

Unavoidable significant adverse impacts are defined as those that meet the following two criteria:

- There are no reasonably practicable mitigation measures to eliminate the impacts; and
- There are no reasonable alternatives to the proposed project that would meet the purpose and need of the action, eliminate the impact, and not cause other or similar significant adverse impacts.

As described in Chapter 4, “Visual Character and Shadows,” the proposed action and four-digester scenario would result in a potential significant adverse impact on visual character for Barretto Point Park users looking east toward the 4.3-acre additional parcel on which the digesters would be constructed. The renovation, replacement, and upgrades to existing facilities on the interior of the plant site would be consistent with the industrial character of the study area, and changes on the existing plant site would largely not be noticeable, as most of the plant interior is not visible from the study area due to distance and intervening buildings. Rising 130 feet tall, the proposed egg-shaped digesters (either two or four) would be prominent additions to the study area. While they would be in keeping with the area’s industrial character, the height and bulk of the digesters would be much greater than the relatively low-lying industrial buildings in the area surrounding the plant. Because it is an industrial area, there are few viewers or views that would be affected. However, for Barretto Point Park users looking east toward the 4.3-acre additional parcel on which the digesters would be constructed, there would be a potential for a significant adverse impact on visual character.

The transfer of land from NYCDEP to NYCDPR to create Barretto Point Park and the planning for Barretto Point Park were both undertaken in the context of design work for the use of the 4.3-acre parcel for the egg-shaped digesters. The two projects were contemporaneously planned. It was conceived that the design of Barretto Point Park would transition from its industrial surroundings to the waterfront. The potential significant visual character impact would be very limited. No views of or access to the waterfront would be affected. Only views looking east from the park would be affected. The impact would not significantly impact park users’ enjoyment of the park and there are no significant shadows impacts. Further, the final design of the digesters’ exterior will be completed with input from the community, to enhance and convey the modern, innovative architectural style associated with this particular wastewater technology, as was done at the Newtown Creek Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP). A vegetated buffer has been established between Barretto Point Park and the area of the proposed digesters. However, due to the height of the digesters, the significant visual character impact cannot be fully mitigated.

In addition, the Mayor’s Office and NYCDEP are working with the Hunts Point community to increase both open space and visually attractive environments in the study area. NYCDEP is working with the Hunts Point community to identify a community open space amenity (see information about the Hunts Point Community Investment Project in Chapter 1, “Project Description” and Chapter 23, “Environmental Justice”) in recognition that the plant and its long-term construction have placed a burden on the community, including the potential visual impact

Hunts Point WPCP

associated with the proposed digesters. The Hunts Point Vision Plan, South Bronx Greenway, roadway traffic improvements, and future additions to Barretto Point Park are among the efforts being pursued by the City within the Hunts Point community.

As described in Chapter 21, “Mitigation,” and above, there are no measures available to mitigate the limited potential significant adverse visual impact. As described in Chapter 24, “Alternatives,” there is no feasible alternative that would better meet the objectives and implementation of the proposed action while reducing or eliminating this significant impact, which is limited in scope. Therefore, the potential significant adverse visual impact would remain unmitigated and is unavoidable. *