

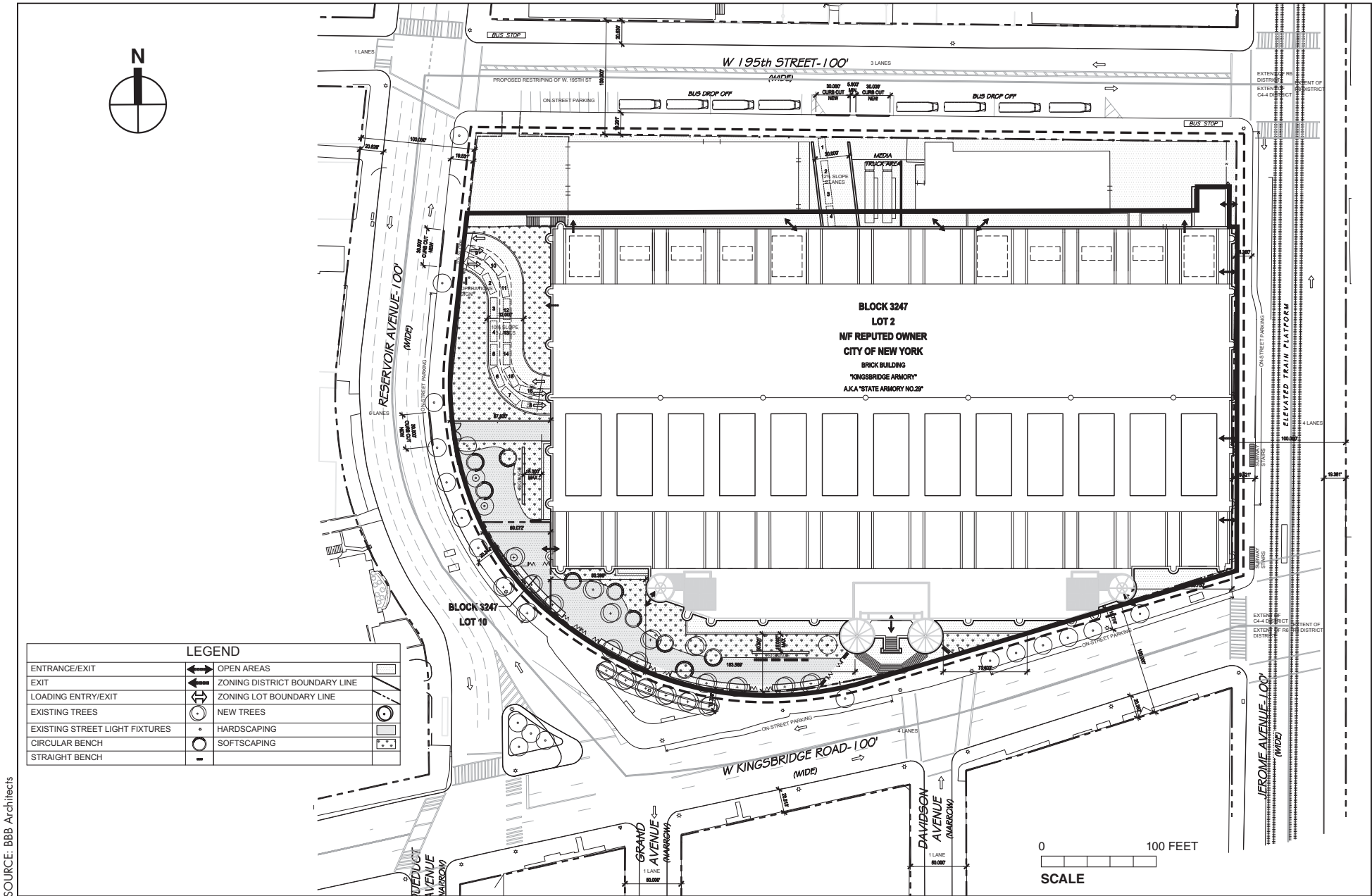
## A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Kingsbridge Armory National Ice Center (KNIC) project is a proposed redevelopment of the Armory building (the “Armory”)—a historic landmark that is substantially vacant—with approximately 795,000 gross square feet (gsf) of new uses, including approximately 457 parking spaces (the proposed project).

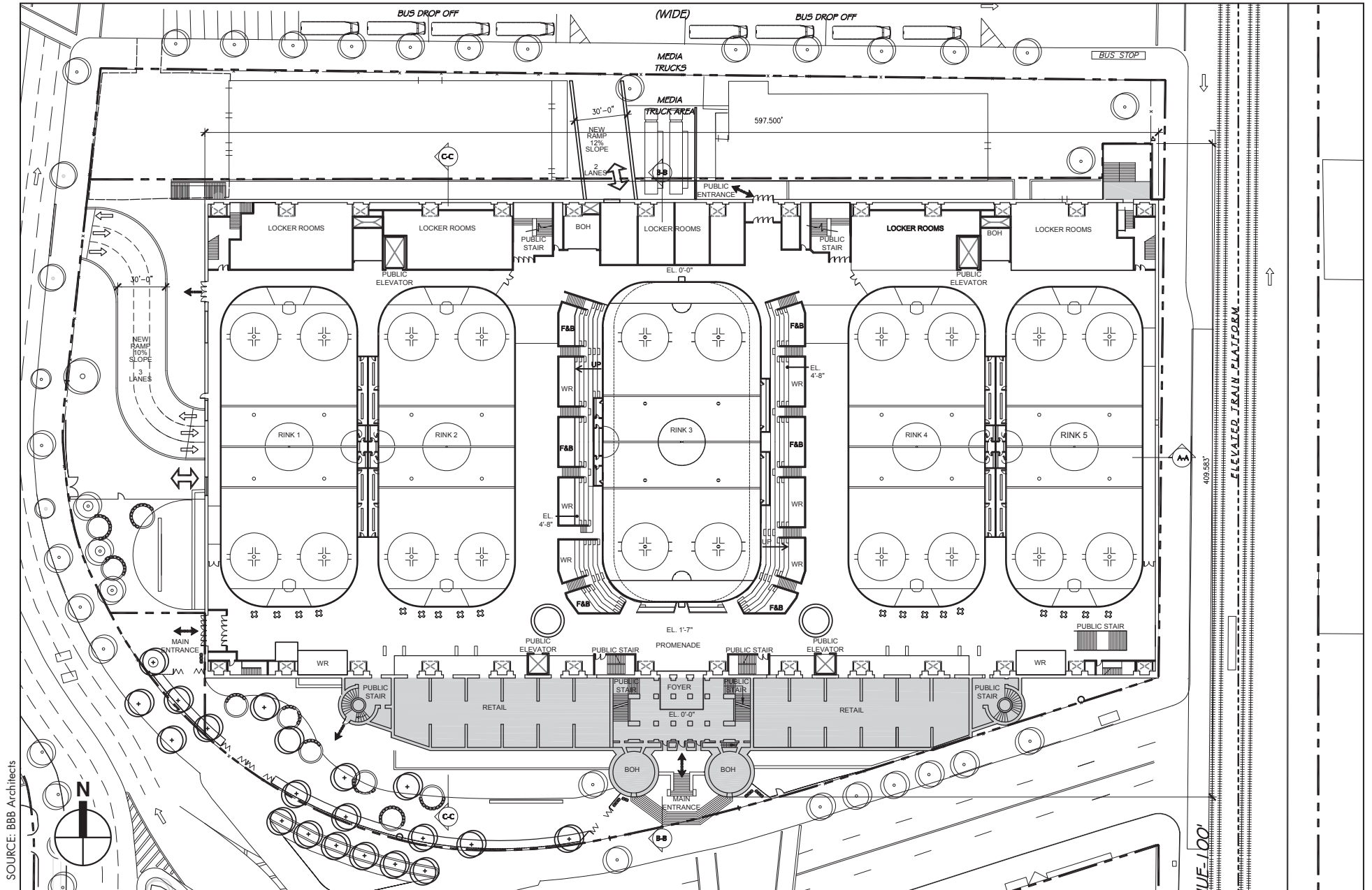
The proposed project would be located in the Kingsbridge Heights neighborhood of the Bronx on Block 3247, Lot 10 and a portion of Lot 2. The project site occupies most of the block bounded by West 195th Street, Reservoir Avenue, West Kingsbridge Road, and Jerome Avenue (see **Figure 1-1**). The site is largely occupied by the Armory building, which is substantially vacant, apart from the storage of graffiti removal trucks by the Mayor’s Office’s “Graffiti Free NYC” program. In addition to the Armory building, the project site includes small, landscaped areas to the south and west of the Armory building. The Armory is a New York City Landmark (NYCL) and is listed on the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places (S/NR).

The proposed project would redevelop the Armory with approximately 795,000 gsf of new development, including 9 ice rinks; approximately 64,000 gsf of related program space, including a wellness/off-ice training center, curling rinks, and lockers/equipment storage; approximately 58,000 gsf of related food and beverage, concession, and retail space; and approximately 50,000 gsf of community facility space, which is assumed to include fitness and recreation facilities, multipurpose rooms, child care, business incubator space, and meeting rooms for local community use (see **Table 1-1** and **Figures 1-2 through 1-5**). The proposed ice rinks are intended for use by neighborhood students and residents, high school and college leagues, open skating times, instructional training, adult professional (minor league) and non-professional hockey games, figure and speed skating, and other ice events. The central, main rink would have a capacity of approximately 5,000 seats; the other rinks would have limited, temporary bleacher seating (approximately 100 seat-capacity per rink). The main pedestrian entrance to the facility would be at the Armory’s headhouse on West Kingsbridge Road; alternate pedestrian entrances would be from Reservoir Avenue, Jerome Avenue, and West 195th Street.

Approximately 457 accessory parking spaces would be provided in the Armory’s cellar levels. Entry to the parking garage and loading dock areas would be from Reservoir Avenue and West 195th Street, at the west and north sides of the project block; new curb cuts would be created at these locations. In addition, the south side of West 195th Street is anticipated to be utilized for school and event bus drop-off and pickup, as well as temporary parking for other vehicles during special events, subject to New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) approval. This Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) assumes that school and event buses—as well as overflow vehicles from the project’s accessory parking garage, as necessary—would park at the Lehman College lot, north of the project site.

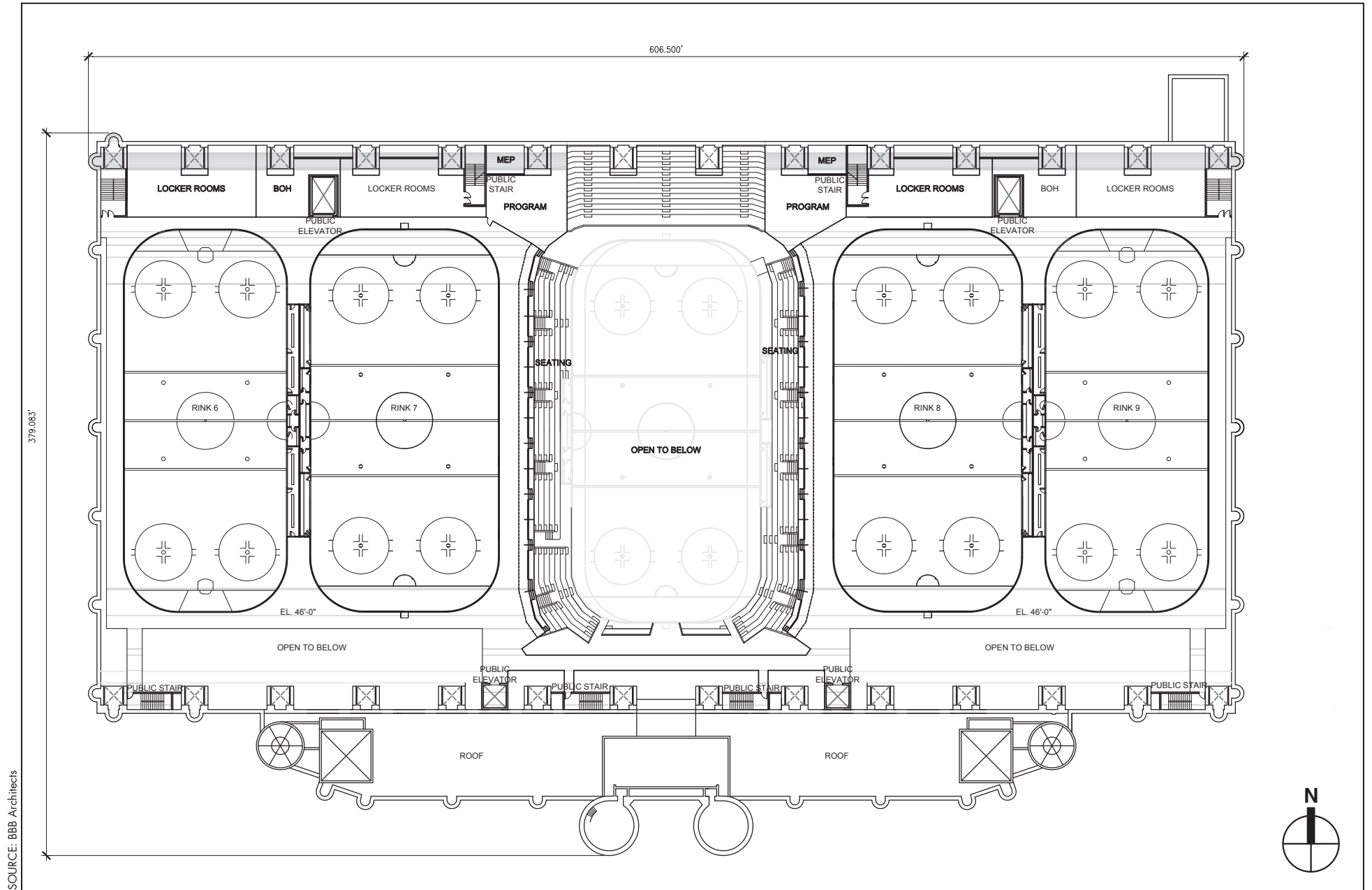


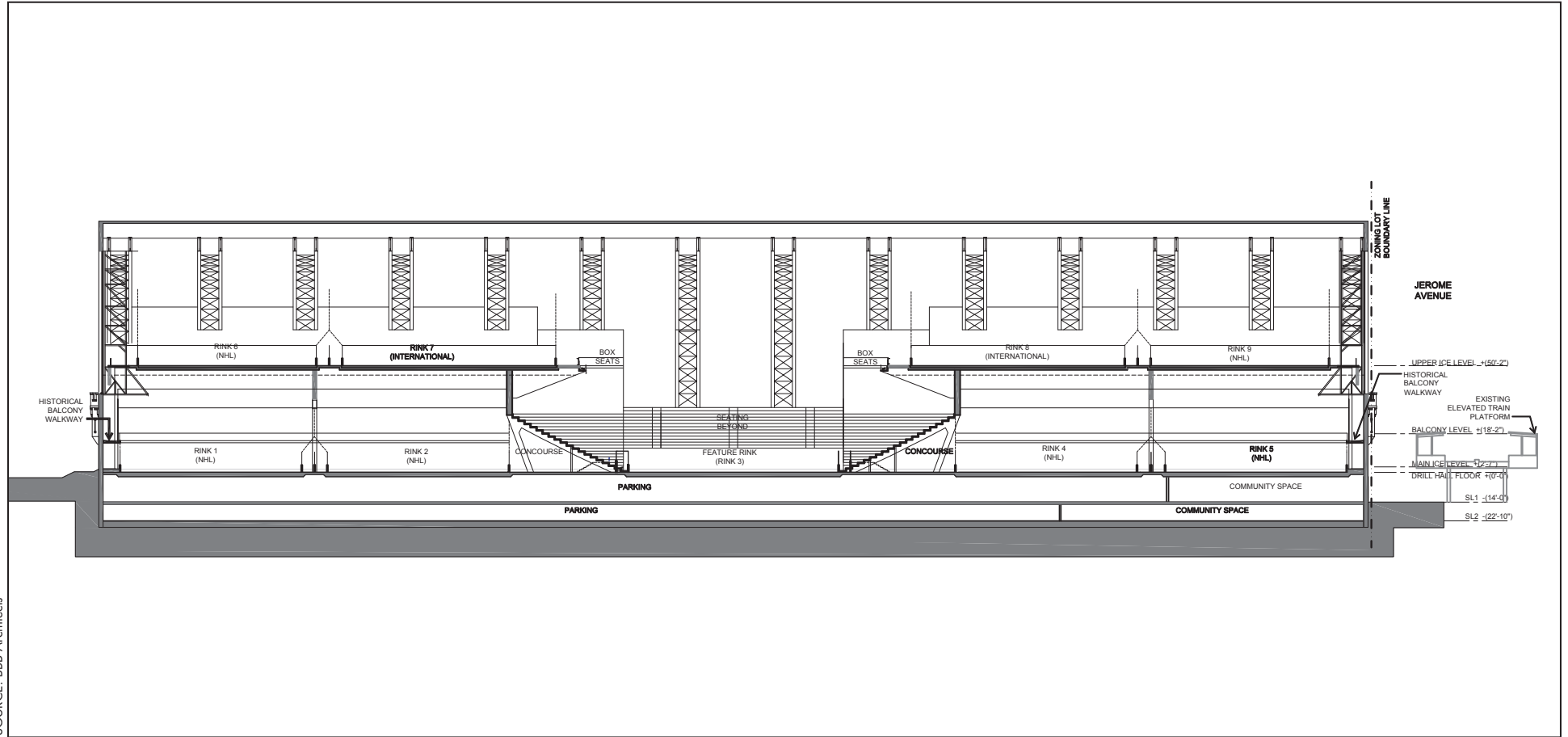
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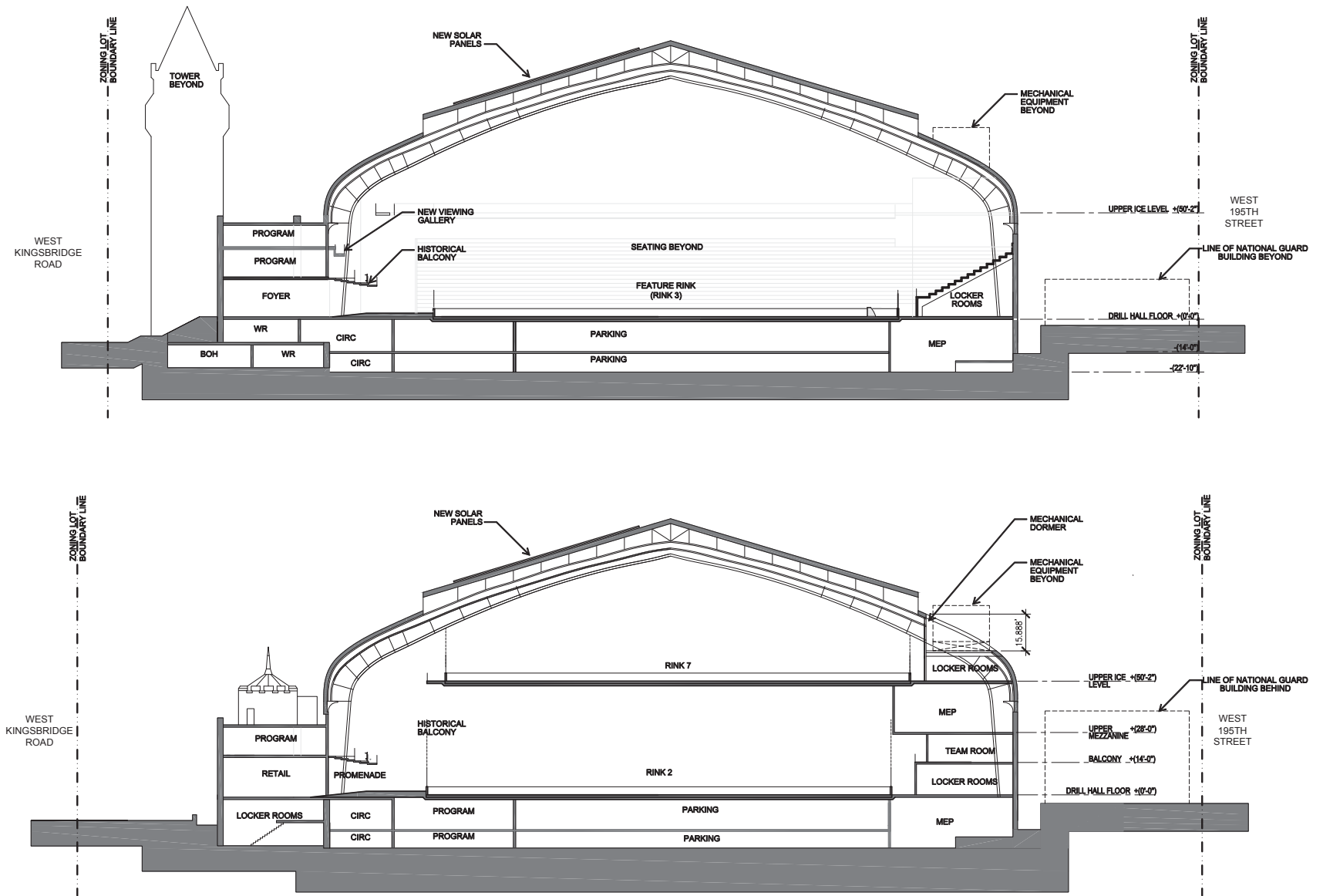
NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

**Main Ice Level**  
**Figure 1-2**





NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY



NOTE: FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

North-South Sections at Rink 2 and Rink 3  
Figure 1-5

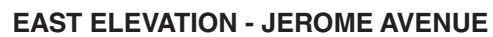
**Table 1-1**  
**Program Summary\***

Use	Gross Square Footage	Spaces / Seats	Other Description
Ice Rinks and Accessory Spaces	±274,400	--	9 rinks total, main rink with capacity of approximately 5,000 seats
Related Program Space	±64,300	--	Wellness/off-ice training center, curling rinks, lockers/equipment storage
Related Food and Beverage/Concessions/Retail <sup>†</sup>	±58,100	--	--
Community Facility	±50,000	--	Fitness and recreation facilities, multipurpose rooms, child care, business incubator space, meeting rooms
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>±446,800</b>	--	--
Parking	±153,300	Approx. 457 spaces	Parking located in cellar and subcellar levels
Mechanical/Circulation/Ice Plant	±194,800	--	--
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>±794,900</b>	--	--

\*All square footages are approximated.  
<sup>†</sup>Includes some circulation area.

The proposed project would involve some changes to the exterior of the historic Armory structure, to provide additional pedestrian and vehicular access, to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and to accommodate mechanical systems. These are anticipated to include new pedestrian entrances and exits on the north side of the building, a new ADA-compliant entrance at the southwest corner of the building's west facade, a new vehicular entrance and loading dock on the north side of the building, and a new truck entrance on the west side of the building. In addition, there would be several screened openings at the building's roof for the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system, which could be visible from some nearby vantage points, and signage within and adjacent to the Armory structure. Solar panels are proposed to be installed on the upper (flat) portion of the roof on the south side of the building. Alterations to the historic structure would be designed in consultation with and subject to approval by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) (and, as required, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation [OPRHP]). **Figures 1-6 and 1-7** provide illustrative elevations of the proposed project.

The proposed project also would introduce new signage to the interior of the Armory that would be visible from nearby vantage points. Illuminated signs would be added within the Armory at the east and west interior facades of the drill hall (facing Jerome Avenue and Reservoir Avenue, respectively). The signs would be set back from the interior facades by at least 18 inches, as required by LPC. The signs would be approximately 8 feet tall and 200 feet wide. The eastern side, facing Jerome Avenue, would comprise an LED display sign; the sign on the western façade would be comprised of individually cut letters that read "Kingsbridge National Ice Center" and would be indirectly lit from the front. Additionally, two free-standing signs, approximately 10 feet tall and 50 feet wide, are proposed at the ground level outside of the Armory structure, one facing West Kingsbridge Road and the other facing Reservoir Avenue. These signs would have a total sign area of approximately 500 sf each and would be illuminated from within. Finally, banners identifying the Armory Building as an ice center are proposed on



### Proposed East and West Elevations Figure 1-6





### Proposed North and South Elevations

**Figure 1-7**

the south facade of the Armory Building at the existing historic turrets. The banners would be illuminated through lighting sources mounted at ground level.

For the purpose of analyzing the potential environmental impacts of the proposed actions described below, this Draft EIS (DEIS) considers the proposed project to be the reasonable worst-case development scenario.

The proposed project would involve in-ground construction related to excavation below the Armory building for select foundation work. If the proposed project is approved, it is anticipated that site preparation and construction for the project would commence in late 2014, and the first full year of operation is expected to be 2018.

## **B. SITE CONDITIONS**

As described above, the project site is largely occupied by the Kingsbridge Armory. The Armory, which is also known as the Eighth Regiment Armory, is approximately 588,765 gsf<sup>1</sup> in size, 130 feet tall, 300 feet wide and 600 feet long. It is substantially vacant apart from the storage of graffiti removal trucks by the Mayor's Office "Graffiti Free NYC" program. In addition to the Armory, the project site includes small landscaped areas south and west of the Armory building. The two buildings adjacent to the Armory's north façade are excluded from the project site and are not part of the proposed project; however, they are within the proposed rezoning area. These two buildings are modern additions to the Armory property that are currently being used by the National Guard for military recruiting and a garage. The Kingsbridge Road station on the No. 4 train line is located directly east of the project site at Jerome Avenue, and the No. 4 train's viaduct extends north-south above Jerome Avenue. The proposed rezoning area is currently zoned R6.

## **C. BACKGROUND HISTORY<sup>2</sup>**

The Kingsbridge Armory, officially the former home of the 258th Field Artillery (Eighth Regiment), is a noted example of military architecture. Reputedly the largest (former) armory in the world, it gives the appearance of a medieval Romanesque-style fortress with its massive towers and crenellated parapets. It is one of the few remaining armories in New York City.

The Armory was built on the site of the proposed eastern basin of the Jerome Park Reservoir. Excavation had begun for the eastern basin in the early 1900s, but the New York State legislature authorized the site for a National Guard armory in 1911. A number of military relics were dug up during the excavation, as the armory site was near two Revolutionary War fort sites. When the Armory was built, the military organization using the building was known as the Eighth Coast Artillery, which traces its history back to 1786 with the establishment of the peace-time militia in New York City. Because the regiment formed part of the honor guard at the presidential inauguration of George Washington, it later adopted the nickname of the "Washington Greys." Before the present Armory was built, the organization occupied the armory at Park Avenue and East 94th Street.

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<sup>1</sup> Including basement and mezzanine levels.

<sup>2</sup> Portions of this section have been excerpted from the Armory's "New York City Landmark Designation Report" (1974).

Over the course of the 20th century the Armory's drill hall hosted numerous public events, particularly in the early 1950s before the completion of the Coliseum at Columbus Circle. These events included radio broadcasts, bicycle races, track and tennis events, auto, boat, flower and dog shows, and stockholder meetings. In the early 1980s, the Armory was also used as a shelter for the homeless. As part of a nationwide program of military cutbacks, the Eighth Regiment departed the Armory in 1994, and the City of New York took control of the Armory on April 11, 1996. During the 1990s, a plan was developed to utilize the building as a retail and sports complex, but this plan never moved past the planning stage. Other proposed uses for the structure have included a public school and a retail complex, for which an EIS was prepared in 2009 (see description below).

### **PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

In 2007, the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the sale and redevelopment of the landmark Armory. In the spring of 2008, Related Retail Armory, LLC was selected by EDC as the designated developer for the then-proposed project. The then-proposed project contemplated the renovation and redevelopment of the Armory with approximately 605,000 square feet (sf) of retail, cinema, fitness club, restaurant, and community facility uses and approximately 400 parking spaces. A DEIS for the previous project was issued in May 2009, and a Final EIS (FEIS) was issued in October 2009. The then-proposed project was reviewed pursuant to the city's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) and was not approved by the City Council in December 2009.

### **PROPOSED PROJECT**

In January 2012, the EDC again issued a RFP for the sale and redevelopment of the landmark Armory. KNIC Partners, LLC responded to the RFP with a proposal to redevelop the Armory as a national ice center, as described above. The KNIC proposal is intended to help address New York City's shortage of ice surfaces, as well as to foster community development and engage youth in active lifestyles. KNIC Partners also reached an agreement with a coalition of community groups to provide a significant community benefits package as part of the proposed project. KNIC Partners was selected as the City's designated developer of the Armory on April 23, 2013.

## **D. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

The proposed project would support the economic revitalization of the Kingsbridge Heights neighborhood of the Bronx by converting the large, substantially vacant Armory building into productive use. The KNIC project would create new employment, learning, and recreational opportunities for local residents, and would create economic and fiscal benefits to the City in the form of economic revitalization, increased employment opportunities, and tax revenue. By creating the largest indoor skating facility in the world, the project also would provide a new, unique destination in the Bronx.

## **E. PROPOSED ACTIONS**

The proposed project involves the disposition of City-owned property to a private developer. Disposition would require approval through ULURP pursuant to New York City Charter Section 197-c and separate Mayoral and Borough Board approval pursuant to City Charter Section 384(b)(4). In addition, the following discretionary actions would be required to facilitate the project:

- A zoning text amendment to Section 74-41 of the New York City Zoning Resolution (ZR), to create a new subsection 74-41(b), which would allow by special permit an indoor arena with a rated capacity in excess of 2,500 persons, but not greater than 6,000 persons, to be located within 200 feet of a residential district in Bronx Community Board 7, and to allow modifications of certain signage and loading berth requirements;
- A zoning map amendment to rezone the project block from R6 to C4-4;
- A special permit pursuant to proposed subsection 74-41(b) of the ZR to permit (a) an arena with a maximum capacity of 6,000 seats at the development site and (b) the modification of signage and loading berth requirements for the proposed project;
- A special permit pursuant to ZR Section 73-36 from the New York City Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) for the proposed wellness center; and
- An easement from the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs, for the planned use of the property between West 195th Street and the north façade of the Armory, for reconfigured and expanded access driveways, as well as for ingress/egress.

Since the Armory is a NYCL, the proposed changes to the building would require a Certificate of Appropriateness (CofA) from LPC pursuant to New York City Landmarks Law.

The project sponsor also will seek federal historic preservation tax credits for the proposed renovation of the building.

## **F. ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK**

The lead agency and involved agencies are required to take a hard look at the environmental effects of a proposed action and, to the maximum extent practicable, avoid or mitigate significant adverse impacts on the environment consistent with social, economic, and other essential considerations. The EIS identifies and analyzes the significant adverse environmental impacts of a proposed action and how those impacts could be avoided or minimized, providing a means for agencies to consider environmental factors and choose among alternatives in their decision-making processes.

The 2012 *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual* will serve as the general guide on the methodologies and impact criteria for evaluating the proposed project's potential effects on the various environmental areas of analysis. In disclosing impacts, the EIS considers the proposed action's adverse impacts on the environmental setting. Because the proposed project is anticipated to be fully operational in 2018, its environmental setting is not the current environment, but the future environment. Therefore, the technical analyses and consideration of alternatives assess current conditions and forecasts these conditions to 2018 (the analysis year that was determined appropriate for this project) for the purposes of determining potential impacts. The EIS provides a description of "Existing Conditions" for the year 2013 and forecasts these conditions to the future 2018 analysis year without and with the proposed project ("No Build" and "Build" conditions, respectively). To forecast the No Build condition, information on known land-use proposals (as identified in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy") and, as appropriate, changes in anticipated overall growth, are incorporated. The differences between No Build and Build conditions are assessed for whether such differences are adverse and/or significant; any significant adverse environmental impacts are disclosed. The EIS also identifies and analyzes appropriate mitigation for any identified significant adverse environmental impacts.

As noted above, the proposed project is considered to be the reasonable worst-case development scenario for the purpose of analyzing the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. To establish a conservative framework for assessing potential impacts in the future analysis year, the EIS assumes a baseline condition in which, absent the proposed development, the Armory would remain in its current substantially vacant condition.

## **G. PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS**

The above-described actions are subject to both the City's ULURP and CEQR procedures. These review processes are described below.

### **UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW PROCEDURE (ULURP)**

ULURP, mandated by Sections 197-c and 197-d of the City Charter, is a process especially designed to allow public review of a proposed project at four levels: the Community Board, the Borough President and (if applicable) Borough Board, the CPC, and the City Council. The procedure sets time limits for review at each stage to ensure a maximum total review period of approximately seven months.

The ULURP process begins with a certification by CPC that the ULURP application is complete, which includes satisfying CEQR requirements (see the discussion below). If the particular application is subject to environmental review (see below), a negative declaration, conditional negative declaration, or a notice of completion of a DEIS must be issued before an application can be certified.

The application is then forwarded to the Community Board (in this case, Bronx CB7), which has 60 days to review and discuss the proposal, hold public hearings, and adopt recommendations regarding the application. Once this step is complete, the Borough President reviews the application for up to 30 days. CPC then has 60 days to review the application, during which time a ULURP/CEQR public hearing is held. Comments made at the DEIS public hearing (the record for commenting remains open for 10 days after the hearing to receive written comments) are incorporated into a FEIS; the FEIS must be completed at least 10 days before CPC makes its decision on the application. CPC may approve, approve with modifications, or deny the application.

If the ULURP application is approved, or approved with modifications, it moves to the City Council for review. The City Council does not automatically review all ULURP actions that are approved by CPC. Zoning map changes and zoning text changes (not subject to ULURP) must be reviewed by the City Council; the Council may elect to review certain other actions. The City Council, through the Land Use Committee, has 50 days to review the application and, during this time, will hold a public hearing on the proposed project. The Council may approve, approve with modifications, or deny the application. If the Council proposes a modification to the proposed project, the ULURP review process stops for 15 days, providing time for a CPC determination on whether the modification is within the scope of the environmental review and ULURP review. If it is, then the Council may proceed with the modification; if it is not, then the Council may only vote on the project as approved by CPC. Following the Council's vote, the Mayor has 5 days in which to veto the Council's actions. The City Council may override a Mayoral veto within 10 days.

### **NEW YORK CITY ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW (CEQR)**

Pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and its implementing regulations, New York City has established rules for its own environmental quality review, abbreviated as

CEQR. The environmental review process provides a means for decision-makers to systematically consider environmental effects along with other aspects of project planning and design, to propose reasonable alternatives, to identify, and when practicable mitigate, significant adverse environmental effects. CEQR rules guide environmental review through the following steps:

- **Establish a Lead Agency.** Under CEQR, the “lead agency” is the public entity responsible for conducting the environmental review. The lead agency is typically the entity principally responsible for carrying out, funding, or approving the proposed action. For the KNIC project, the lead agency is the New York City Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development (ODMED).
- **Determine Significance.** The lead agency’s first charge is to determine whether the proposed action may have a significant impact on the environment. To make this determination, the lead agency prepared an Environmental Assessment Statement (EAS). Based on the information contained in the EAS, the lead agency determined that the proposed development plan could have the potential to result in significant adverse environmental impacts and issued a Positive Declaration, initiating the preparation of an EIS.
- **Scoping.** Once the lead agency issues a Positive Declaration, it must then issue a draft scope of work for the EIS. “Scoping,” or creating the scope of work, is the process of establishing the type and extent of the environmental impact analyses to be studied in the EIS. CEQR requires a public scoping meeting as part of the process. A public scoping meeting was held on the proposed project and EIS scope of work on Thursday, May 23, 2013. A final scope of work, reflecting comments made during scoping, was issued by ODMED on July 15, 2013.
- **DEIS.** In accordance with the final scope of work, a DEIS has been prepared. The lead agency reviewed all aspects of the document, calling on other City agencies to participate as appropriate. Once the lead agency was satisfied that the DEIS was complete, it issued a Notice of Completion and circulated the DEIS for public review. When a DEIS is required, it must be deemed complete before the ULURP application can also be found complete.
- **Public Review.** Publication of the DEIS and issuance of the Notice of Completion signals the start of the public review period. During this period, which must extend for a minimum of 30 days, the public may review and comment on the DEIS either in writing or at a public hearing convened for the purpose of receiving such comments. As noted above, when the CEQR process is coordinated with another City process that requires a public hearing, such as ULURP, the hearings may be held jointly. The lead agency must publish a notice of the hearing at least 14 days before it takes place and must accept written comments for at least 10 days following the close of the hearing. All substantive comments become part of the CEQR record and are summarized and responded to in the FEIS.
- **FEIS.** After the close of the public comment period for the DEIS, the lead agency will prepare a FEIS. The FEIS must incorporate relevant comments on the DEIS, in a separate chapter and in changes to the body of the text, graphics, and tables. Once the lead agency determines that the FEIS is complete, it will issue a Notice of Completion and circulate the FEIS.
- **Findings.** The lead agency and each involved agency will adopt a formal set of written findings, reflecting its conclusions about the potential for significant adverse environmental impacts of the proposed action, potential alternatives, and mitigation measures. The findings may not be adopted until 10 days after the Notice of Completion has been issued for the FEIS. Once findings are adopted, the lead and involved agencies may take their actions (or take “no action”). \*