

# **North Brooklyn Land Use Framework**

# North Brooklyn

## Land Use Framework:

### A Plan for Balanced Growth

This Land Use Framework aims to retain areas for industrial businesses that benefit from separation from other uses while channeling commercial growth to areas near transit. It also aims to update land use regulations to better support today's businesses in line with *New York Works* goals. The recommendations presented here are conceived of as pieces of a balanced overall strategy, interdependent and intended to reinforce one another. Because the Land Use Framework enables an increase in the amount of workspace in the Study Area to accommodate growth in multiple sectors, the overall intended effect of these recommendations would be conducive to job growth.

The Land Use Framework does not put into place zoning regulations on development but, rather, will inform the development of a zoning proposal for the Study Area. A City-led rezoning will reflect the recommendations of the *North Brooklyn Plan* and will include further analysis and outreach to stakeholders about the details of a rezoning proposal, including boundaries.

Subareas were identified based on employment trends and physical characteristics such as concentrations of large lots and subway access:

#### Core Industrial Area

A central hub for essential industrial businesses that create jobs and keep New York City running.



#### Growth District

A dynamic, transit-accessible district for creative and tech-driven jobs of the future.



#### Transition Area

A mix of industrial and non-industrial uses serving as a buffer between the Core and other areas.



#### Stable Areas

##### Mixed Edge

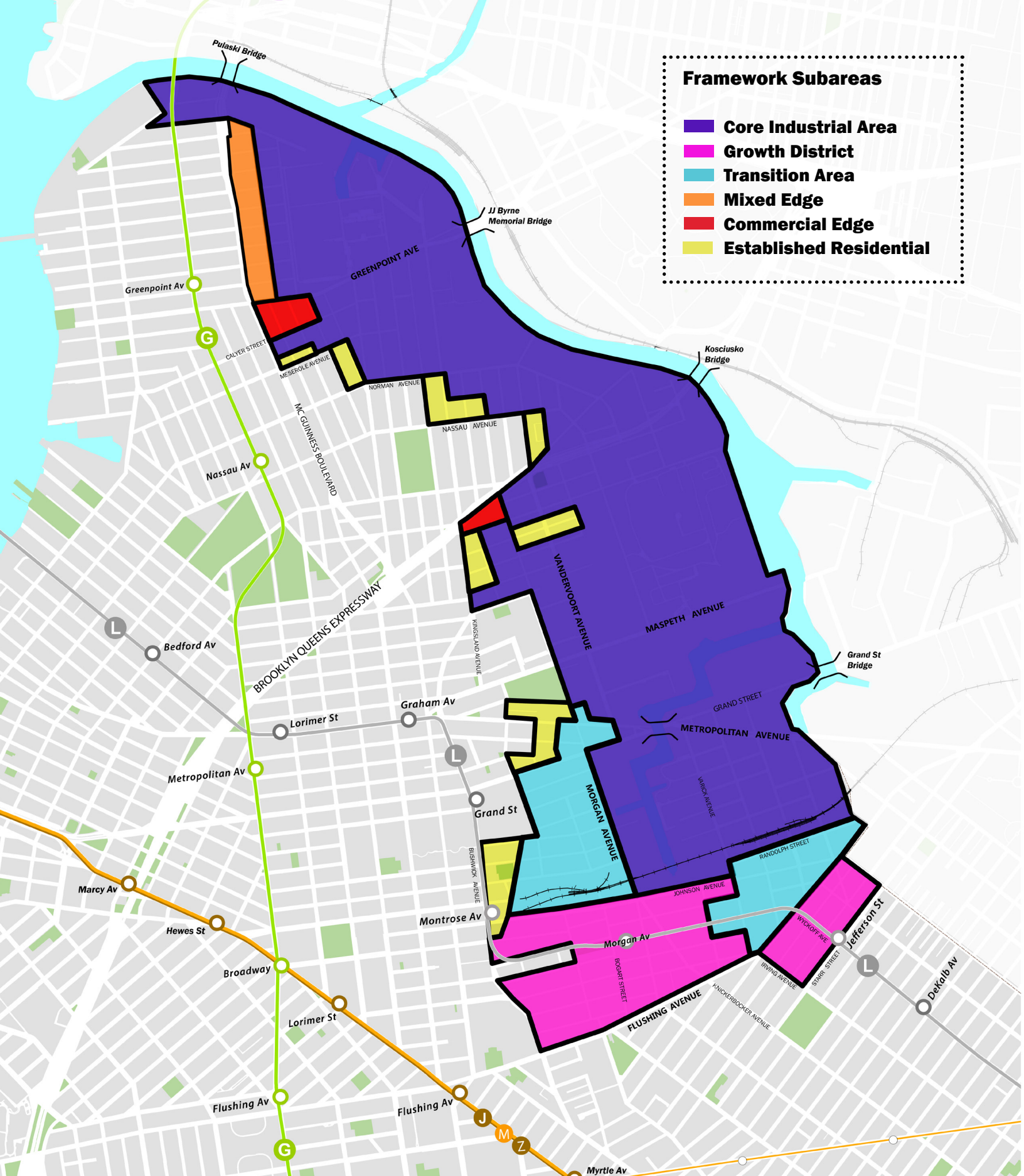
An area with no predominant use between industrial and residential neighborhoods.

##### Commercial Edge

Selected active commercial properties at the edge of residential neighborhoods.

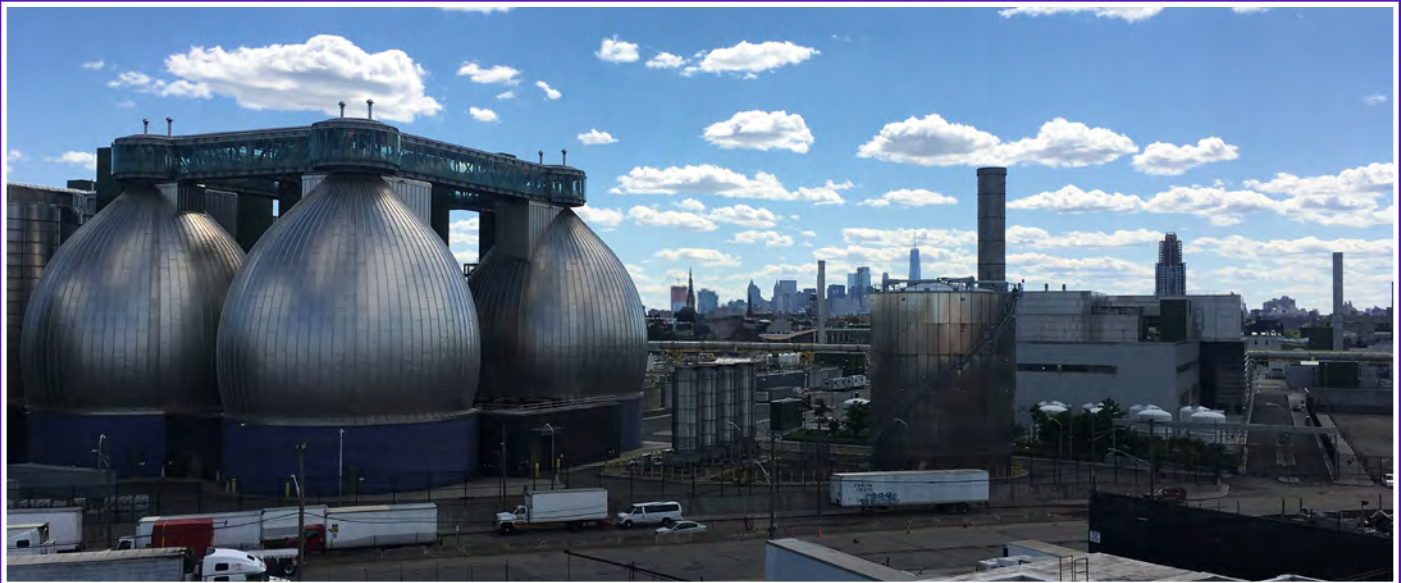
##### Established Residential

Predominantly residential blocks located in M districts.



## Core Industrial Area

*A central hub for essential industrial businesses that create jobs and keep the city running.*



### KEY METRICS

#### ACRES

**733**

69% of Study Area

#### % INDUSTRIAL

**90%**

by lot area

#### BUILT CHARACTER

**55%**

of lots contain 1-story buildings

#### JOBS (2016)

**10,230**

52% of jobs in the Study Area

#### JOB GROWTH: Industrial

**4% (+320)**

between 2010-2016

#### JOB GROWTH: Non-Industrial

**-31% (-715)\***

between 2010-2016  
\*net decline driven by a small  
number of large companies

### BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

**Heavy, truck-intensive  
industrial uses**

- Wholesale trade
- Construction
- Transportation and warehousing

- Waste management
- Manufacturing
- Film stages
- Utilities



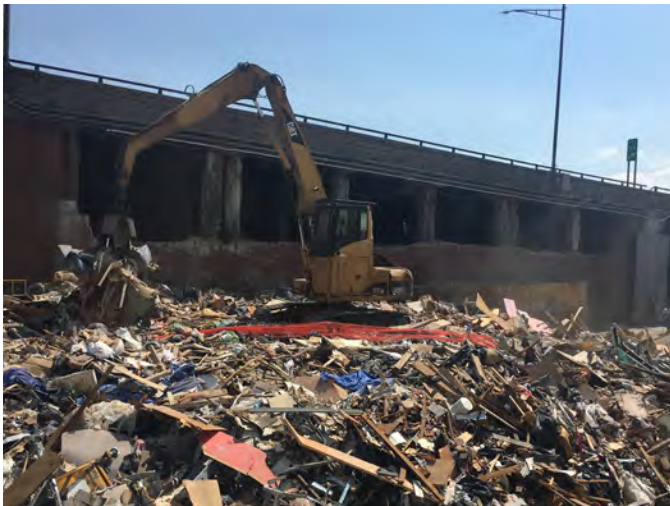
## CORE INDUSTRIAL AREA: DEFINING FEATURES



> Concentration of truck-intensive businesses



> Utilities and essential industrial services



> Open industrial uses



> Large lots



> Maritime freight and rail



> Low-scale warehouses

## Core Industrial Area

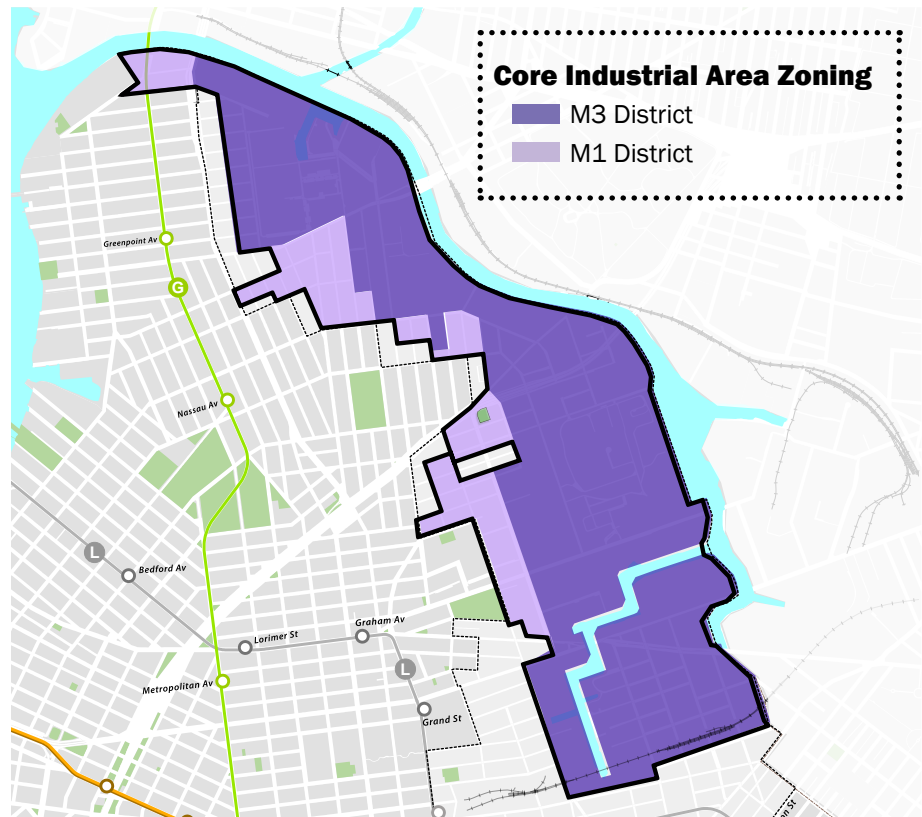
### A Concentration of Heavy, Truck-Intensive Industrial Businesses

The Core Industrial Area constitutes over two-thirds of the Study Area and spans the length of the Brooklyn side of Newtown Creek. DCP defined the Core Industrial Area based on the location of the most significant concentrations of truck-intensive businesses that provide essential industrial services to the city and benefit from separation from non-industrial uses. The Core Industrial Area was also defined by key strategic assets: large lots appropriate for siting truck-intensive industry, distance from residential areas, and location in the geographic center of the city with access to highways and other transportation infrastructure.

The majority of the Core Industrial Area is zoned M3-1. However, in buffer areas proximate to residential uses, some portions of the Core Industrial Area are zoned M1-1 and M1-2, where some of the most noxious industrial uses are not permitted. Any zoning treatment for the Core Industrial Area will need to differentiate between the M1 and M3 areas so that these noxious industrial uses continue not to be permitted near residential areas.

### Industrial Uses

The industrial businesses in the Core Industrial Area generally require large sites for loading, unloading, or open storage. Most occupy low-scale buildings, with the most intensive activity on the ground floor. Many of



these businesses generate truck traffic, noise and odors. However, some can be lower impact, such as small-scale wholesale, and may be appropriate for buffer areas closer to residential uses.

While industrial employment has grown in parallel with the citywide population, new construction has been relatively limited. Businesses have invested primarily in building reuse, renovations, and expansions, with new construction limited to one-story warehouses and sound stages.

### Other Land Uses

The growth of office space (excluding accessory office) in the Core Industrial Area has been limited given a combination of market preferences,

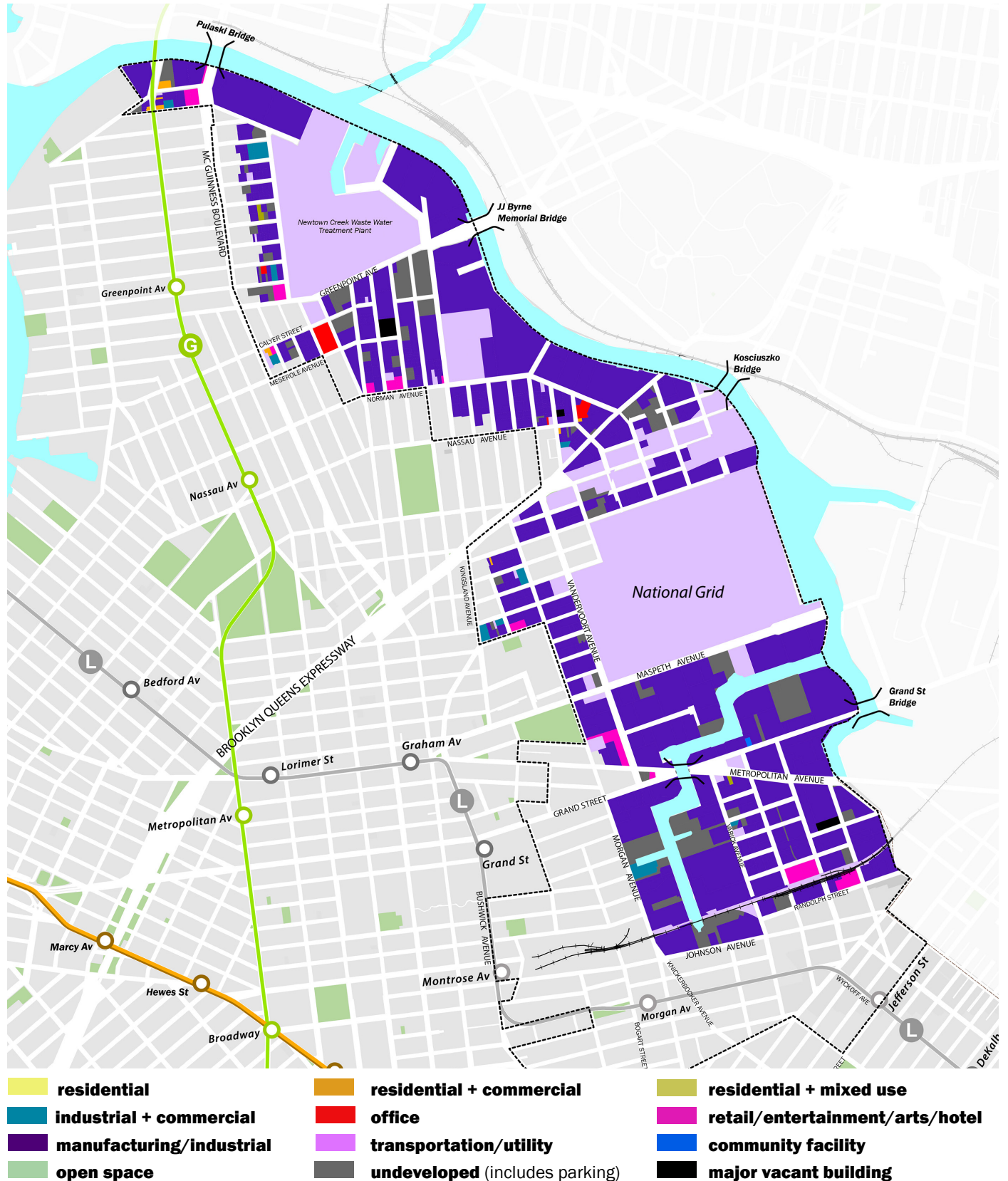
geography, and existing zoning regulations.

There are few retail, arts, or entertainment establishments in the Core Industrial Area. However, some nightlife and entertainment uses have similar space preferences to heavy industrial businesses: large lots, ground floor space, and separation from residential neighborhoods. Two large-footprint event venues recently located at the periphery of the Core Industrial Area.

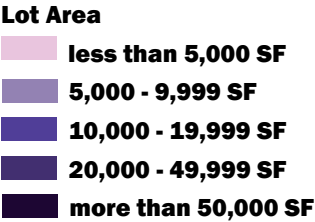
There is little housing, with the exception of two predominantly residential blocks on Beadel Street (part of the Established Residential Subarea).



## Land Use

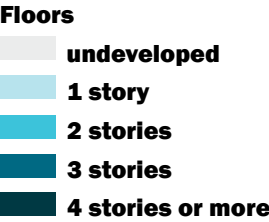


Built Environment



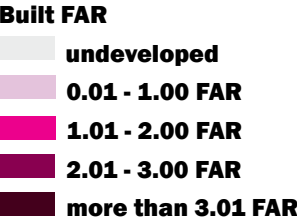
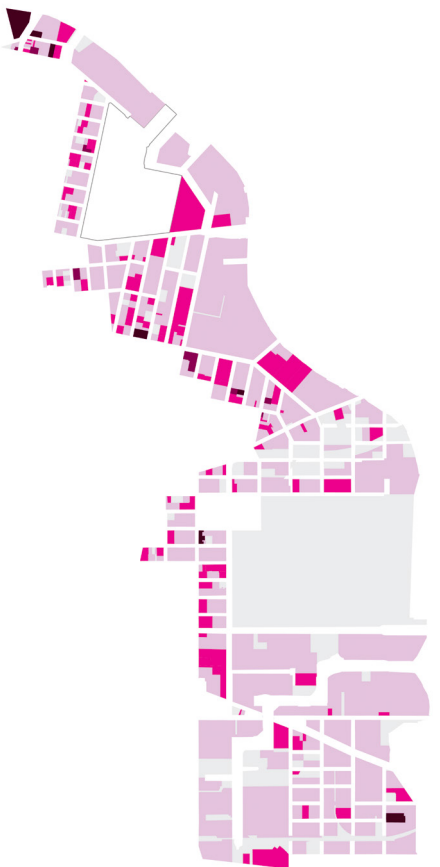
*Large lots:*

**OVER 85% OF LOT AREA  
COMPRISES LOTS OVER  
20,000 SF**



*Low-rise:*

**OVER 50% OF LOTS CONTAIN  
1-STORY BUILDINGS**



*Underbuilt:*

**OVER 60% OF LOTS ARE  
UNDERBUILT PER CURRENT  
ZONING**



## What We Heard:

### Why are businesses here?

#### Key Advantages

- > **Geographic location in the center of the city and proximity to major transportation infrastructure** provide access to broad areas of the city.
- > **Separation from residential and other uses** allows businesses to avoid complaints or conflicts that hinder their operations.
- > **Large lots and low-scale buildings** serve the needs of businesses that require significant ground floor space for parking, loading/unloading, heavy machinery, and storage, with less use for upper floor space.
- > **M3 zoning permits heavy industrial uses** that may not be allowed by zoning to locate elsewhere.

### What could be improved?

#### Key Challenges

- > **The aging building stock** does not consistently provide high ceilings, wide column spans, and substantial space for off-street loading, which are more easily found outside New York City.
- > **Obsolete zoning** creates obstacles to expansion or creation of space for industrial businesses.
- > **Transportation infrastructure constrains business operations**, with roadways in need of repair, congestion, a narrow, inefficient street grid, and limited crossings of Newtown Creek.
- > **Location within the 1% annual chance floodplain** poses risks of flood damage to industrial businesses that rely heavily on ground floor space.

## GOAL for the Core Industrial Area

**Retain as a hub for essential industrial businesses, balanced by growth in diverse sectors in the Growth District.**

The Core Industrial Area plays an important role in the city's industrial economy, with a unique set of strategic advantages for essential industrial businesses that keep the city running. Zoning and infrastructure improvements in this subarea can provide a location where such businesses can continue to operate away from other uses. In order to leverage the full economic growth potential of the Study Area, an industrial reinforcement strategy in the Core Industrial Area must be paired with a growth strategy that channels commercial density and investment to the transit-rich Growth District.

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## ISSUE:

# Retention of large sites for heavy, truck-intensive industrial uses.

Across much of the Core Industrial Area, existing zoning restricts an array of uses and allows a relatively limited amount of FAR. Most of the Core Industrial Area is M3-1, which permits up to 2.0 FAR for industrial, office, eating and drinking establishments, limited types of retail (some of which, such as grocery stores, are limited to 10,000 square feet in size) and entertainment uses. Community facility uses and hotels are not allowed in M3 districts. The Core Industrial Area also contains some M1 areas, which permit a broader array of retail uses, some of which are limited to 10,000 square feet in size. M1 zoning prohibits most community facilities, but those that are allowed – most significantly ambulatory healthcare facilities and houses of worship – are allowed more FAR than are industrial and commercial uses. M1-1 zoning allows for up to 2.4 FAR of community facility use and only 1.0 FAR of commercial or industrial use; M1-2 zoning allows for up to 4.8 FAR of community facility use and only 2.0 FAR of commercial or industrial use.

In policy conversations about planning for industrial areas, some have proposed placing additional restrictions on non-industrial uses, especially in heavy industrial areas such as the Core Industrial Area.

### Limiting Self-Storage and Hotels

In 2017, the City Planning Commission and City Council approved a zoning text amendment that limits self-storage

in IBZs citywide, including in the IBZ portions of the Study Area. Currently, a zoning provision that would require a special permit for any new hotel development in the vast majority of M1 districts is pending before the City Council as part of the public review process.

### Limiting Nightlife and Entertainment

Proponents for further use limitations in the Core Industrial Area have called for restrictions on large-scale entertainment uses, such as night clubs and music venues. Given the Core Industrial Area's unique economic importance as a center for goods-movement and critical functions for the city, targeted limitations on large-scale entertainment within this particular area could help ensure that large lots and ground floor spaces remain available for essential industrial uses in the future, without impairing the economic and cultural functions that entertainment and nightlife contribute within the city.

### Limiting Office, Retail, and Eating & Drinking Establishments

Additional use regulations on offices, retail, and eating and drinking establishments in the Core Industrial Area have also been suggested during the outreach process. The City must consider the tradeoffs between protecting a select set of industries while imposing land use restrictions on other sectors of job-

generating activity. Office uses remain an important source of jobs for New Yorkers, serve an important function as an accessory or complementary use to industrial businesses, and can be a vital source of revenue for industrial business owner-occupants. Unlike many other uses, offices have the ability to locate on upper floors where many industrial uses cannot, and therefore do not necessarily compete directly with these uses while helping to increase job densities for an area. DCP found that office uses often prefer larger lots to facilitate larger floorplate developments, similar to industrial users within the Core Industrial Area, and therefore could consider targeted limitations on the size of office uses, their location on large lots, or their location on ground floors, as an appropriate way to retain large, ground floor space for industrial uses.

Retail and eating and drinking establishments, many of which are already limited to 10,000 square feet in size, have the ability to locate on smaller lots that are less suitable for larger footprint industrial businesses, and can serve the needs of local employees, businesses, and residents of adjoining areas while facilitating job-generating use of smaller sites throughout the area. However, although industrial businesses in the area have reported few direct conflicts with these activities, it may be prudent to consider strategies to prevent future concentrations of these uses in order to maintain the long-term stability of

the Core Industrial Area. Therefore, DCP will consider appropriate size limitations for retail and eating and drinking establishments in order to reduce the potential for concentrations of these uses that could conflict with industrial business operations.

districts. DCP agrees that zoning that favors community facilities over other uses does not align with the economic development goals for the Study Area, and recommends the alignment and re-balancing of FAR for job-generating uses.

### **Limiting Community Facilities**

Some area stakeholders have also called for the elimination of the preference that existing zoning gives to community facility uses in M1

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

#### **Explore appropriate limitations on targeted uses.**

In recognition that it is necessary both to protect the economic role of intensive industrial activities and to enable a wider range of businesses to find suitable locations within the city, DCP will examine targeted limitations on certain uses intended to preserve the availability of ground floors and large lots for industrial and truck-dependent activities. While retaining locations for core industrial activities is vital to the city's economy, in this rapidly growing, space-constrained city, reserving large amounts of land for the low-density development and parking typical of many industrial businesses may be a costly strategy for job growth. Therefore, limitations on office, retail, and entertainment uses in the Core Industrial Area will be balanced by increasing FAR in the Growth District to allow for job generating office and commercial growth.

Because the M3 portions of the Core Industrial Area contain the greatest concentrations of large lots and essential industrial activities, limitations on other non-industrial uses may be particularly appropriate in M3 areas. Therefore, DCP proposes amending the permitted M3 uses within the Core Industrial Area to include the following new use limitations:

- > Limit new large-footprint entertainment uses in M3 portions of the Core Industrial Area (e.g., Use Group 12).**
- > Establish appropriate size limitations on retail and eating and drinking establishments to limit potential for future conflicts with industrial and truck-dependent activities.**
- > Establish appropriate limitations on new stand-alone office space by, for example, limiting in size, on large lots, or on ground floors.**
- > Reduce FAR permitted for community facilities to equalize with FAR permitted for other uses.**



ISSUE:

**Low allowable floor areas in M1-1 districts for industrial uses.**

While many industrial businesses prefer to operate on the ground floor, some businesses do use upper-floors for activities such as light production, storage, and office space.

Core Industrial Area, only 1.0 FAR is permitted in M1-1 areas. This zoning limits the creation of upper-floor industrial space.

While 2.0 FAR for commercial and industrial uses is permitted in the M3-1 and M1-2 portions of the

**Example:**



RECOMMENDATION:

**Allow at least 2.0 FAR for industrial uses across the Core Industrial Area.**

Increasing allowable FAR for industrial uses could facilitate building expansion or new construction to create multi-story buildings for industrial businesses. Any additional floor area increases would apply to industrial uses (e.g., in M1-1 districts, allowable floor area for industrial uses would be increased to 2.0; floor area for other uses would remain at the current maximum FAR of 1.0).

## ISSUE:

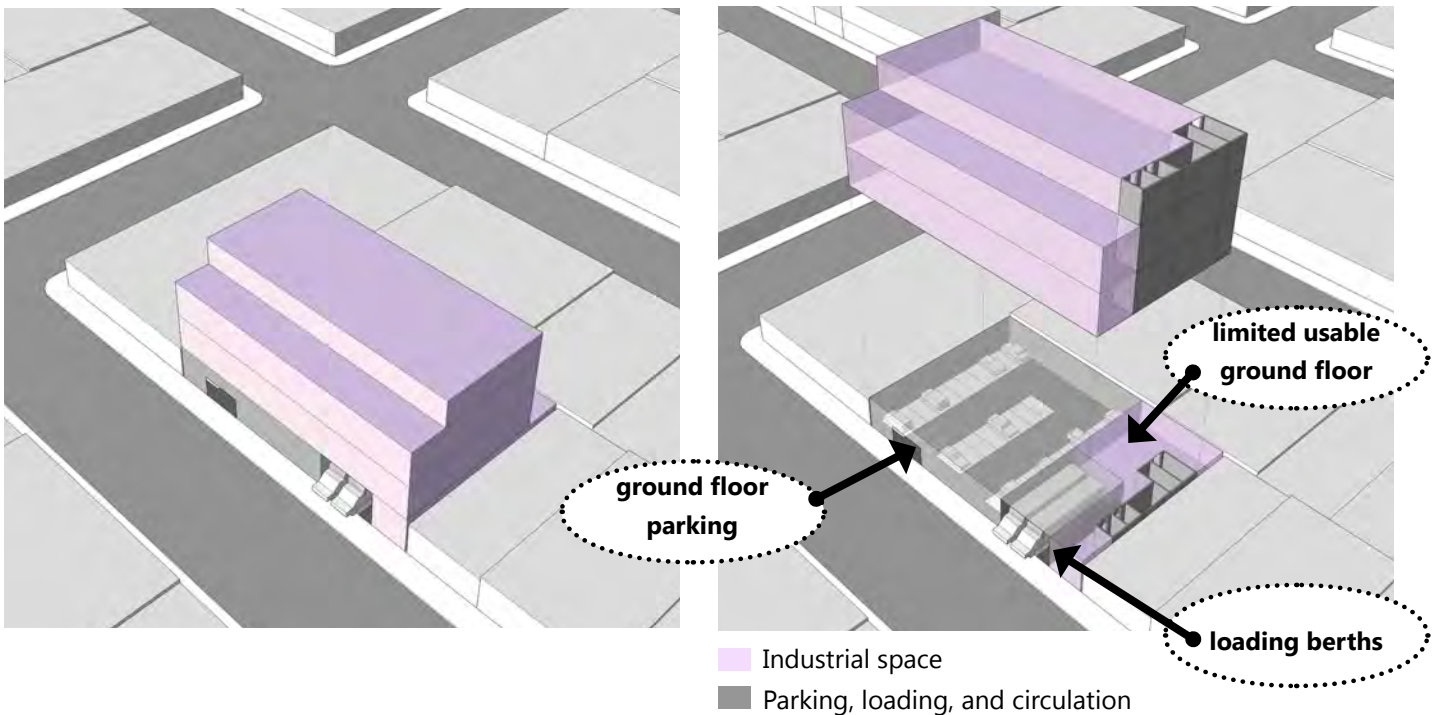
# High parking and loading requirements that may discourage investment.

## PARKING

Current zoning requires a minimum of one off-street parking space per 1,000 or 2,000 SF of industrial use (varying by use). This can make building expansions and new development infeasible because surface parking displaces valuable ground floor

industrial space, and constructing decked- or below-grade parking is often cost-prohibitive, especially in the flood zone. At the same time, the Core Industrial Area's distance from subways and bus routes encourages employees and customers to drive to the area, and on- and off-street parking appear to be well-utilized.

Additional study is required to understand how to balance provision of adequate parking in the neighborhood while addressing the physical constraints posed by off-street parking requirements.



### Example: Industrial Building in a M1-2 District

150' x 100' lot | 2.0 FAR allowed | 30,000 SF building

Required parking spaces: **30** / Required loading berths: **2**

### Issues:

- > Current zoning includes significant minimum parking requirements that effectively assume 1 car per worker, at 1 space per 1,000 SF of industrial use.
- > The required 30 parking spaces would likely be located on the ground floor. Underground and above grade parking are generally prohibitively expensive for industrial businesses.
- > Parking and loading almost entirely absorb the ground floor, the most valuable space for industrial businesses.

## LOADING

Current zoning requires off-street loading berths in proportion to the size of a building: one berth is required for 8,000 to 25,000 SF of floor area, a second at 40,000 SF, a third at 60,000 SF, and so on. These requirements have changed little since 1961.

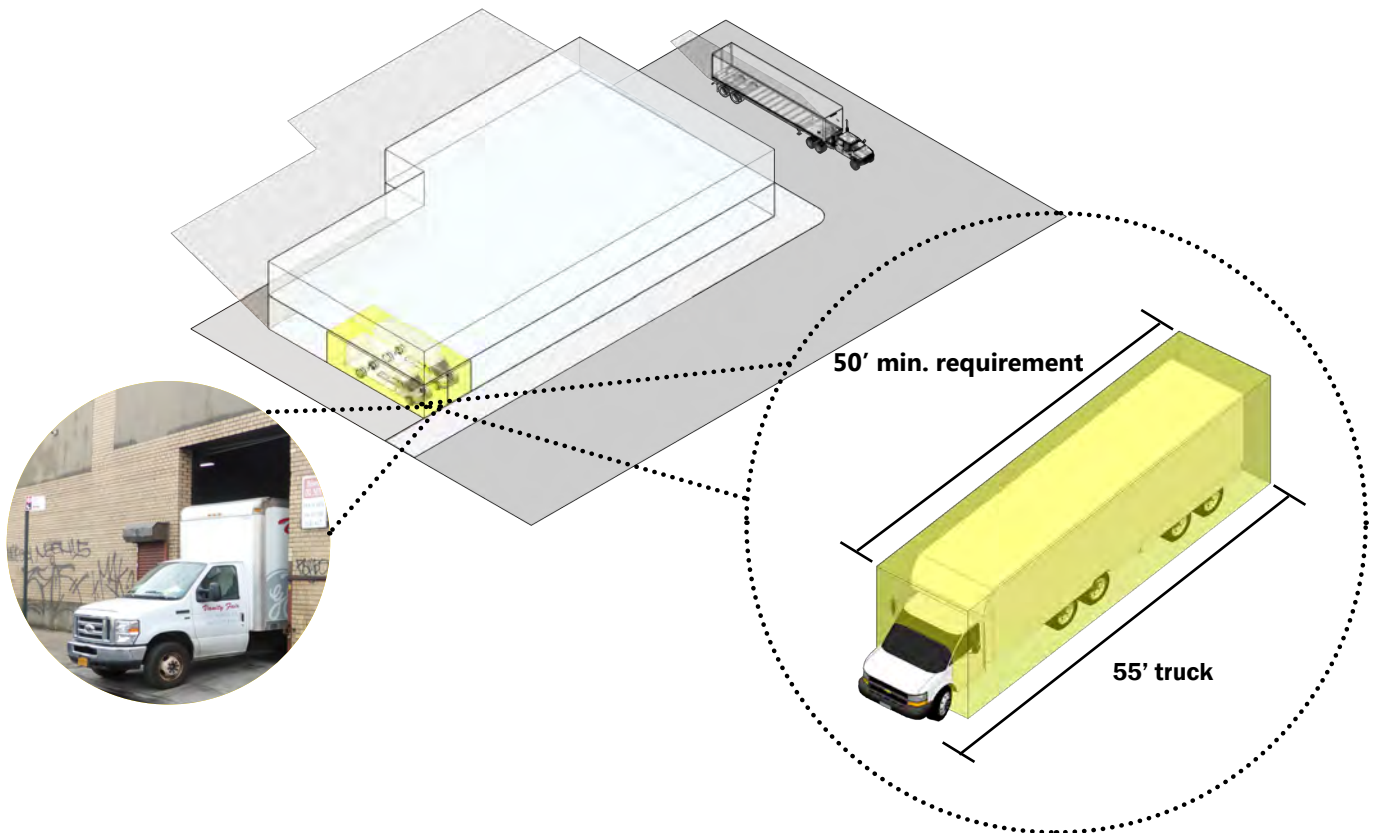
While today's truck-intensive industrial businesses rely heavily on loading berths, these berths also take up a

significant amount of valuable ground floor space within a building, which could discourage creation of new industrial space. This may be especially true in expansion of existing buildings: an increase in size can trigger requirements for new loading docks, which would be both expensive and impractical to provide.

Today's loading dock requirements also do not accommodate modern trucks. The minimum loading bay depth for

industrial buildings under 10,000 SF is 33 feet, and the minimum for buildings over 10,000 SF is 50 feet. However, the maximum legal truck size in New York City for single-unit box trucks is 35 feet in length, and for multi-unit tractor trailers is 55 feet in length. Loading dock requirements should reflect the dimensions of today's trucks.

### Off-street loading requirements today



RECOMMENDATION:

**Rightsize off-street parking requirements for industrial uses that create obstacles to new construction or expansion of industrial buildings.**

- > **Study whether industrial parking requirements for new buildings can be reduced while still providing adequate parking for the subarea.**
- > **For expansions of existing industrial buildings, waive or reduce additional required parking spaces if they would reduce ground-floor industrial space, and/or reduce parking requirements for upper-floor uses.**

RECOMMENDATION:

**Encourage shared parking across the subarea.**

- > **Increase the allowable distance for off-site parking.**
- > **Allow waivers or reductions in required parking when dedicated car-sharing spaces are provided.**

RECOMMENDATION:

**Update loading berth requirements for industrial uses to better align with business needs and avoid discouraging expansion of industrial buildings.**

- > **Study business loading needs and rightsize loading berth requirements in relation to size and use of building.**
- > **Address obstacles to building expansions created when an increase in building size triggers requirements for additional loading berths.**
- > **Update loading berth depth requirements based on the dimensions of modern trucks.**





# Growth District

***A dynamic, transit-accessible district for creative and tech-driven jobs of the future.***

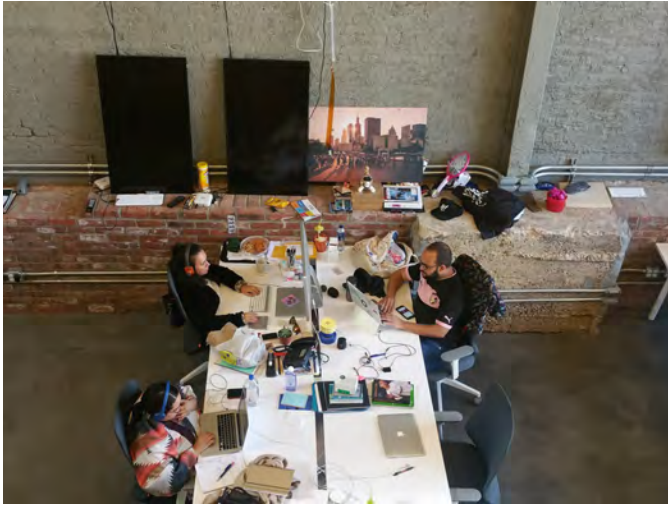


## KEY METRICS

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<b>ACRES</b>	<b>% INDUSTRIAL</b>	<b>BUILT CHARACTER</b>
<b>139</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>28%</b>
13% of Study Area	of lot area	of lots contain 1-story buildings
////////////////////		
<b>JOBS (2016)</b>	<b>JOB GROWTH: Industrial</b>	<b>JOB GROWTH: Non-Industrial</b>
<b>3,880</b>	<b>17% (+320)</b>	<b>155% (+990)</b>
20% of jobs in the Study Area	between 2010-2016	between 2010-2016
////////////////////		
<b>BUSINESS ACTIVITIES</b>		
<b>Eclectic mix of industry, innovation, and arts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Artists studios &amp; galleries</li><li>• TAMI, other office-based businesses and coworking</li><li>• Accomodation and food services</li></ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Retail and entertainment</li><li>• Large-scale and small niche manufacturing</li><li>• Wholesale trade</li></ul>	



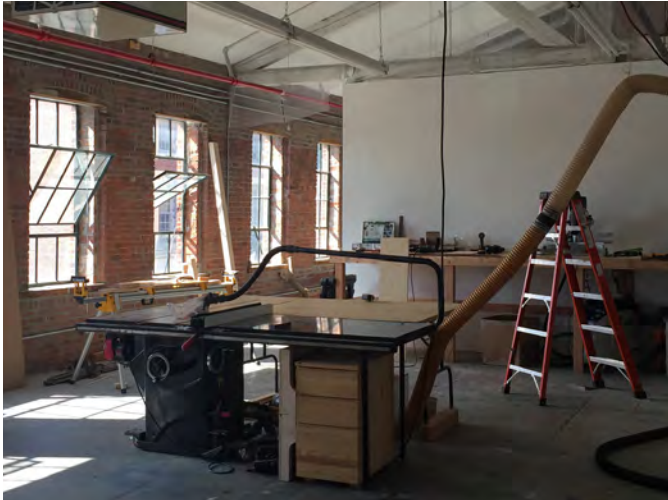
## GROWTH DISTRICT: DEFINING FEATURES



> TAMI and other office



> Street art, studios, and galleries



> Light manufacturing and some large industrial uses



> Retail and entertainment



> Concentration of loft buildings



> Existing housing adjacent to industrial uses

## Growth District

### A dynamic, mixed-use district for creative and tech-driven jobs of the future

The Growth District is the most mixed-use, rapidly changing portion of the Study Area. Between 2010 and 2016, jobs in the Growth District grew by 53 percent, including 990 new non-industrial jobs and 320 new industrial jobs, vastly outpacing job growth in the rest of the Study Area.

Transit access, adjacency to residential neighborhoods, a strong creative culture, and a concentration of approximately forty industrial loft buildings has made the Growth District attractive to a wide array of creative and innovative uses. Over twenty years ago, artists and others looking for affordable live/work space began moving into the area's loft buildings. Today, the subarea is characterized by lively and distinctive street art and a growing mix of art galleries, restaurants and bars, music venues, TAMI and other office-based businesses, legacy large-scale industrial uses, and small manufacturers. The Growth District has also historically been the most mixed-use portion of the Study Area, and contains the greatest concentration of housing, including townhomes that predate zoning. Reflecting this highly mixed-use condition, portions of this subarea were not included within the IBZ boundaries when they were drawn.

The Morgan Avenue and Jefferson Street subway stations, located centrally within the Growth District, are valuable assets that can continue to support job growth and serve a rapidly growing number of workers. But a finite supply of multi-story loft buildings, the predominance of low-scale warehouses, and zoning that discourages new construction constrain the supply of space. Zoning can be updated to channel continued investment and economic growth into the Growth District while relieving development pressure on other areas.

#### Office

The Growth District is seeing dramatic growth of TAMI businesses such as Carto, a mapping software company; Remezcla, a Latin American media brand; and ConsenSys, a blockchain software technology company. Some TAMI businesses, such as Madwell, lie on the spectrum between commercial and manufacturing, using space for both digital design and fabrication.

There is also a significant amount of office development in the pipeline: a total of one million SF has been announced, planned, or built in the past five years. These projects are predominantly

building conversions, but the Growth District also includes a small number of ground-up construction projects, including 100 Bogart Street, a 56,000 SF coworking space, and 13 Grattan Street, a 30,000 SF office and retail building.

#### Retail, arts, and entertainment

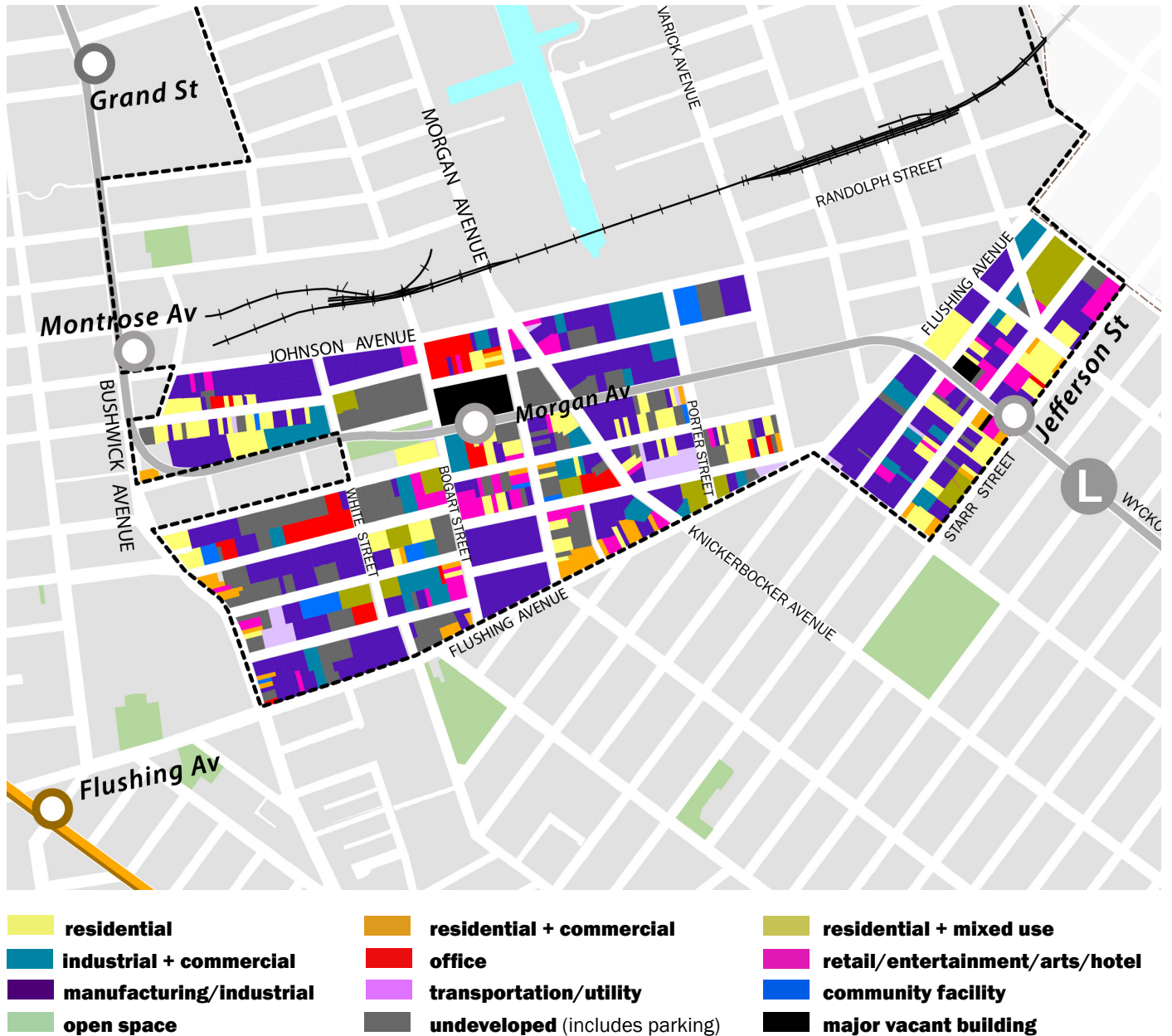
The Growth District contains one of the city's major artistic hubs, with studio spaces, such as the BogArt at 56 Bogart Street and Brooklyn Brush Studios; live/work spaces, such as the McKibbin Street lofts; studios and galleries in converted low-scale warehouses; and an abundance of street art.

Anchored by subway stations, Bogart Street and Wyckoff Avenue are emerging retail corridors. They contain restaurants, such as the well-known Roberta's Pizza; entertainment venues, such as the Pine Box Rock Shop and the House of Yes; a combined restaurant and movie theater called Syndicated; and some retail stores, such as vintage clothing and a small grocery.

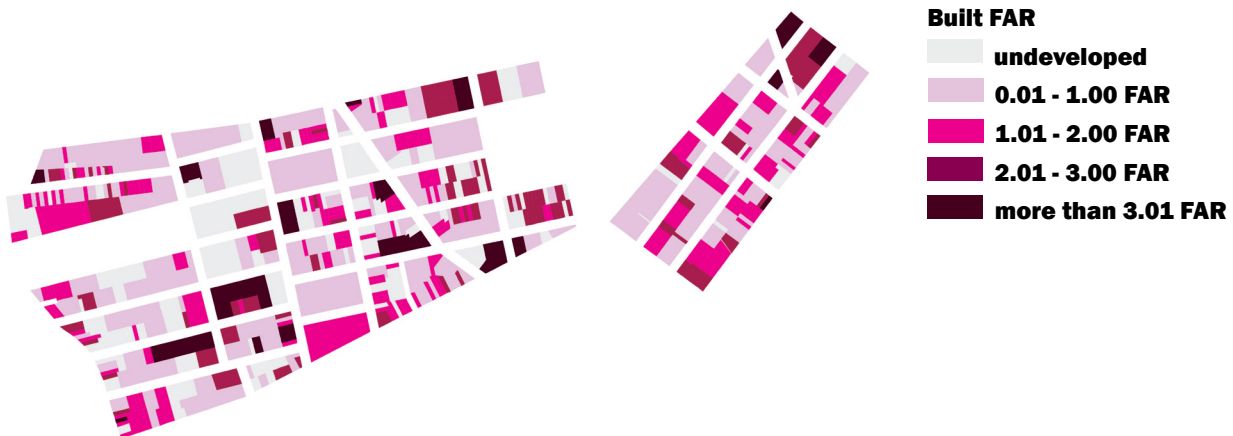
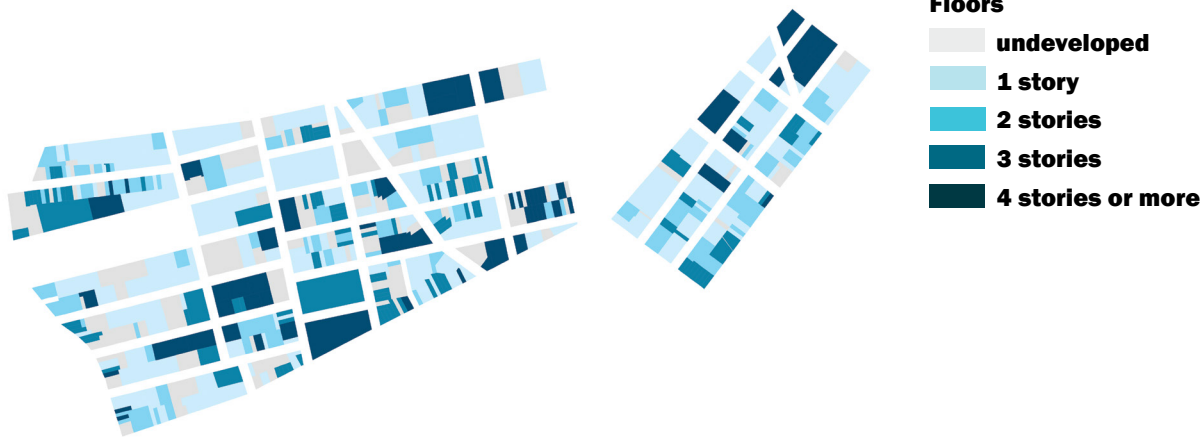
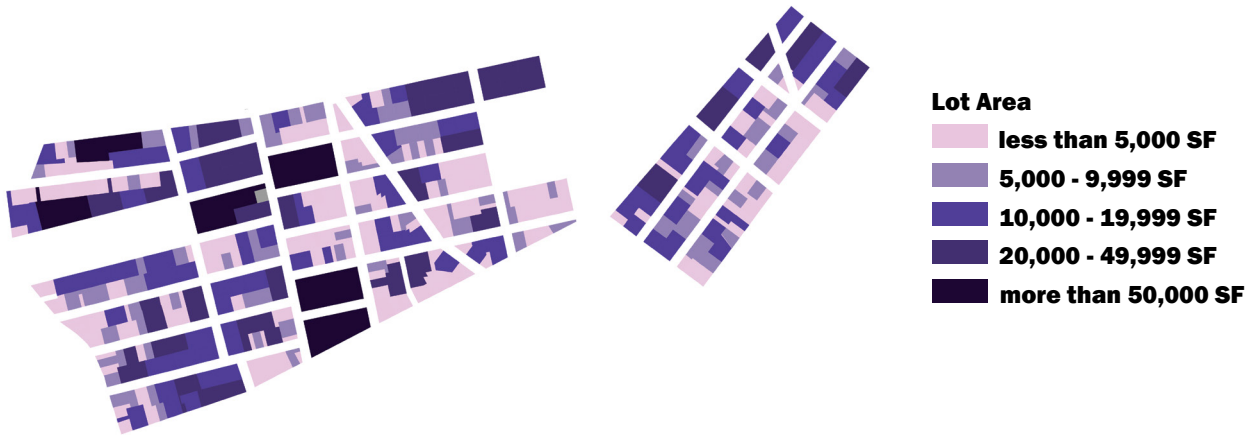
The Growth District contains several food manufacturers whose operations offer some crossover between retail and manufacturing. Some examples are Ichiran Ramen, which has a restaurant



## Land Use



## Built Environment



### **Small lots:**

**OVER 70% OF LOT AREA  
COMPRISES LOTS UNDER  
20,000 SF**

### **Multi-story buildings:**

**45% OF BUILDINGS ARE  
OVER 1 STORY**

### **Overbuilt:**

**35% OF LOTS ARE  
OVERBUILT PER CURRENT  
ZONING**

attached to its noodle manufacturing plant; Tortilleria Mexicana Los Hermanos, which runs a small restaurant adjacent to tortilla manufacturing; and Kings County Brewers Collective, which contains both a brewery and taproom.

## **Residential**

This subarea has the most housing of all subareas and is directly adjacent to established residential neighborhoods. Residential uses are located on approximately 30 percent of lots in the subarea, most of which are small lots. Residential buildings in the subarea include 175 houses built before 1961, 20 Loft Law buildings, and two buildings constructed pursuant to a variance. Residential uses generate more pedestrian activity as well as more conflicts with industrial uses.

## **Industrial**

A variety of large and small manufacturing businesses are located here, ranging from the largest manufacturer of dumpling wrappers in the United States (Wonton Food), to small-batch, highly specialized artisanal businesses serving the local market. These small manufacturers include chocolate makers, custom woodworking, lighting fabrication and restoration, high end glassworks, a bespoke high-end suit tailor (Martin Greenfield), and makers of high end window displays.

Other major industrial business types are wholesale and distribution (Boars Head), transportation, and construction, which generally occupy low-scale warehouse buildings of various sizes. There also remain open lots used actively for cement mixing, open storage and parking.

## **Hotels**

A number of new hotels have been constructed or are planned for the subarea. However, a new zoning provision that would require a special permit for any new hotel development in an M1 district is expected to be applicable to the entire Growth District.

## What We Heard:

### Why are businesses here?

#### Key Advantages for Office-Based Businesses

- > **The creative and tech business ecosystem** is appealing to TAMI and other office-based uses.
- > **Subway stations** located within the boundaries of the subarea make it accessible to business owners, employees, and Manhattan-based clients; almost 90 percent of the subarea is within ¼ mile of the subway.
- > **Geographic proximity to workers** helps business owners attract talent from a workforce living in nearby Brooklyn neighborhoods.
- > **Unique neighborhood character** helps create a brand that appeals to customers.
- > **Stock of multi-story loft buildings** makes for desirable and affordable office space.
- > **Local restaurants, bars, and other services are growing.**

#### Key Advantages for Retail, Arts, and Entertainment Businesses

- > **Transit access** makes the subarea easily accessible to customers.
- > **Geographic proximity to workers** helps business owners find employees.

- > **Creative neighborhood culture** allows music venues and other entertainment businesses to thrive.
- > **Industrial building stock** with high ceilings and large open floorplans can be easily converted to bars and restaurants.

#### Key Advantages for Industrial Businesses

Industrial businesses in the Growth District vary greatly in terms of business model, size, and space needs. Some businesses moved into the subarea before the growth in non-industrial uses, while others have moved to the subarea more recently.

- > **Access to major truck routes.** Morgan Avenue and Flushing Avenue serve as important connectors.
- > **Transit access** makes the subarea easily accessible to workers and customers.
- > **Local services are growing** and beginning to provide workers with places to eat lunch in an area that previously had few options.

### **What We Heard:**

### **What could be improved?**

#### **Key Challenges**

- > **Zoning constrains construction of new workspace.** Low density limitations and high parking requirements make development of new office space challenging or infeasible.
- > **Conflicts between industrial and non-industrial users** are increasing as non-industrial uses grow. Industrial business operations may be impeded with the addition of new non-industrial uses in the subarea, while large trucks on the subarea's narrow streets can lead to unsafe pedestrian conditions.
- > **Public realm and pedestrian conditions** are generally poor due to a lack of investment in public amenities in industrial areas



## GOAL for the Growth District

**Grow a transit-accessible, dynamic ecosystem of creative and tech-driven jobs in office-based and industrial sectors, balanced by reinforcement of the Core Industrial Area for essential industrial uses.**

Channeling commercial growth momentum into the Growth District can support a diversity of jobs in the Study Area's most transit-accessible locations, while relieving pressure to convert industrial space for other uses in other subareas. Given the predominance of low-density buildings in the subarea, allowing for new development at a greater FAR and with less parking than permitted in zoning today could potentially create millions of net new square feet of space for jobs.

Growing a business district here also serves broader citywide policy goals and the *New York Works* jobs plan. Creating transit-accessible tertiary business districts outside of New York City's more established office districts can meet the needs of growing TAMI and other office-based businesses. More dispersed office districts can bring jobs closer to populations, including the college-educated tech-savvy population that is growing outside of Manhattan, as well as local, lower-income communities that would benefit from new job opportunities. With proximity, training/internship linkages can be more easily created between growing businesses and local high schools and colleges that serve local residents. Further, growth would bring workers to the Growth District that might otherwise be Manhattan-bound. This reverse commuting would particularly help to relieve pressure on the L train line.

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100 Bogart Street: new construction coworking space

ISSUE:

**Low permitted density near transit and building envelopes that do not reflect existing character.**

**DENSITY**

The Growth District is currently mapped with M1-1 and M1-2 zoning districts that allow a maximum FAR of up to 1.0 or 2.0, respectively, for commercial and industrial uses. This relatively low density limits building expansions and discourages development of small or infill sites. Many of the existing loft buildings that have attracted TAMI and small manufacturing tenants to the Growth District could not be built today under current zoning. More broadly, the New York City Zoning Resolution's existing M1 districts offer a limited gradient of allowable FAR's,

offering 1.0 and 2.0, and then jumping to 5.0 and 10.0 FAR. The lack of zoning districts with intermediate densities prevents the creation of mid-sized non-residential buildings in the Study Area and other M districts in the city where there is a growing commercial market.

**BUILDING ENVELOPE**

Originally designed for horizontal, auto-oriented businesses, existing building envelope regulations in M1 districts encourage creation of buildings with set-backs and towers, in contrast to the bulkier preexisting industrial loft buildings. Shorter, bulkier loft-like buildings with fewer setbacks can provide larger floorplates that are more accommodating for a wide range of office-based and industrial firms.

***Loft buildings in the Study Area could not be built today: most are between 3.0-4.0 FAR and do not comply with current zoning regulations on base heights, setbacks, lot coverage, and parking and loading facilities.***

**M1-1**

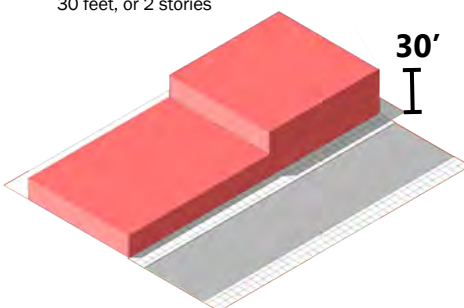
**Maximum FAR:**

1.0 FAR for industrial/commercial

2.4 FAR for community facility

**Maximum base height:**

30 feet, or 2 stories



**M1-2**

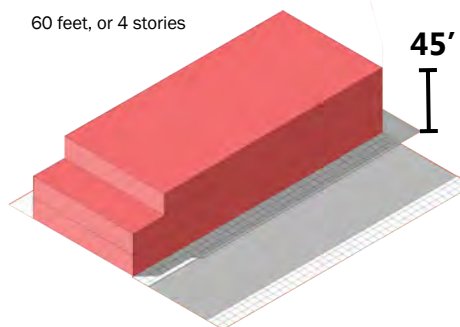
**Maximum FAR:**

2.0 FAR for industrial/commercial

4.8 FAR for community facility

**Maximum base height:**

60 feet, or 4 stories



**Existing loft buildings:**

**Built FAR:**

3.0 - 4.0 FAR (overbuilt under current zoning)

**Building heights:**

vary, up to



RECOMMENDATION:

**Develop new M districts or land use tools that allow for densities between 2.0 and 5.0 FAR.**

- > **Increase maximum permitted floor area to between 2.0 and 5.0 FAR for commercial and industrial uses in order to encourage new development, allow for greater building variety and volume, and facilitate increased job density near transit.**
- > **Conduct an urban design analysis to determine appropriate locations for greater density while maintaining a high quality environment and neighborhood character.**

RECOMMENDATION:

**Create new, more “contextual” building envelopes to allow for loft-like buildings.**

- > **As part of new M districts or land use tools described above, create new building envelopes that: allow for bulkier loft-style buildings that reflect existing neighborhood character, facilitate larger, more flexible floorplates for diverse commercial and industrial uses, reduce the ability to build towers on large sites, and create a more consistent street wall that contributes to a higher quality pedestrian realm.**

ISSUE:

**Greater density permitted for community facility space.**

As discussed in the Core Industrial Area zoning recommendations, in M1 districts, existing zoning favors construction of community facility space over commercial and

industrial space by allowing greater FAR for community facility uses. The community facility uses permitted as-of-right in M1 districts are ambulatory healthcare and houses of worship,

although other uses are permitted by Special Permit.

RECOMMENDATION:

**Equalize FAR permitted for community facilities with FAR permitted for other uses.**

- > **Eliminate the preference for community facility uses in zoning today by allowing the same amount of FAR for community facility, commercial, and industrial uses.**

## ISSUE:

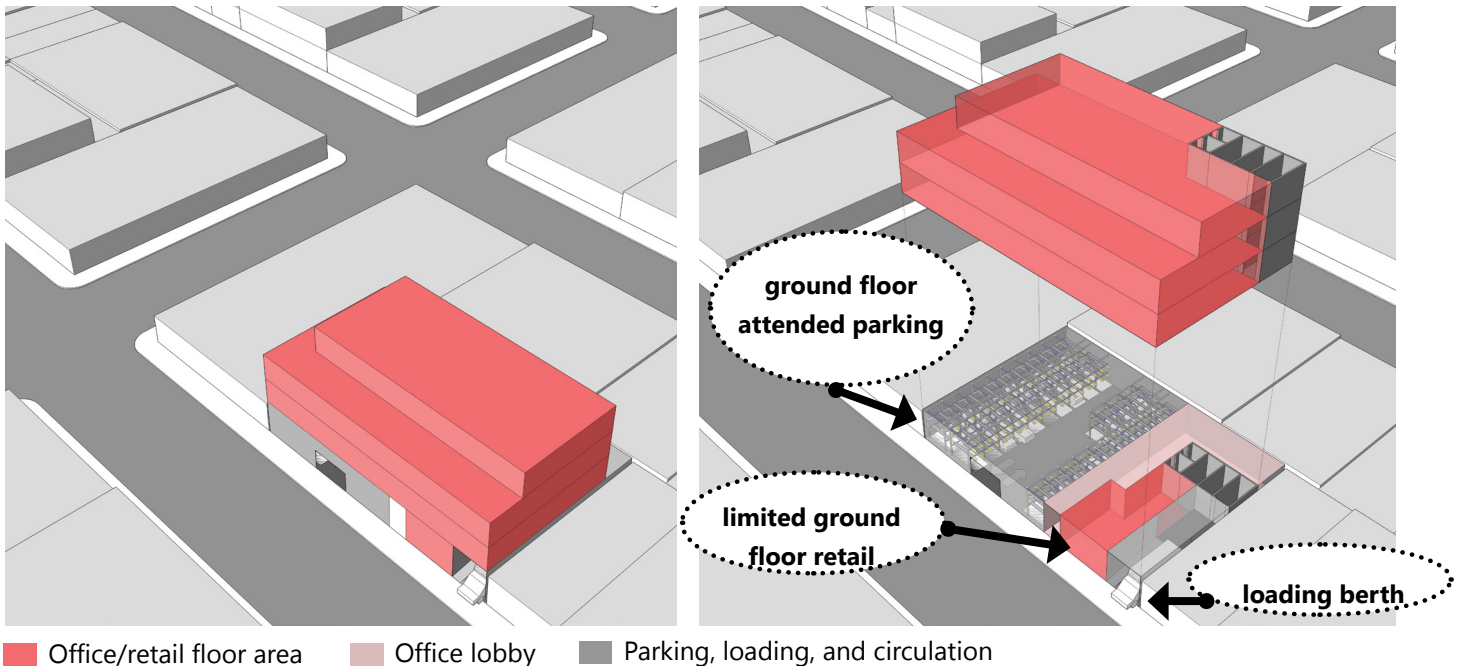
## High parking and loading requirements that may discourage investment.

### PARKING

Minimum parking requirements in the subarea do not reflect its excellent transit access and discourage creation of new space. Current zoning requires one parking space for every 300 SF of commercial use, significantly limiting the feasibility of new construction or

expansions. Fitting required parking on a commercial development site requires either giving over ground floors to parking, or building expensive underground parking. While there is a special permit from the Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) available to halve parking requirements for office uses, this process can add time

and cost to a project and ultimately still requires a substantial amount of parking that may not be appropriate in areas close to transit.



### Example: New Commercial Building in a M1-2 District

150' x 100' lot | 2.0 FAR allowed | 30,000 SF building

Required parking spaces: **100** / Required loading berths: **1**

#### Issues:

- > Current zoning includes extremely high minimum parking requirements that effectively assume 1 car per worker, at 1 space per 300 SF of commercial use.
- > The 100 required parking spaces could fit on the ground floor with the use of an attendant and stackers. While this increases development costs, underground parking is significantly more expensive.
- > This largely limits the availability of space for revenue-generating ground floor retail.

## **LOADING**

**(See also Core Industrial Area zoning recommendations for more detail.)**

In M districts in the Study Area, loading requirements for most retail and service uses are similar to those for industrial uses and are relatively high. Loading requirements for office

uses are less onerous: office buildings between 25,000 SF and 100,000 SF are required to provide one loading berth, whereas an industrial building of that size would need to provide multiple loading berths.

As discussed in the Core Industrial Area recommendations, these loading requirements have not been updated since 1961, but business needs have

likely changed. Loading requirements may also discourage investment in new space, especially in expansions of existing buildings that trigger requirements for additional berths. Minimum depth requirements also do not reflect the sizes of today's trucks.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**Rightsize off-street parking requirements for commercial and industrial uses to better reflect proximity to transit.**

- > Reduce off-street parking requirements to better reflect the subarea's excellent access to transit and to remove obstacles to new construction or expansion of existing buildings.**

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**Update loading berth requirements for industrial and commercial uses to better align with business needs and avoid discouraging expansion of existing buildings.**

- > Study business loading needs and rightsize loading berth requirements in relation to size and use of building.**
- > Address obstacles to building expansions created when an increase in building size triggers requirements for additional loading berths.**
- > Update loading berth depth requirements based on the dimensions of modern trucks.**



ISSUE:

**Large-scale industrial users operate in an evolving employment district.**

A number of large footprint industrial businesses, such as Boars Head, are located in the Growth District, some of which are a considerable source of jobs in the area. Ongoing planning efforts should account for these important stakeholders and ensure that future actions support their growth. Current zoning may be an impediment to their ability to upgrade or expand existing

facilities, and additional outreach will be needed to better understand business needs today and in the future.

RECOMMENDATION:

**Support large-scale industrial users in the Growth District**

- > Work with businesses to develop a zoning approach that supports the growth of valuable large-scale industrial users that exist in the Growth District today.**

# Transition Area

*A mix of industrial and non-industrial uses serving as a buffer between the Core Industrial Area and other subareas.*



## KEY METRICS

ACRES	% INDUSTRIAL	BUILT CHARACTER
111	62%	50%
11% of Study Area	of lot area	of lots contain 1-story buildings
JOBS (2016)	JOB GROWTH: Industrial	JOB GROWTH: Non-Industrial
3,610	4% (+100)	138% (+420)
19% of jobs in the Study Area	between 2010-2016	between 2010-2016
BUSINESS ACTIVITIES		
Mix of industrial & emerging non-industrial uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Construction</li><li>• Manufacturing</li><li>• Wholesale</li><li>• TAMI, other office-based businesses</li><li>• Artist studios &amp; galleries</li><li>• Retail and entertainment</li></ul>	

## TRANSITION AREA: DEFINING FEATURES



> **Light manufacturing**



> **Truck-intensive businesses**



> **Limited retail and entertainment**



> **Limited TAMI and other office**



> **Low-scale character with some loft buildings**



> **Street art, studios, and galleries**



## Transition Area

### **A mixed-use area serving as a buffer between heavy industry and other uses**

The Transition Area consists of two non-contiguous areas — Transition Area West and Transition Area East — and serves as a buffer between the Core Industrial Area and the Growth District and residential neighborhoods. Industrial uses are more clearly the dominant land use than in the Growth District although, especially in Transition Area West, creative, TAMI, and retail and entertainment uses are emerging. Compared to the Growth District, the Transition Area has more moderate access to public transit. Further, this subarea, and Transition Area East in particular, contains more large lots, providing opportunities for continued industrial use or mixed industrial/commercial buildings. As significant growth is channeled into the Growth District, the Transition Area can serve as a stable area that allows for modest continued growth in commercial and creative uses, with new mechanisms to encourage retention and creation of industrial space.

#### **Industrial Uses**

In the Transition Area, industrial businesses are present on every block. The largest industrial sectors are manufacturing, wholesale trade, and construction. There is a wide variety of manufacturing types and sizes, ranging from large-scale noodle and dumpling wrapping manufacturing, to small-scale

luxury furniture and metalworking. City of Saints Coffee spans both manufacturing and commercial activities with a café located within its roasting facility. There are also film and photography studios in Transition Area East such as the 1896 and BabyBlue Brooklyn.

#### **Office Uses**

The Transition Area contains some TAMI and other office-based tenants. Livestream is one of the larger tech employers in the subarea, on Morgan Avenue. Businesses on the spectrum between office and manufacturing include Voodoo Manufacturing, a 3D printing company located in the same building as Livestream.

While investment activity in Transition Area West has been less significant than in the Growth District, a number of plans for the creation of space for commercial uses have been announced or are under way, such as the Breeze, a conversion of an 82,000 square foot, three-story building at 314 Scholes Street to office and retail space by Hudson Companies.

#### **Retail, arts, and entertainment**

While less concentrated than in the Growth District, the Transition Area contains some artist studios, galleries, and live/work lofts. Some artist studios are located within the Transition Area's fourteen loft buildings, while others are in one to two story warehouses.

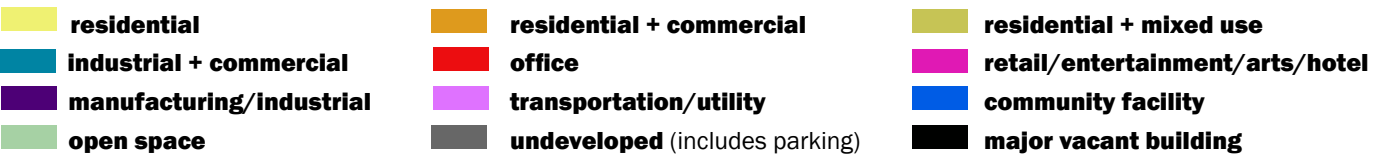
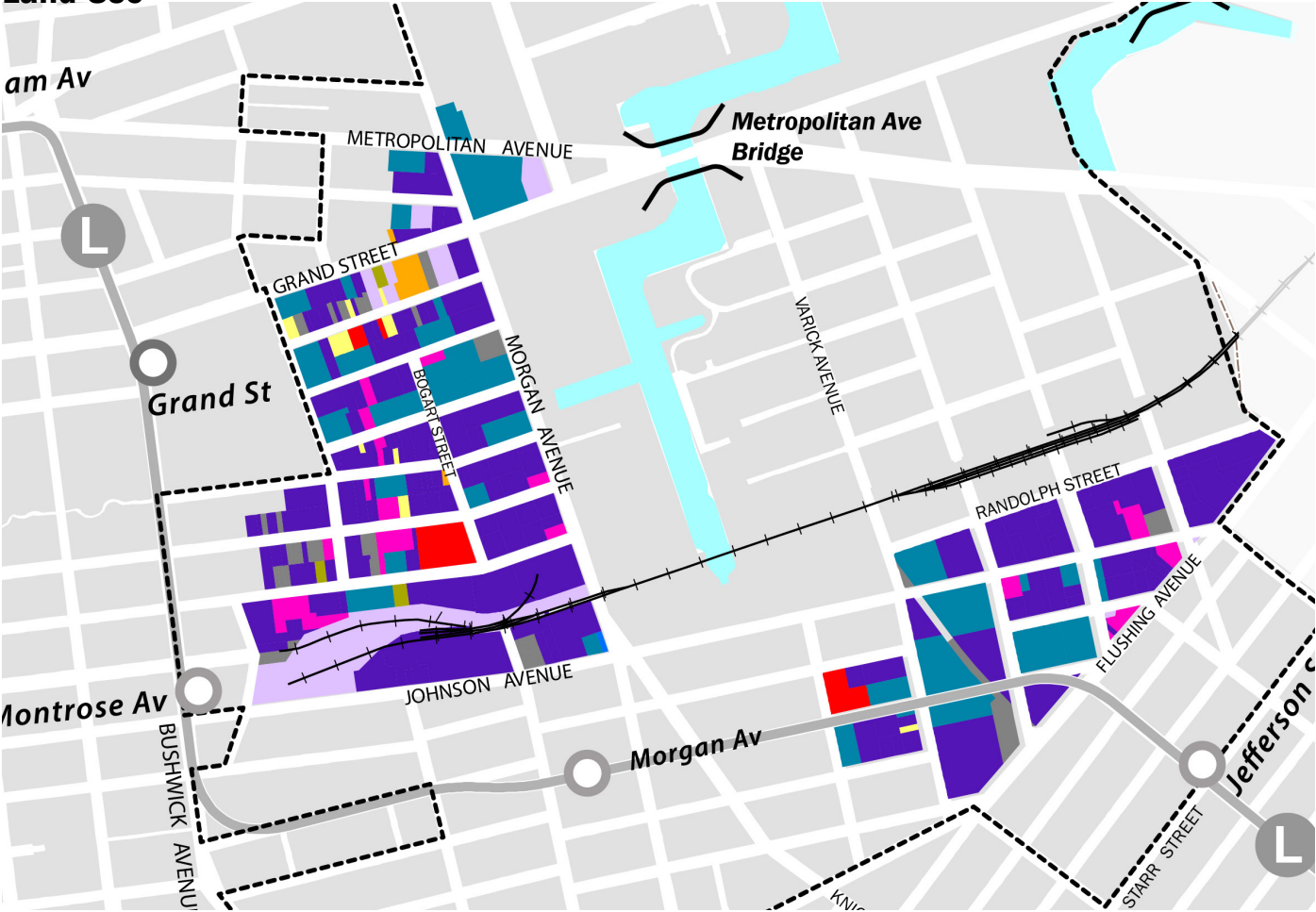
Transition Area West contains a number of restaurants, bars, and entertainment venues, such as the Wick, a large music venue, adjacent to rehearsal spaces at the Sweatshop, both on Meserole Street. Transition Area East, farther from the subway and residential areas, contains little retail; Caffè Vita coffee roasting and café on Johnson Avenue is an exception. A new music venue/arts space, Elsewhere, opened in a converted warehouse on Johnson Avenue in 2017.

#### **Residential**

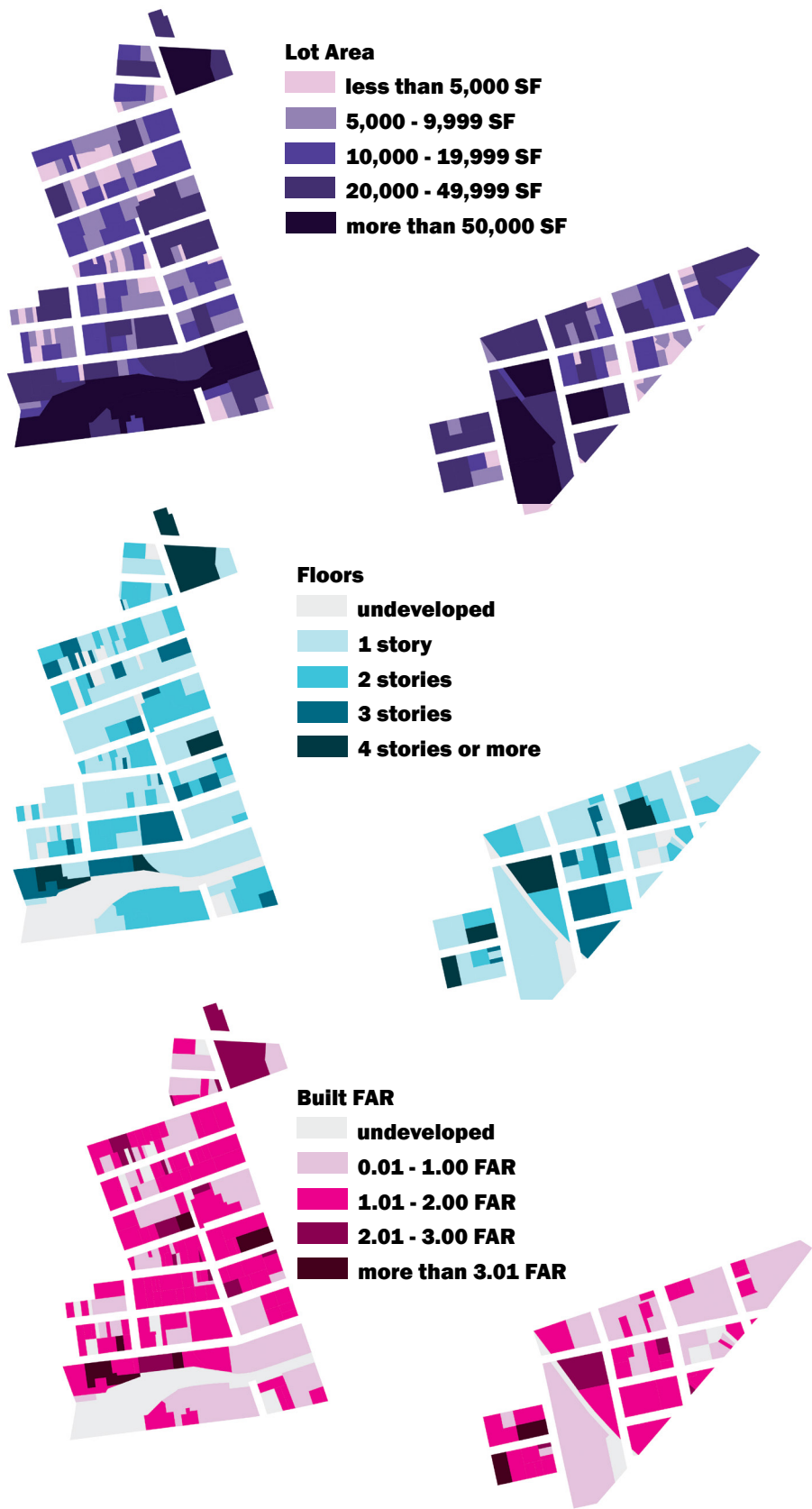
Transition Area West contains several Loft Law buildings and some scattered historic townhomes, especially along Maujer Street. There are no residential uses in Transition Area East.



# Land Use



Built Environment



**Flexible lots:**

**OVER 50% OF LOT AREA  
COMPRISES LOTS OVER  
20,000 SF**

**Low-rise:**

**50% OF BUILDINGS ARE  
1 STORY**

**Underbuilt:**

**OVER 40% OF LOTS  
ARE UNDERBUILT PER  
CURRENT ZONING**

## What We Heard:

### Why are businesses here?

#### Key Advantages for Industrial Businesses

- > **Proximity to major truck routes**, such as Morgan Avenue, Flushing Avenue, and Johnson Avenue.
- > **Limited number of residential uses** reduces the potential for conflicts. Transition Area East is not adjacent to residential areas.
- > **Some large lots** in Transition Area East can be used for space-intensive industrial activities.

#### Key Advantages for Office-Based Businesses

- > **A small stock of multi-story loft buildings** can be converted to commercial use.
- > **Creative culture and character** are attractive to TAMI and other office-based firms.
- > **Moderate transit access** serves the subarea.
- > **Emerging retail uses** in Transition Area West offer services to workers.

#### Key Advantages for Retail, Arts, and Entertainment Businesses

- > **Proximity to, but separation from, residential areas** helps nightlife businesses avoid residential complaints while still attracting nearby residents.
- > **Creative neighborhood culture** allows music venues and other entertainment businesses to thrive.
- > **Moderate transit access** serves the subarea.

### What could be improved?

#### Key Challenges

- > **Conflicts between industrial and non-industrial uses** arise given the true mix and proximity of industrial and non-industrial uses.
- > **Zoning constrains construction of new workspace.** While the *North Brooklyn Plan* does not aim to unlock substantial new growth in the Transition Area, high parking requirements and low allowable FAR do not reflect the subarea's moderate proximity to public transit.

## GOAL for the Transition Area

**Support a continued mix of industrial and commercial uses while channeling substantial commercial development to the Growth District.**

The Transition Area has fewer of the assets that have driven the momentum of change in the Growth District: centrally located subway stations, a concentration of loft buildings, and activity generated by substantial existing residential uses. Further, Transition Area East contains assets for industrial businesses that the Growth District does not: larger lots that can accommodate industrial uses and mixed industrial and commercial uses. A light touch that removes some zoning barriers to new development, while also putting into place tools to encourage creation or retention of industrial space, can help encourage a continued mix of uses. This will allow for this subarea to continue to serve as a buffer for the Core Industrial Area, while also channeling development to the Growth District.

### Land Use Tool Recommendations

Many of the recommended zoning tools for the Transition Area are similar to those recommended for the Growth District. Where indicated, refer to Growth District recommendations for more information.





ISSUE:

**Market forces that discourage creation or retention of industrial space.**

A new zoning mechanism can be put into place to encourage creation of new industrial space or retention of existing industrial space when a property is redeveloped.

As described in the “Industrial Mixed-Use Building Typologies” discussion on page 14, specific conditions

are required for a new mixed-use commercial and industrial building to be both physically and financially feasible. As such, broad requirements for industrial space set-asides across an entire neighborhood can have unintended consequences, hampering investment. However, there are ways for zoning to incentivize property

owners to provide industrial space within new development by making it more physically and financially feasible.

RECOMMENDATION:

**Create new mechanism to incentivize creation or retention of industrial space.**

- > Develop an appropriate zoning mechanism to strongly incentivize the provision of industrial space, such as preferential FAR, which would allow more FAR for industrial uses than for commercial or community facility uses.**

ISSUE:

**Low permitted density and building envelopes that do not reflect existing character.**

Like the Growth District, the Transition Area is currently mapped with M1-1 and M1-2 zoning districts that allow for up to 1.0 - 2.0 FAR. While significant increases in density should be put

into place in the Growth District to channel commercial growth there, a more modest increase in density is appropriate in those portions of the Transition Area close to subway

stations so as to tap potential provided by our subway system.

RECOMMENDATION:

**Develop new M districts or land use tools that allow for greater density than today, though at a lower maximum density than in the Growth District.**

RECOMMENDATION:

**Create new, more “contextual” building envelopes to allow for loft-like buildings. (See Growth District zoning recommendations for more detail.)**

ISSUE:

**Greater density permitted for community facility space.**

RECOMMENDATION:

**Equalize FAR permitted for community facilities with FAR permitted for commercial uses.**

*(See Growth District zoning recommendations for more detail.)*

ISSUE:

**High parking and loading requirements that may discourage investment.**

RECOMMENDATION:

**Rightsize off-street parking requirements for commercial and industrial uses to better reflect proximity to transit.**

**> Reduce off-street parking requirements in proportion to the subarea's moderate access to transit, removing obstacles to new construction or expansion of existing buildings.**

RECOMMENDATION:

**Update loading berth requirements for industrial and commercial uses to better align with business needs and avoid discouraging building expansions.**

*(See Growth District zoning recommendations for more detail.)*



CITY OF *Saints* COFFEE ROASTERS

COFFEE

BEAT THE CURE

25-61 49<sup>TH</sup> AVE.  
L.I.C. N.Y. 11101  
USDOT 403714



# Stable Areas

## Mixed Edge

**A historic mix of residential and industrial uses, with no predominant use, between established industrial and residential areas.**

The Mixed Edge subarea is a walkable, dense area comprised of a strip of half-blocks located between McGuinness Boulevard, a busy transportation corridor, and the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant. The Mixed Edge contains an ad hoc mix of industrial and residential uses and is within walking distance of the Greenpoint Avenue G train station.

The current zoning is M1-1. The lack of a dominant land use suggests that a zoning change to tip the balance to residential use is not warranted, as this would increase the amount of housing close to the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant on the eastern edge of the Mixed Edge.



*Mixed uses on McGuinness Boulevard*



## Commercial Edge

### **Selected active commercial properties at the residential edge of the Study Area.**

The Commercial Edge consists solely of commercial properties at the edge of the Study Area for which no intervention is recommended. On Greenpoint Avenue, this includes a Key Food grocery store that serves local residents and the former Leviton factory buildings, which currently contain a mix of small manufacturers and creative tenants. One of the overall objectives of the *North Brooklyn Plan*, is to preserve such buildings, which offer opportunities for high employment density.

The other portion of the Commercial Edge is a shopping center containing a McDonald's, Staples, and Autozone store. This block is located between the elevated Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, the Core Industrial Area, and residential neighborhoods. Serving local residents and workers in an appropriate location, no land use change is necessary to accommodate the existing use and built typology of big-box retailers.



*Retail uses on Lombardy Street*

## Residential Edge

**Predominantly residential blocks located in M districts, similar in character to adjacent residential neighborhoods.**

The Study Area includes peripheral blocks outside the IBZ that are wholly or partially zoned M1-1 or C8-2 (a designation for auto-related uses). These blocks comprise the Established Residential subarea, and are dominated by low-scale rowhouses despite the underlying industrial or commercial zoning. One portion of the subarea, along Beadel Street, is located in the middle of the Core Industrial Area.

The character of these blocks is generally consistent with the low-scale character of adjacent residential neighborhoods. Zoning that better matches the existing character of these predominantly residential blocks is needed to allow residents to modestly expand their properties and allow for limited new low-scale residential that aligns with existing context.



Beadel Street



Jewel Street



Bushwick Avenue

ISSUE:

**Current zoning is not aligned with predominant residential use.**

Being located in an M district burdens homeowners by making it more difficult to obtain insurance or mortgages. In addition, major alterations and investment in homes are disincentivized.

RECOMMENDATION:

**Adjust zoning to reflect existing residential character.**

**Any residential rezoning should be consistent with the density and character of adjacent residential neighborhoods and would be strictly for areas with predominantly residential uses. As is the case with the Land Use Framework as a whole, subarea boundaries are conceptual and any future rezoning or land use actions would require site-by-site analysis and stakeholder outreach to create a final zoning proposal, including zoning boundaries.**