

**FINAL SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE  
CROTON WATER TREATMENT PLANT  
AT THE EASTVIEW SITE**

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## **5.3. VISUAL CHARACTER**

### **5.3.1. Introduction**

This section examines the potential effects of the proposed Croton Water Treatment Plant (Croton project) on the existing visual quality and design characteristics of the Eastview Site and surrounding study area, including building types, heights, and materials, and topography and vegetation.

The study area for this Visual Character analysis includes the Eastview Site and an area extending roughly one-mile from the site, bounded by the Saw Mill River Parkway to the west, the Cross Westchester Expressway (I-287) and the southern edge of the Westchester Community College campus to the south, the Taconic State Parkway and Hillside Avenue (Route 100) to the east, and Mid-Westchester Executive Park, Grasslands Reservation, and the Gate of Heaven Cemetery to the north. The methodology used to prepare this analysis is presented in Section 4.3, Data Collection and Impact Methodologies, Visual Character.

### **5.3.2. Baseline Conditions**

During site visits, photographs were taken from various vantage points to capture/present the visual character of the area. The vantage point selection was based on publicly accessible locations within the study area that represent views that could be altered by the proposed project. Although the study area extends approximately one mile from the Eastview Site, views were taken from publicly accessible locations that are generally located in close proximity because views of the Eastview Site diminish with distance. Although the study area extends approximately one mile from the site, views were taken from publicly accessible locations that are generally located in close proximity because views of the Eastview Site diminish with distance. Photographs were taken during both the winter and summer months to account for changes in vegetation. Figure 5.3-1 provides a key map for the photographs of the Eastview Site and the study area.

#### **5.3.2.1. Existing Conditions**

##### **5.3.2.1.1. Water Treatment Plant Site**

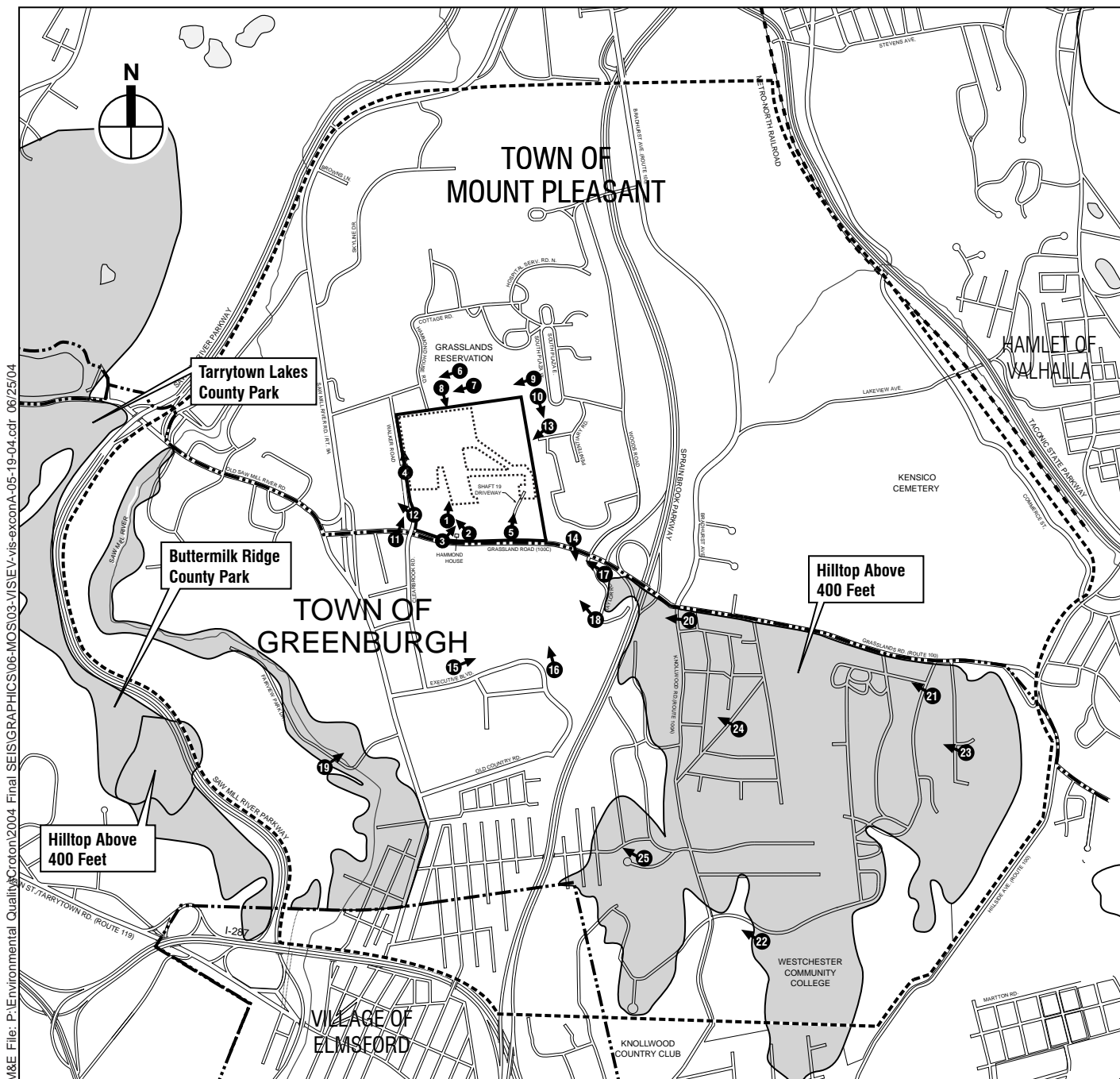
Most of the Eastview Site is currently undeveloped and covered with vegetation consisting of shrubs and patches of mature trees with the exception of: the Delaware Aqueduct Shaft No. 19, situated on the eastern side of the site with an access road off Route 100C; and the historic Hammond House, a private residence that is situated on the southern edge of the site accessed by a driveway from Route 100C. Hammond House Road is a former two-lane road, which is now a tree-lined corridor that divides the site. The road runs north-south, sloping upwards slightly as it heads northward towards Dana Road. Recently de-paved, the private roadway retains remnants of the asphalt pavement (Photograph 1 of Figure 5.3-2). This roadway is closed, demapped, and on NYCDEP property. It had been informally used previously by pedestrians and cyclists; however, access to this roadway is no longer permitted due to the implementation of updated security measures. The remainder of the site can be characterized as

containing abandoned agricultural fields, which vary from early successional species to shrub-dominated openings and successional woodlots. These communities are interspersed with mature or maturing forest and wetland communities.

During the winter months, the 36-foot tall Westchester County Department of Laboratories and Research (County Laboratory) building can be seen from the southern end of Hammond House Road. To the west of Hammond House Road are brush-covered fields and views of a ridgeline in the distance (Photograph 2 of Figure 5.3-2). East of Hammond House Road, fronting on Route 100C is the Hammond House, a farm house dating from the early 18th century (Photograph 3 of Figure 5.3-3). The two-story wood-frame house, which has a peaked roof and a front porch (supported by wood columns), faces a small grassy yard that separates the house from Route 100C. The areas north and east of the house's yard are brush covered.

On the northeastern portion of the Eastview Site there is a large forested wetland area. Near the northwestern corner, a small amount of masonry debris from a former structure is scattered on the ground. The remains of a stone wall can also be seen. Along the western edge of the site is Walker Road (formerly Bee-Line Boulevard) a two-lane road that provides access Westchester County Valhalla Campus (Grasslands Reservation). A low metal fence separates this road from the remainder of the Eastview Site (Photograph 4 of Figure 5.3-3). Walker Road also provides access to the Westchester County Bus Facility.

Mine Brook, a narrow low-lying brook that runs roughly north-south, is east of the Hammond House and divides the site, and continues its course through a culvert under Route 100C and southward into the Town of Greenburgh. The land slopes gently upward from the stream bed. Immediately adjacent to both sides of the brook are elevated areas covered with trees. Near the easternmost edge, a narrow, paved road (Photograph 5 of Figure 5.3-4) leads north from Route 100C to an existing shaft structure for the Delaware Aqueduct (Shaft No. 19). Tall wooden utility poles with wires border the road. Not visible from Route 100C, the shaft house is a small, one-story concrete structure that is set on elevated ground and surrounded by low grass and overgrown brush, which are common groundcover across most of the Eastview Site.



## Key to Photographs Eastview Site





**Photograph 1** - View north along Hammond House Road with Westchester County Department of Laboratories and Research building in the background.



**Photograph 2** - View northwest from Hammond House with ridgeline in the background.

## Visual Character Eastview Site





**Photograph 3** - View of the Hammond House.



**Photograph 4** - View north on Walker Road. Western edge of Eastview Site.

## Visual Character Eastview Site





**Photograph 5** - View north of entrance to access road to Shaft No.19.



**Photograph 6** - View west of Westchester County Valhalla Campus (Grasslands Reservation).

## Visual Character Eastview Site

#### **5.3.2.1.2. Study Area**

***Town of Mount Pleasant.*** As described in Section 5.2, Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy, the Eastview Site is surrounded to the north, east, and west by the Grasslands Reservation. Grasslands Reservation is a large landscaped campus containing medical facilities, transportation and public safety facilities, and a correctional complex (the Westchester County Correctional Complex). Numerous buildings are set on grassy plots with landscaped lawns and trees. They are connected by paved roads, including two primary roads that extend through the campus, Dana Road and Woods Road. The medical buildings are primarily of late 20th century construction with flat roofs. However, a few of the buildings making up the New York Medical College are mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century buildings with peaked roofs. The buildings mostly have brick facades and range in height from two to four stories (Photograph 6 of Figure 5.3-4). The back of the County Laboratory (Photograph 7 of Figure 5.3-5) faces the northern property line of the Eastview Site (Photograph 8 of Figure 5.3-5). Large paved parking lots adjoin many of the buildings in Grasslands Reservation. To the east of the County Laboratory, a parking lot is located adjacent to the northeast corner of the water treatment plant site (Photograph 9 of Figure 5.3-6). The modern, brick Westchester County Correctional Complex is close to the eastern side of the Eastview Site. Double-height floors of the Correctional Facility make this building the equivalent of 10 stories (120 feet tall). Near the correctional facility is the tallest structure on the campus, a thin, tapering steel telecommunications tower that is 490 feet tall (Photograph 10 of Figure 5.3-6). The tower is visible from many locations in the study area, including from Walker Road (Photograph 11 of Figure 5.3-7) and Cross Westchester Executive Park south of Route 100C. Dana Road, a two-lane road that extends east-west through Grasslands Reservation from Saw Mill River Road (Route 9A) along the northern portion of the campus, is bordered by standard metal light poles and wooden utility poles with overhead wires. Woods Road, a winding service road located east of the Eastview Site, provides access to Grasslands Reservation from Route 100C.

To the west of the Eastview Site are the Bee-Line Bus Facility and the Westchester County Fire Training Center (Photograph 12 of Figure 5.3-7). The bus facility, located at the corner of Route 100C and Walker Road, is a modern-looking, relatively low, but large flat-roofed garage for bus storage. North of the bus facility is the Fire Training Center. The center includes various fire training props, including a burn house. The burn house is a narrow three to four-story structure surrounded by large paved parking. Besides these facilities, the area is largely undeveloped. The water treatment plant site is visible from the west from the Bee-Line Bus Facility and Westchester County Fire Training Center, from the north from the County Laboratory, from the east from the Westchester County Correctional Complex, (Photograph 13 of Figure 5.3-8) and from the south from the Cross-Westchester Executive Park.





**Photograph 7** - View west of rear of Westchester County Department of Laboratories and Research building adjacent to northern edge of Eastview Site.



**Photograph 8** - View south from rear of the Westchester County Department of Laboratories and Research building.

## Visual Character Eastview Site





**Photograph 9** - View west of Eastview Site from Grasslands Reservation.



**Photograph 10** - View south of the Correctional Facility and telecommunications tower from northeast corner of Eastview Site.

## Visual Character Eastview Site



**Photograph 11** - View northeast of Eastview Site and telecommunications tower from Grasslands Road/Walker Road intersection.



**Photograph 12** - View northwest of the Bee-Line Bus Facility with the Westchester County Fire Training Center in the background.

## Visual Character Eastview Site





**Photograph 13** - View west toward Eastview Site from Westchester County Correctional Complex.



**Photograph 14** - View south of transmission lines near Grasslands Road near Catskill Aqueduct connection chamber.

## Visual Character Eastview Site



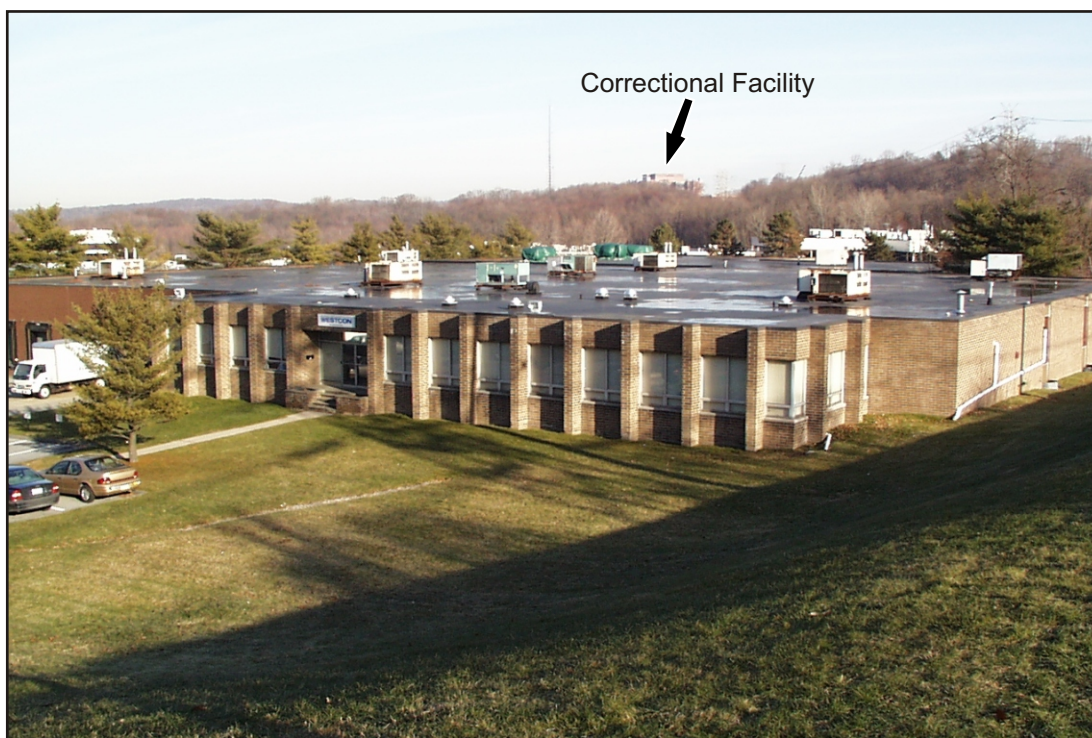
***Town of Greenburgh.*** Immediately south of the Eastview Site across Route 100C is an additional 66-acre City-owned parcel (south parcel) that contains densely wooded areas, wetlands, and brush cover. Vegetation around Mine Brook, which continues along its north-south course, is mainly hardwood forest. As on the Eastview Site, the land slopes gently upward from the streambed. Near the center of the parcel, a former drainage ditch and the remains of a portion of a stone wall are present. On the eastern edge of the parcel are large-scale overhead transmission lines, which are visually prominent (Photograph 14 of Figure 5.3-8). Currently, a cleared pathway provides access to this portion of the City property to provide access to the Catskill Connection Chamber.

The City-owned parcel is bordered by the Cross Westchester Executive Park to the south and west and the Catskill Aqueduct and residences to the east. The Cross Westchester Executive Park is a corporate campus of modern commercial and industrial buildings with masonry and glass facades. The low, modern buildings are situated along winding roads adjacent to large paved parking lots (Photograph 15 of Figure 5.3-9). The Executive Park has access from Route 100C via Clearbrook Road, which borders the western edge of the campus. Views from the Executive Park include the entire Eastview property and Grasslands Reservation (Photograph 16 of Figure 5.3-9).

The Catskill Aqueduct is located beneath additional City-owned property along the eastern edge of the Eastview property, which also contains three high-voltage towers carrying overhead electrical transmission lines. East of this area is a small residential development on Taylor Road, which is bordered by tall utility poles with overhead wires and streetlights. Along both sides of this winding cul-de-sac are primarily one- and two-story brick and frame houses with peaked roofs. The houses typically have attached garages accessed by paved driveways and landscaped front lawns with mature trees. Some of the properties have small out buildings behind the houses and swimming pools. West of the houses along the western side of the road is a wooded area that slopes sharply downward from the houses and forms a barrier between a majority of the site and the houses along the border of the parcel (Photographs 17 and 18 of Figure 5.3-10). This wooded area is part of the additional City-owned land discussed above.



**Photograph 15** - View east near Executive Boulevard with Eastview property to the left.



**Photograph 16** - View northwest on Executive Boulevard toward the Eastview Site.

## Visual Character Eastview Site





**Photograph 17** - View northwest on Taylor Road.



**Photograph 18** - View northwest toward the Eastview Site from Taylor Road.

## Visual Character Eastview Site

***Outer Portions of the Study Area.*** To the northwest of Grasslands Reservation is the Mid-Westchester Executive Park. Another office park (Landmark Property) is located west of the Eastview Site, across Route 9A. The Eastview Site is not visible from the Landmark Property or Mid-Westchester Executive office parks.

The Cross Westchester Executive Park lies in the southwestern portion of the study area along Clearbrook Road and Executive Boulevard. To the east of the Eastview Site is the Sprain Brook Parkway, a four-lane north-south highway. The Sprain Brook Parkway is at a lower elevation than the Eastview Site and is not visible from the parkway. The area east of the Sprain Brook Parkway up to the eastern boundary of the study area is largely occupied by the Kensico and Gate of Heaven Cemeteries. The cemeteries are at a much lower grade than the Eastview Site. Therefore, the site is not visible from the cemeteries.

Two important visual resources are located on the eastern and western borders of the study area: the Taconic State Parkway and the Saw Mill River Parkway. The Taconic State Parkway, winding and landscaped, is a historic motorway that carries four lanes of traffic on the eastern border of the study area. Similarly winding and landscaped, the Saw Mill River Parkway forms the western boundary of the study area, running north-south through both the Towns of Mount Pleasant and Greenburgh. The Eastview Site is not visible from either parkway.

There are several Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs) that have been designated by the Town of Greenburgh both within and just outside of the study area for the proposed project. The locations of these CEAs are identified on Figure 5.3-1. In the southwest quadrant of the study area, there is another CEA that contains floodplains associated with the Saw Mill River. This area also contains several industrial uses along Fieldcrest Drive, Waterside Drive, and Fairview Park Drive, all of which are off Route 9A. Views of the Eastview Site from this CEA are shielded by intervening vegetation and topography (Photograph 19 of Figure 5.3-11). Within the southeast quadrant of the study area, there is a CEA that contains hilltops with elevations ranging over 400 feet above sea level. This area contains the Westchester Community College campus, the Hebrew Hospital Home of Westchester, and several residential neighborhoods along Knollwood Road, none of which have direct views of the Eastview Site (Photographs 20 through 25 of Figures 5.3-11 through 5.3-14). Just outside of the study area to the west, beyond the Saw Mill River Parkway, are three additional CEAs: two County parks (Buttermilk Ridge County Park and Tarrytown Lakes County Park) and a hilltop above 400 feet within Buttermilk Ridge County Park. In addition, although it is not designated as a CEA, the Town of Greenburgh is currently developing a trail system immediately south of Buttermilk Ridge County Park and east of the Hackley School. Although outside of the study area, these CEAs may have views of the Eastview Site, particularly from the hilltop within Buttermilk Ridge County Park. However, vegetation in these densely wooded parks would obscure most views of the site.





**Photograph 19** - View northeast toward the Eastview Site from Fairview Park Drive in Floodplain CEA.



**Photograph 20** - View west toward the Eastview Site from Route 100C at Arthur Lane in Hilltop CEA.

## Visual Character Eastview Site





**Photograph 21** - View northwest toward the Eastview Site from Westchester Community College Campus (north side) in Hilltop CEA.



**Photograph 22** - View northwest toward the Eastview Site from Westchester Community College Campus (south side) in Hilltop CEA.

## Visual Character Eastview Site





**Photograph 23** - View northwest toward the Eastview Site from Hebrew Hospital Home driveway in Hilltop CEA.



**Photograph 24** - View northwest toward the Eastview Site from Buena Vista Drive in Hilltop CEA.

## Visual Character Eastview Site





**Photograph 25** - View northwest toward the Eastview Site from Heather Lane in Hilltop CEA.

## Visual Character Eastview Site



### **5.3.2.2. *Future Without The Project***

The Future Without the Project conditions were developed for the anticipated peak year of construction (2008) and the anticipated year of operation (2010) for the proposed project. The anticipated peak year of construction is based on the peak number of workers.

The Future Without the Project considers two scenarios: one in which the NYCDEP Catskill/Delaware Ultraviolet (UV) Light Disinfection Facility (Cat/Del UV Facility) would not be located on the Eastview Site and another in which the Cat/Del UV Facility is located on the site, specifically in the southeast corner of the site. It should be noted that the Eastview Site is the only location under consideration for the Cat/Del UV Facility. This scenario is being carried because the Cat/Del UV Facility has not yet received its necessary approvals from the Towns of Mount Pleasant or Greenburgh or other approval entities. By the peak construction year, two additional NYCDEP projects could be located on the Eastview Site, namely a Police Precinct and possibly an NYCDEP East-of Hudson Administration Building<sup>1</sup>. The Police Precinct may be located in the southwest corner of the Eastview Site. The location of the Administration Building is less certain; however, since the Eastview Site is one of several properties currently being evaluated as a possible site for this facility. In addition to these projects, NYCDEP's Kensico-City Tunnel may be under construction at the Eastview Site starting in 2009. All of these NYCDEP projects are analyzed in this Final SEIS to the extent to which information is available. They are all separate actions from the proposed project and will undergo their own independent environmental reviews.

#### **5.3.2.2.1. *Without Cat/Del UV Facility at Eastview Site***

**Water Treatment Plant Site.** Visual resources and urban design in the area surrounding the Eastview Site are not anticipated to change substantially by the year 2010, the initial year of operation for the proposed plant.

By the anticipated year of peak construction, a proposed NYCDEP Police Precinct is planned to be constructed on the southwest corner of the Eastview Site. Construction of the proposed NYCDEP Police Precinct would alter the appearance of the site from Route 100C. Additionally, the Kensico-City Tunnel (KCT) project is anticipated to be under construction by the year 2010; it could temporarily alter the visual character of the site during construction, depending on where its staging area is located. At this time, the KCT project is in the early planning stages and no detailed information is available. Depending on where it is sited, and if constructed on the Eastview Site, construction of a possible Administration Building may also alter the appearance of the site. This project, in addition to the projects mentioned above, would be subject to its own independent environmental review.

These structures would change the visual character of the Eastview Site, transforming it from a largely undeveloped natural condition to a developed suburban condition with low-rise buildings, interior roadways, parking areas and landscaping.

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<sup>1</sup> This depends on the results of a siting evaluation that is currently ongoing. The siting decision will be evaluated and discussed as part of a separate independent environmental review.

### ***Study Area.***

Town of Mount Pleasant. In Grasslands Reservation to the north, the introduction of new and expanded structures, particularly the proposed Biotech Center, would increase the urban character of the campus. Immediately north of the water treatment plant site, the County Laboratories would be expanded by 15,000 square feet, further contributing to the more developed appearance of the study area. To the west, an 113,540 sq. ft. Home Depot would be introduced to the study area.

Trees and vegetation on the northern half of Eastview Site would remain intact through 2010. However, construction of the NYCDEP police precinct would alter the views of the southern half of the Eastview Site. On the site, views of the proposed development area from the County Laboratory and other parts of Grasslands Reservation would be screened by existing vegetation. Hammond House Road would remain closed to pedestrian and bicycle traffic between Route 100C and Dana Road.

Town of Greenburgh. To the south of the Eastview Site, undeveloped portions of the additional City-owned property in the Town of Greenburgh would remain largely unchanged; it is possible that a water storage basin for the Kensico-City Tunnel would be located in Greenburgh. Trees and shrubs around Mine Brook would continue to provide dense brush cover to the City-owned property on the south side of Route 100C. Proposed projects within the study area in the Town of Greenburgh include building new office buildings and expanding existing facilities at places such as the Landmark at Eastview. These construction projects shall not substantially affect the visual character of the surrounding areas from that which is described above under existing conditions due to the already developed nature of those areas.

#### ***5.3.2.2.2. With Cat/Del UV Facility at Eastview Site***

In addition to the projects described above, the Cat/Del UV Facility could be developed on the southeast corner of the Eastview Site. If the Cat/Del UV Facility were construction on the Eastview Site, it would change the currently undeveloped vegetated character of the property.

***Project Site.*** The Cat/Del UV Facility would consist of a main disinfection building, north and south forebay structures, an electrical generator building, and a pump station for the Town of Mount Pleasant on the Eastview Site. The pump station would pump UV treated water from the proposed facility to the Town of Mount Pleasant's Commerce Street Pump Station. On the south parcel of City-owned property, there could be two small access buildings above one or two new Catskill Connection Chambers (CCC). One of these buildings would be located above the new CCC for the treated water tunnel (north of the existing CCC), and the other would be located above a possible new CCC for the possible pressurized raw water conveyance tunnel (north of the existing CCC). The main disinfection building would be situated east to west and cover a rectangular footprint of approximately 87,600 square feet. The curved roof would be approximately 30 ft high above final grade on the eastern edge of the building and 50 ft high above final grade on the western edge of the building. The forebay structures would handle and convey raw and treated water to and from the distribution system and the Cat/Del UV Facility.

The north forebay structure would cover a square footprint of approximately of 24,000 square feet and stand 20 ft above final grade. The south forebay structure would cover a square footprint of approximately of 7,200 square feet and stand 20 ft above final grade. The electrical generator building would cover a rectangular footprint of approximately 11,000 square feet and stand approximately 25 ft high above final grade.

A treated water conduit would be introduced to convey treated water to the Catskill Aqueduct on the south parcel. A pressurized raw water conduit could be constructed to convey raw water from the Catskill Aqueduct on the south parcel to the Cat/Del UV Facility if the decision is made not to build a pressurized Catskill Tunnel alternative. This conveyance would extend below grade from a new CCC, located north of the existing CCC on the south parcel, along the eastern edge of the Eastview Site. The treated water conduits would extend below grade from the Cat/Del UV Facility to a new CCC, located south of the existing CCC, on the south parcel. The construction of both conduit systems would result in the excavation and leveling of existing topography and vegetation along either route, thereby producing a view of the Cat/Del UV Facility from Route 100C.

New trees would be planted, a stormwater detention system would be built, new paved areas would be added and the remaining area would be landscaped. A landscaping plan would be developed to restore the surrounding area that would resemble the institutional and office park development setting of the study area. Vegetative buffering such as thick foliage, shrubs or other types of screening around the north and west boundaries of the Eastview Site would not be introduced because of security concerns.

***Study Area.*** From adjacent locations within the Towns of Mount Pleasant and Greenburgh, the Cat/Del UV Facility would produce few, if any, visual effects from afar relative to the existing structures around the Eastview Site, particularly in comparison to the eight-story, 233,579-square-foot County Penitentiary, the 403,000-square-foot Westchester Medical Center, and a 490-foot telecommunications tower. Due to undulating terrain and intervening vegetation, roadways, and buildings, the proposed facility would not be visible from many viewpoints to the north and west. Within the immediate vicinity of the Eastview Site, the main disinfection building would be visible from the County Laboratory, the Westchester County Correctional Complex and other structures on Grasslands Reservation. However, the Cat/Del UV Facility would not be out of character with these structures.

Because a large portion of the existing vegetation on the Eastview Site would be removed during construction activities (including the other NYDCEP proposed projects), the Cat/Del UV Facility would be visible from Route 100C. Although the main disinfection building would be partially visible from this location, it would be similar in scale and appearance to the County Laboratory. From Walker Road the Cat/Del UV Facility would not be immediately adjacent or visually intrusive in background views containing the Hammond House. Vegetation surrounding Hammond House would not be removed or altered as a result of the project. The Cat/Del UV Facility would not be visible from residences along Taylor Road; the closest residential area located to the southeast of the Eastview Site. At night, site lighting would be kept to the minimum needed for security purposes and directed at the facility structures; therefore, much of

the surrounding vegetation would inhibit site lighting from reaching adjacent locations to the south, including the Taylor Road neighborhood.

From some elevated locations in the Town of Greenburgh (e.g. southeast of the Eastview Site), minimal views of portions of the Cat/Del UV Facility's roof could possibly be visible. However, these distant views would potentially only include the top of the building and mechanical penthouses (i.e. location that houses the HVAC equipment) on the roof in the distance, beyond treetops in the fore and middle of the viewshed, yet below the horizon line. The Westchester County Correctional Complex and adjacent telecommunications tower would continue to dominate the skyline and remain the most visually prevalent structures in the area. Similarly, the top of the main disinfection building would be visible from distant adjacent locations such as the Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs) within the Town of Greenburgh, which include hilltops above 400 feet. However, the CEAs from which views of the Eastview Site may be available are private property and not open to the public (e.g., the ridge located just outside the study area west of the Saw Mill River Parkway) due to the respective ownership (i.e. private property or government owned land). Because of the lower elevations of the Kensico and Gate of Heaven Cemeteries, the Cat/Del UV Facility would not be visible from these locations.

### **5.3.3. Potential Impacts**

#### **5.3.3.1. *Potential Project Impacts***

The anticipated year of operation for the proposed plant is 2010. Therefore, potential project impacts have been assessed by comparing the Future With the Project conditions against the Future Without the Project conditions for the year 2010 for both the with and without the Cat/Del UV Facility scenarios.

##### **5.3.3.1.1. *Without Cat/Del UV Facility at Eastview Site***

**Eastview Site.** The proposed project would include one building on the 83-acre Eastview Site. The main treatment building would be 65 feet high above grade and cover a rectangular footprint of approximately 262,000 square feet at the northwest corner of the Eastview Site. A vehicle inspection facility, including small guard booths and vehicle screening buildings, would be located farther south to regulate access to the water treatment plant site. A vehicle interdiction wall would follow the property line around the complex along the north side of the site, west to Walker Road, and south along the road before jogging at a right angle east to the vehicle inspection facility. Along the west boundary of the Eastview Site (running parallel to Walker Road), the wall would be built atop an earth berm, this elevation would be enhanced by site grading during the construction phase (Photograph 26 of Figure 5.3-15). Except for occasional shrubs punctuating the landscape within the interdiction wall, the developed portion of the water treatment plant site (approximately 12 acres) would consist primarily of lawn areas and paved vehicle surfaces around the new buildings. Vegetative buffering such as thick foliage, shrubs or other types of screening around the north and west boundaries of the proposed Croton project would not be introduced because of security concerns. However, widely spaced deciduous and coniferous trees would be planted on-site.

Some vegetation in the northwest corner of the Eastview Site would be permanently cleared to allow the proposed plant to be constructed. The existing open areas and wooded areas on the water treatment plant site are not currently viewed by the public, as access to the site is not permitted. With the proposed project, viewers, employees, and visitors would not be adversely affected by the change of visual composition in the area resulting from the proposed plant. Because the site is adjacent to institutional and office park development along the north, east and part of the west sides, views of the proposed plant from off-site would not be out of character with adjacent structures.

The total area affected during construction would be 30 acres (including the 12 acres mentioned above). The additional 18 acres would serve as a staging area during the construction of the proposed project, and afterwards the area would be landscaped and restored. New trees would be planted, a Stormwater Detention Basin would be built, new paved areas would be added and the remaining area would be landscaped. The landscaped area would be the same in character as existing conditions at the Eastview Site.

In addition, the Police Precinct located along the view corridor of Grasslands Road, would change a green view along the north side of Route 100C to one of developed infrastructure. Development associated with the KCT project could also contribute to a change in the view along the north side of Route 100C. These projects together would certainly contribute to the alteration of the current viewscape of the property north of Route 100C. However, development of a light industrial (infrastructure/water supply), low scale suburban commercial, or industrial nature is not out of line when compared with the surrounding scale and character of the area and is not be considered to result in significant adverse impacts.

As shown in Photograph 27 of Figure 5.3-15, the contemporary design of the buildings would combine buff colored pre-cast concrete with inlaid brick elements. The façade of the main treatment building would include punched aluminum window units with tinted glazing, and glass curtain wall stairwells extending from the ground to the upper levels of the building. The front entrance of the building would face north and open into an atrium with similar fenestration extending from the ground to the roof, allowing for natural illumination from outside. Some building mechanical equipment would be enclosed in utility penthouses attached to the rooftop of the treatment building. The penthouses would be sheathed with a complementary metal skin. The vehicle interdiction wall would provide both a tangible security feature at the facility and a visual definition of the site boundary. The pre-cast concrete or brick faced piers and base of the wall would use the same materials as the sheathing of the proposed plant, and would also include ornamental metal pickets that would allow views beyond the wall onto the water treatment plant site.

Next to the existing structures within Grasslands Reservation, the proposed plant would not be out of character with its surrounding environs. Some of the existing structures in the vicinity of the water treatment plant site are substantially larger and taller than the proposed plant, including the eight-story, 233,579-square-foot County Penitentiary, a 490-foot telecommunications tower immediately east of the site, and the eight-story, 403,000-square-foot Westchester Medical Center to the north.

As shown in Photograph 26 of Figure 5.3-15, the proposed elevated berm and vehicle interdiction wall would prevent views directly across the water treatment plant site from Walker Road, and only the upper portions of the new buildings would be visible. The vehicle interdiction wall and landscaped grounds beyond would be in character with other structures on the Grasslands campus and neighboring office parks.

Upon completion, the proposed project would total 12 acres of developed space and the Police Precinct would contribute some additional developed area in the southern portion of the site. The remaining portions of the property would be replanted except for areas required to be kept clear, which would be landscaped with grass. See Section 5.14, Natural Resources for further details regarding disturbance of vegetation by other NYCDEP proposed projects at this site.



**Photograph 26** - View North on Walker Road, Western Edge of Eastview Site.



**Photograph 27** - Simulated View of Main Water Treatment Plant.

## Visual Character Eastview Site

From off-site locations within Mount Pleasant and Greenburgh, the proposed facility would produce few, if any, visual effects from afar relative to the existing structures around the Eastview Site, particularly in comparison to the Correctional Complex and Westchester Medical Center (see Photographs 28 and 29 of Figure 5.3-16). Due to undulating terrain and intervening vegetation, roadways, and buildings, the proposed plant would not be visible from many viewpoints north and east of the Eastview Site. Within the immediate vicinity of the Eastview Site, the main treatment building would be visible from the County Laboratory, Bee-Line Bus Facility and other structures on Grasslands Reservation. However, the proposed plant would not be out of character with these structures.

Because a large portion of the existing vegetation on the Eastview Site would be removed during construction of the proposed plant and during construction of other NYDCEP proposed projects, the water treatment plant would be visible from Route 100C and Walker Road (see Photograph 28 of Figure 5.3-16 and Photograph 30 of Figure 5.3-17). Although the main treatment building would be partially visible from these locations, it would be similar in scale and appearance to the County Laboratory and would not be immediately adjacent or visually intrusive in background views containing the Hammond House. Vegetation surrounding Hammond House would not be removed or altered as a result of the proposed project. The proposed plant would not be visible from residences along Taylor Road, the nearest residential area to the southeast of the Eastview Site. At night, much of the surrounding vegetation would inhibit site lighting from reaching off-site locations to the south, including the Taylor Road neighborhood. Also, the lighting fixtures would be downcast to prevent light from reaching such locations.

**Study Area.** Views from areas surrounding the Eastview Site are anticipated to change since the northwest corner of the site would change from a natural field to a 12 acre developed area containing the proposed Croton project and associated parking and landscaped areas. From some elevated locations in Greenburgh (southeast of the Eastview Site), minimal views of portions of the proposed plant roof would possibly be visible. However, these distant views would only include the top of the building façade and mechanical penthouses on the roof in the distance, beyond treetops in the fore and middle of the viewshed, yet below the horizon line (see Photograph 29 of Figure 5.3-16). The Correctional Complex and adjacent telecommunications tower would continue to dominate the skyline and remain the most visually prevalent structures in the area. Similarly, the top of the main treatment building would be visible from distant off-site locations such as the critical environmental areas (CEAs) within the Town of Greenburgh, which include hilltops above 400 feet. However, the CEAs from which views of the proposed plant may be available are private property not open to the public (e.g., the ridge located just outside the study area west of the Saw Mill River Parkway) due to the respective ownership (i.e. private property or government owned land). Because of the lower elevations of the Kensico and Gate of Heaven Cemeteries, the proposed project would not be visible from these locations. In sum, although the proposed plant would somewhat alter the views of the study area, the overall operation of the proposed project would not have any significant adverse impacts on visual character in the study area. Likewise, the proposed project along with the other NYCDEP projects planned for the site would certainly alter existing views of the site from some vantage points. The visual quality of the area is not anticipated to be significantly adverse because the size, scale and development nature of the site would not be inconsistent with the suburban





**Photograph 28** - View Northeast of Main WTP from Grasslands Road/Walker Road Intersection.



**Photograph 29** - View Northwest on Executive Blvd. with Main WTP in Background.

## Visual Character Eastview Site



**Photograph 30** - View North Along Hammond House Road with Main WTP in Background.

## Visual Character Eastview Site

character and build-out conditions surrounding the site. The NYCDEP facilities would be between 30 and 70 ft in height, similar to the Westchester County Laboratory to the north of the site, and lower than the 393 foot tall radio tower to the east of the site. The facilities would be designed to be in harmony with the architectural context of the area.

#### ***5.3.3.1.2. With Cat/Del UV Facility at Eastview Site***

***Eastview Site.*** As discussed in Section 5.3.2.2.2. Future Without the Project, With Cat/Del UV Facility at Eastview Site, the Cat/Del UV Facility, the NYCDEP Police Precinct, developments associated with the KCT project, and possibly the NYCDEP Administration Building would develop the Eastview Site as a light-industrial water supply complex. By the anticipated year of operation, the UV project would include two buildings located in the southeast corner of the 83-acre north parcel. The proposed Croton project, when added to the already developed site, would be consistent with the scale and character of the surrounding area, and would not result in a significant adverse impact to visual character.

The Cat/Del UV Facility would clear trees and vegetation on the southeast portion of the Eastview Site as well as corridors within the eastern portion of the south parcel. However, the trees in the northeast corner of the Eastview Site would be preserved as well as the trees surrounding the Hammond House. The addition of the proposed Croton project would clear the northwest portion of the site. This would further contribute to the development of the Eastview Site as a light-industrial area and would not be out of character with the surrounding area (see Section 5.14, Natural Resources, for details).

Most of the visual effects related to the operation of these new facilities would be confined to the site itself. While the existing natural appearance of the Eastview Site would be altered, especially as seen from views along Walker Road, Route 100C and Dana Road, such a change would not be considered significantly adverse given: (1) the overall non-residential context of the site, including the large scale nature of the surrounding facilities (i.e. Westchester County Correctional Complex, the Cat/Del UV Facility, Bee-Line Bus Facility, and County Laboratory); (2) the types of viewers would include employees working within Grasslands Reservation and motorists on Route 100C and not viewers out for a scenic drive; and (3) due to the topography of the Eastview Site, there would be few locations from which the viewer could see both the Cat/Del UV Facility and the proposed Croton project.

***Study Area.*** As stated above in the Future Without the Project, the visual resources and urban design in the study area are not anticipated to significantly change whether or not the Cat/Del UV Facility is located at the site. The addition of the proposed Croton project to the study area is also not anticipated to change the character of the surrounding area, since the proposed Croton project would continue the development of the Eastview Site as a light-industrial water supply complex.

The development exemplified by the Cat/Del UV Facility and the proposed Croton project would be consistent with the scale and character of the surrounding area. The visual quality of the area is not anticipated to be significantly impacted from the addition of the proposed Croton project, because the size, scale and developed nature of the Eastview Site would not be inconsistent with

the suburban character and built-out conditions surrounding the site. At night, site lighting would be directed at the on-site facilities and would be kept to the minimum needed for security purposes; furthermore, much of the surrounding vegetation would inhibit site lighting from reaching adjacent locations to the south, including the Taylor Road neighborhood.

#### **5.3.3.2. *Potential Construction Impacts***

The anticipated year of peak construction for the proposed plant is 2008. Therefore, potential construction impacts have been assessed by comparing the Future With the Project conditions against the Future Without the Project conditions for the year 2008.

For the peak year two scenarios are assessed: one in which the Cat/Del UV Facility is not located at the Eastview site and another in which the Cat/Del UV Facility is located on the site, specifically in the southeast corner of the site. Therefore, potential construction impacts have been assessed by comparing the Future With the Project conditions against the Future Without the Project conditions for the year 2008 for both of these scenarios.

##### **5.3.3.2.1. *Without Cat/Del UV Facility at Eastview Site***

Construction of the proposed plant and accompanying structures would commence in September 2005, and would last for approximately five years. Construction would involve the disturbance of approximately 30 acres, or 34.5 percent, of the site, including a substantial amount of excavation and grading of soil for the building foundations and tunnels. During the initial site preparation, vegetation would be cleared permanently for the new buildings and paved vehicle surfaces, primarily involving the northwest corner of the Eastview Site. A stormwater detention basin would also be installed during the beginning of the construction period to control stormwater runoff and sedimentation attributed to construction activities. Vegetation along the tunnel routes and within the stormwater detention basin area would be removed on a temporary basis until these features are established. These areas would be replanted upon completion of the construction period. On the northeastern portion of the Eastview Site, most of the vegetation would remain undisturbed with the exception of: (1) temporary disturbance within a 60-foot corridor where the treated water tunnel would be installed; and (2) permanent disturbance within a 60-foot right-of-way for the proposed service road leading to the Shaft 19 of the Shaft 19 of the Delaware Aqueduct. See Section 5.14, Natural Resources, for a replanting plan for the proposed Croton project-related disturbances.

During construction, it is anticipated that heavy equipment and construction materials would be present on the site and that stockpiling of fill would occur. Although the height of the tallest structure (the main treatment building) at completion would be 65 feet, temporary use of cranes, a tunnel boring machine, and other heavy building equipment would be anticipated at various times during the construction period. These types of equipment would be visible from various off-site vantage points, but these views would be temporary. During the peak years of activity, a substantial amount of parking would be needed. During the peak period of construction employment for the proposed Croton project (2008), a maximum of 652 construction workers would be present on-site on any given weekday. Parking would be provided within the construction area, which would be fenced in.



Noise barriers could be positioned along the boundaries of the construction area. The primary purpose of the temporary noise barriers would be to reduce potential elevated stationary noise levels from the construction equipment. However, they would have the added benefit of screening such equipment from views into the site. The noise barriers would be removed upon completion of the construction. Views of the noise barriers would not have any significant impacts on visual character to the study area. Although they may be partially visible from the historic Hammond House, their use would be temporary and therefore would not have a permanent effect on the visual context of this historic resource. The barriers would not be visible from any of the critical environmental areas or other visual resources in the study area.

**Study Area.** From adjacent locations within the Towns of Mount Pleasant and Greenburgh, the construction of the proposed Croton project would produce temporary visual effects relative to the existing structures around the Eastview Site (i.e. a portion of the existing vegetation on the Eastview Site would be removed and the proposed Croton project construction site could be visible from portions of the viewshed around the site). Due to undulating terrain and intervening vegetation, roadways, and buildings, most construction activity would not be visible or would be hidden from some viewpoints surrounding the Eastview Site. The elevated berm between Route 100C and the project site would screen the viewpoints of the site from Route 100C. However, the construction would likely be visible from Walker road and Dana Road. Cranes that are taller than the surrounding vegetation, stockpiled excavated material, and trucks that would be traveling to and from the site could potentially be visible from viewpoints surrounding the site.

Lighting, if used during construction, would be directed at the on-site construction activity and would be kept to the minimum needed to conduct construction work; furthermore, much of the surrounding vegetation would inhibit site lighting from reaching adjacent locations.

It is not anticipated that proposed construction on the Eastview Site would significantly impact residents in the area. Most of the visual effects related to the construction of new facilities at the water treatment plant site would be confined to the site itself. Although construction of the proposed plant would change the existing natural appearance of the Eastview Site, particularly as seen from views along Walker Road and Dana Road, such a change would not be considered significantly adverse given: (1) the overall non-residential context of the site, including the adjacent Westchester County Correctional Complex, Bee-Line Bus Facility, County Fire Training Center and other forms of development; (2) the types of viewers, including employees working within Grasslands Reservation and motorists. Some construction activity would be visible from the historic Hammond House on the southern edge of the water treatment plant site, but these temporary views would be partially obscured by the mature trees along Hammond House Road. The Hammond House would not experience any direct effects (e.g., vibrations) of construction. And (3) overall, the visual effects of constructing the proposed plant would be temporary and therefore, no significant adverse impacts would be anticipated to occur.

#### **5.3.3.2.2. With Cat/Del UV Facility at Eastview Site**

**Eastview Site.** In addition to the approximately 28 acres on the Eastview Site and nine acres in the south parcel that would be disturbed by the Cat/Del UV Facility, the proposed Croton project would disturb an additional 30 acres on the Eastview Site. Most of the disturbance by the proposed Croton project would be concentrated in northwestern portion of the Eastview Site. The northwestern portion would be disturbed by construction of the proposed Croton project itself and the southwestern portion would be disturbed as a result of being utilized for construction staging by the Cat/Del UV Facility. The construction of the proposed Croton project would contribute to the disturbed nature of the Eastview Site. The wooded area in the northeastern corner of the site would remain undisturbed as well as the trees surrounding the Hammond House.

**Study Area.** From adjacent locations within the Towns of Mount Pleasant and Greenburgh, the construction of the proposed Croton project would contribute to the temporary visual effects already existing on-site as a result of the ongoing construction of the Cat/Del UV Facility at the Eastview Site. Due to undulating terrain and intervening vegetation, roadways, and buildings, most of the additional construction activities associated with the proposed Croton project would not be visible or would be hidden from many viewpoints surrounding the Eastview Site.

From some elevated locations in the Town of Greenburgh (e.g. southeast of the Eastview Site), views of the proposed Croton project construction work in addition to Cat/Del UV Facility construction could be visible. These distant views could include tall cranes and other large machinery to be used on-site, beyond treetops in the fore and middle of the viewshed, yet below the horizon line. These tall cranes would be indistinguishable from the similar construction equipment being used for the Cat/Del UV Facility. The Westchester County Correctional Complex and adjacent telecommunications tower would continue to dominate the skyline and remain the most visually prevalent structures in the area. Lighting, if used during construction, would be directed at the on-site construction activity and would be kept to the minimum needed to conduct construction work; furthermore, much of the surrounding vegetation would inhibit site lighting from reaching adjacent locations to the south, including the Taylor Road neighborhood in the Town of Greenburgh.

During the peak years of activity for the Cat/Del UV Facility, 480 construction workers would be present on-site on any given weekday. With the construction of the proposed Croton project (2008), an additional 652 construction workers would be present on-site on any given weekday. Given the site constraints resulting from both the Cat/Del UV Facility and proposed Croton project being under construction at the same time, there would not be sufficient space on-site to provide on-site parking. Therefore, four off-site parking options are evaluated as part of the proposed Croton project. See Section 5.9, Traffic and Transportation, for further details. It is not anticipated that workers parking in these off-site parking locations would result in significant adverse visual character impacts; the introduction of these worker vehicles to these locations would not change the visual context of the locations since they are designed and expected to have large numbers of vehicles at these locations.

In summary, most of the visual effects related to the construction of facilities at the Eastview Site would be confined to the site itself. Although construction activities would change the existing natural appearance of the site, such a change would not be considered significantly adverse given: the overall non-residential context of the site, including the adjacent Westchester County Correctional Complex, Bee-Line Bus Facility, County Fire Training Center and other forms of development; and the types of viewers, including employees working within Grasslands Reservation and motorists. Overall, the visual effects of constructing the proposed Croton project would be temporary; therefore, no significant adverse impacts would be anticipated to occur.