloped mapped but un-built portion of the roadway. Under the Proposed Project, the realigned roadway would continue to Veterans Road West, and views would continue eastward for pedestrians looking down the roadway corridor, past CPPSPP. While views would be altered, the Proposed Project will allow more people to interact with and view nature, by bringing more people to the overall area and the adjacent Conversation Area to the east of the school.

Year 2020 Analysis Conclusions

The full build-out of the Proposed Project by the year 2020 would not result in any of the conditions that would merit further detailed assessment of urban design and visual resources. While the Proposed Project would result in the construction of the remaining new developments by the 2020 analysis year, the proposed structures and buildings of Retail Site “B”, the senior housing and the proposed school would be similar to the surrounding buildings within the study area. Several other one- and two-story retail buildings are found in the surrounding area, including directly adjacent to and across the street of the Project Area, and additional residences are located west of the Project Area along Arthur Kill Road. The proposed buildings would also adhere to and comply with zoning requirements of the new zoning districts, and the retail structures would be constructed “as-of-right” to the proposed C4-1 zone, while the proposed residential and school buildings may require further discretionary and public review process once rezoned to R3-2 zone. In addition, the full build-out of the Proposed Project would not alter or result in substantial changes to the built environment of a historic district, or effect the components of an historic building that contribute to the resource’s historic significance, by the 2020 analysis year.

The full build-out of the Proposed Project would also not block any view corridors or views to/from any natural areas with rare or defining features. Pedestrian views of these sites along Veterans Road West and Arthur Kill Road would be altered, but allow for more people to interact with the surrounding natural areas adjacent to the view corridor, which is currently undeveloped. The development of these sites would also not block any views to the waterfront or along the area roadways, as the proposed developments would be confined to each respected site.

While the full build-out of the Proposed Project also includes street new mapping and construction, significant adverse impacts are not expected, and further detailed analyses are not warranted. The mapping and construction of Englewood Avenue along the northern border of the Project Area would enhance the street network and would include bicycle and pedestrian facilities, as well as allow for new views along Englewood Avenue towards both Arthur Kill Road and the West Shore Expressway, adjacent

to CPPSPP. The new mapping and street construction would not, however, result in changes to any urban design features that would alter the context or approach of any natural or built visual resource.

Therefore, the Proposed Project is not expected to result in any significant adverse urban design or visual resource related impacts by the 2020 analysis year, and further detailed assessments are not warranted.