

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

EAST NEW YORK





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DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING CITY OF NEW YORK

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

EAST NEW YORK

THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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Highland Park Children's Garden
Local 372
Local Development Corporation of East New York
Low Income Investment Fund
Maxwell High School
NYC Aspirations Diploma Plus High School
Ocean Hill Residents Association
Our Lady of Lourdes Academy
PS 155
T&L Community Radio
Triumphant Full Gospel Assembly
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Young Life East New York

And other community organizations and residents

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NYC Department of Sanitation
NYC Department of Small Business Services
NYC Department of Transportation
NYC Economic Development Corporation
NYC Housing Authority
Metropolitan Transportation Authority



A vision for Broadway Junction as a major regional destination.

FOREWORD

Dear Fellow New Yorkers,

As we strive to improve the lives of all New Yorkers by creating more affordable housing, as set forth in *Housing New York: A Five-Borough, Ten-Year Plan*, as well as good jobs and economic opportunities, this plan for East New York offers a blueprint for how these citywide goals can be accomplished on a neighborhood level.

The NYC Department of City Planning is pleased to share *Sustainable Communities: East New York*, which presents a vision for a more sustainable and equitable East New York. This report is the culmination of a two-year community engagement process examining the potential for growth in this Brooklyn neighborhood. Together with several public agencies and the East New York community we identified opportunities for the neighborhood to blossom – with a rich transit network, vacant and underutilized land available for redevelopment, and strong local organizations and leaders ready to help realize a new vision for the area.

With first-hand guidance from residents, businesses, sister public agencies, and other stakeholders, the Department of City Planning has laid out a framework for growing East New York to achieve expressed goals of new and diverse housing options, more retail services, local jobs, and a healthy and safe community.

East New York presents a rare opportunity to fully harness the assets of a historically underutilized regional transit hub. The area around Broadway Junction, where three subway lines and regional rail converge, has the potential to support substantial development and become a major outer borough destination with places to work, shop, socialize, and enjoy. The transit corridors of Atlantic Avenue, Fulton Street and Pitkin Avenue can cultivate a mix of uses and ultimately provide thousands of new housing units. The East New York industrial area provides opportunities for job creation and economic development. Streetscape improvements can tie the neighborhood together, making it safer for pedestrians and supporting the increased level of activity envisioned for the area.

As New York City works to achieve our ambitious goals to build or preserve 200,000 units of affordable housing, create good jobs, and generate economic development, physical and social infrastructure enhancements must be coordinated. This comprehensive plan for East New York demonstrates how these multiple objectives can be achieved to improve the quality of life for residents in a historically underserved neighborhood.

Realizing this vision will require political will, a commitment of public resources and a close working relationship between city government and the East New York community – its elected officials, local leadership, community organizations, residents and businesses. We at the Department of City Planning look forward to immediately engaging with the East New York community to make the recommendations in this report a reality.

We must work together to do so.

Sincerely,

Carl Weisbrod
Director, Department of City Planning
Chairman, New York City Planning Commission

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----|
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | XI |
| I INTRODUCTION | |
| SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: EAST NEW YORK | 1 |
| II EAST NEW YORK | |
| IN CONTEXT | 11 |
| III EAST NEW YORK AND CYPRESS HILLS | |
| SUBAREA | 32 |
| IV INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS | |
| SUBAREA | 58 |
| V BROADWAY JUNCTION | |
| SUBAREA | 84 |
| VI SUSTAINABILITY | 114 |
| VII THE FUTURE OF EAST NEW YORK | 128 |



A vision for Pitkin Avenue in East New York

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents a vision for a resurgent East New York, Brooklyn, with opportunities for thousands of new mixed-income housing units, jobs and services based on a collaborative planning effort led by the Department of City Planning, together with community residents, local organizations, and fellow public agencies. This study recommends changes to transform East New York's key transit corridors into vibrant, safe streets offering new housing and retail, and develop a regional center at Broadway Junction providing jobs and opportunities for economic development.

The Sustainable Communities East New York planning initiative was funded under a regional planning grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to the New York-Connecticut Sustainable Communities Consortium, a collection of governmental and planning organizations in partnership to support the development of livable communities and growth centers around the region's most extensive commuter rail network. As outlined in *Housing New York*, creating housing and job opportunities in proximity to transit is a key goal as New York City seeks to remain affordable for current residents and accommodate a growing population while

fostering sustainable neighborhoods and economic opportunity. East New York was chosen for this study based on its rich transit infrastructure, including a regional rail line, five subway lines and numerous bus routes, which provides the foundation for future transit-oriented development and the further growth of this community.

This initiative was supported by and complements the ongoing work by public agencies including the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Economic Development Corporation (EDC), and agencies of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), as well as community-based organizations, including the Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation which is conducting a NYS Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program (BOA) study to evaluate vacant or underutilized strategic sites for redevelopment. The BOA study and this study share the goals of capitalizing on existing transit infrastructure to bring new housing and job opportunities to this underserved community.

Intensive community visioning sessions with residents and other local stakeholders elicited the following planning goals for East New York.

Planning Goals:

- Facilitate new housing opportunities, including affordable housing
- Improve access to fresh food and retail services
- Enhance the physical environment
- Facilitate job creation and improve access to job centers
- Incorporate sustainability into neighborhood efforts

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of analysis and community outreach, this report recommends the following:

Promote new, mixed-income housing and mixed-use development along key transit corridors

Provide opportunities for thousands of new housing units as well as for jobs on vacant or underutilized sites along key transit corridors in East New York. Atlantic Avenue offers the greatest potential for higher-density, mixed-use development with several large strategic sites. New housing and neighborhood stores could also be supported by the existing transit lines along Pitkin Avenue and Fulton Street. A wide range of resources, including housing subsidies and zoning mechanisms, could ensure that this new housing would be affordable to households at a range of income levels.

Cultivate a dense, mixed-use, job-intensive, regional destination at Broadway Junction

The East New York MTA Long Island Railroad (LIRR) station, inter-connecting subway stations and numerous bus lines make Broadway Junction one of the most highly transit-accessible locations in the city and region, comparable to Downtown Brooklyn, Jamaica and other central locations. This presents a unique opportunity to advance the community's wishes for mixed-use development, including shopping and entertainment, educational facilities, cultural centers, government institutions, other commercial uses, and mixed-income housing. While significant challenges exist to establishing a center of activity in this highly underutilized area

encumbered by infrastructure, collaborative efforts by City Planning, the MTA, and EDC, among other public and private partners, would bring to fruition the vision for regional-scale development which would provide a wide range of benefits for residents in the adjoining neighborhoods and the city as a whole.

Build on neighborhood strengths to preserve longstanding residential neighborhoods and promote contextual infill development

The area's existing rowhouses and small apartment buildings, located on the residential side streets between the neighborhood's retail corridors, have been a source of stability for East New York. Contextual zoning would promote the retention of this housing stock and ensure that new infill development complements the existing built residential character.

Encourage economic development opportunities to support job growth

New housing and growth in East New York's residential population would expand the local customer base and create opportunities for new stores and other commercial ventures. DCP would work with the Department of Small Business Services to support new and existing businesses as the demand for local services such as grocery stores, banks and restaurants is projected to increase. In addition, the industrially-zoned area to the west of the study area presents opportunities for more intensive industrial and commercial activity. Activating underutilized sites, with a focus on strategic sites at the periphery of this area, and encouraging job-intensive uses would support existing work by EDC to encourage increased economic activity and make jobs more accessible to residents of the adjoining neighborhoods.

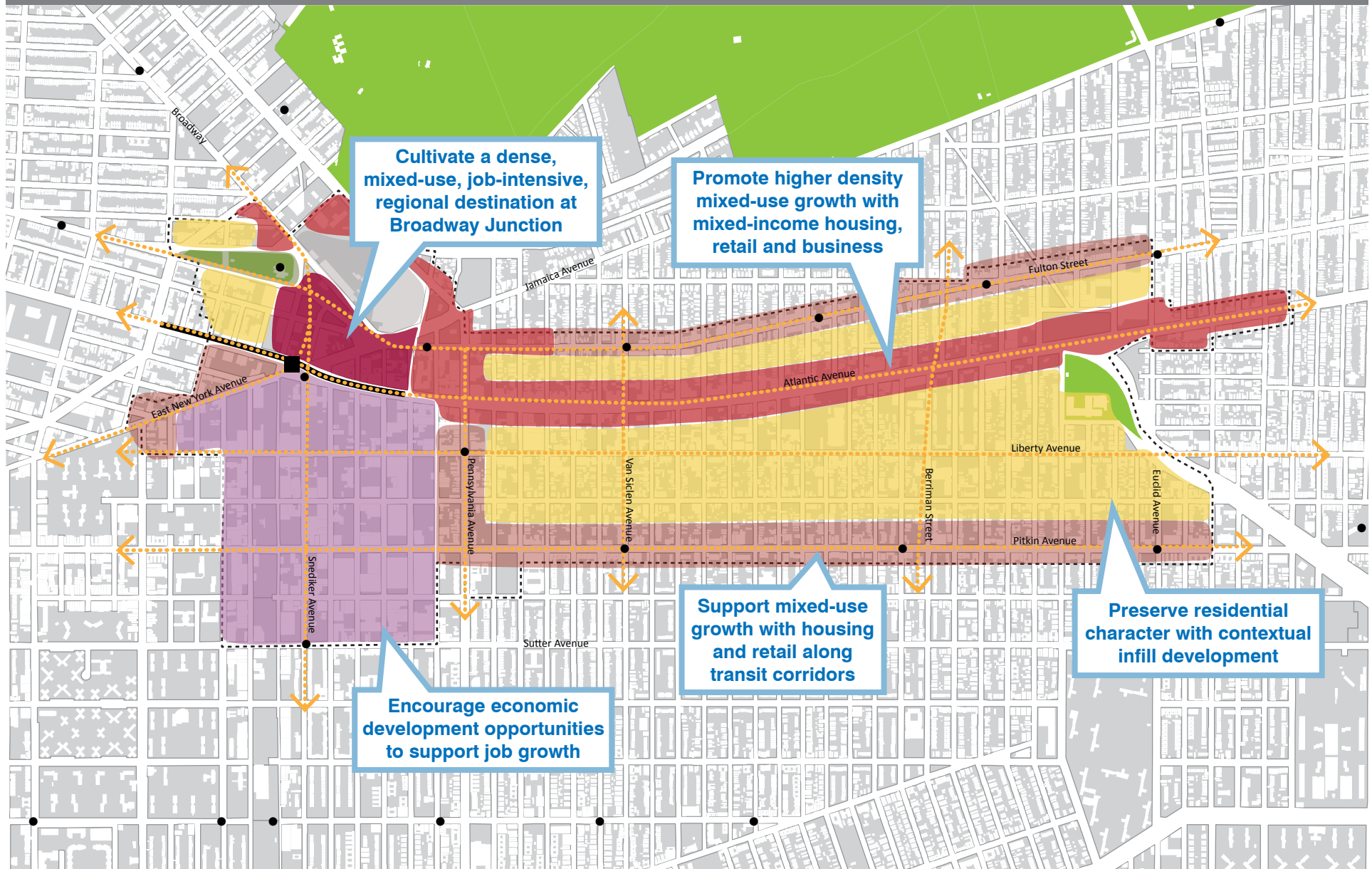
Enhance safety and connectivity with streetscape improvements

By adding new sidewalks, curb extensions, traffic signals, street trees, benches, bus shelters and other amenities along major corridors, neighborhood safety and walkability for pedestrians and transit users would be enhanced. As a result of their collaboration on this study, and with funding from the City Council, DOT has begun making improvements to priority intersections along Atlantic Avenue, which is dangerous to cross and inhospitable to pedestrians walking or waiting for buses. At Broadway Junction, DOT is slated to construct improvements to pedestrian connectivity between the LIRR, subway and bus stations, as well as to the surrounding neighborhoods; in addition, further enhancements in the Industrial and Business Area would increase safety and strengthen that area's ability to attract and retain more businesses and jobs.

Support neighborhood sustainability through programs at the community level

Local organizations in East New York as well as city agencies such as the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Health, and the Department of Sanitation, are working to improve health and sustainability by promoting street tree plantings, green infrastructure, access to open spaces and green building practices. Enhancing connections to parks and open space, promoting active transportation, and improving access to healthy food can further support community wellness efforts.

OVERVIEW OF STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS



- Preserve residential character
- Higher density mixed-use growth
- Industrial and business uses
- Open space
- Mixed-use growth along transit corridors
- Regional scale development
- MTA Train Yard and Bus Depot
- New York City Subway Station
- LIRR Station
- Enhance connectivity through the neighborhood

TURNING RECOMMENDATIONS INTO ACTION

Implementation of this study's recommendations would strengthen East New York as a livable, transit-oriented community, supporting its residents' vision of a complete neighborhood offering a range of housing options, including affordable housing, transportation, jobs and services in a healthy, clean and safe environment. This will require the combined effort of government agencies, elected officials, local residents, businesses, and community-based organizations. Some recommendations have already begun to be implemented as a result of this study.

Key Next Steps:

- Implement streetscape and transportation improvements
- Develop and introduce for public review a rezoning plan to allow higher densities and a mix of uses along transit corridors and promote contextual development in primarily residential areas
- Promote redevelopment of key underutilized sites through coordinated public and private investment



*Left (photo): Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation celebrates the completion of a new affordable housing development
Image: © Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation*

Streetscape and Transportation Improvements

In addition to the previously mentioned streetscape improvements to Atlantic Avenue and around Broadway Junction currently underway by DOT, in the long-term, changes to the traffic flow and a reconstruction of Atlantic Avenue could make this corridor safer and more efficient for a variety of users including pedestrians, bikers, transit riders and drivers. Making transit stations in the area more accessible would allow more users to access these resources; measures could include improving the underpass at the LIRR station, opening additional entrances to the Broadway Junction station, adding bus stop shelters, improving wayfinding between stations, and installing ramps and elevators to make stations more accessible to those with limited mobility.

Neighborhood Rezoning

The NYS Department of State has awarded a Step 3 BOA implementation grant to the Department of City Planning and the Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation (CHLDC), which would partially fund the development and completion of an area-wide rezoning to implement this study's recommendations for mixed-use growth along transit corridors, contextual zoning, and the redevelopment of strategic brownfield sites. City Planning recently worked with CHLDC to facilitate

the required rezoning to medium-density to allow the construction of the first mid-rise affordable housing development on Pitkin Avenue in many decades. This development will provide 60 units of much needed affordable housing as well as stores on the ground floor to help activate Pitkin Avenue's retail corridor and is an example of the type of development which would be enabled by a neighborhood-wide rezoning. Additionally, a grant from the New York-Connecticut Transit-Oriented Housing Incentive Fund, a joint project of the New York-Connecticut Sustainable Communities Consortium and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, will help CHLDC advance a mixed-use development of retail and affordable rental housing.

Economic Development

Redevelopment of strategic sites along Atlantic Avenue would be facilitated through an area-wide rezoning, and would bring new housing and economic activity to the corridor. Realization of the economic development potential envisioned for Broadway Junction would require concerted, long-term effort on the part of public agencies, elected officials, private enterprise, local community members and other stakeholders. This ambitious vision for Broadway Junction as a regional anchor and home to a variety of commercial and institutional destinations capitalizes on the existing transit assets to create enormous value for the surrounding community and the entire region.



*Right (photo):
A safety median and high-visibility crosswalk
have made this intersection at Atlantic Avenue
and Warwick Street safer for pedestrians.*



INTRODUCTION

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: EAST NEW YORK

I



INTRODUCTION

PLANNING FOR REGIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainable Communities: East New York was funded through a regional planning grant under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Sustainable Communities Initiative. It is one of 16 local implementation projects undertaken by New York - Connecticut Sustainable Communities, a consortium of 17 municipalities, counties, Metropolitan Planning Organizations and the Regional Plan Association (RPA) covering Long Island, lower New York State, New York City and southwestern Connecticut.

By building on the region's extensive transit network, the Consortium's goal is to accommodate future regional growth in livable communities with mixed-income housing and employment along the region's transit networks. Sustainable Communities: East New York is one of four Sustainable Communities projects linked by the Long Island Rail Road in Brooklyn, Nassau and Suffolk counties. It is one of three projects in New York City, along with a study of development opportunities near existing and proposed Metro North stations in the Bronx, and a set of citywide climate resilience studies.

Partnership for Sustainable Communities

*In June 2009, U.S. HUD, together with U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, formed the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The Partnership's mission is to coordinate federal housing, transportation, water and other infrastructure investments nationwide that will improve access to affordable housing, increase transportation options, and lower transportation costs while protecting the environment. The Sustainable Communities initiative is defined by six **Livability Principles**:*

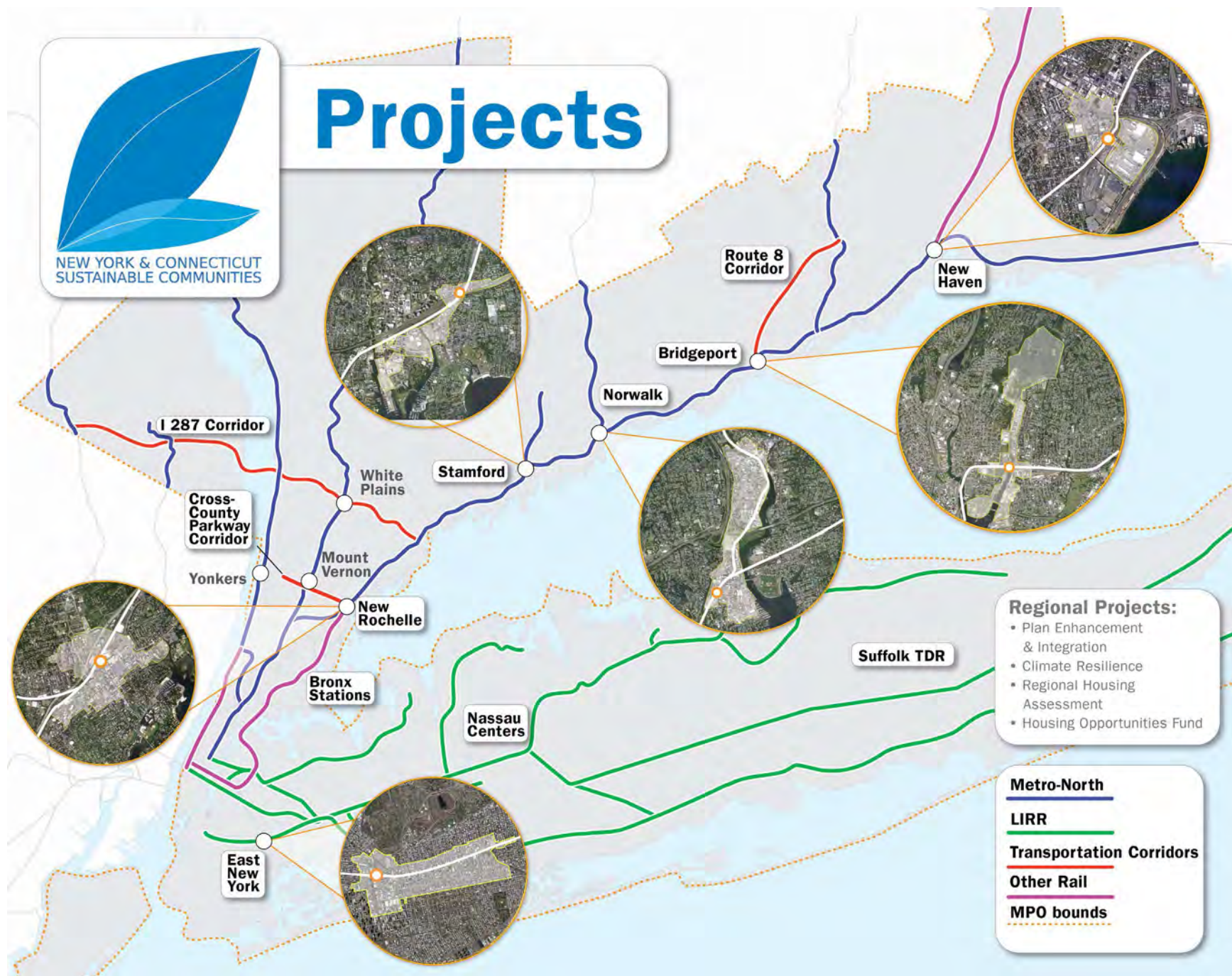
- ① **Provide more transportation choices**
- ② **Promote equitable, affordable housing**
- ③ **Enhance economic competitiveness**
- ④ **Support existing communities**
- ⑤ **Coordinate policies and leverage investment**
- ⑥ **Value communities and neighborhoods**

*Right (map):
Regional sustainability projects undertaken along transit lines by
the New York-Connecticut Sustainable Communities Consortium
Map: © New York- Connecticut Sustainable
Communities Consortium*



NEW YORK & CONNECTICUT
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Projects



SUSTAINABILITY IN NEW YORK CITY

Transit-oriented development is one of the central principles of **PlaNYC**. The plan aims to locate more than 95 percent of new housing opportunities in New York City within a half-mile (or less than a 10 minute walk) of transit. New York City currently has very low levels of energy usage and carbon emissions per capita. This is attributable in large part to the city's compact development pattern, which minimizes the need for automobile use and provides greater opportunities for lower-cost, lower-emissions transportation options. To further reduce the city's carbon emissions as outlined in PlaNYC, the city will need to grow along its transit network.

PlaNYC

PlaNYC is New York City's strategy to accommodate the City's expected growth to more than 9 million residents in the next few decades while at the same time strengthening its economy, combatting climate change, and enhancing quality of life for all New Yorkers. It includes initiatives undertaken by over 25 City agencies, and is regularly updated.

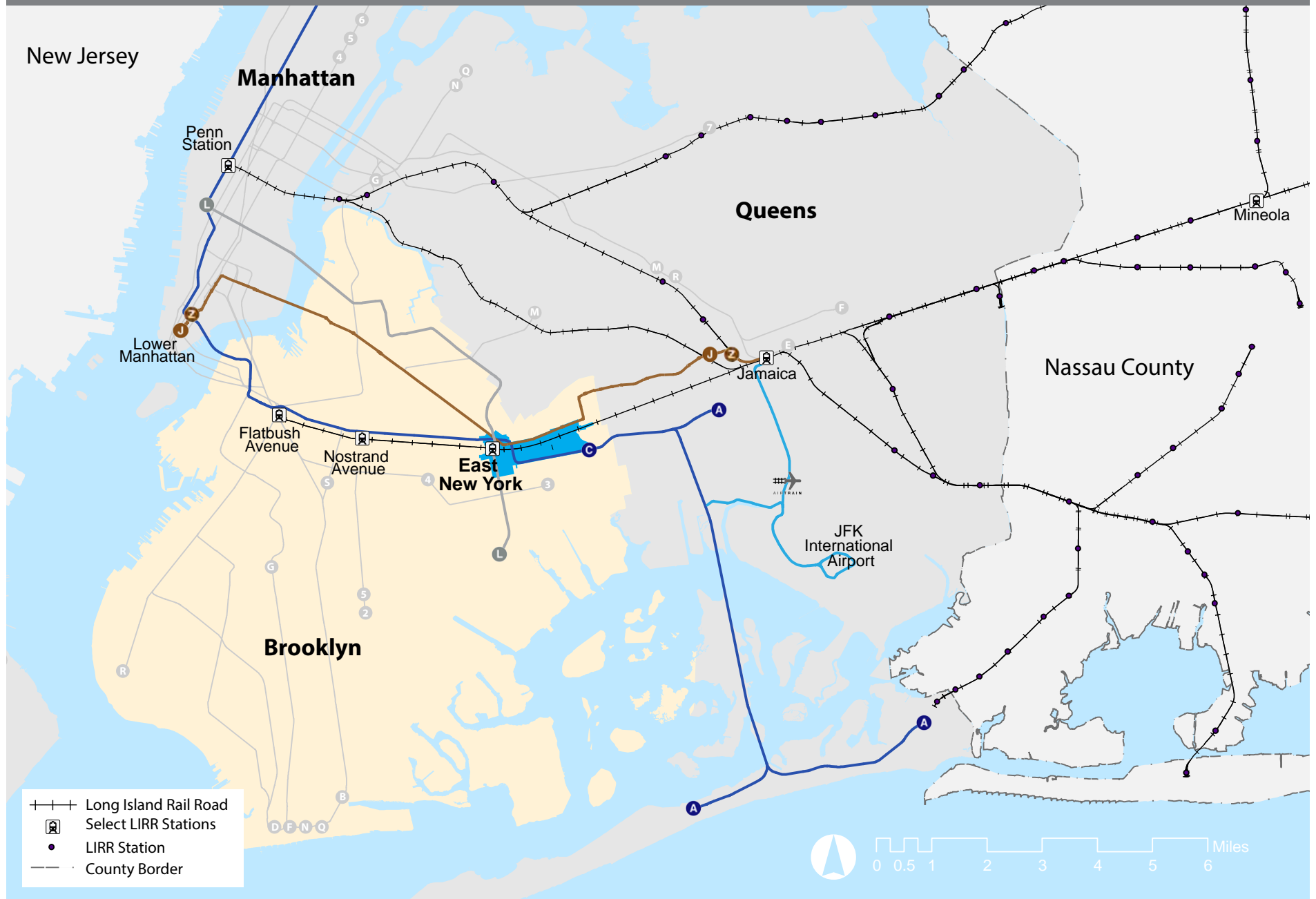
EAST NEW YORK

East New York was selected for this study because of its existing transit resources, its vibrant, diverse community and committed local organizations, and its potential to contribute to a more sustainable New York City. With a regional train line connecting the area to important centers in Long Island, Brooklyn and Queens; five subway services; several bus lines and numerous vacant and underutilized parcels, the area is well suited for transit-oriented development and has great potential for revitalization as a more complete mixed-use community with housing, jobs and services in close proximity to each other and to transit. Compact, higher density development will not only allow for more housing, including affordable housing, and neighborhood services, but will also enhance the area's environmental performance by reducing energy consumption as more residents are able to walk, bike and use transit as primary modes of transportation.

The study seeks to lay the foundation for such a community by coordinating neighborhood planning with transportation and sustainability recommendations. Five central goals of the study are to:

Planning Goals:

- Facilitate new housing opportunities, including affordable housing
- Improve access to fresh food and retail services
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- Facilitate job creation and improve access to job centers
- Incorporate sustainability into neighborhood efforts



PLANNING GOALS

FACILITATE NEW HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

The availability of a range of housing choices in proximity to transit, retail and community services allows diverse groups of residents to work, shop and play close to home, greatly reducing the need for private automobiles. This in turn reduces household transportation costs as well as the space needed to accommodate cars within the urban environment. Allowing a diverse mix of housing types appropriate for a variety of lifestyles and incomes can support dynamic, accessible, mixed-income communities.

IMPROVE ACCESS TO FRESH FOOD AND RETAIL SERVICES

High quality retail and services such as grocery stores, restaurants, department stores, banks, fitness centers and child care are essential for creating active, vibrant neighborhoods that meet the needs of local residents. Such an environment also offers opportunities for local jobs and small businesses. Adequate residential densities are needed to ensure a local customer base to sustain a diversity of services and shops in a neighborhood.



*Left (sketch):
Proposed residential development and long-term land
use changes on Pitkin Avenue at Berriman Street.*

ENHANCE THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Well-designed streets provide a safe and attractive environment for a pedestrians, bikers, transit users and drivers alike. Infrastructure elements that support multiple means of travel should include adequate travel and turning lanes for vehicles; bike lanes; adequate sidewalks, visible crosswalks, medians and curb extensions which all make walking along and crossing roads safe for pedestrians; bus shelters, benches, street trees and wayfinding signs which make streets attractive and accommodating for all users. Active storefronts and businesses at the ground level can help provide a sense of safety for residents and visitors by creating a pleasant and interesting environment and by bringing users to the street at various times of the day and night.

FACILITATE JOB CREATION AND IMPROVE ACCESS TO JOB CENTERS

Good jobs and stable employment enhance community prosperity. The presence of local jobs suitable for a variety of skill levels in diverse industries is a marker of a healthy economy. Additionally, accessible and efficient public transportation networks allow residents to access economic opportunities throughout the city and region. Such a neighborhood offers multiple public transportation options including transit, bus and regional connections. Public transportation should be convenient, easy to use, and accessible with easy transfers between modes of travel, clear wayfinding, and amenities such as bus shelters.

INCORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY INTO NEIGHBORHOOD EFFORTS

Neighborhoods can support public health, provide open space, promote energy efficiency and provide clean air and water. Neighborhoods that include parks within walking distance offer opportunities for physical activity and improved wellness. Street trees can provide shade as well as filter carbon dioxide and pollutants from the air. Green infrastructure elements such as bioswales and green roofs can help prevent localized flooding and filter stormwater, enhancing water quality for the entire region. Energy efficient design and renewable energy sources reduce energy consumption, lowering costs for residents and building owners while reducing harmful emissions and conserving resources.



*Right (photo):
Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn Heights has a
pedestrian-friendly streetscape.*

PLANNING PROCESS

The Sustainable Communities East New York study builds on thorough data analysis and extensive community outreach. Project staff examined the area's history, analyzed demographic and socio-economic data, and conducted field work. Field surveys gathered data on land, building and ground-floor uses, the width and condition of streets, sidewalks and other public spaces, the location of street trees, and other physical conditions. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) consisting of City and State agencies active in the study area, provided technical and policy expertise, feedback on draft recommendations and identified possible opportunities for coordinated planning around future implementation.

Three phases of community outreach collected input from a variety of stakeholders including residents, Community Boards, business and property owners, elected officials and community-based organizations. Hundreds of community members attended more than 50 outreach events held in the course of the study, ranging from meetings with representatives from community-based organizations and elected officials to workshops and visioning sessions open to all area residents. Outreach activities included a Town Hall meeting at PS 89, a Community Visioning Forum for East New York at Community Board 5 offices, a Community Visioning Forum for Broadway Junction at Aspirations High School, outreach at Cypress Hills LDC's Verde Summit and a survey of business owners in the Industrial Business Zone.



Community Boards 5 and 16, which each cover portions of the study area, were highly engaged throughout the process. The project team updated the Board and their Land Use committees regularly and solicited input on plans. As part of the outreach effort, the project was also guided by a Community Advisory Committee (CAC), consisting of residents and representatives from local community-based organizations. Through this extensive outreach and public engagement residents identified key challenges and opportunities in East New York, as well as their vision for the future of the area.

*Above (photo):
Community members and City Planning staff during the
Broadway Junction walking tour organized by DCP.*

*Opposite Page - Left (photo):
Local residents discuss the neighborhood's assets and
priorities during the visioning event held in May 2012.*

*Opposite Page - Right (photo):
A participant at the Broadway Junction visioning event
reports back on ideas to revitalize the area.*

PHASE I

PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND PUBLIC INPUT

(Spring 2011—Spring 2012)

City Planning staff and community members worked collaboratively to refine study goals. Two visioning sessions for specific areas helped gather more targeted community input and identify key issues and opportunities. The first session included a walking tour and charette with participants. In the second session participants were led on a “virtual” tour through the study area before identifying challenges and opportunities. A survey of business owners complemented this initial outreach phase.



PHASE II

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK ON DRAFT PLANNING FRAMEWORK

(Fall 2012—Spring 2013)

A draft planning framework was developed based on land use surveys, technical analyses and community input from the first outreach phase. This framework laid out a vision for future development that would channel growth around key transit corridors, promote affordable housing opportunities and preserve existing neighborhood assets. The planning team met with Community Boards, the CAC and TAC to share the draft planning framework. These groups offered feedback which was integrated into the final planning framework.

PHASE III

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK ON FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

(Summer 2013—Fall 2013)

The complete planning framework and recommendations were presented to stakeholders. These recommendations focused on creating a new center of activity at Broadway Junction as well as promoting job growth in the industrial area. Community members were receptive to this vision for how land use and streetscape changes in these areas of East New York could facilitate opportunities for new economic opportunities and improved access to transit.





EAST NEW YORK

IN CONTEXT



EAST NEW YORK

STUDY AREA CONTEXT

The Sustainable Communities: East New York study area is an approximately one-square mile area in eastern Brooklyn that includes portions of the East New York, Cypress Hills, Ocean Hill and Brownsville neighborhoods of Community Districts 5 and 16. The study area extends two miles east to west and is roughly bounded by Fulton Street to the north, Conduit Avenue to the east, Pitkin Avenue to the south and Powell Street, Mother Gaston Boulevard and Eastern Parkway Extension to the west. It is bordered by Highland Park to the north, the neighborhood of City Line to the east, the 'core' of East New York to the south, Brownsville and Ocean

Hill to the west and Bushwick to the northwest.

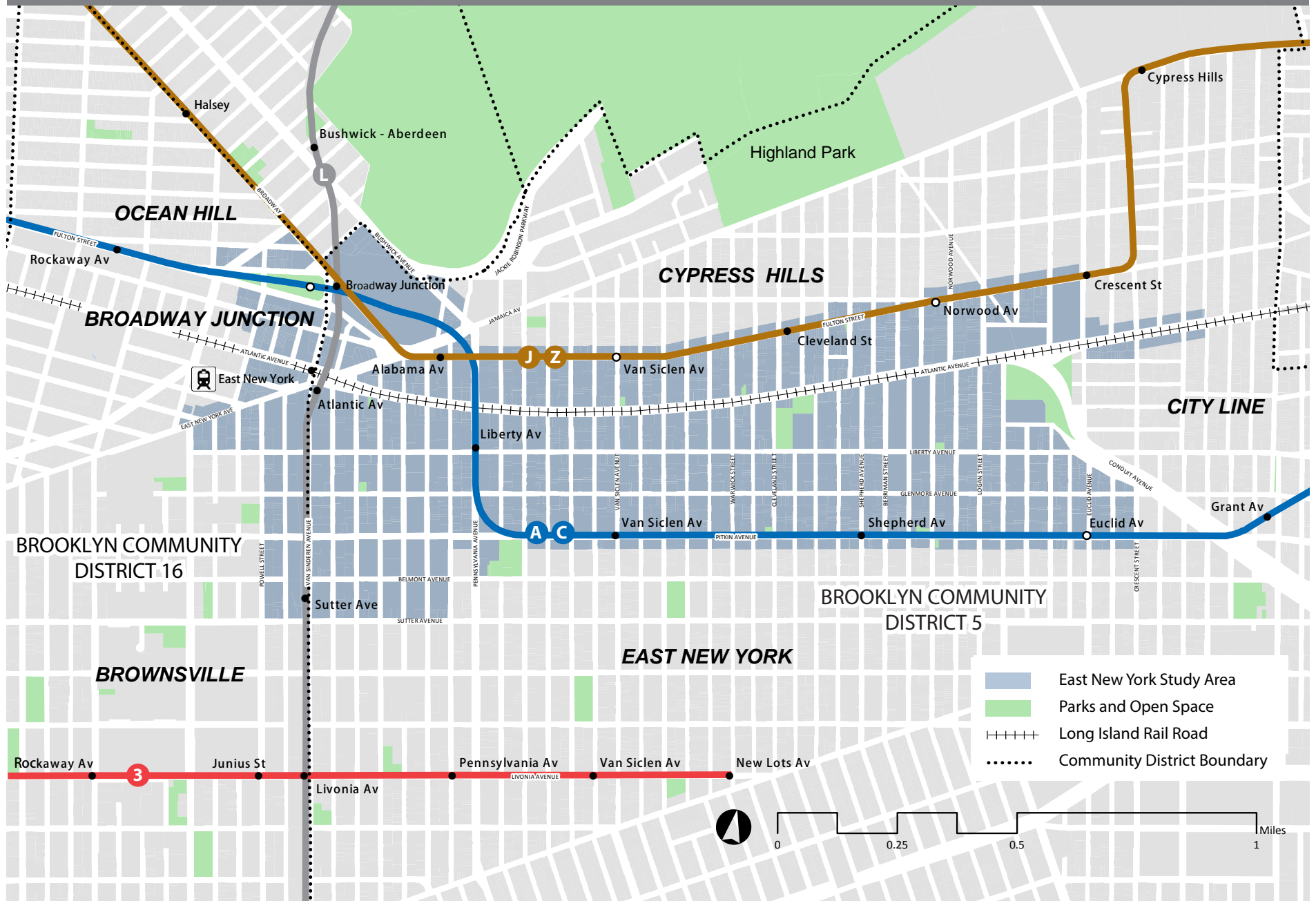
This area's rich transit access, numerous vacant and underutilized land parcels and strong community organizations already active in revitalizing the area present a unique opportunity to plan for community-based, sustainable and transit-oriented development. The study area is served by the Long Island Railroad (LIRR), a regional rail line providing service between Downtown Brooklyn and Long Island, five subway services and numerous bus lines, all of which traverse the area and converge in its western corner around Broadway

Junction. Many large parcels of land remain underbuilt or undeveloped due to changes in land use and despite economic improvement in the area. The area features active community-based organizations, such as the Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation (CHLDC), Arts East New York and the Local Development Corporation of East New York, which are already working to strengthen and revitalize this community. Furthermore, the CHLDC's work to develop strategies for the reuse of several large strategic sites under a New York State Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) grant is an important complement to the goals of this study.



Above (photo):
A mural outside the Broadway Junction subway station.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: EAST NEW YORK - STUDY AREA



EAST NEW YORK PAST TO PRESENT

EARLY GROWTH

In 1670, the first European settlers arrived in the area, after the Dutch West India Company had bought the forested land from the Canarsie Indians and begun farming, calling their new home “New Lots” to distinguish it from the “Old Lots” (now known as Flatbush) further west. These farms remained through the 1800’s even as Manhattan and the adjacent City of Brooklyn rapidly urbanized.

In 1835, the Connecticut merchant Colonel John R. Pitkin bought a large portion of the farmland, laid out a township called East New York and established a shoe factory at the intersection of Williams and Pitkin Avenues. A year later, the Long Island Rail Road opened its first section running along Atlantic Avenue between the Brooklyn waterfront and Jamaica, Queens. Small factories, including food-related businesses processing agricultural products from Long Island, railroad yards and other related uses, as well as mid- and low-rise residential buildings with stores on the ground floors, were built alongside the railroad on Atlantic Avenue. The former Borden Dairy building and the former Chloe Food facility are remaining examples of buildings from this agricultural past. Small apartment buildings and homes were built on either sides of Atlantic Avenue in Cypress Hills to the north and in East New York to the south.

Meanwhile the industrial district originally established by Colonel Pitkin continued to thrive, offering employment for residents of the burgeoning neighborhoods around it. This industrial district remained vital throughout the early twentieth century, when East New York was known as Brooklyn’s “Little Pittsburgh” due to its high concentration of industrial uses including steel fabrication. The industrial area was served by a north-south freight and passenger rail line running at grade at Van Sinderen Avenue. Factories, lofts and warehouses developed around this line, mixed with new dense tenements. Known today as the Bay Ridge line, this rail line connected Sunnyside, Queens, with the Bay Ridge-Sunset Park industrial waterfront.

Cypress Hills and East New York grew further with the extension of elevated transit lines in the 1880’s and 1890’s that connected neighborhoods of Queens with Downtown Brooklyn and Manhattan. Residential construction followed the elevated lines and along Fulton Street and Pitkin Avenue retail corridors developed with stores on the ground floors of small apartment buildings to serve the emerging neighborhoods.

*Opposite Page (map):
Dense development is apparent in East New York
(highlighted), spurred by the presence of rail lines.
Source: U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Department of the Interior,
USGS Scanned Historical Quadrangle Standard, Version 1.0*

SURVEY MAP OF BROOKLYN - 1897



20TH CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

In the first half of the 20th century, significant public transportation infrastructure investments resulted in the relocation of two of the at-grade railroad lines and one of the elevated transit lines below ground. These large public construction projects, part of a citywide effort to improve conditions as well as safety within the city, removed significant sources of noise and impediments to light and air, and positioned Cypress Hills and East New York for further growth.

As part of this effort, the Bay Ridge line was relocated in 1914 from at-grade to a tunnel beneath Broadway Junction and Atlantic Avenue and an open, below-ground trench to the south. Another such effort was the Atlantic Avenue Improvement project, a public works project conducted under the auspices of Robert Moses between 1939 and 1942, which buried the Long Island Rail Road below Atlantic Avenue throughout most of Brooklyn. At the East New York Station, which coincides with the Bay Ridge line tunnel, the tracks of the LIRR rose from below Atlantic Avenue to come to grade, lifting the roadway of Atlantic Avenue on its roof above on a new ten-block-long viaduct. East New York Avenue, running diagonally, was relocated in a tunnel below Atlantic and Van Sinderen Avenues. While this project replaced the barrier of the at-grade LIRR tracks along Atlantic Avenue in the area with a vehicular thoroughfare, the new viaduct cut off the Broadway Junction area to the north from Ocean-Hill/Brownsville to the south.

.....The first European settlers arrive in “New Lots”.

The Long Island Rail Road opened its first section running along Atlantic Avenue between the Brooklyn waterfront and Jamaica, Queens.

.....Bay Ridge line is relocated from at-grade to a tunnel beneath Broadway Junction and Atlantic Avenue and an open, below-ground trench to the south.

1670 1835 1836 1880's and 1890's • 1914 1939 and 1942

The Connecticut merchant Colonel John R. Pitkin buys a large portion of farmland, lays out a township called East New York and establishes a shoe factory at the intersection of Williams and Pitkin Avenues.

The extension of elevated transit lines spurs continued residential and commercial growth.

The Atlantic Avenue Improvement Project buries the Long Island Rail Road below Atlantic Avenue throughout most of Brooklyn, including East New York.



*Opposite Page (photo):
Vacant lot after the demolition of small homes
in East New York in the early 1990's.*

*Left (photo):
Long Island Rail Road tracks running along Atlantic
Avenue in 1938, just before they were buried.
Image: © Brooklyn Public Library-Brooklyn Collection*

'A' subway line is extended under Fulton Street from Broadway Junction through East New York under Pennsylvania and Pitkin avenues through Queens; elevated train structure over Pitkin Avenue is dismantled.

East New York loses 80 percent of its manufacturing jobs between 1960 and 1980.

Nehemiah Housing Program develops affordable two-story row houses in East New York.

.....1950's 1960's 1970's 1979 1980's 1983 2006

Between 1960 and 1980 the population of East New York decreases by a third and its housing stock is reduced by nearly half.

Local Development Corporation of East New York (LDCENY) founded; East Brooklyn Industrial Park established shortly after.

Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation (CHLDC) is formed.

East New York Industrial Business Zone is established.



Finally, in the mid-1950's, the City of New York extended the Independent System 'A' subway line it was constructing under Fulton Street from Broadway Junction through East New York under Pennsylvania and Pitkin avenues to the Queens border and beyond and dismantled the elevated train structure over Pitkin Avenue.

POSTWAR DECLINE

In the 1960's and 1970's, the population of Cypress Hills and East New York declined significantly, accompanied by disinvestment and abandonment of property. This change mirrored that of other working class neighborhoods around the city, including the South Bronx, Harlem and Brownsville. Between 1960 and 1970, African-American and Hispanic residents replaced white residents in Cypress Hills and East New York as the majority. During this time mortgage lending practices

contributed to widespread deterioration in East New York; when homeowners were unable to keep up their mortgage payments, the federal government foreclosed on their properties and the owners were forced to move, leaving many homes vacant. Formerly occupied blocks quickly deteriorated as vacant homes burned and then were demolished for safety. This created patches of vacant land that affected the value of other nearby homes, causing deterioration to spread further. Soon, much of East New York between Liberty Avenue to the north and Linden Boulevard to the south was marked by blocks of vacant buildings and a steep decline in property values. As a result, by 1980 the population of East New York had decreased by a third since 1960 (from 66,000 to 40,000 residents in the study area) and its housing stock was reduced by nearly half.

The physical decline of East New York and Cypress Hills was mirrored in the industrial area to the south of Broadway Junction as manufacturing moved out of New York City due to various factors, including the easier highway access available elsewhere, the need for larger building lots, and safety and security concerns. While New York City lost about half of its more than one million manufacturing jobs between 1950 and the mid 1970's, East New York lost 80 percent of its manufacturing jobs between 1960 and 1980. In East New York, the City identified the area south of Broadway Junction, between Junius Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, and north of Sutter Avenue as a potential area for industrial retention and expansion. Plans were drawn up for an "industrial park" in the area, and an urban renewal plan was created authorizing

acquisition of land by the City through eminent domain for the purpose of consolidation and assemblage in order to attract large industrial users. The East New York I Urban Renewal Plan was adopted in 1985 and the East Brooklyn Industrial Park was created.

RECOVERY

Beginning in the 1980's renewed public investment and private, grass-roots initiatives helped East New

*Below (photo):
Apartment building on Glenmore Avenue at Jerome
Street had fallen into disrepair in the early 1990's.*

*Opposite Page (photo):
Apartment building after rehabilitation in the late 1990's.*



York and Cypress Hills to stem their decline and begin a recovery that continues to this day. With the stabilization of the City's finances after the fiscal crisis of the late 1970's, the administration of Mayor Ed Koch embarked on an ambitious new City-sponsored housing program that set as its goal the rehabilitation of every vacant City-owned residential building. This program, led by the City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), and implemented by both HPD and local, not-for-profit organizations working directly in the affected communities, resulted in the return of empty building shells to permanent affordable housing

managed by HPD and non-profits. In East New York and Cypress Hills, HPD and the Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation (CHLDC), formed in 1983 to strengthen Cypress Hills and its Fulton Street retail strip, rehabilitated all vacant buildings within these neighborhoods. The program resulted in the removal of physical blight from many blocks, stabilization of the many still intact existing residential blocks and the beginning of the return of residents to the area.

For the large swaths of vacant land created by the demolition of homes earlier in the 1970's and

1980's, the City initiated the Nehemiah Housing Program which developed small, two-story row houses. By providing affordable homeownership opportunities in modestly sized buildings, the program sought to reverse the tide of disinvestment and strengthen the fabric of the community. The program, initiated at the urging of the East Brooklyn Congregations, a faith-based organization founded in neighboring Brownsville, initiated a new phase of growth for the neighborhood. Following the success of the Nehemiah program, the City continued its investment in the neighborhood with new housing under the Partnership Housing program, as well as other programs, through a variety of non-profit sponsors. As a result, the population began to grow again after decades of decline.

The East New York Industrial Park, created out of a formerly mixed residential and industrial area, also experienced growth due to targeted investment and marketing by the NYC Economic Development Corporation and the stewardship of the Local Development Corporation of East New York. New uses included a business incubator at Pitkin Avenue and Junius Street, warehouses and numerous large school bus parking lots. In 2006, the City established Industrial Business Zones in industrially-oriented areas across New York City where expanded business services are available for industrial and manufacturing businesses, and replaced the East Brooklyn Industrial Park with this designation. Today, employment in the industrial area is rising – though the most significant increases have occurred in social services, with transportation-related employment as the only area of substantial industrial growth.



DEMOGRAPHICS

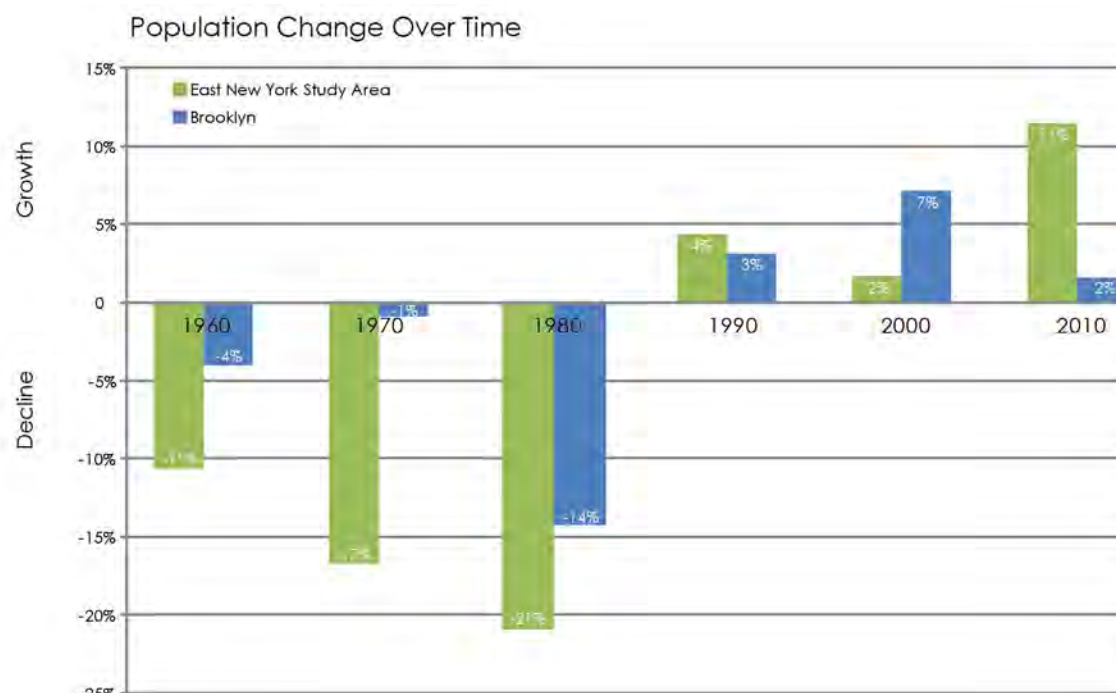
The population of the study area, currently at around 46,000 residents and growing at a faster rate than the rest of Brooklyn, has made a remarkable comeback since the 1990's but it is still significantly below the historic high of 66,000 reached in the 1950's. Most residents are either African American (51 percent) or Hispanic (40 percent). The area's African-American population has increased by 20 percent over the past 10 years, in contrast to Brooklyn and New York City as a whole, which have seen a loss in African-American residents. East New York residents are younger than the borough and city-wide average; just over 36 percent are under age 20, compared with 26 percent of Brooklyn residents.

East New York study area residents have lower incomes than Brooklynites overall: nearly half of all households make less than \$25,000 per year as compared with 31 percent of households across Brooklyn; 16 percent of households in the study area make more than \$75,000 per year, while 29 percent of households fall into this higher income range in Brooklyn.

Because of the comparatively low incomes, housing cost is a major concern for area residents, most of whom are renters (82 percent of households). According to data from the American Community Survey, 63 percent of renter households in East New York spend more than 30 percent of their monthly income on rent, as compared to 54 percent of renter households throughout Brooklyn. Spending



Above (photo): Students outside the Cypress Hills Community School.



more than 30 percent of income on housing is the threshold at which housing costs are considered to be a burden, reducing income available for other essential expenses such as food, health care, education and savings.

The proportion of unregulated rental housing units in East New York (45 percent) is slightly higher than across Brooklyn (41 percent) and the city (39 percent). Thus, while rental housing in East New York, regardless of restrictions on rental price, is currently more accessible to low- or moderate-income households than similar housing across the city, unregulated units are less likely to be protected from rising prices in the housing market.

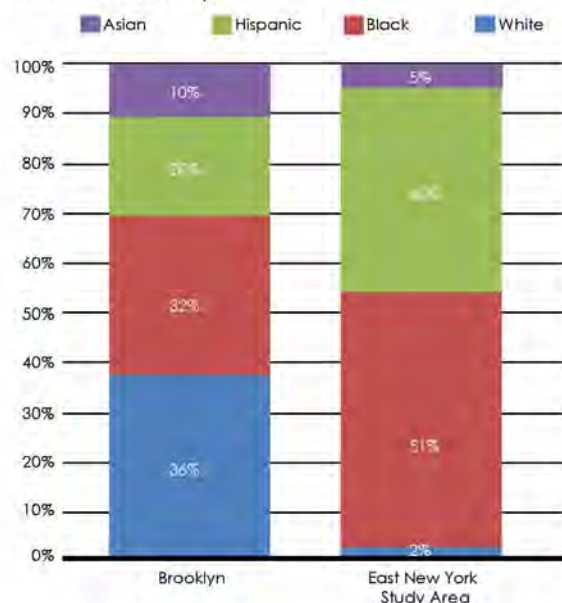
Basic educational attainment in the study area

is on par with Brooklyn as a whole, with about three quarters of residents 25-years or older having received a high school diploma. However, a substantial disparity exists with respect to higher education. Only 11 percent of East New York residents over 25 hold a college degree as opposed to nearly 30 percent of all Brooklyn residents. Although, according to the New York State Department of Labor, employment for East New York residents increased between 2000 to 2010, unemployment persists as a major issue, with just under half of the population over 16 employed as compared to 56 percent of the same population in all of Brooklyn. Consistent with lower levels of post-secondary education, employed East New York residents are more likely to be engaged in the service industries, manufacturing, transportation or

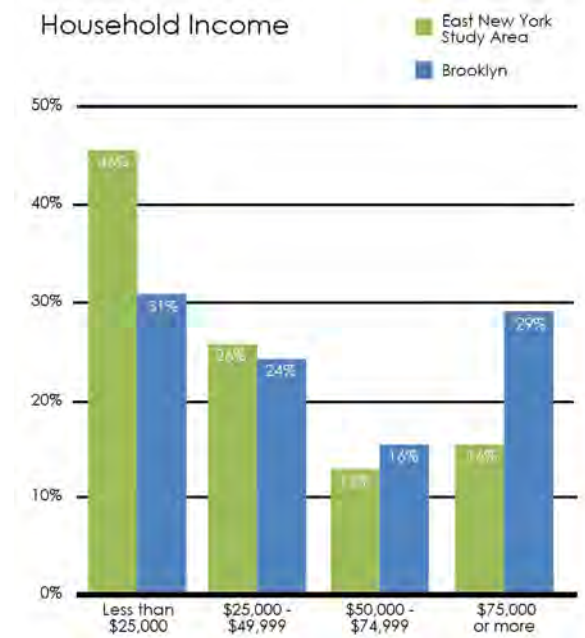
warehousing sectors, and less likely to be employed in finance, insurance, real estate, or professional services, than their counterparts across the borough.

Like the rest of the city, East New York has seen a dramatic decrease in crime in recent decades. While crime rates in New York City's 75th Police Precinct, which encompasses East New York, are still higher than in other parts of the city, most crime categories have seen a significant drop since the 1990's. For example, murder rates decreased by nearly 50 percent between 2001-2012. Despite the progress the neighborhood has made, East New York still has a higher rate of violent crime than most other areas of Brooklyn, which diminishes the quality of life for area residents.

Racial makeup



Household Income



Data Notes

For the purposes of this analysis, data for the following census tracts were examined: 365.02, 367, 908, 1134, 1144, 1150, 1152, 1156, 1166, 1168, 1170, 1178, 1192, 1194, 1196, and 1198.

Data Source for Population Change over Time:
Minnesota Population Center. National Historical
Geographic Information System: Version 2.0.
Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota 2011.

Data Source for Racial Makeup:
U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census Public Law 94-171 Files

Data Source for Household Income:
American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2006-10

Compiled by Population Division, NYC
Department of City Planning

TRANSPORTATION

One of East New York's principal assets is transportation access. The area around Broadway Junction in the northwest corner of the study area serves as a major transit hub for regional rail, subway and bus lines, and provides quick access to Downtown Brooklyn, Jamaica, Lower Manhattan, Long Island and other employment and commercial centers in the region. The Long Island Rail Road has a station at Broadway Junction. Multiple subway and bus lines also converge here and then run east-west and north-south to serve the study area. The road network includes major thoroughfares, such as Atlantic and Pennsylvania avenues, that connect the area to the regional highway and truck network and provide access to JFK airport and other destinations across the City and region.





Anticipated Future LIRR Service in East New York

When the East Side Access project (the Long Island Rail Road connection to Grand Central Terminal), is completed the MTA will shift service on the Atlantic Terminal Branch in Brooklyn to a Cross-Borough shuttle service between Atlantic Terminal and Jamaica Station. The shuttle would run every 7-8 minutes during peak travel periods and every 15 minutes during non-peak hours, effectively doubling the frequency of service at the East New York Station. At Jamaica riders would be able to connect to all but one line of the Long Island Rail Road lines, as well as to the Airtrain to JFK Airport.

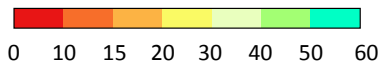


Left (photo):
Long Island Rail Road East New York Station.

BROADWAY JUNCTION - TRAVEL TIME BY SUBWAY

-  New York City Subway
-  Long Island Rail Road
-  Broadway Junction subway station
-  East New York LIRR station

Travel time (in minutes) by subway:



Travel times by subway and rail to major destinations in New York City:

Downtown Brooklyn

20 - 30 mins
10 mins (LIRR)

Lower Manhattan

20 - 30 mins

Midtown

30 - 40 mins

Long Island City

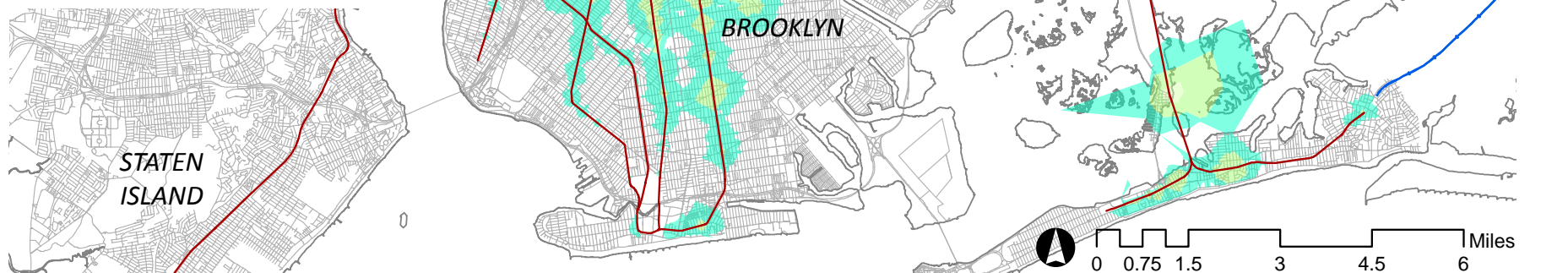
30 - 40 mins

Jamaica

30 - 40 mins
8 mins (LIRR)

JFK Int'l Airport

30 - 40 mins



TRANSIT

The Broadway Junction area is a key regional transit node comparable to other major hubs outside Manhattan including Atlantic Terminal or Jamaica Center. The area is served by five subway services (the A, C, L, J and Z lines) and multiple bus lines. From here it is only a 25 to 30 minute train ride to Lower Manhattan via subway. The East New York station of the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR), one of three LIRR stations in Brooklyn, is located at the convergence of Atlantic and East New York avenues in the Broadway Junction area. This regional rail service provides fast access to Atlantic Terminal in Downtown Brooklyn, to Jamaica Center in Queens, as well as destinations on Long Island. Mineola, Nassau County's government center, can be reached in less than 30 minutes via the LIRR.

The A/C runs below ground along Pennsylvania and Pitkin avenues with local stops at Liberty Avenue, Van Siclen Avenue, and Shepherd Avenue stations and an express stop at the Euclid Avenue station (which is also the terminus of the C train). The A/C provides a connection to Queens and JFK in the east and Downtown Brooklyn and

Manhattan to the north and west. The J/Z runs on an elevated track along Fulton Street, with stations at Alabama Avenue, Van Siclen Avenue, Cleveland Street, Norwood Avenue and Crescent Street. This line connects to Jamaica, Queens to the east and lower Manhattan to the west. Additionally, the L train runs through the industrial area along Van Sinderen Avenue, with stops at Atlantic Avenue and Sutter Avenue, connecting to Canarsie to the south and Bushwick and Manhattan to the north. Of all the stations in the study area, only the Euclid Avenue A/C station is accessible for transit riders with limited mobility.

Ten bus lines provide service to points within the study area. Atlantic Avenue is served by the Q24 bus running from Jamaica, Queens to Bushwick, Brooklyn. The B83 and B20 bus lines run along Pennsylvania Avenue. Each of these lines pass through Broadway Junction, which is also served by the Q56, B25 and B12 bus lines. The Q7, Q8 and B13 all connect to the Euclid Avenue station on Pitkin Avenue. The B14 runs along the southern border of the industrial area on Sutter Avenue.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: EAST NEW YORK - TRANSPORTATION NETWORK



STREET NETWORK

Several major Brooklyn streets intersect in this area, including Atlantic Avenue, Fulton Street, Broadway, and the Jackie Robinson Parkway, making East New York a gateway to Jamaica, JFK International Airport and Long Island for vehicular traffic.

Within most of the study area, Atlantic Avenue has a width of 120 feet and includes six moving lanes and two curbside lanes. A paved median contains vents for the LIRR tunnel below. Atlantic Avenue connects the neighborhood to downtown Brooklyn to the west, and Jamaica, Queens, Long Island, and, via Conduit Avenue, JFK Airport to the east. The avenue is a designated through truck route, and is heavily traveled by trucks moving goods

through the borough. Atlantic Avenue bisects the neighborhood from east to west, creating a divide between Cypress Hills to the north and East New York to the south with its fast-moving traffic and few safe crossings. East of Warwick Street, the street grids to the north and south of Atlantic Avenue do not align, and marked pedestrian crossings traversing the entire width of Atlantic Avenue are few and far between. This leads pedestrians to cross the busy street at unmarked locations, which has contributed to high rates of injuries and fatalities on the avenue.

The street network around Broadway Junction has been heavily impacted by the rail network. Atlantic Avenue runs above grade on a viaduct for ten blocks from Eastern Parkway Extension to Georgia Avenue while East New York Avenue is routed



*Left (photo)
Atlantic Avenue is a major thoroughfare which
is part of the city's truck network.*

through an underpass from Pacific and Junius Streets to Williams Avenue and Fulton Street. These configurations have created a disjointed landscape, as many areas are cut off by roadways, and has made the area extremely difficult for pedestrians to navigate.

Pennsylvania Avenue is the only major north-south connection in this area, connecting to the Jackie Robinson Parkway to the north and Linden Boulevard and the Belt Parkway to the south. Pennsylvania Avenue is an 85 foot-wide, busy, two-directional thoroughfare and a designated local truck route. Other north-south corridors are all single-directional, narrow streets. Fulton Street is a 70-foot-wide street carrying single-directional eastbound traffic through the study area while Pitkin Avenue is an 80-foot-wide two-way street.

BIKE NETWORK

East New York is served by several bike routes. The bike path along Liberty Avenue connects to the Bergen and Dean street bike paths which run to Downtown Brooklyn, and a bike route along East New York Avenue connects to the Eastern Parkway greenway which ends at Prospect Park. North-south bike lanes along Miller Avenue and Vermont Street connect to Highland park. These routes are part of the Brooklyn-Queens greenway which extends 40 miles throughout the two boroughs. The bicycle network in East New York and Brownsville has recently been expanded with new lanes along Pitkin Avenue, Mother Gaston Boulevard and New Lots Avenue, providing a stronger intra-neighborhood system and more connections to the regional bike network.



*Right (photo):
Biker on Liberty Avenue in East New York.*

SUBAREAS

EAST NEW YORK – CYPRESS HILLS



The East New York-Cypress Hills subarea is located east of Pennsylvania Avenue between Fulton Street to the north, Pitkin Avenue to the south and Conduit Avenue to the east. This area is characterized by the three mixed-use commercial corridors of Atlantic Avenue, Fulton Street, and Pitkin Avenue running east-west as well as a residential “core” comprised of low-scale rowhouses and semi-detached homes between these corridors. The neighborhood of Cypress Hills lies to the north of Atlantic Avenue and is characterized by a slightly lower scale of two-three story rowhouses than the neighborhood of East New York found to the south of Atlantic Avenue.

INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS AREA



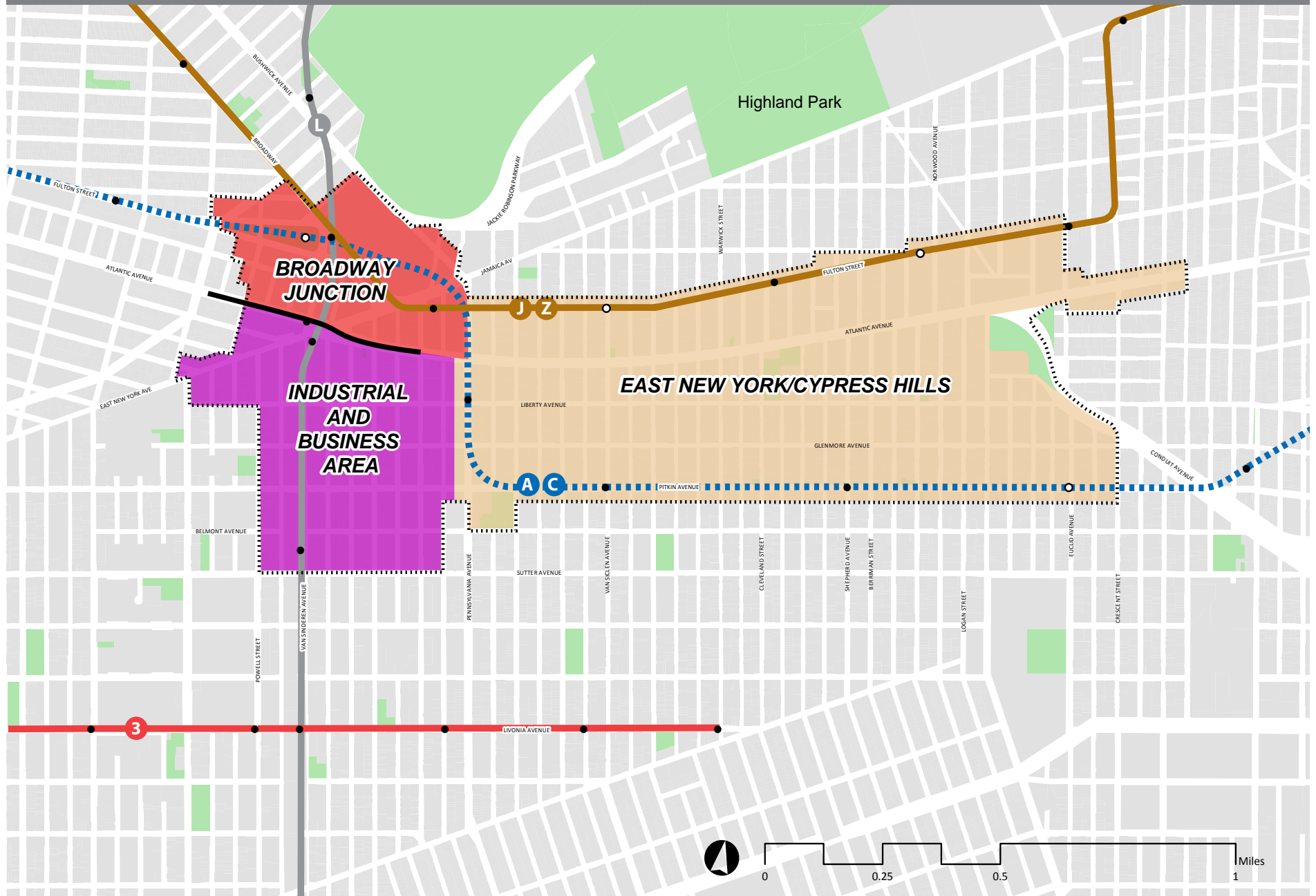
The Industrial and Business subarea roughly conforms to the boundaries of the East New York Industrial Business Zone and is defined by the prevalence of industrial and semi-industrial businesses. The area is roughly bounded by the axes of East New York and Atlantic Avenues to the north, Sutter Avenue to the south, Powell Street to the west and Sheffield Avenue to the east. Semi-industrial uses such as warehouses and vehicle storage make up the majority of current land use.

BROADWAY JUNCTION



The Broadway Junction subarea is a major transit hub surrounded by low-density semi-industrial, commercial, and residential uses. This subarea is roughly bounded by Atlantic and East New York avenues to the south, Pennsylvania Avenue to the east, Bushwick Avenue to the north, and Mother Gaston Boulevard and Eastern Parkway Extension to the west. Five subway lines and regional rail converge here, providing significant transit access for the surrounding community. At the same time, this transportation infrastructure, much of which is elevated, has contributed to the high number of vacant and underutilized sites. While most uses in the area are semi-industrial, some residential uses can be found in the western portion of the subarea.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: EAST NEW YORK - SUBAREAS



LAND USE & ZONING

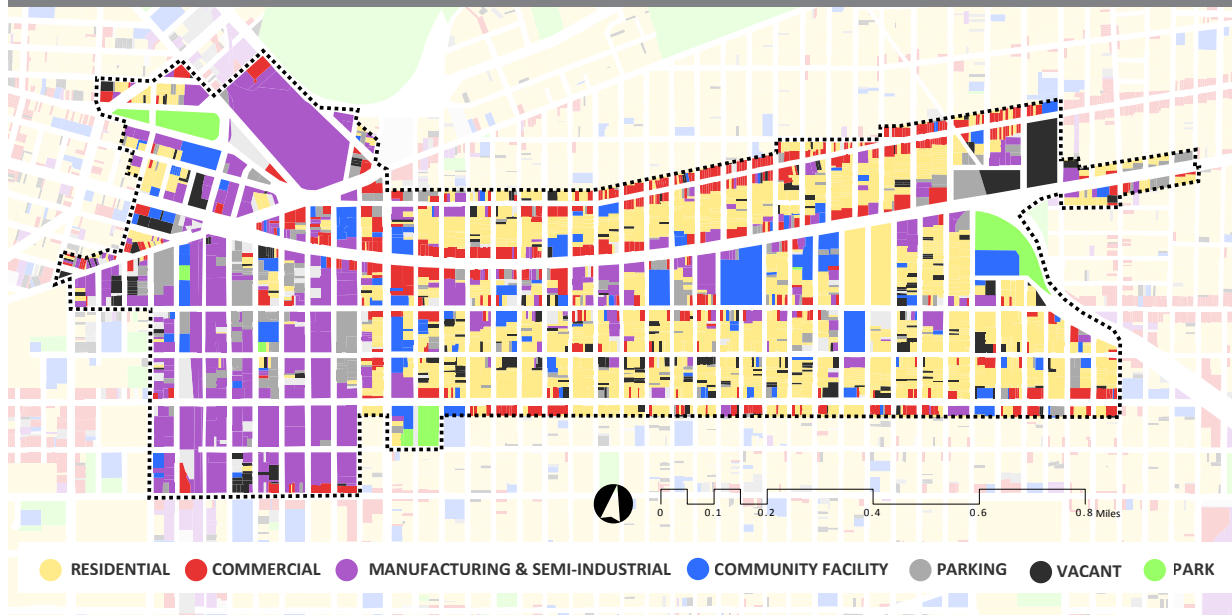
Land use describes the mix of residential, commercial, industrial and community facility uses found in a neighborhood as well as the density of development. The East New York study area contains all of these uses, as well as significant transportation infrastructure and vacant and underutilized land. Most of the study area, particularly east of Pennsylvania Avenue, is residential, characterized by two to three story rowhouses and small walk-up apartment buildings. Commercial corridors include Fulton Street, Atlantic Avenue, Pitkin Avenue, Pennsylvania Avenue and parts of Liberty Avenue. Along most of Fulton Street and Pitkin Avenue, these commercial uses

tend to be local retail and services such as delis, laundromats, and salons, while Atlantic Avenue as well as parts of Liberty Avenue and Fulton Street also contain semi-industrial uses such as storage facilities and auto repair shops. Industrial and semi-industrial uses are predominant in the industrial area south of Atlantic Avenue and west of Pennsylvania Avenue as well as around Broadway Junction. These areas also contain significant amounts of vacant or underutilized land.

Land use is influenced by zoning regulations, which control the types of new uses that are permitted, their density, and the size of new buildings. Overall, the

zoning in the study area restricts new development to a relatively low density, which is lower than the historic density of much of the neighborhood, and restricts the amounts of housing, including affordable housing, that can be built. Current zoning designations also prohibit or discourage a mix of uses and encourage auto-oriented commercial uses along major streets. In most parts of East New York the zoning has not changed since the adoption of the Zoning Resolution in 1961. This means that zoning districts do not necessarily reflect current uses or needs of the community.

STUDY AREA CURRENT LAND USE



Zoning

Zoning is a set of regulations established by the City which control the permitted uses, density and building form within an area. Zoning regulates what a property within an area can be used for – for example housing, stores or industry – how high a building can be built, and how much floor area it can contain. Zoning can encourage or restrict development, and is an important tool for guiding the future physical development of a neighborhood. Use is regulated through three primary types of zoning district in New York City: residential, commercial and manufacturing districts.

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

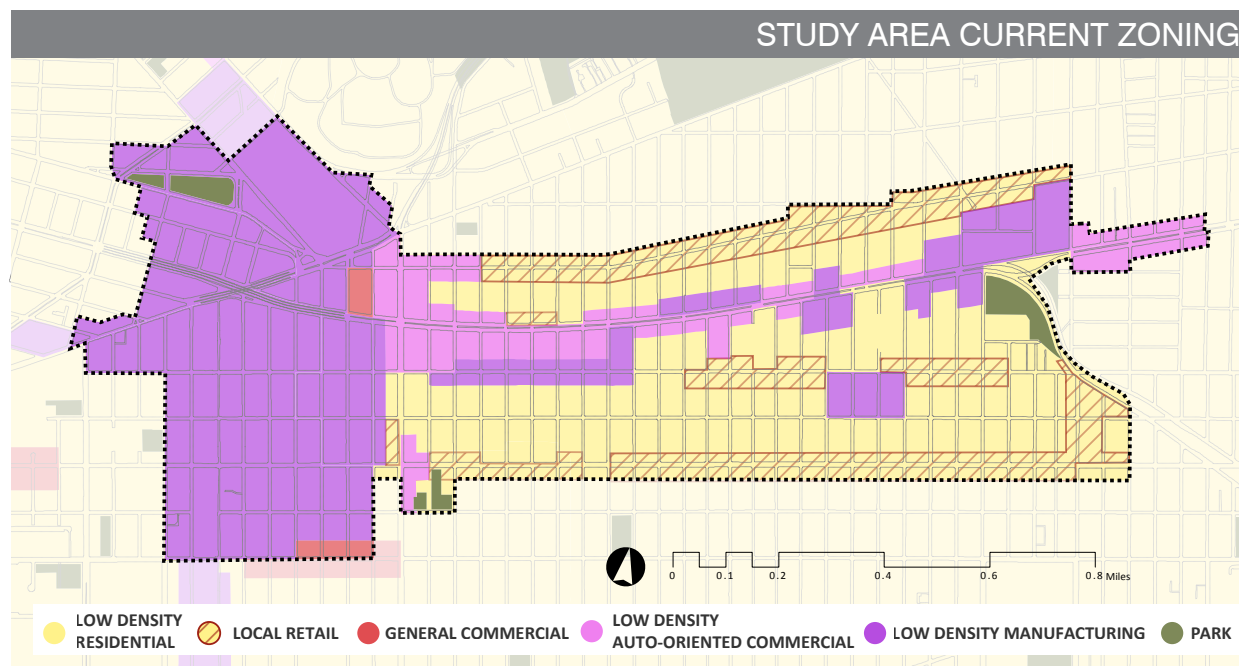
Residential districts generally allow different types of housing as well as community facility uses, such as schools, houses of worship, or health care facilities. The most common residential zoning district found in the study area, covering much of the area east of Pennsylvania Avenue, is R5. This is a relatively low-density district that requires front, side and rear yards as well as parking for most units, which may be provided in the front yard. This district limits building height to 40 feet and building footprint to 55 percent of the lot, and generally produces rowhouses or small apartment buildings. A small portion of the study area along Pitkin Avenue is part of a medium-density residential district (R6).

MANUFACTURING DISTRICTS

A large portion of the study area, including the Industrial and Business subarea, Broadway Junction and a number of blocks along Atlantic Avenue, are located in manufacturing districts, which allow a range of industrial uses, some commercial uses, and certain community facilities, but do not allow new residential uses. M1 manufacturing districts, which are the most common in the study area, allow for primarily light industrial uses that are generally enclosed. A small portion of the industrial area is zoned as an M3 district. This district allows a wider range of industrial uses, including open uses such as scrap yards and contractors yards, and a narrower set of commercial uses.

COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

The most common commercial zoning district in the study area is C8, which is found along large portions of Atlantic Avenue, as well as smaller portions of Fulton Street, Pitkin Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue. C8-1 and C8-2 are low-density districts that allow a range of commercial and community facility uses, including auto-oriented uses such as auto repair shops, gas stations and car washes, and semi-industrial uses such as warehousing and vehicle storage. Unlike most commercial districts, C8 districts do not permit new housing. This district requires substantial amounts of parking. A typical development in this district is a 1-2 story building surrounded by a large parking lot.



C1 and C2 commercial overlay districts, which are mapped within residential districts, allow for local commercial uses in combination with residential uses. They allow a range of local retail uses, including grocery stores, delis, salons, laundromats, restaurants and small scale retail at the ground floor of mixed use buildings. In the study area, these overlays are typically mapped over R5 residential districts, where limitations on building height and density limit the ability to provide housing with ground-floor retail.



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EAST NEW YORK AND CYPRESS HILLS

SUBAREA

III



EAST NEW YORK AND CYPRESS HILLS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The mixed-use residential subarea east of Pennsylvania Avenue comprises the majority of the study area and is the residential heart of East New York. This subarea is defined by a series of east-west corridors, with Fulton Street and Pitkin Avenue forming the northern and southern border of the study area, respectively, and Atlantic Avenue dividing the area into northern and

southern sections. Pennsylvania Avenue, the only major north-south street in the area, provides the western border. Between these major corridors are residential blocks and a few minor corridors. Most of this subarea, with the notable exception of Atlantic Avenue and segments of a few other corridors, falls into a low-density residential zoning district (R5).

Atlantic Avenue

Atlantic Avenue is the largest corridor running through the area and is one of the main thoroughfares in Brooklyn. Common land uses along the avenue include low-scale semi-industrial and auto-related uses, such as gas stations, car washes, auto repair shops, storage facilities, and fast food restaurants. Most of Atlantic Avenue is currently zoned for low-density light manufacturing (M1-1) and auto-oriented commercial uses (C8-2). New residential uses are not permitted in either of these zoning districts. The small pockets of manufacturing zoning largely conform to the presence of loft-style buildings previously used for industrial purposes. Most loft buildings have been converted to warehouses, storage facilities or are vacant. Recent construction in the manufacturing district has included fast food establishments or community facilities such as schools, suggesting low demand for industrial land uses.



*Left (photo):
Atlantic Avenue is a 120-foot wide thoroughfare in East New York.*

EAST NEW YORK - CYPRESS HILLS SUBAREA - AERIAL VIEW



Orthophoto Base Map Copyrighted by the New York City Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications. All rights reserved.

Fulton Street

Fulton Street has retained most of its historic character as an active local retail corridor and is an important shopping and dining destination for the surrounding Cypress Hills community. The J/Z line runs above grade along this corridor, with stations at Van Siclen Avenue, Cleveland Street, Norwood Avenue, and Crescent Street. This provides transit access but also brings noise and blocks some amount of light along the corridor. Fulton Street is mainly lined with historic two- to three-story attached mixed-use buildings with ground floor retail and housing above. Most of the corridor falls into a low-density residential district (R5) with a commercial overlay to allow local retail uses. The three blocks immediately east of Pennsylvania Avenue are part of a low-density commercial district (C8-2) and contain gas stations, car sales lots and auto-repair shops. Residential uses at the ground floor can also be found intermittently along the corridor.

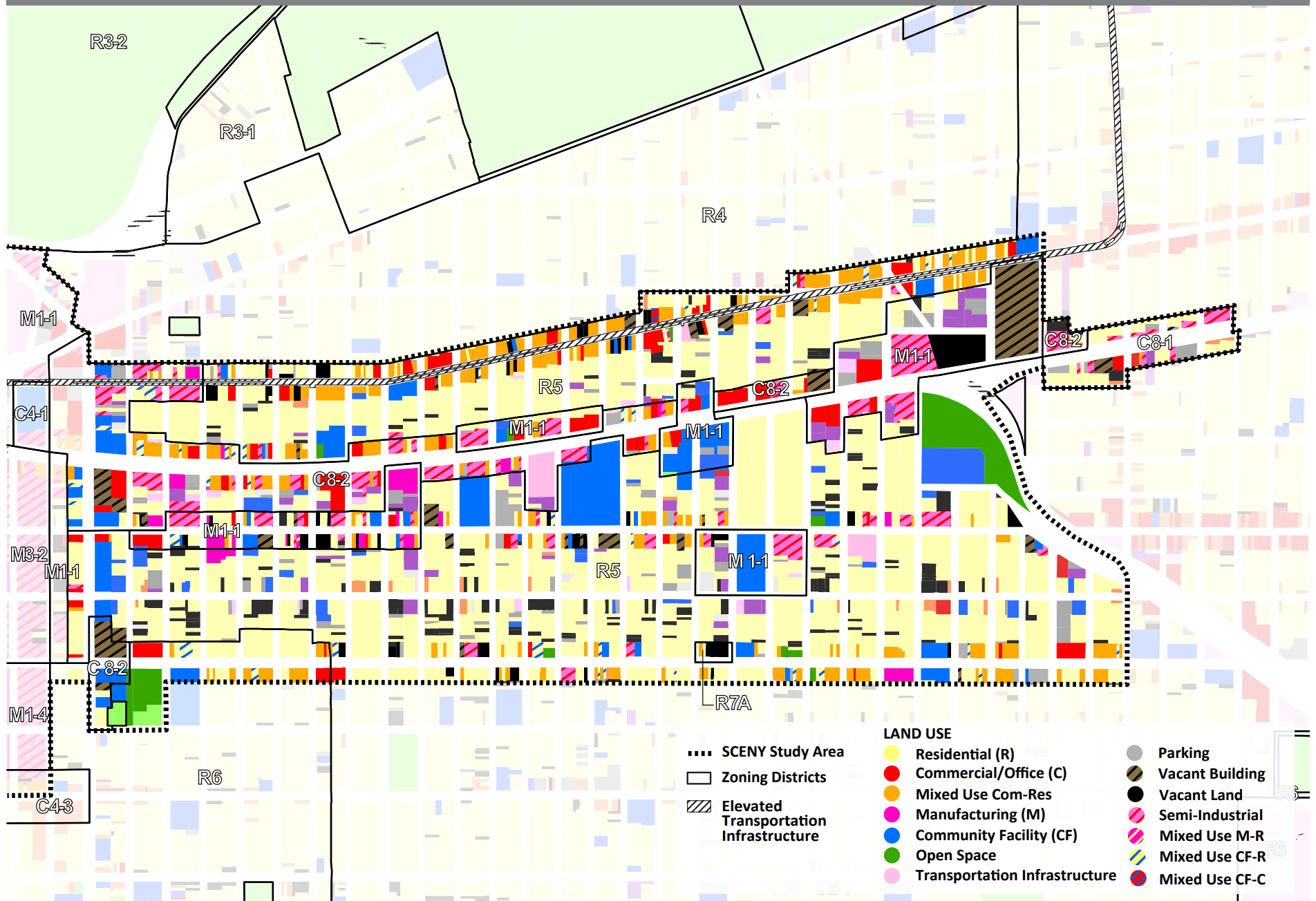
Pitkin Avenue

The A/C line runs below grade along Pitkin Avenue with stations at Van Siclen Avenue, Shepherd Avenue, and Euclid Avenue, an express stop and the terminus of the C train. The corridor is generally characterized by two- to three-story mixed-use buildings with neighborhood retail at the ground floor and residential units above. While Pitkin Avenue was once a thriving commercial strip, today much of the corridor is residential. Ground-floor residential uses are found in over 40 percent of buildings as many former retail spaces have been converted to residential units. New construction is mostly



Top (photo): Fulton Street at Pine Street
Bottom (photo): Pitkin Avenue at Van Siclen Avenue

EAST NEW YORK - CYPRESS HILLS SUBAREA - CURRENT LAND USE AND ZONING



residential and often sets back from the street line to allow for off-street parking or faces side-streets with building sides facing onto Pitkin Avenue. Commercial uses include one of the area's few full-service supermarkets at Vermont Street, as well as delis, laundromats, salons and other small retail establishments. Most of the corridor falls into a low-density residential district (R5) with a commercial overlay to allow local retail uses. Approximately five blocks immediately east of Pennsylvania Avenue fall into a slightly higher density residential district (R6). Fiorentino Plaza, a medium-density NYCHA development can be found on the northern side of Pitkin Avenue in this district.

Pennsylvania Avenue

Pennsylvania Avenue, which forms the western border of this subarea and is the only major north-south corridor in the area, is home to a mix of uses. Low- to mid-rise rowhouses and apartment buildings are mixed with institutional uses, such as the Community Board 5 offices, churches, a high school and a clinic. A low-density commercial district (C8) along with a residential district with a commercial overlay along this avenue allow for a variety of commercial, community facility and residential uses.

Central blocks

The residential blocks between the main commercial corridors of Fulton Street, Atlantic Avenue and Pitkin Avenue are characterized by a two- to three-story row houses and small three- to four-story apartment buildings built in the early 1900's, the heyday of the neighborhood's development. Most of this area is zoned for low-density residential uses (R5). Recent infill development includes low-scale rowhouses or semi-detached homes. New construction must conform to the low-density zoning regulations which require off-street parking and front yards, producing developments that do not match the form and character of existing buildings.

The Cypress Hills neighborhood lies to the north of Atlantic Avenue and is characterized by slightly lower scale rowhouses and detached homes than are typically found south of Atlantic Avenue in East New York. Liberty Avenue and Glenmore Avenue are minor corridors running east-west through the southern residential portion of the subarea. Commercial overlays on scattered portions of Liberty Avenue have allowed some local retail uses and a manufacturing district along portions of Liberty Avenue is home to auto repair shops and other semi-industrial uses. Glenmore Avenue is characterized by low-scale homes as well as a number of community gardens which have sprung up on vacant city-owned lots, once occupied by residential buildings.

Opposite Page (photo):

Local residents discuss the area's assets and priorities during the visioning event held in March 2012.

Left (photo):

Residential homes in the central blocks of East New York.



WHAT WE HEARD

In the outreach process, residents of East New York and Cypress Hills expressed appreciation for the diversity of their community and for assets such as local schools, parks and access to transit. Many residents have lived in the neighborhood for decades and have friends, family, and businesses rooted in East New York. While many find the neighborhood an affordable place to live, residents are also concerned about the increasing cost of housing and lack of housing choices.

Residents also shared that they often do not feel safe walking in the neighborhood, particularly crossing Atlantic Avenue, due to a lack of pedestrian amenities, and crime. Community members reported that they often have to shop outside the neighborhood for basic needs like groceries and household goods because of the lack of retail variety.

“People like to shop on Fulton Street where there are locally owned stores”

“There are not a lot of places to go or walk to, like shops or community centers”

“Atlantic Avenue is too busy and unsafe to cross”

“We want more developments with storefronts and outdoor seating on Atlantic Avenue”

“Too many vacant lots and buildings are an eyesore for the community”

“The area is safer than it has ever been”

“More diverse housing options are needed so young people can move back to the neighborhood when they become successful”



CHALLENGES

Lack of diverse housing choices

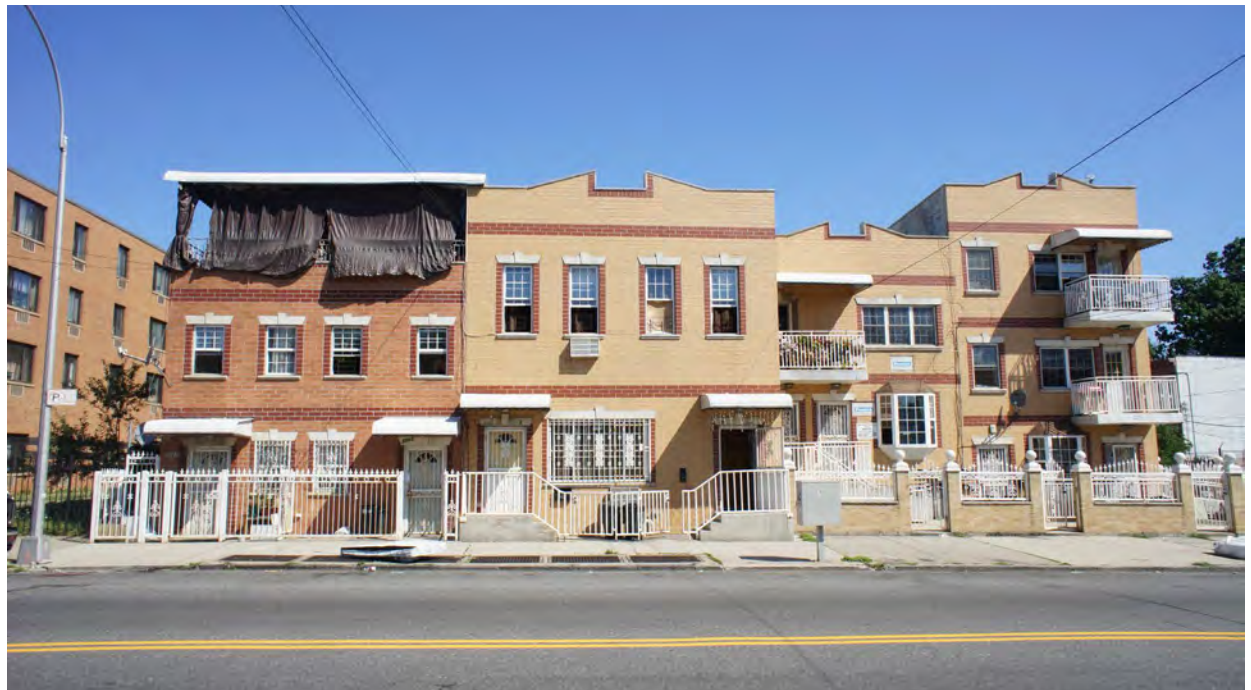
East New York community members identified a strong need for additional housing, including affordable housing, in their neighborhood. The area has been attracting new residents in recent decades, drawn by housing which can be found at a comparatively lower cost than elsewhere in Brooklyn. While rents may be more affordable than in the rest of the City, households in the area are heavily burdened by housing costs, with many spending more than 30 percent of their income on rent. Residents would like to see more options for mixed-income housing serving the needs of diverse populations such as seniors and young people. With East New York's population growing, for the neighborhood to remain affordable for households at various income levels, steps must be taken to increase the housing supply and create and preserve affordable housing.

Zoning limits opportunities for new housing and a mix of uses

Current zoning regulations limit new development to low densities despite the excellent transit access found throughout the area, which could support a higher density of development. This limits the production of housing, including affordable housing, substantial quantities of which are best achieved at higher densities. The lack of new housing has been a factor preventing the area's population from returning to historical levels.

The zoning regulations in much of the area require front yards, restrict the total building height to 40 feet, and require parking to be provided on-site. This restricts the overall size of a potential building, and the total number of residential units that can be built. These regulations have also encouraged development out-of-character with historic styles. Setbacks for front yards or parking are not in context with historic building patterns, and there are few limits on curb cuts in front of homes. This creates a fragmented streetwall with numerous curb cuts along residential streets, inhibiting walkability.

Zoning also prohibits the construction of new housing in certain areas of East New York, most notably along Atlantic Avenue, a major corridor with numerous parcels that could be developed with a mix of uses including housing. This limits the overall capacity for housing and discourages mixed-use developments. The lack of residential uses serves to further reduce the amount of pedestrian activity along Atlantic Avenue.



Limited Retail

Access to local services and shopping is lacking in East New York. Residents would like to see a greater variety of retail services in the neighborhood, particularly stores selling healthy, affordable food. While the commercial corridors of Fulton Street, Pitkin and Atlantic Avenues are within walking distance to residential areas, many East New York residents say they currently shop outside the neighborhood because stores in the area do not provide the variety and quality of goods they would like to fill their household needs. The typical retail mix is fairly limited to delis, fast food restaurants and salons. Residents with access to a vehicle are able to shop at nearby retail destinations with a greater

*Opposite Page (photo):
New low-density residential development along Pitkin Avenue.*

*Below (photo):
Inactive ground floor uses and vacant storefronts
along the Fulton Street corridor.*

variety of goods at competitive prices. The number of retail establishments in the neighborhood has not returned to its historical level when the population was higher. On Fulton Street where the surrounding residential population has been stable, the retail corridor is active whereas on Pitkin Avenue, where surrounding neighborhoods saw a dramatic decline in the residential population retail establishments have been shuttered.

Inactive ground floor uses

On many historic retail corridors, housing on the ground floor disrupts retail continuity. For example, on Pitkin Avenue many former storefronts have been converted to residential use after experiencing declining commercial demand. The conversion of ground floor retail spaces to residential uses, as well as the construction of new residential developments on both Pitkin Avenue and Fulton Street has created a disjointed retail corridor and limited street activity. On Liberty Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue commercial overlays are discontinuous, disrupting retail continuity. On Atlantic Avenue, the form of commercial development that is encouraged by current zoning – low-scale development set back from the street by parking lots – leads to underutilization and diminishes the quality of the street environment by creating an auto-oriented streetscape with fragmented streetwall and numerous curb cuts. This makes the street uninviting to pedestrians. Additionally, a lack of activity at the street level, especially at night, makes walking feel unsafe.



Poor streetscape conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists

The pedestrian infrastructure found in the area does not provide for a safe, active environment. Several major pedestrian routes to transit are not striped with crosswalks or equipped with signals or other appropriate vehicular controls. This makes it dangerous for pedestrians to cross major streets and contributes to pedestrian injuries and fatalities, particularly on Atlantic Avenue. Between 1999 and 2009 there were six pedestrian fatalities and 230 injuries on Atlantic Avenue between Pennsylvania and Fountain Avenues. Many key intersections lack traffic signals and crosswalks, there are no curb extensions and only a narrow median is present, making it difficult for pedestrians to traverse this major thoroughfare and creating a barrier between north and south portions of the neighborhood. This

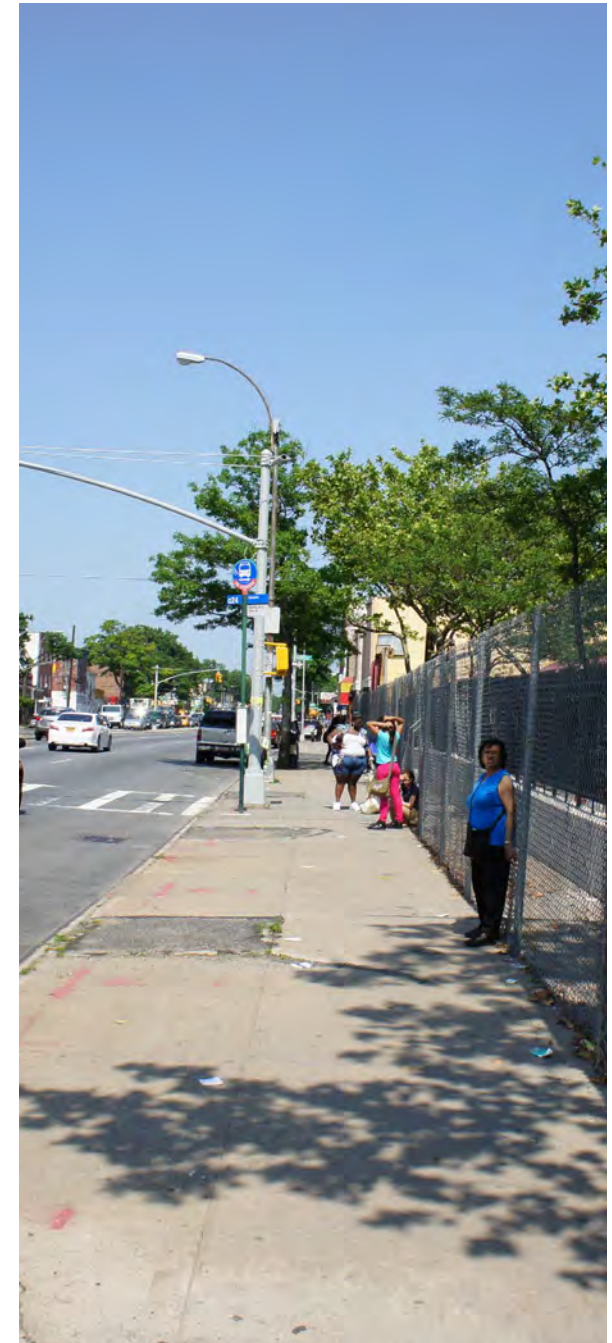


Above (photo):
The width of Atlantic Avenue and lack of safety medians and other pedestrian infrastructure makes it challenging to cross.

limits residents' ability to access transit, which lies to the north (J/Z along Fulton) and south (A/C along Pitkin) of this thoroughfare.

Few pedestrian amenities such as lighting, benches, bus shelters, wayfinding signs and street trees are found along key corridors, making walking less appealing. In part because of transit lines running below grade along Pitkin Avenue and above ground on Fulton Street there are few street trees on these corridors.

Infrastructure for bicyclists is fragmented, with few bike lanes or bike parking, which diminishes safety and discourages residents from choosing this form of transportation, particularly kids and other less experienced riders.



Above (photo):
Bus riders wait at a stop on Atlantic Avenue without a shelter.

OPPORTUNITIES

Significant Underutilized Sites

A number of vacant or underutilized sites hold great potential for large-scale redevelopment for a mix of uses including housing, retail, commercial services and community facilities. Many of these sites have been identified as strategic sites by Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation (CHLDC) and are being examined for their development potential as part of a Brownfield Opportunity Area study. Most of these sites are located along Atlantic Avenue.

Transit Resources

The A/C line along Pitkin Avenue and the J/Z line along Fulton Street make transit highly accessible throughout the neighborhood. Service from the Euclid Avenue express A station can reach Downtown Brooklyn in 20 minutes. Numerous buses serve the area, including lines along Atlantic Avenue, Pennsylvania Avenue and from the Euclid Avenue station to Gateway Mall, JFK and other destinations. This existing transit infrastructure can support a higher density of residential and commercial uses.

Regional Connectivity

Atlantic Avenue is a major transportation corridor in Brooklyn for both vehicle traffic and transit. The avenue, which bisects the entire borough, running from Downtown Brooklyn to Jamaica, Queens, is part of the citywide truck network and is a key link in routes to JFK airport. The Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) runs along Atlantic Avenue below and above grade in various sections. The East New York LIRR station provides the area with access to regional employment centers, retail and entertainment destinations in Brooklyn and on Long Island.

Neighborhood Character

The compact street network has laid the foundation for a walkable community where shopping corridors are in close proximity to residential areas. Rowhouses in the area are typically set back a short distance from the street, creating a consistent streetwall that frames the sidewalks and is inviting to pedestrians. Fulton Street and Pitkin Avenue are traditional retail corridors and portions of these streets retain an intact streetwall and active ground floor uses. Distinctive structures that are currently vacant or underutilized, such as the Borden Dairy on Atlantic Avenue and the former police precinct house on Liberty Avenue, could be adaptively reused for housing, economic development, community services, or other uses and help establish a unique identity for the area.



Above (photo):
The Arlington Village apartment complex on Atlantic Avenue has fallen into a state of disrepair and is only partially occupied.

VISION



Atlantic Avenue at Warwick Street today

Atlantic Avenue would become the central spine connecting the thriving neighborhoods to the north and south with mixed-income housing, plentiful retail and safe streets.



A vision for Atlantic Avenue as the heart of East New York.

STRATEGIES

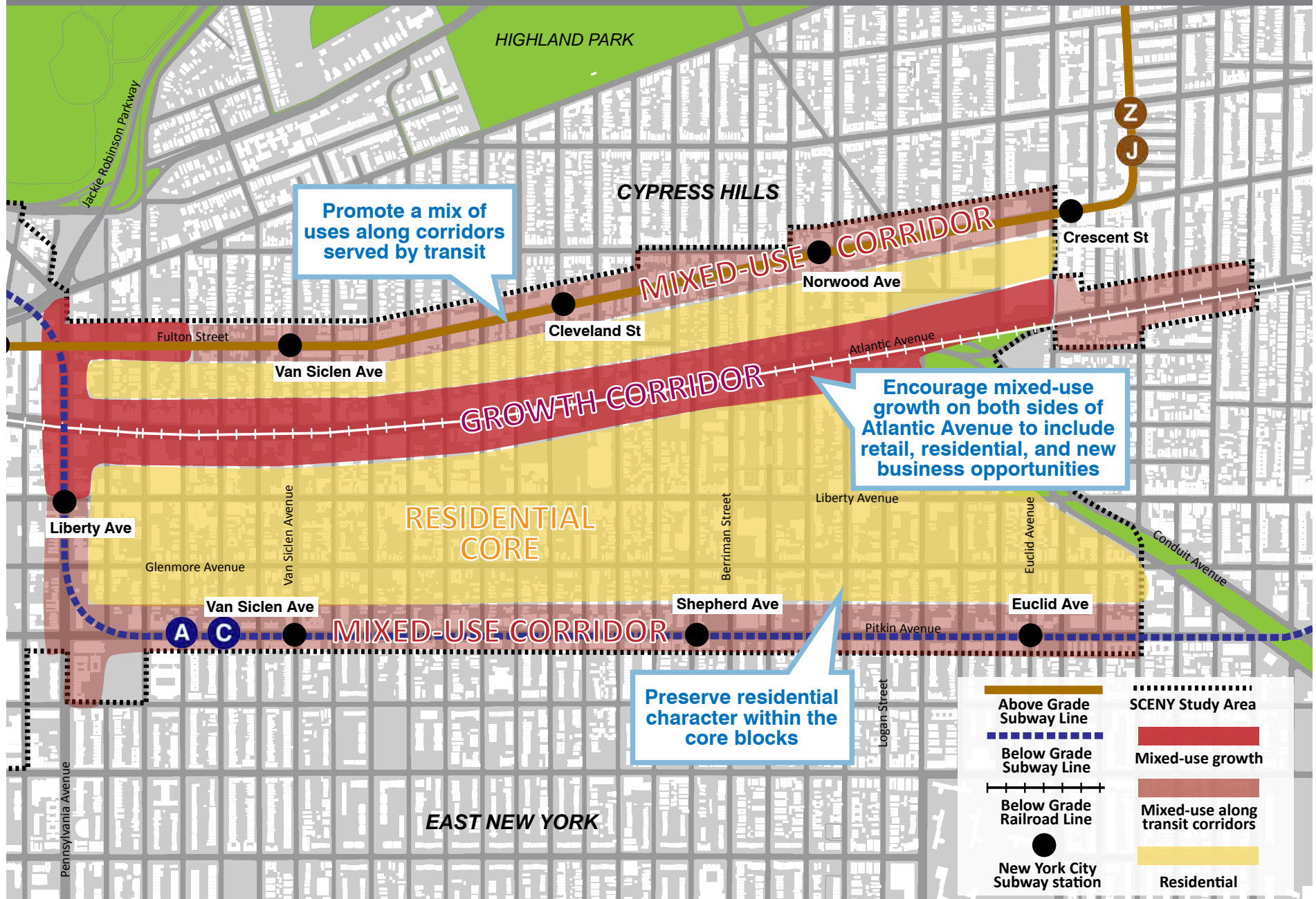
The East New York – Cypress Hills Subarea has the potential to become a vibrant, inclusive residential neighborhood with a wide variety of local retail options, job opportunities and attractive, safe streets that invite residents and visitors to enjoy their neighborhood. Opportunities for new housing, including affordable housing, along key corridors, particularly Atlantic Avenue, would provide more housing choices for current and future residents. A growing residential population would expand the customer base for existing and new businesses such as grocery stores, pharmacies, and other services

to flourish. Significant strategic sites and distinctive buildings hold the potential to support economic development and provide job opportunities for local residents and the region. New development in the primarily residential central blocks should match the form of existing buildings, adding to the area's unique character. Streetscape improvements could support this new level of activity with safer crossings on Atlantic Avenue and other corridors. The following strategies are proposed to work together to help realize this vision.



*Left (photo):
An active mixed-use transit corridor in the Bronx.*

EAST NEW YORK - CYPRESS HILLS SUBAREA - LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS



A.

PROPOSE ZONING CHANGES TO FACILITATE BALANCED NEIGH- BORHOOD GROWTH

SUPPORT MIXED-USE GROWTH ON KEY TRANSIT CORRIDORS

Atlantic Avenue, Fulton Street and Pitkin Avenue have the potential to become vibrant mixed-use corridors. Changes to the zoning to allow higher densities and a greater variety of uses would promote new housing, more active streetscapes, and a greater variety of retail options such as grocery stores, restaurants, banks, pharmacies, and other needed services.

Atlantic Avenue has the potential to provide substantial new housing, retail and other commercial services. New housing is not currently permitted in the zoning districts found along most of Atlantic Avenue. Changing the zoning to allow residential uses would facilitate the construction of new housing and mixed-use development. Allowing higher residential density and a variety of job-generating uses on these sites would help bring a critical mass of residents to support a greater diversity of retail offerings and activate streetscapes and public spaces. In this way, Atlantic Avenue could transform into an urban boulevard offering a diversity of housing options, shopping, entertainment, jobs and services to the surrounding neighborhood as well as drawing visitors from the broader region.

Fulton Street, Pitkin Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue have the potential to see modest growth on underutilized sites, enabling new mixed-use developments with housing and ground-floor retail that are supported by the existing transit network.

PRESERVE RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS AND PROMOTE CONTEXTUAL INFILL DEVELOPMENT

Residents have identified the residential blocks between the transit corridors as areas to preserve. Side streets between the major commercial corridors feature established neighborhoods of rowhouses, duplexes and small apartment buildings. Contextual zoning would ensure that new infill development complements the existing residential character by promoting consistent building height and size.

Allowing new residential development with ground-floor retail on Liberty Avenue would strengthen this neighborhood corridor where manufacturing zoning currently prohibits new housing and scattered commercial zoning allows retail only on disparate blockfronts.

ENCOURAGE APPROPRIATE DESIGN AND USE TO FOSTER ACTIVE STREETSAPES

New zoning for the area should promote active ground floor uses with an appropriate minimum level of window coverage, and minimize curb cuts which disrupt the sidewalk to foster more dynamic commercial corridors that are inviting to pedestrians. Regulations should respond to the needs of particular corridors, for example by shaping buildings to minimize the impact of the elevated train on Fulton Street with additional flexibility for taller buildings or requiring setbacks from the street.

DEVELOP NEW NEIGHBORHOOD DESTINATIONS ON STRATEGIC SITES ALONG ATLANTIC AVENUE

A vital component in the transformation of East New York is the creation of new centers of activity that will bring together housing, commercial uses, community services and street level activities. A number of strategic sites – vacant or underutilized properties which hold potential for redevelopment – have been identified by DCP as well as CHLDC

through their Brownfield Opportunity Area study. This study involved extensive community outreach to develop a community vision for future use on these sites. The properties considered to hold the greatest potential are all located along Atlantic Avenue; new activity on these sites would help establish this corridor as the central spine of the

neighborhood connecting the communities to the north and south. Changing the zoning regulations to allow a mix of uses on these sites would increase the potential for redevelopment and help facilitate the transformation of the neighborhood by creating opportunities for new housing, jobs and economic development.

Site: Former M&T

Bank building

Size: Just over 30,000 square feet

Condition:

Vacant Building

Potential Future Use: This site's location at the junction of two major thoroughfares makes this an ideal site for a community center, civic space, health facility, housing, and other uses.



Site: Arlington

Village

Size: Over 300,000 square feet (two full city blocks)

Condition: Low-

rise garden apartments in a state of disrepair and only half-occupied

Potential Future Use: Mixed-use development offering affordable housing, open space, and retail along Atlantic Avenue.



Site: Former Chloe Food

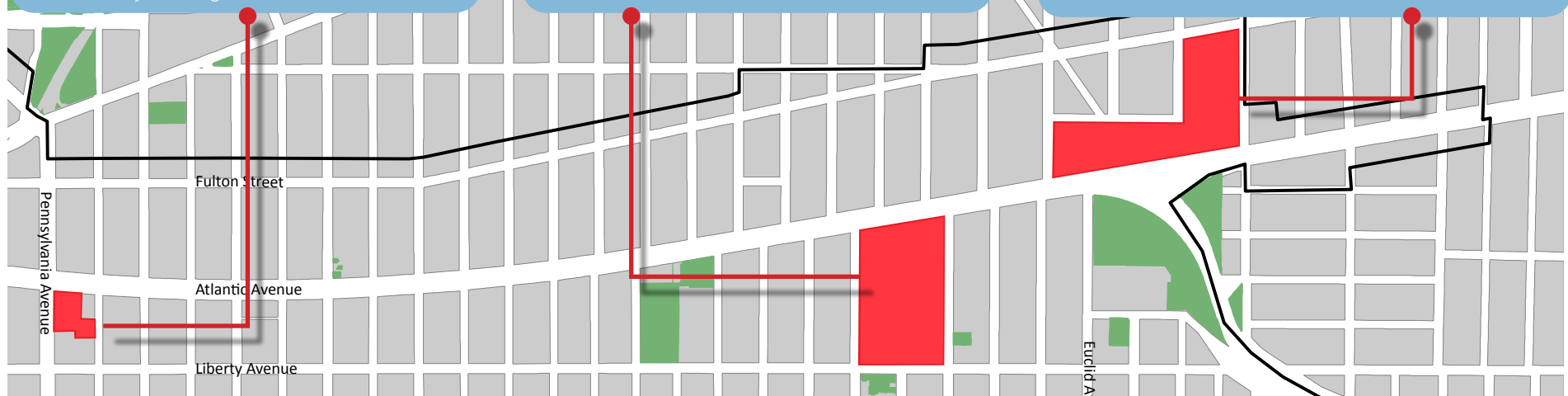
plant and adjacent City-owned property

Size: Nearly 300,000 square feet

Condition: Food production

plant burnt down in early 2012; adjacent lot is undeveloped

Potential Future Use: Envisioned as food production center providing local jobs as well as access to fresh food through retail operations. Housing, rooftop gardens, and weekend markets could coexist with such uses.



B.

PROMOTE AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

Atlantic Avenue presents the greatest opportunity for the development of housing affordable at a range of income levels. The width of the street, access to transit, and presence of a number of significant sites with potential for redevelopment provide this corridor with the capacity to support significant growth. Changes to the zoning allow residential development at higher densities would allow the construction of affordable apartment buildings on identified strategic sites as well as other properties along the corridor and result in a substantial expansion of the neighborhood's housing supply.

Pitkin Avenue and Fulton Street are transit corridors and established shopping strips with many vacant lots or low-rise buildings that could serve as sites for the construction of new affordable housing. Changing the low-density zoning to medium-density would allow more affordable housing to be built along these corridors.

As described in *Housing New York*, the City's 10-year strategy to promote housing affordability, the City expects to use a wide variety of tools, including housing subsidy programs, tax incentives, and inclusionary zoning, to promote housing affordability in neighborhoods such as East New York. DCP and HPD are currently conducting a study that will establish the foundation for a new mandatory Inclusionary Housing program, which would be applied in medium and high density districts where rezonings provide an opportunity for significantly more housing. This program would require as a condition of residential development that a portion of the housing developed be permanently affordable.

East New York's housing includes a large share of apartments that are currently accessible to low- and moderate-income households, whether or not they are subject to restrictions on rental prices. As part of *Housing New York*, the City will seek to establish new outreach strategies and preservation tools to preserve affordability through targeted investments in existing housing. The construction of new housing for all income levels would also provide additional affordable housing opportunities and by accommodating growing demand, help reduce upward pressure on rents.



Above (photo):
Parkview Commons in the South Bronx was developed by Nos Quedamos on a former brownfield site. It provides over 100 units of affordable housing as well as ground floor retail.

C. SUPPORT RETAIL GROWTH

With increased residential density, the neighborhood will see increased demand for local services such as grocery stores, banks and restaurants, supporting existing and new businesses while creating local job opportunities. City incentives for the development of grocery stores selling fresh food should be utilized to add to the neighborhood's healthy food options. As well, support for new and existing businesses could be provided through the creation or expansion of Business Improvement Districts or merchants associations to support retail growth along corridors such as Atlantic Avenue, Fulton Street and Pitkin Avenue.



*Above (photo):
125th Street is an active commercial corridor in Harlem offering a wide variety of retail, services, and office space, as well as entertainment and cultural attractions.*

MYRTLE AVENUE, Brooklyn

[case study]



The Myrtle Avenue Revitalization Project (MARP) has helped transform a distressed street into a vibrant, mixed-use commercial corridor with entrepreneurial, cultural, recreational and employment opportunities for local residents. In the late 1990's Myrtle Avenue in Fort Greene and Clinton Hill was characterized by a high ground-floor vacancy rate, a high crime rate, dilapidated buildings, excessive graffiti, limited retail variety and light foot traffic. MARP, founded in 1999, began to make physical improvements to the corridor that included graffiti removal, tree plantings and storefront improvements. As these measures began to transform Myrtle Avenue, MARP began a campaign to attract new businesses to the corridor.

By 2005, Myrtle Avenue was booming, and a Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District (BID) was established. The combined efforts of MARP and the BID have lowered retail vacancy rates, lowered crime rates, supported the growth of locally-owned businesses, and attracted new development to the area. Streetscape improvements such as high visibility crosswalks and curb extensions have contributed to the revitalization by making the corridor more pedestrian-friendly.

D. IMPROVE STREETSCAPES AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Curb extensions, high-visibility crosswalks, safety medians, street tree plantings, benches, bus shelters and other amenities for pedestrians would create a safer and more inviting streetscape which would encourage residents to choose to walk. Intersections near transit, schools and community services should be prioritized to ensure safe routes for students to walk and bike to school and for residents to access essential services.

Atlantic Avenue

Crossing the north-south neighborhood divider of Atlantic Avenue is particularly difficult given its width, high traffic volume and lack of pedestrian safety measures.

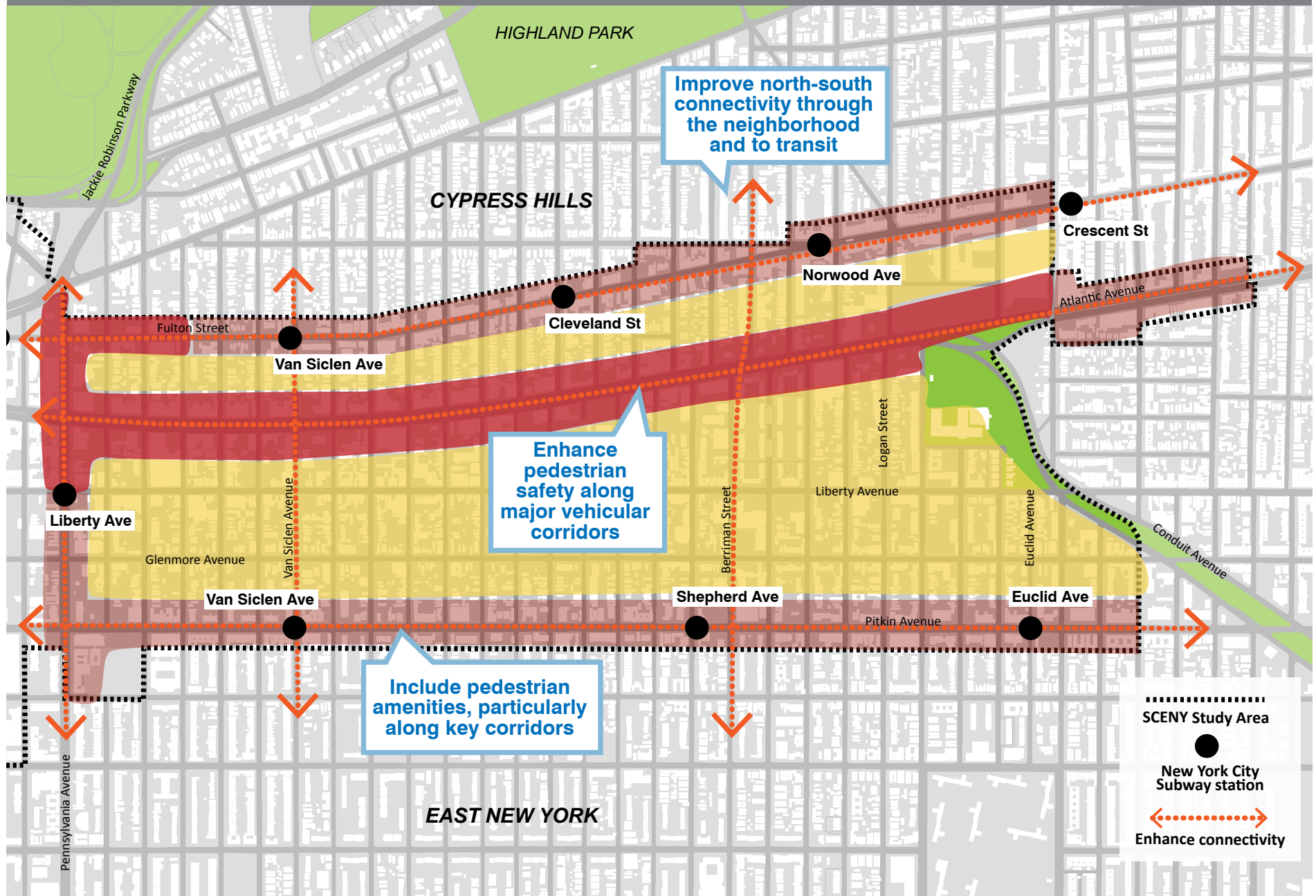
Former City Council Member Erik Dilan allocated funds to the NYC Department of Transportation for streetscape improvements at key intersections along Atlantic Avenue. These measures could include safety medians, curb extensions, high visibility crosswalks and new traffic signals. After identifying priority intersections and appropriate safety measures, construction is expected to begin in Fall 2016. These safety improvements would help bridge the gap between northern and southern portions of the neighborhood, enhancing residents' access to transit, community facilities and shopping.

In the longer term Atlantic Avenue should be rebuilt by taking into account proposed land use changes.



*Right (photo):
Pedestrian safety improvements along
Atlantic Avenue in East New York.*

EAST NEW YORK - CYPRESS HILLS SUBAREA - CONNECTIVITY RECOMMENDATIONS



A reconstruction of Atlantic Avenue could include the addition of a raised, planted median as well as a redesign of the intersection of Atlantic and Conduit Avenues to replace the grade-separated interchange with a conventional interchange-controlled by traffic lights. This change would likely not result in longer travel times but would increase traffic safety by forcing drivers to maintain a safe speed. Additionally, a growing residential population along Atlantic Avenue could result in an increase in local transit ridership, particularly on the bus route serving the corridor. Increased ridership may warrant new bus stop shelters which could be incorporated into an overall street redesign.

Pitkin Avenue

Pitkin Avenue in Brownsville, west of the study area, is a thriving commercial corridor with vibrant retail activity and heavy pedestrian traffic; the corridor has the potential to undergo a similar renaissance in East New York with the addition of active ground-floor uses. Streetscape improvements such as curb extensions, high-visibility crosswalks and more street trees would make Pitkin Avenue a more inviting place to walk. The addition of a pedestrian plaza or other public open space, potentially adjacent to the Euclid Avenue station, would help activate the street and provide a community gathering place.



*Left (photo):
School children learn about traffic safety.
Image: © NYC Department of Transportation*

*Opposite Page (photo):
A pedestrian plaza at Livonia and New Lots
Avenues has created new public space.*

Fulton Street

Active ground floor uses make Fulton Street a vibrant pedestrian environment. Continuing to support ground floor activity and promoting design interventions to account for the impact of the elevated train, such as encouraging building setbacks to create wider sidewalks and allow more light to reach the street would create a more pedestrian-friendly environment. Amenities such as high visibility sidewalks, benches and street trees would also make the corridor more welcoming to pedestrians. Explore potential sites for a pedestrian plaza, such as at Norwood Avenue. This would create an active public space and bring more eyes to the street, enhancing personal safety.



ADAM CLAYTON POWELL BLVD, Harlem, Manhattan

[case study]



Image: © NYC Department of Transportation

The Department of Transportation worked with community members in Harlem to improve street safety conditions on Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Boulevard. Between 2006 and 2012, there were ten pedestrian fatalities and hundreds of injuries as a result of crashes on this road. Major issues included dangerous street crossings, speeding vehicles, double-parked vehicles and congestion in the left-turn lane.

After consultation with the community, the NYC Department of Transportation responded to these issues by extending the center median and the curb at crosswalks, adding pedestrian safety signage, hosting safety education programs, retiming signals and installing pedestrian countdown signals. These measures have created a shorter crossing distance and a safer space for pedestrians. Wider parking lanes and dedicated left-turn lanes were also instituted.

Since these improvements have been made, average vehicle speeds have been lowered and crashes on Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Boulevard have decreased by 32 percent.

CATALYST PROJECT:

Pitkin Avenue Corridor

Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation is currently developing a mixed-use affordable housing project on a vacant site on Pitkin Avenue at Berriman Street. When complete, this development will provide 60 units of affordable housing and new retail options for the neighborhood. In order to develop an adequate density to support affordable housing, the site was rezoned from R5/C2-3 to a medium-density R7A/C2-4 district in 2013. The

previous zoning district would have permitted only 34 dwelling units and would have required over 20 parking spaces to be provided. This limited scale would not have made affordable housing financially feasible. An area-wide rezoning would allow future developments of this scale to be built as of right, expanding the potential supply of affordable housing in the neighborhood.



Pitkin Avenue at Berriman Street today

A mixed-use development with affordable housing and retail on a transit corridor.



Pitkin Avenue with a mixed-use development currently underway at the corner of Berriman Street, as well as potential long-term land use and streetscape changes.



EAST BROOKLYN
INDUSTRIAL PARK



INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS SUBAREA

IV



INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS SUBAREA

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Industrial and Business subarea is roughly bounded by the axes of East New York and Atlantic Avenues to the north, Sutter Avenue to the south, Powell Street to the west and Sheffield Avenue to the east. Broadway Junction lies to the north, though the Atlantic Avenue viaduct and LIRR tracks form a barrier between these two subareas. The subarea

is bordered by the residential neighborhood of East New York to the south and east, and Brownsville to the west.

The Industrial and Business subarea generally follows the boundaries of the East New York Industrial Business Zone (IBZ), one of sixteen IBZs

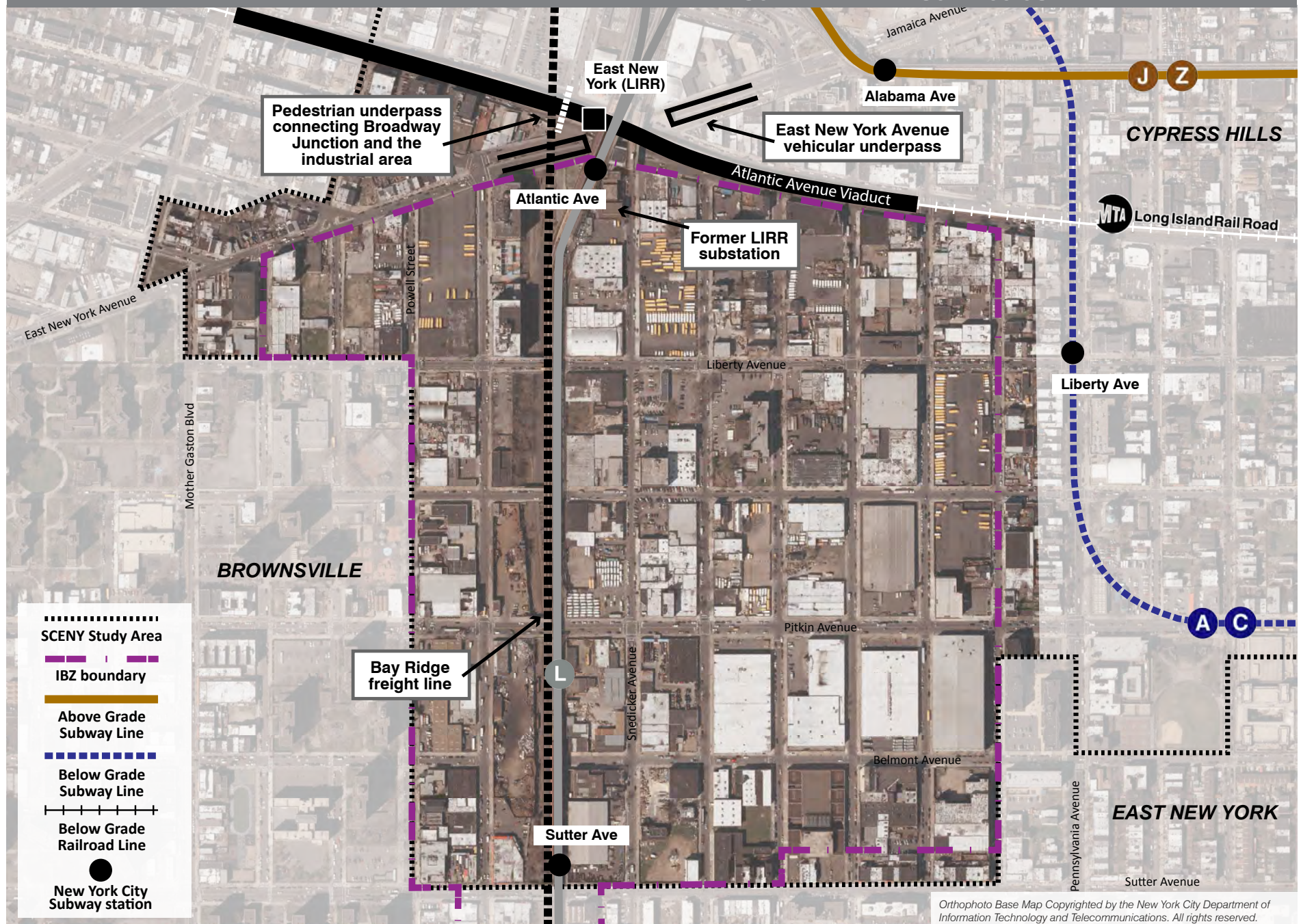
found throughout the City, and one of six in Brooklyn. This designation serves to support industrial businesses by providing services to area firms and tax incentives for businesses locating there. The portion of the East New York IBZ south of Sutter Avenue, the southern boundary of our study, was not considered in this analysis. As well a number of blocks zoned for manufacturing use which do not fall into the IBZ boundary were included in this study.

The East New York IBZ is home to over 4,000 jobs. Nearly half of these are in the transportation and warehousing sector. Between 2002-2011 the area saw the number of jobs increase 33 percent. The number of manufacturing jobs, however, shrank. As the manufacturing sector has declined, jobs in semi-industrial uses including warehousing and transportation and have proliferated, and now make up almost half of jobs in the IBZ. As well, a number of homeless shelters have opened in former industrial loft buildings, generating job growth in social services.



*Left (photo)
Belmont Metal factory in the IBZ has been
located in East New York since 1896.*

INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS SUBAREA - AERIAL VIEW



Land Use

Semi-industrial uses such as open vehicle storage, vehicle repair shops and warehouses make up over half of the land use in the subarea. When enclosed, these low-intensity uses often occupy buildings with no windows to the street and do not generate significant foot traffic. Manufacturing uses comprise about one quarter of current land use in the industrial area. Such uses include metal works, food processing facilities and construction-related businesses. Open heavy industrial uses comprise a small portion of the land use and primarily consist of scrap yards adjacent to the Bay Ridge rail line along Junius Street. In recent years, a number of homeless shelters have opened in former industrial loft buildings, concentrated in the northern portion of the industrial area. Residential and commercial uses make up a small portion of land use and are found mostly along the edges of the subarea.

Zoning

The Industrial and Business subarea is largely zoned for industrial uses with the majority of the area contained within a low-density M1-4 district which allows light industrial uses, as well as offices, hotels, retail uses and some community facilities. In these districts, open industrial uses must comply with performance standards. Seven blocks in the northwest corner of the subarea are zoned M3-2, a heavy industrial district which allows open or enclosed industrial uses and only a limited range of commercial uses. New residential uses are not permitted in either of these manufacturing districts. Although the area is mostly zoned for industrial uses, semi-industrial uses are prevalent throughout the area. In fact, no heavy industrial uses are found in the M3 district and the few open industrial uses are located within an M1 district.

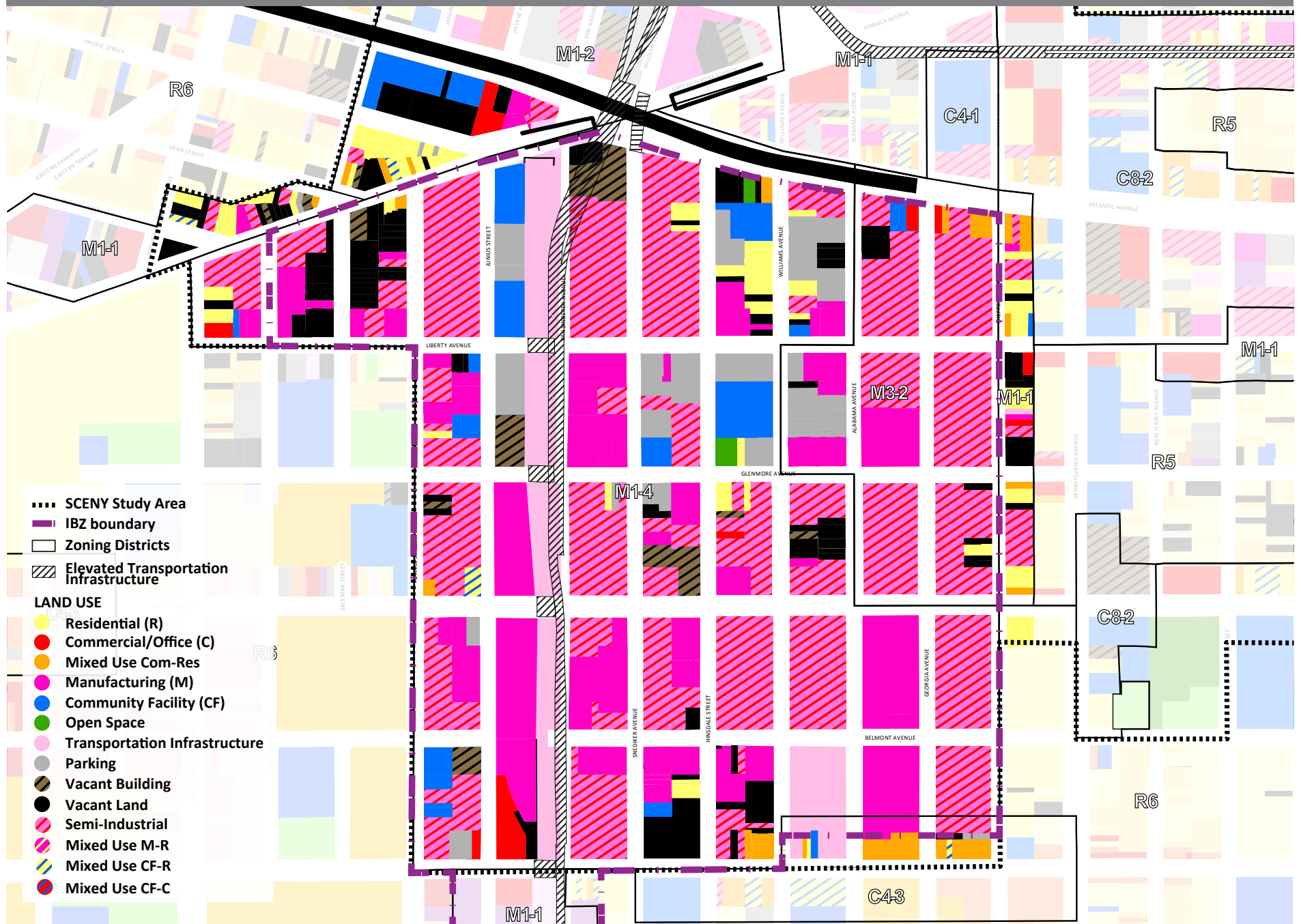


Above (photo): Bus parking is a common semi-industrial land use in the subarea.



Above (photo): A scrapyard on Junius Street is an example of an open industrial use.

INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS SUBAREA - CURRENT LAND USE AND ZONING



WHAT WE HEARD

Residents and business owners reported that the Industrial and Business subarea is an essential economic driver in East New York. The area employs thousands of workers, including many who live in East New York. Business owners value the affordable industrial space that the area has to offer and appreciate the convenient access to the city truck routes and close proximity to JFK Airport.

Surveys of both business owners and community members revealed concerns over streetscape conditions in the industrial area. The lack of commercial activity at street level reduces the amount of foot traffic through the area, making the district feel deserted and unsafe, particularly at night. Because of this, the industrial area can feel like a barrier between the neighborhoods of Brownsville and East New York. Additionally, the Atlantic Avenue viaduct presents a physical barrier between this area and Broadway Junction, cutting the industrial area off from a major transit hub.

Local employers highlighted the difficulty of attracting skilled new employees because of the poor access and poor perceptions of safety, as well as a general lack of basic services, such as lunch spots or banks to cash paychecks. Business owners also report that the narrow, one-way roads are difficult for trucks to navigate and that there are few places for trucks to enter the industrial area.

Residents as well as business owners expressed a desire for additional job training and employment placement services in the neighborhood. Community members suggested that a university or other educational facility be located in East New York in order to bring jobs and educational services to the area. Business owners also requested more incubator spaces and flexible building styles to meet the evolving needs of modern industrial businesses.



“The industrial area brings jobs to the area”

“Businesses have been based here for many generations”

“The IBZ divides the residential neighborhoods of Brownsville and East New York”

“Mismatch between building stock and modern industrial needs”

“Corridors feel unsafe and desolate; many buildings have no windows”

“Transit options are isolated from residential areas, feels unsafe”

“LIRR underpass is in deplorable condition”

“Littering and illegal dumping are common”

CHALLENGES

Changing employment patterns

In past decades, manufacturing has consistently seen its share of the labor force in New York City decline, as the sector shrinks nationwide in response to global economic conditions. While the IBZ has added jobs in the past ten years this growth has largely been in social services, transportation and warehousing, while manufacturing employment has declined. Transportation and warehousing now make up nearly half of all jobs found in the subarea.

Limitations of current buildings, sites and location

Few sites in the Industrial and Business subarea provide the types of space that are sought after by most larger industrial firms – large, column-free spaces with excellent freight access to wide streets and ample loading facilities. The fact that there are few connections between the subarea and nearby commercial centers limits the locational advantages of the area. The limited amount of new construction suggests that industrial rents are unlikely to support construction of modern space. The uses that have gravitated to the subarea include semi-industrial uses such as warehousing and vehicle storage, as well as community facilities such as homeless shelters.



*Right (photo):
Storage center on Pitkin Avenue in the industrial area.*

*Opposite Page (photo):
Local residents and representatives from the Regional Planning Association discuss issues and opportunities in the industrial area at the Town Hall meeting held in February 2012.*

Limited availability of loft-style buildings for adaptive reuse

Loft-style buildings and other former industrial buildings can provide a flexible shell for adaptive reuse as commercial and office space, community facilities or residential use. A number of such properties are found in the subarea, located mostly in the north close to Atlantic and East New York Avenues. However, many of these buildings are currently occupied by non-industrial uses, particularly homeless shelters.

Few services or amenities

There are few services such as restaurants, banks, pharmacies, or other retail offerings in the Industrial and Business subarea or the surrounding blocks. This reduces the area's ability to attract new businesses, which seek locations which can offer services for their business and employees. This also affects quality of life in the surrounding neighborhoods, where residents have limited shopping options.



*Above Right (photo):
A former industrial building on Junius Street is
currently used as a homeless shelter.*



*Right (photo):
Few services such as restaurants, banks, or pharmacies
are found within or near the industrial area.*

Desolate streetscape divides neighborhoods

Most lots in the area are occupied by low-intensity, semi-industrial uses such as bus parking and warehousing which diminish the amount of street activity. Many industrial buildings are characterized by blank walls and are often surrounded by parking and fencing. There are few street trees, benches, wayfinding signs or other amenities that make streets hospitable for pedestrians. Inadequate street lighting make the area feel unsafe, particularly at night. Sidewalks are often blocked by truck traffic or loading. Illegal dumping and littering is common, which contribute to the overall desolate and uninviting nature of the streetscape. Because of these streetscape conditions, the area functions as a barrier between surrounding neighborhoods of Brownsville, East New York and Ocean Hill. For example, Pitkin Avenue, which is home to a mix of active commercial uses in both Brownsville and East New York, is divided by the bleak streetscape and inactive uses found in the Industrial and Business subarea, which stands between these two sections of the corridor.

Barriers to transit

While the Industrial and Business subarea is located in close proximity to transit, including the Broadway Junction transit hub, access is limited by the Atlantic Avenue viaduct running above grade along the northern edge of the industrial area. This viaduct blocks pedestrians or vehicles from crossing Atlantic Avenue for ten blocks, effectively isolating the subarea from Broadway Junction. The only pedestrian crossing is the LIRR station underpass located at Van Sinderen Avenue, which is poorly lit and deteriorating. This creates a barrier for workers accessing jobs in the industrial area, as well as for residents of Brownsville who wish to access transit at Broadway Junction.

Lack of vehicular connectivity

There are limited number of access points to the Industrial and Business subarea for cars and trucks, particularly from Atlantic Avenue, which runs along the northern edge of the area and is a through truck route. There are no left turns allowed into the industrial area or onto Pennsylvania Avenue, also part of the truck network, from westbound lanes on Atlantic Avenue. This forces trucks wishing to enter the industrial area to turn onto neighborhood streets in the surrounding residential area, increasing traffic volume and creating congestion and safety hazards on narrow local streets. Additionally, many streets in the industrial area are too narrow for many trucks to maneuver.



*Right (photo):
Streetscape conditions in the industrial area*

OPPORTUNITIES

Publicly-owned sites

A number of sites within the Industrial and Business subarea that are owned by public agencies are currently vacant or underutilized. These sites include a vacant former LIRR substation at Snediker and Atlantic Avenues and vacant City-owned properties on Sackman Street. These sites could provide opportunities for reuse or redevelopment for businesses, anchor institutions or activity centers that offer services to area residents and businesses. In addition, should other sites controlled by City agencies become available in the future, these could offer additional opportunities for reuse. These include the former PS 63 on Williams Avenue, now owned by Department of Homeless Services, and NYPD offices housed in a loft-style building on Belmont Avenue at Snediker Avenue.

Accessibility to labor force

The urban setting of the Industrial and Business subarea provides access to a large potential employment pool in the adjoining residential communities as well as those that are accessible by transit. The mixed use character of the surrounding neighborhoods could be enhanced by providing additional services accessible to businesses and employees as well as area residents. Two L train stations are located in the subarea, at Atlantic Avenue and Sutter Avenue and the LIRR station at Atlantic Avenue is adjacent to the northern border of



the industrial area. The Broadway Junction station is located just three blocks north of the industrial area. The B12 bus line runs along East New York Avenue and the B14 runs along Sutter Avenue, the area's northern and southern borders, respectively. Additionally, the B83 and B20 buses run along Pennsylvania Avenue, one block to the east, and additional bus lines converge at Broadway Junction.

Proximity to regional truck network

Atlantic Avenue, which runs along the northern border of the Industrial and Business subarea, is part of the through truck network, which runs between boroughs. Pennsylvania Avenue, which runs close to the eastern border of the subarea, is part of the local truck network, and connects to Linden Boulevard and Broadway, which are also local truck routes. Access to this network provides businesses with means to transport goods necessary for their operations and to distribute products. The truck network connects the industrial area to JFK airport, a key point in many supply chains.

*Opposite Page - Above (photo):
The former LIRR substation at Snediker and Atlantic Avenues.*

*Opposite Page - Below (photo):
The L subway line Sutter Avenue station serving both
area residents and workers in the industrial area.*

*Right (photo):
Truck traffic in the industrial area.*



VISION



Pitkin Avenue at Alabama Avenue within the Industrial Business Zone today

Flourishing businesses bring a variety of commercial and industrial uses and new jobs to the subarea while streetscape improvements activate key corridors and edges.



Pitkin Avenue corridor activated with improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, public art, wayfinding features, and active ground floor uses.

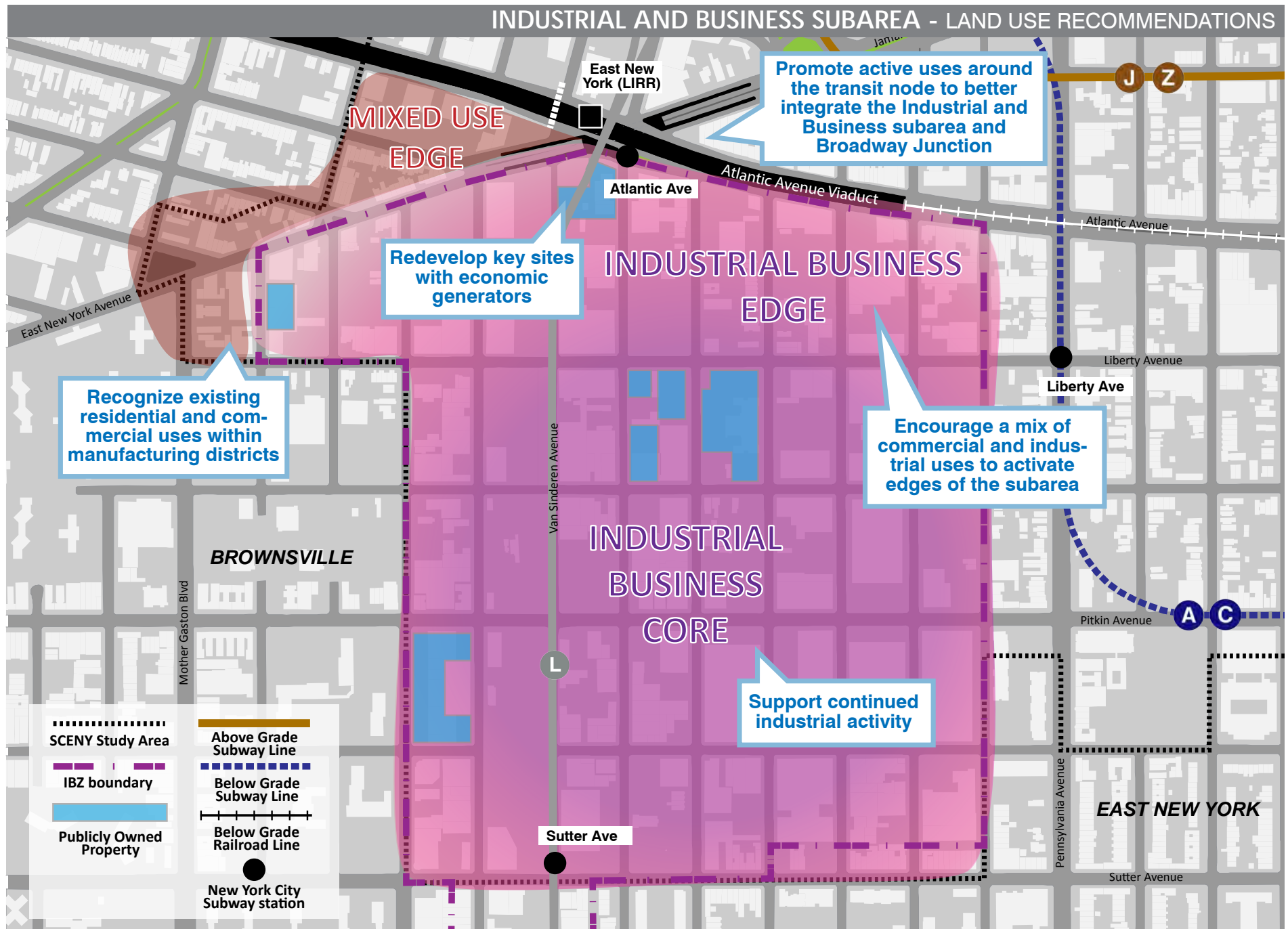
STRATEGIES

The Industrial and Business subarea has the potential to strengthen its role as a source of employment for the area and the City. By capitalizing on its assets including underutilized land and proximity to transit, the area could promote more active uses and become a more vibrant hub of employment. A number of publicly-owned sites in the area have the potential to be repurposed for new uses that could spur job creation and entrepreneurship. Promoting a greater variety of commercial as well as industrial uses, particularly at the edges of the industrial area, would provide needed services

for business owners and workers as well as local residents, and would foster a more dynamic interface with the surrounding neighborhoods. Enhanced streetscape conditions would help make the area safer for workers, residents of adjacent neighborhoods, and visitors to the industrial area, enhancing connectivity and improving perceptions of the area. These strategies can help the East New York industrial area position itself as a modern, thriving business zone and enhance its position to attract and retain high growth industries.



*Left (photo):
The Brooklyn Navy Yard provides modern industrial
space for hundreds of businesses.*



A. PROMOTE A MIX OF INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL USES

SUPPORT CONTINUED INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY

The portion of the Industrial and Business subarea south of Liberty Avenue between Junius and Sheffield Avenues is home to most of the remaining active manufacturing uses in the area such as metal works and food processing plants, as well as other industrial uses such as scrap yards. This area is appropriate for continued industrial activity. New site design standards currently being developed by DCP as part of an Open Industrial Uses study would improve environmental performance of open industrial sites and limit negative effects on surrounding uses.

ENCOURAGE A MIX OF COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL USES TO ACTIVATE THE EDGES OF THE SUBAREA

A mix of industrial and commercial uses in the northern portion and along the edges of the industrial area would facilitate permeability with surrounding neighborhoods and provide needed commercial services to both local businesses and their employees as well as to surrounding residents. These edges currently contain a mix of commercial and industrial uses; by enhancing this character, the edges have potential to act as an interface between the industrial area and



*Right (photo):
Old Williamsburg Candle facility in the East
New York Industrial Business Zone.*

surrounding neighborhoods, providing services that benefit both, such as restaurants, banks and pharmacies. The northern portion of the industrial area is home to a concentration of loft-style buildings which, should they become available for other uses, could lend themselves to adaptive reuse for a variety of commercial purposes such as business incubators, office space, event venues, retail and more. Expanding commercial options would make the area more attractive to potential

employers and employees, and generate greater economic activity with spillover benefits for the surrounding neighborhoods. Zoning changes to allow a mix of residential and commercial uses may be appropriate for certain blocks outside the IBZ boundary north and south of East New York Avenue between Mother Gaston Boulevard and Van Sinderen Avenue, parts of Sutter Avenue, and parts of Sheffield Avenue where there are currently few industrial uses.



*Right (photo):
Loft style building on East New York Avenue along
the northern edge of the subarea holds potential for
adaptive reuse and new ground floor activity.*

B. ENHANCE CONNECTIONS TO SURROUNDING NEIGHBOR- HOODS AND ACCESS TO TRANSPORTA- TION NETWORKS

IMPROVE STREETSCAPE CONDITIONS AND ENCOURAGE ACTIVE GROUND FLOOR USES TO ENHANCE SAFETY AND CONNECTIVITY

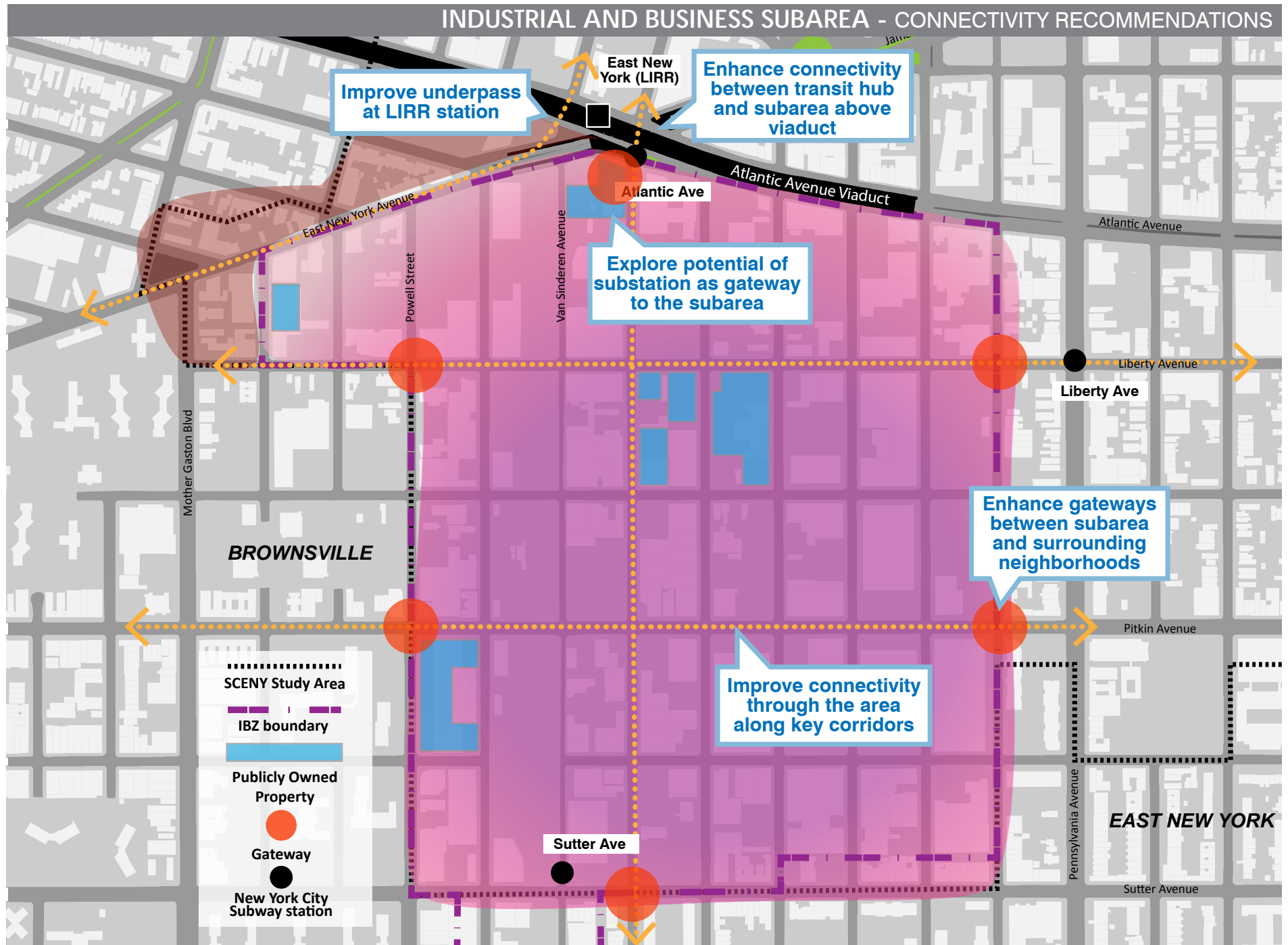
Streetscape conditions would be improved by encouraging active ground floor uses with transparent frontages along the street. Active uses and greater levels of transparency would bring additional “eyes on the street”, making the area feel safer to employers, workers, neighborhood residents and other pedestrians. Currently, design controls in the East New York II Urban Renewal Plan require opaque screening on industrial sites. This results in buildings that feel visually and physically impenetrable to passers-by and adds to the desolate nature of the streetscape. Changing this regulation would allow greater levels of transparency.

Streetscape improvements along key corridors that connect to transit and major activity centers, as well

as along the edges of the industrial area, would enhance permeability and connectivity between neighborhoods. These key corridors include the north-south streets of Van Sinderen Avenue, which connects to the LIRR station and Broadway Junction, and Snediker Avenue, which connects to the L station at Atlantic Avenue, as well as the east-west streets of Pitkin and Liberty Avenues, which provide through connections through the IBZ between East New York and Brownsville. Wayfinding signs directing visitors to transit and other key destinations could aid in navigation. Public art, street trees and other amenities would make the streets safer and more attractive for pedestrians. Improving walkability on streets running through the industrial area would help knit together the surrounding neighborhoods of East New York, Brownsville and Ocean Hill, while making the area more attractive to current and prospective businesses and their workers.



*Right (photo):
Streetscape and pedestrian safety improvements along
Lafayette Avenue in Hunts Point in the Bronx. Improvements
are part of the “Hunts Point Vision Plan” developed by NYC
Economic Development Corporation in coordination with
NYC City Planning, Transportation and Parks departments.*



ENHANCE CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN THE INDUSTRIAL AREA AND BROADWAY JUNCTION

Improve access points between the Industrial and Business subarea and Broadway Junction to the north with additional and improved pedestrian connections. These reimagined gateways could invite visitors into the area and serve as an interface between the industrial area and surrounding communities.

Improve the underpass at the East New York LIRR station to provide a safer connection between the Industrial and Business subarea and Broadway Junction. Without dramatically changing its configuration, the underpass could be made safer and more attractive by removing unnecessary partitions that reduce its width and create blind corners, repairing walls and ceilings, and adding improved lighting. Explore opportunities to include design elements and public art along the underpass to create a welcoming and safer environment for users. Land use changes that introduce more active use on either side of the underpass would also contribute to public safety and support the longevity of capital improvements to the underpass itself.

An unused portion of the elevated train track running over the Atlantic Avenue viaduct presents an opportunity to create a pedestrian overpass to provide an additional connection between Broadway Junction and the industrial area. Explore opportunities for the rehabilitation and reuse of this unused piece of infrastructure, which spans Williams Place and Snediker Avenue and connects to the Atlantic Avenue L station and the vacant former LIRR substation.

ABOVE AND BELOW GRADE PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY



Top Left (photo): Underpass at East New York LIRR station is poorly lit and in need of repairs
Bottom Left (photo): Underpass at Jay St-Metrotech subway station is well lit and adds visual appeal with public art.



Top Right (photo): Unused elevated train track spanning Atlantic Avenue
Bottom Right (photo): Highline Park developed on unused rail line in Chelsea
Image: © Kwong Yee Cheng, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/ky-cheng/5651386703/in/set-72157626570723326/>

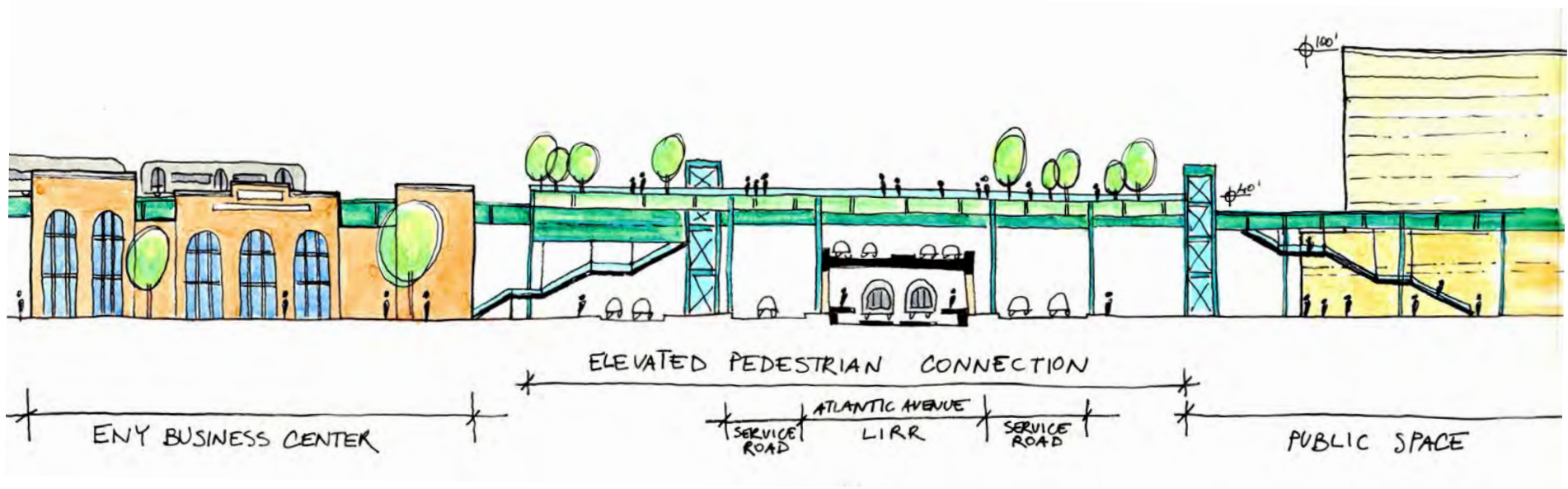
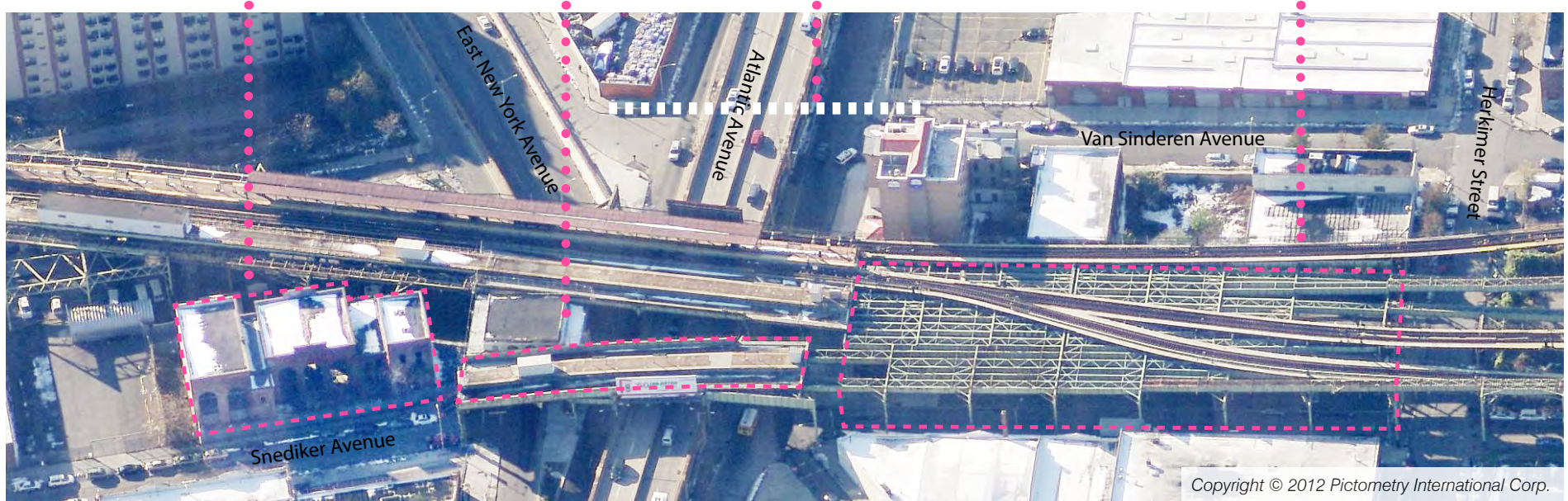
INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS SUBAREA - POTENTIAL ELEVATED PEDESTRIAN CONNECTION

Potential adaptive reuse at
former LIRR Substation

Potential pedestrian overpass
on unused rail spur

Existing pedestrian underpass
at East New York LIRR Station

Potential public open space
under elevated tracks



VILLAGE OF MURALS, Hunts Point, The Bronx



Businesses and community groups have worked together to create safe, attractive pathways linking industrial and residential neighborhoods in Hunts Point, the Bronx. The Hunts Point industrial area has been characterized by residents and local employees as bleak and unsafe due to the presence of vacant land, barren streets and extensive graffiti.

When Sims Metal Management opened a new scrap metal recycling facility in Hunts Point, the company sought to improve the surrounding streetscape. They collaborated with The POINT Community Development Corporation, to develop the “Village of Murals” project with the goal of transforming the area into a vibrant, safe space through the introduction of bright murals, plantings and green walls.

In addition to mitigating the sparse industrial corridors, the murals and plantings also serve as a passive wayfinding system, guiding pedestrians through the industrial area to parks, the Bronx and East Rivers and the South Bronx Greenway.

IMPROVE TRUCK ACCESS, PARKING AND LOADING

Enhance connectivity to the regional truck network by identifying additional truck access points to the industrial area. Allowing additional locations for vehicles traveling westbound on Atlantic Avenue to turn left to enter the industrial area would improve access and reduce detours through the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Consider ways to enhance truck navigation including changes to the parking and loading patterns, narrowing sidewalks where appropriate, and the addition of corner splays.

*Below (photo):
Signage and street design improvements enhance
connectivity through Hunts Point in the Bronx.*

*Opposite Page (photo):
HBK Incubates at La Marquette in East Harlem supports
entrepreneurs starting up food-related businesses.
Image: © NYC Economic Development Corporation*



C. REDEVELOP KEY SITES WITH ECONOMIC GENERATORS

Underutilized publicly owned properties could be redeveloped to support economic activity with active uses such as business centers, incubator space, or education or job training facilities. Active uses on these sites would anchor the mixed-use edges and improve safety and security through increased foot traffic. New uses that support economic activity in the area would help enhance the competitive position of the East New York industrial area within the city and generate new jobs.



BUILDING 92 Brooklyn Navy Yard

[case study]



The opening of Building 92 is the latest milestone in the transformation of the Brooklyn Navy Yard from one of the largest shipbuilding facilities in the United States to a modern industrial park. From its inauguration in 1801 to its decommissioning in 1966, the Navy Yard was one of the major job generators in Brooklyn, employing tens of thousands of Brooklyn residents at any given time. Mayor Koch established the Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation (BNYDC) in 1981. The BNYDC sought to diversify the industrial park to ensure job stability, as well as transform the industrial site into a thriving, sustainable economic engine. By 2011, after a \$200 million investment in green infrastructure upgrades, the Navy Yard was home to 275 businesses and 6,000 employees.

Building 92 opened in 2011 and is now the gateway to this industrial area for many visitors. The building includes a workforce development hub, an exhibition space, and visitor center. The historic structure was renovated for adaptive reuse and is Platinum LEED-Certified. Building 92 has been a crucial component in the Navy Yard's rebranding strategy, showcasing the Yard's cultural and historical significance as an industrial innovator and job creator.

CATALYST PROJECT:

LIRR Substation

The vacant former LIRR substation at Atlantic and Snediker Avenues, currently owned by the MTA, is unique within the area for its strategic location and its potential for adaptive reuse. Because of its location on the northern border of the industrial area, adjacent to the East New York LIRR station, the Atlantic Avenue L train station, and in close proximity to Broadway Junction, this site could serve as a gateway to the industrial area. This distinctive structure has an estimated interior space of over 10,000 square feet. The structure is an estimated 30 feet tall and features

a large, open interior space with a number of lofts and side rooms which could be configured for a variety of uses such as a business center for local industries, flexible work space for start-ups, event space, educational facilities, and other uses that support economic growth. A ground-floor presence on this site could draw street-level activity and serve as the public face of the industrial area. The potential exists to make connections across Atlantic Avenue via the existing Atlantic Avenue L station and an unused spur of the elevated railway.



The former LIRR substation along Snediker Avenue today

A connection between the industrial and business subarea and Broadway Junction



The substation envisioned as a center of activity supporting local businesses.



BROADWAY JUNCTION

SUBAREA



BROADWAY JUNCTION

EXISTING CONDITIONS

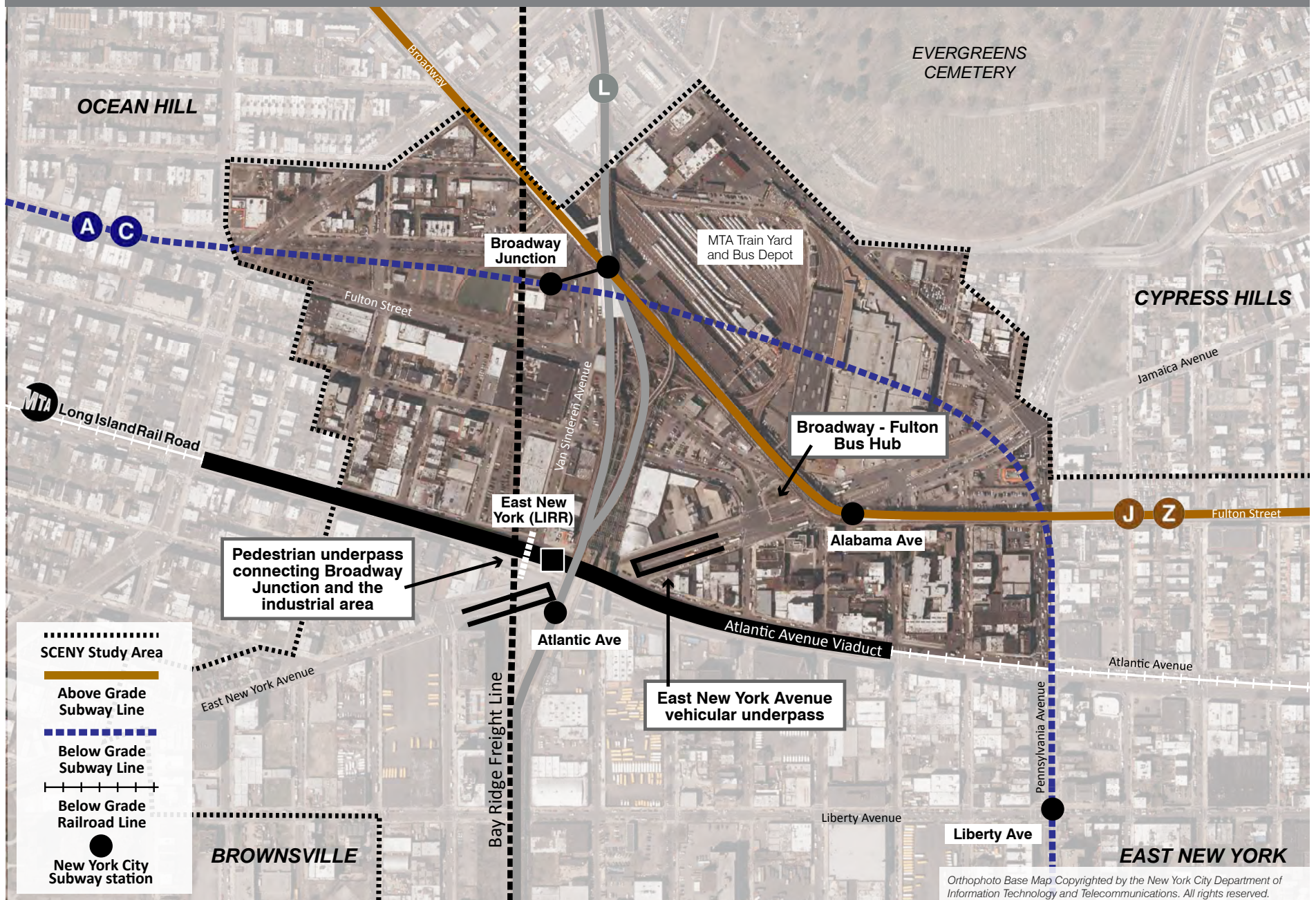
The Broadway Junction subarea is located in the northwest portion of the East New York study area and is generally bounded by Atlantic Avenue to the south, Pennsylvania Avenue to the east, Bushwick Avenue to the north, and Eastern Parkway to the west. The area is characterized by elevated transportation infrastructure, disjointed land uses encompassing residential, commercial and industrial uses, and a preponderance of vacant and underutilized land.

The Broadway Junction subarea contains three major transit nodes. Broadway Junction station serves five subway services (A/C, J/Z, and L) and numerous buses, acting as a major transfer point in the NYC Transit system. The Alabama Avenue station of the J/Z is located adjacent to a major bus hub at the intersection of East New York Avenue, Broadway and Fulton Street. Finally, the East New York LIRR station, offering regional rail service, and Atlantic Avenue L train station are located at Atlantic and Van Sinderen avenues.

*Below (photo):
The Broadway Junction subway station
at Van Sinderen Avenue*



BROADWAY JUNCTION SUBAREA - AERIAL VIEW



With this combination of subway, bus and regional rail service, Broadway Junction is a key transit node comparable to other major hubs outside Manhattan that serve as or are planned to become regional destinations, such as Atlantic Terminal or Jamaica Center. With this transit access, Broadway Junction can be reached from locations across a broad swath of Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan, and Long Island. Travel between Broadway Junction and downtown Brooklyn or Lower Manhattan takes about 20 minutes; Midtown can be reached within 45 minutes.

In addition, the Jackie Robinson Parkway and several major Brooklyn streets including Atlantic Avenue, Fulton Street and Broadway, intersect here, making Broadway Junction highly accessible from Jamaica, JFK International Airport and Long

Island for vehicular traffic.

While the convergence of these transportation elements provides superior access to destinations across the city and region, infrastructure is layered at several different levels above and below ground, impacting the physical landscape. A tunnel serving the Bay Ridge freight line runs north-south below grade through Broadway Junction. The LIRR line runs at grade from Eastern Parkway to Georgia Avenue, with Atlantic Avenue elevated on a viaduct over this section. East New York Avenue intersects with Atlantic Avenue below grade and becomes Jamaica Avenue here before entering Queens. The L subway line is elevated as well to bridge over the Atlantic Avenue viaduct and often runs mid-block here. To the north, the J/Z subway line is elevated along Broadway and Fulton Street.

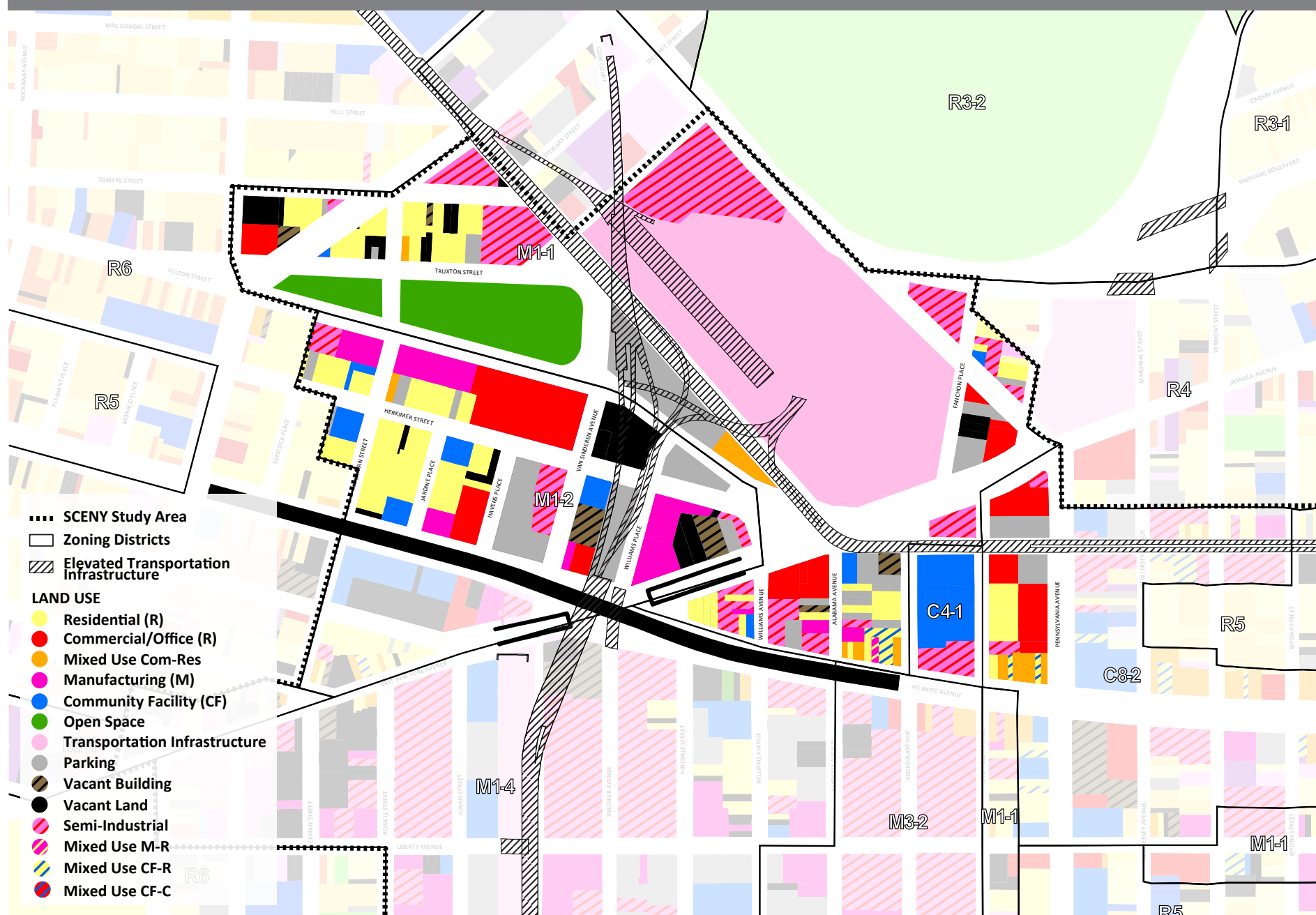
Partly due to the physical barriers and development constraints imposed by this transportation infrastructure, few businesses or other uses are located around the transit stations. This not only represents an underutilization of land in the area, but it also generates little activity at the street level. The Broadway Junction station is used largely as a transfer point between different transit services as there are few destinations in the area around the station, and the walk to nearby residential areas and commercial corridors is desolate and uninviting.

*Below Left (photo):
The East New York LIRR station entrance at grade, with the
Atlantic Avenue viaduct and the elevated L Subway line
tracks above. No signage marks the station entrance here.*

*Below Right (photo):
Elevated transportation infrastructure at Broadway Junction.*



BROADWAY JUNCTION SUBAREA - CURRENT LAND USE AND ZONING



Land Use

The western portion of the subarea, towards Eastern Parkway and the Ocean Hill neighborhood, continues to maintain its longstanding residential character despite being zoned for manufacturing uses since 1961. Here, two- and three-story rowhouses as well as three- to four-story apartment buildings can be found. On the eastern edge, wedged between Atlantic, Jamaica and Pennsylvania Avenues, is an area of disparate low-density uses including residential, parking, community facilities, auto-oriented businesses, and other commercial uses. A large portion of land in the subarea is occupied by the New York City Transit East New York bus depot and railyard, which are located on a superblock bounded by Jamaica Avenue, Broadway, Bushwick Avenue and Conway Street. The central blocks

– described here as the core – of the subarea between Van Sinderen Avenue, Broadway, Jamaica Avenue, Georgia Avenue and Atlantic Avenue are those most affected by infrastructure. Here, where several vehicular corridors converge, the irregular street pattern creates small blocks that are often also impacted by elevated or underground railway tunnels, limiting development options. Most lots in the core are currently either vacant or used for parking, with a few semi-industrial and light manufacturing uses found along Fulton Street and Snediker Avenue. The existing low-scale warehouse buildings are typically occupied with low-intensity semi-industrial and auto-oriented uses, including storage and warehousing, car sales and auto-repair shops.

Zoning

The majority of the Broadway Junction subarea is zoned for low-density light manufacturing uses (M1-2) while a small portion east of Georgia Avenue between Jamaica and Atlantic Avenues is designated for low-density commercial and automotive uses (C8-2) and low-density regional commercial uses (C4-1). Current zoning restricts development in this area by limiting development to low densities, requiring substantial off-street parking, restricting commercial uses and prohibiting new residential development. These zoning designations, along with the concentration of above and below grade transit infrastructure and the lack of a critical mass of existing activity, contribute to a desolate streetscape and have limited growth opportunities around this major transit hub.





*Opposite Page (photo):
Low scale development along Van Sinderen Avenue.*

*Above (photo):
Mixed character along the Atlantic Avenue service road.*

*Below (photo):
Longstanding residential areas west of Broadway Junction.*

Streetscape

The Atlantic Avenue viaduct forms the southern border of the subarea and separates Broadway Junction from the Industrial and Business subarea and Brownsville. For ten blocks, the only pedestrian connection between the northern and southern portions of the Atlantic Avenue viaduct is the unmarked underpass serving the East New York LIRR station at Van Sinderen Avenue.

High pedestrian fatalities have been reported at

the intersection of Broadway and Jamaica Avenue. Here, traffic to and from the Jackie Robinson Parkway meets Fulton Street and Broadway, bus traffic from the adjacent MTA depot creates congestion and a lack of clearly marked pedestrian crosswalks makes the area confusing and difficult for pedestrians to navigate. Connectivity throughout the area is restricted by the presence of transportation infrastructure, which becomes a physical and visual barrier.



*Left (photo):
Desolate streetscape conditions
around Broadway Junction.*

*Opposite Page (photo):
City Planning staff discussing preliminary
recommendations for Broadway Junction with the
Land Use Committee of Community Board 16.*

WHAT WE HEARD

The communities of East New York, Ocean Hill and Brownsville recognize the great potential of Broadway Junction provided by the existing transit access. Residents appreciate being able to access jobs, shopping, and other destinations around the city and region using transit service at Broadway Junction.

Nonetheless, both residents and visitors have a very poor perception of this area, mostly due to the physical condition around the Broadway Junction subway station. At the visioning events led by DCP, local residents often described the area as unsafe, deserted and neglected. Community members also highlighted the lack of a diverse mix of services and retail, particularly basic neighborhood services

like supermarkets, pharmacies, financial services, as well as sit-down restaurants, cafés, bars, entertainment and cultural and recreational facilities.

Residents also mentioned a lack of quality mixed-income housing throughout the study area. New mixed-use developments in proximity to the transit hub could benefit from transit access and also address the pressing housing needs of this community.

The community feels that so far too little attention has been paid to the Broadway Junction area and highlighted the desire for a champion to emerge and guide the revitalization of this portion of the neighborhood.

“Easy to get to most parts of the city and Long Island using transit”

“The streets around Broadway junction are cluttered, dark and feel unsafe”

“Walking from Broadway Junction to the LIRR station is unpleasant and unsafe”

“There are no restaurants, cafes or local healthy food options in the area, only fast food chain stores”

“We want to see a cultural or youth center that young people in East New York can take advantage of”

“A college could locate at Broadway Junction and benefit from all the transit access and will help to make Broadway Junction a destination”



CHALLENGES

Infrastructure constrains development

Transportation infrastructure, above and below grade, hinders development on nearby parcels. In some cases, this infrastructure limits potential building height. Throughout the area, the transit infrastructure generates noise and a visual presence that makes development challenging.

Blighted and desolate streetscape

Both local residents and visitors have a very poor perception of Broadway Junction: that of a desolate, blighted and unsafe place. The elevated infrastructure, poor lighting, overgrown vacant lots and the lack of activity at street level, contribute to a bleak streetscape and create an unwelcoming environment. Few active uses are located at Broadway Junction and, even during the day, few pedestrians can be seen walking the streets.

Lack of a critical mass of activity

The lack of active uses in the area contributes to a barren street environment, which in turn makes it less attractive for new active uses. Without a core of activity, incremental development that builds on existing area strengths is not possible. Activation of the area to realize its full potential is likely to require a large intervention and substantial investment.

Irregular street pattern and limited significant property ownership

The street pattern, where several grids meet, results in small, irregular blocks not suitable for larger scale development. There are also a limited number of large parcels in common ownership. Although a cluster of public property is found around the core blocks surrounding the transit stations, publicly controlled land is often connected to transportation infrastructure, which limits redevelopment potential.

Zoning limits development and uses

Current zoning designations limit development to a low density and the permitted uses mostly to semi-industrial and commercial uses. Such designations are often in conflict with existing uses and do not allow more diverse uses which could bring additional jobs and services to the area.



Barriers to transit access

While several transit nodes are located here, connectivity through this area and to transit is very limited, and pedestrian safety is a major concern for the community. A lack of basic streetscape amenities such as signage or other wayfinding features to announce the location of transit stations and guide users between various transit nodes including the LIRR, subway, and buses make the streets around Broadway Junction difficult for pedestrians to navigate. The design of the public space at key transit access points, such as the bus hub at the intersection of Fulton Street and Broadway, often lacks the necessary space for users to wait for transit service, resulting in overcrowding of the sidewalk. Only one entrance to

the Broadway Junction subway station is available, which is located on the western side of Van Sinderen Avenue, away from the residential districts west of Callahan-Kelly playground, and which does not provide direct access to the J/Z or L lines.

Limited advocate constituency

Although Broadway Junction is centrally located and adjacent to several neighborhoods, because of the lack of activity and blighted physical condition, nearby communities don't perceive this area as a part of their neighborhood, but rather as a transfer station along transit lines and often a place to avoid. Without a significant residential population or active business community, the area lacks natural boosters for its revitalization.



*Opposite Page (photo):
The desolate streetscape around Broadway Junction
contributes to the poor perception of the area.*

*Right (photo):
The bus hub at the intersection of Broadway and Fulton Street.*

OPPORTUNITIES

Local and regional transit access

The three major transit nodes that shape the core of Broadway Junction are key assets, making it accessible from areas beyond the immediately adjacent neighborhoods. Capitalizing on this transit access already in place as well as plans for future increased service at the East New York LIRR station, Broadway Junction could support substantial growth and become a significant regional destination. Improvements to the public realm around and between these nodes would enhance connectivity, support economic development, and give local residents as well as visitors access to capacity broader range of employment, shopping, recreational, educational, and other opportunities.

Central location among communities

Broadway Junction is located among several different communities including Cypress Hills, East New York, Brownsville, Ocean Hill and Bushwick. Broadway Junction serves all these communities and, as a transfer station, others as well. The station area has the potential to become a vibrant hub serving these local neighborhoods as well as the Borough and region.

Stable residential edges

Existing residential areas represent a strong connection to the surrounding Ocean Hill community. Blocks north of Fulton Street, along Sackman Street, and other streets in the western portion of the subarea are home to long-standing residential communities characterized by two- and three-story rowhouses.

Proximity to commercial corridors

Major commercial streets such as Fulton Street, Bushwick Avenue and Broadway link Broadway Junction to Bushwick, Ocean Hill, Brownsville, Cypress Hills and East New York. However, other than a few establishments, most notably a 24-hour diner near the bus hub on Fulton Street, the robust commercial activity found along these corridors in other neighborhoods is lacking here. New, mixed-use development can bring the jobs and services that the community has highlighted as a priority as well as the user population to support the extension of activity along these commercial corridors.

*Opposite Page - Right (photo):
J station at Alabama Avenue*

*Below (photo):
Vacant sites around Broadway Junction*



Underutilized parcels

Vacant and underutilized lots and buildings offer an opportunity for new development. The concentration of these parcels in proximity to transit access points and along key connectors provides the potential for temporary uses in the short term and new developments for a variety of uses and services at key locations in the long term. For example, a lot under the elevated train tracks between Atlantic Avenue and Herkimer Street along Williams Place is used infrequently by the MTA for vehicle storage and typically lies vacant. This property, which is encumbered by the tracks overhead but provides a unique and potentially appealing setting, could be used for pop-up events such as art festivals, street fairs, performances, and other temporary uses.

Underutilized streets

Many streets in the subarea experience very low traffic volume. Because of the irregular street pattern as different street grids come together, and because of the discontinuities in the grid created by Atlantic Avenue and East New York Avenue, a number of street segments are redundant or not essential for traffic flow, such as Herkimer Street east of Van Sinderen Avenue, and portions of Williams and Alabama Avenues north of Atlantic Avenue. These streets can be explored for demapping and closing to assemble parcels suitable for larger-scale development.

Underutilized public space

Callahan Kelly Playground is located above the Broadway Junction station west of Van Sinderen Avenue. This nearly four acre park contains basketball courts, a playground and fitness equipment. However, the configuration of entrances to the park makes it difficult to access from the station entrance or from many of the surrounding streets. Redesigning this entry way to better integrate the station with the park above, and introducing more housing and commercial uses into the surrounding area, could activate the park and create a more vibrant community gathering place adjacent to a busy subway station. Similarly, a small Greenstreets plot at the intersection of East New York Avenue, Fulton Street and Broadway by the bus hub is not well used and could be re-envisioned to create a more inviting area for waiting bus passengers.



VISION



East New York Avenue at Fulton Street near Broadway Junction.

A major regional destination offering a range of housing, retail and entertainment options, new community institutions and local jobs.



Broadway Junction with streetscape improvements, enhanced open space, and long-term land use changes to promote major mixed-use development.

STRATEGIES

While Broadway Junction is a key node in the citywide and regional transit network with the capacity to become a destination for the surrounding communities, this potential has not been realized. Other transit hubs with similar service levels have developed into thriving activity centers or are the subject of plans for substantial future development, including Court Square in Long Island City, 161st Street in the Bronx, and Jamaica Center. Each of these areas contains a mix of significant civic, institutional, and commercial uses.

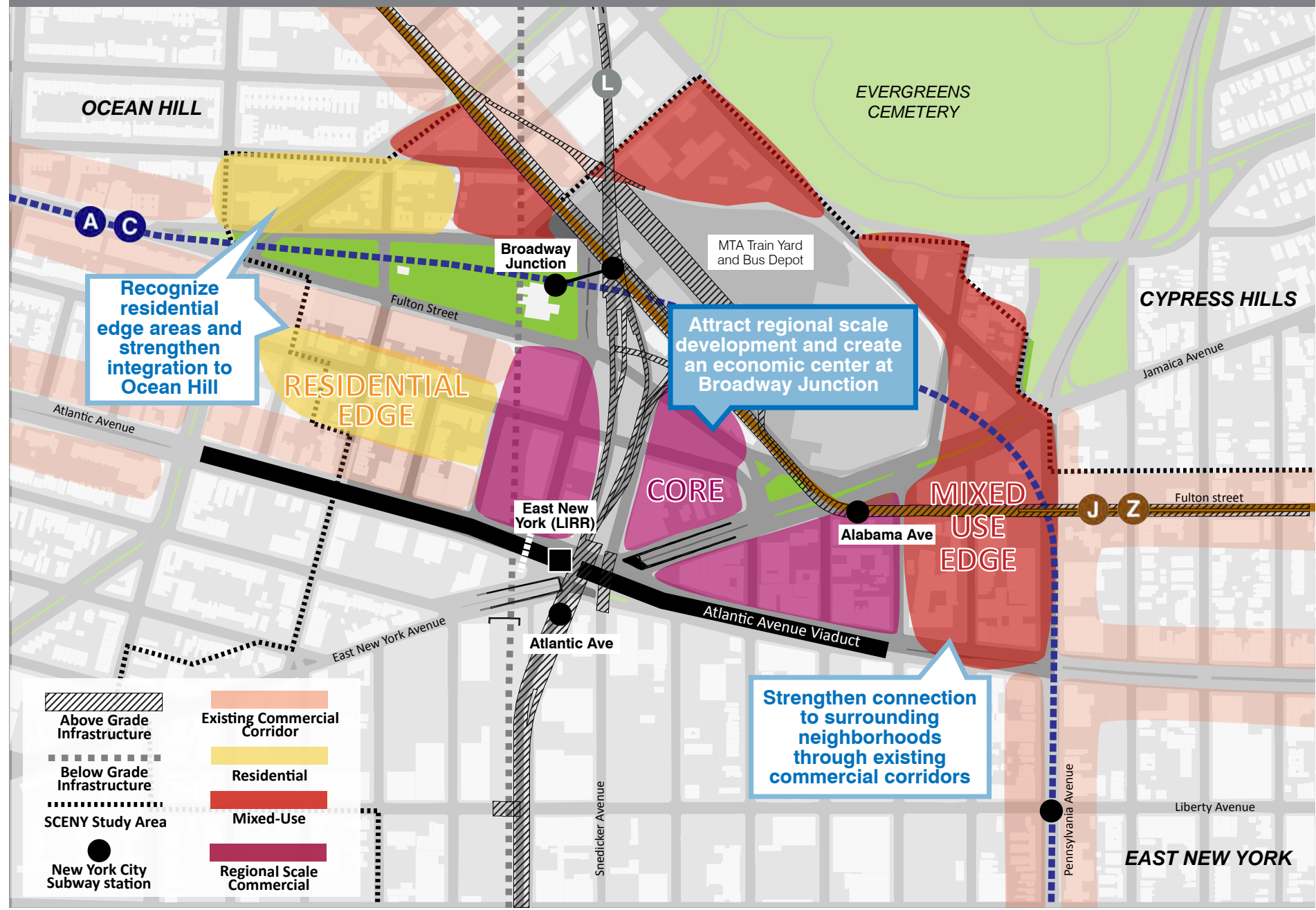
Land use changes supported by public and private investments to attract large-scale mixed-use, mixed-income development could transform Broadway Junction into a regional destination for commercial and institutional uses serving adjoining communities as well as the City and the region. This vision would bring jobs and amenities to the communities of eastern Brooklyn and southwest Queens, increase economic opportunities for residents, reinvigorate underutilized public and private land and foster a safer, more vibrant and livable neighborhood.

However, there are significant challenges to realizing this vision. The lack of a critical mass of residents and active businesses in the area hampers the feasibility of new development. There are few large developable parcels in the area, many properties are encumbered by transit infrastructure and the area lacks a natural champion for its improvement. In order to achieve this multifaceted long-term vision, public agencies, residents, local groups and community leaders will need to work collaboratively to advance the recommendations described here.



Left (photo): Downtown Brooklyn is an area that has seen increased development following an area-wide rezoning, with new housing, a wide range of retail options and office space strengthening its role as a major destination in Brooklyn and the region.

BROADWAY JUNCTION SUBAREA - LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS



A. CREATE A NEW CENTER OF ACTIVITY

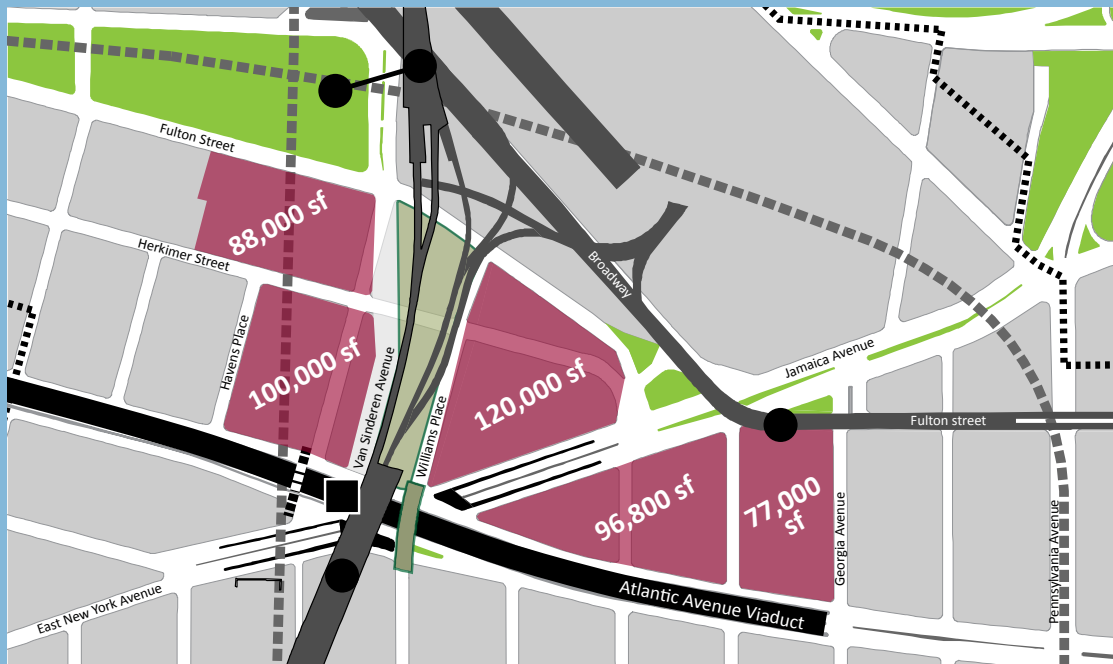
ATTRACT REGIONAL SCALE DEVELOPMENT AND CREATE A NEW ECONOMIC CENTER

In order to enable future self-supporting small- and medium-scale development, an anchor is required at Broadway Junction. This anchor could contain a range of commercial or community facility uses, but the mix of uses should be job-intensive and produce a significant amount of foot traffic to seed the commercial environment. A substantial housing component serving a mix of incomes would support increased activity and help address neighborhood and citywide housing needs. Denser development would be most appropriate within the core blocks of

Broadway Junction. A wide range of uses, including offices, retail, entertainment such as restaurants and movie theaters, as well as institutional and educational uses such as government offices and college campuses, could contribute to making Broadway Junction a new center of activity within the city and the region. The City can support this type of development through regulatory actions including zoning and City Map changes, working with the MTA to identify potential surplus properties, and other measures to support the assemblage of sites sufficient to support economic development, as well as through the use of available incentives for economic development and housing.



*Right (photo):
Atlantic Center in Downtown Brooklyn attracts
shoppers from across the region.*



IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO ASSEMBLE SITES FOR REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT

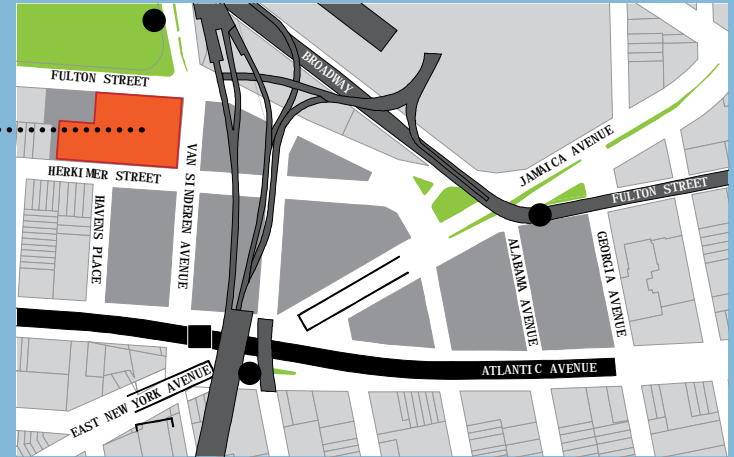
There are no existing single parcels in the core blocks large enough for significant development. Site assemblage will be necessary to create parcels large enough to accommodate regional destinations such as civic or educational institutions or large-scale commercial development. Explore opportunities to reconfigure the irregular street pattern along the central core blocks, particularly for sites with currently limited development opportunities because of existing infrastructure, to allow for improved site assemblage and vehicular and pedestrian movement. Altering the street pattern can improve circulation and ensure the activation of frontages along key pedestrian connectors and the proposed public open space along Williams Place between Atlantic Avenue and Herkimer Street.

*Left (maps):
Illustrative site assemblage scenarios*

Scale comparison of the Broadway Junction Core and other significant facilities

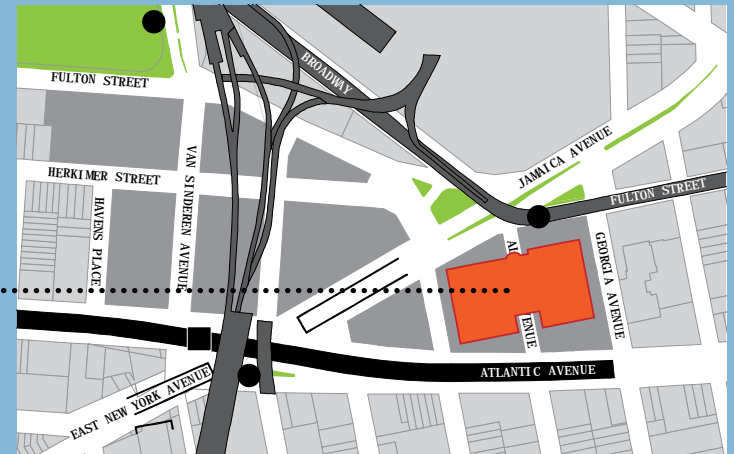
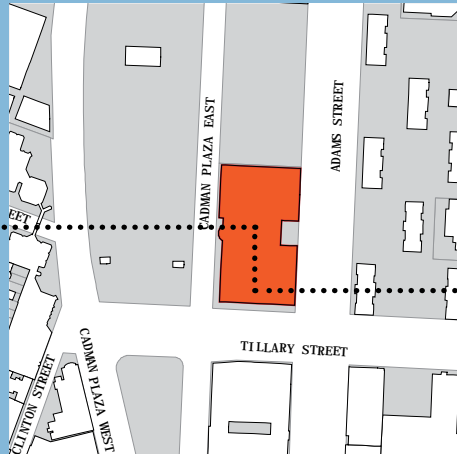
MAGIC THEATRES, HARLEM / 60,000 SF

Movie theater and ground floor retail along 125th Street and Frederick Douglass Boulevard.



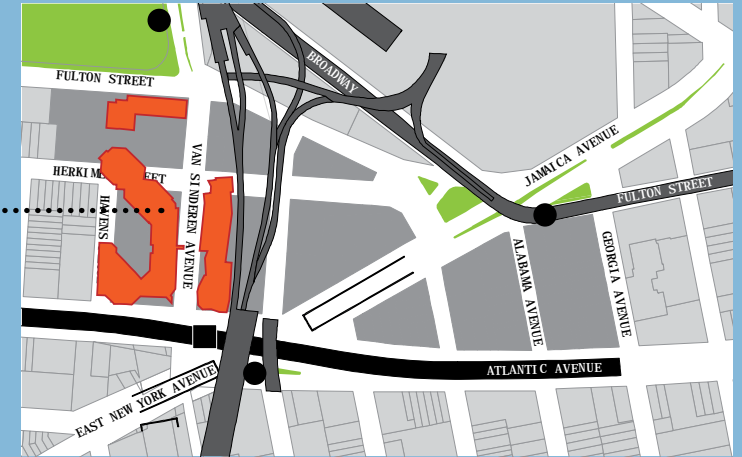
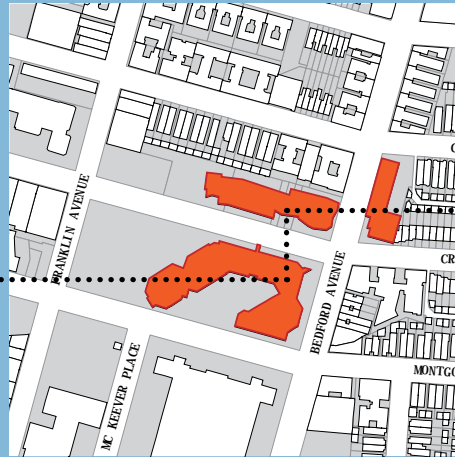
U.S. COURTHOUSE, BROOKLYN / 85,000 SF

Court for the Eastern District of New York. Serves a population of 8 million people throughout the region.



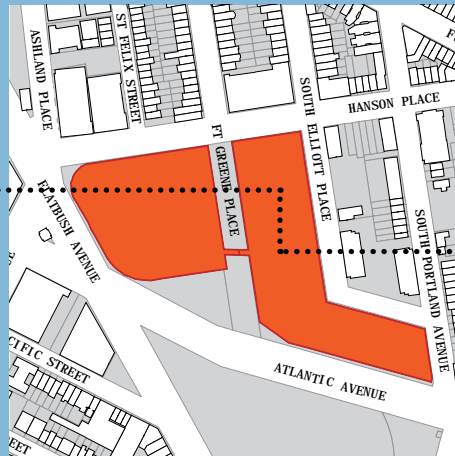
MEDGAR EVERS COLLEGE CAMPUS, BROOKLYN/ 104,000 SF

Urban campus serving over 6,000 enrolled students and offering undergraduate programs in several disciplines including business, education, and nursing.



ATLANTIC CENTER AND ATLANTIC TERMINAL MALL, BROOKLYN / 295,000 SF

Shopping mall, served by local and regional transit, with over 20 stores, also including a supermarket, restaurants, and several private and public offices.



B. IMPROVE STREETSCAPE, CONNECTIONS TO TRANSIT, AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESS TO TRANSIT

Improve pedestrian safety through streetscape interventions, including new crosswalks at strategic locations and street design elements, such as neck downs, bell bollards and new traffic controls, which will slow vehicular traffic to appropriate speeds at key locations.

Maximize transit accessibility by improving the condition of stations in the area, introducing new signage, as well as exploring the feasibility of adding accessibility elements. Consider re-opening the existing entrance to the Broadway Junction subway station along Broadway. While improving overall accessibility to the station, particularly to the J/Z and L lines, this would also help activate portions of Broadway and the neighborhood to the north of the subarea close to residential areas in Ocean

Hill and Bushwick. Consider creating an additional entrance to the station at Fulton Street and Eastern Parkway Extension which would improve access to the station for residents of Ocean Hill.

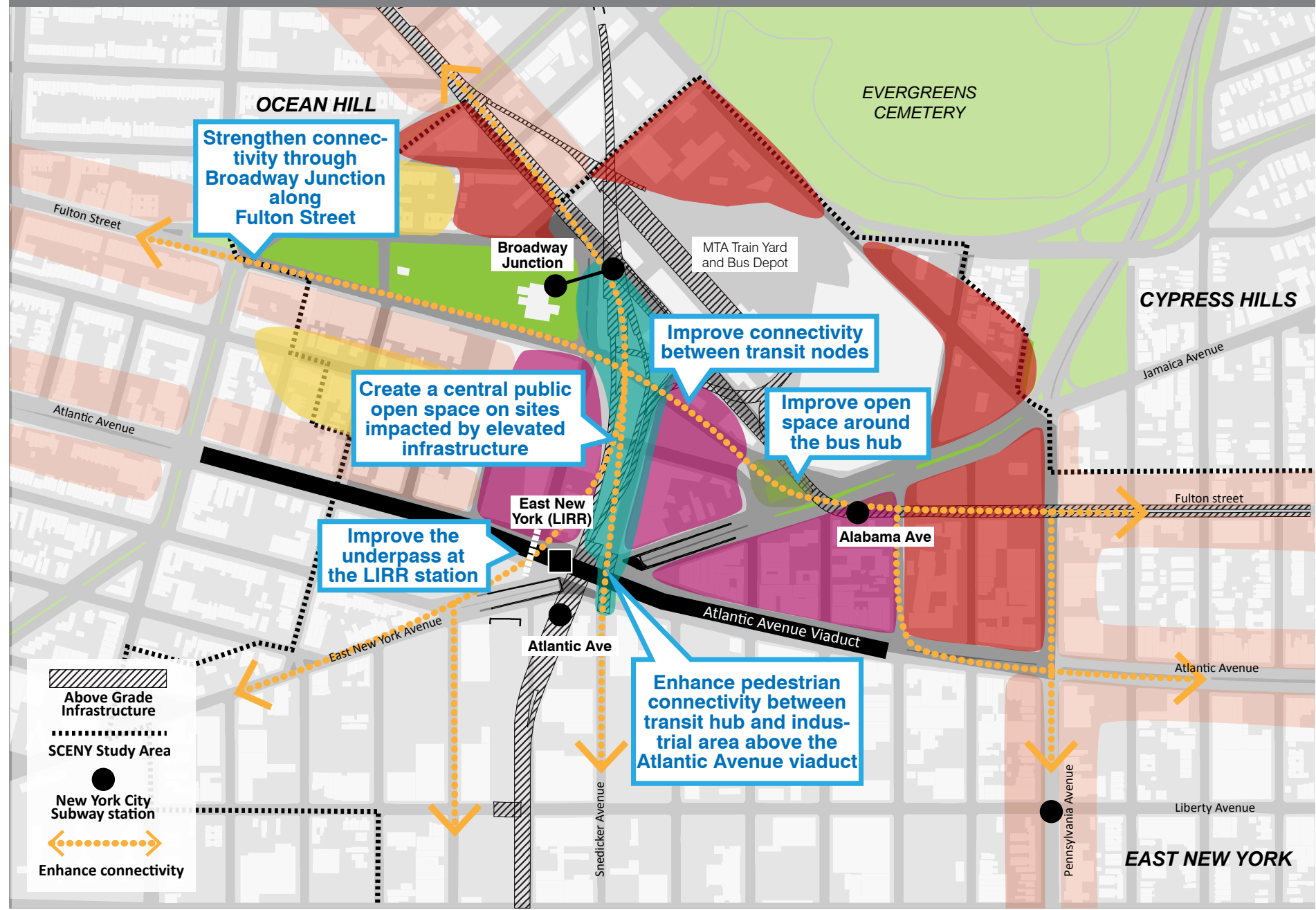
At the East New York LIRR station, improve the quality and safety of the pedestrian underpass below Atlantic Avenue, and increase visibility of main entrances along the Atlantic Avenue service road. Add signage and wayfinding tools to increase visibility of the station and facilitate transfers between modes of transportation.

Consider reopening the stairway entrance to the Atlantic Avenue L train station on the south side of Atlantic Avenue. This would help bridge the divide between the Broadway Junction and Industrial and Business subarea. With potential for development to the east of the L train station, explore the potential for direct access from the station to the second level of a new development.



*Right (photo):
Streetscape improvements enhance connectivity
to transit in Long Island City, Queens.*

BROADWAY JUNCTION SUBAREA - CONNECTIVITY RECOMMENDATIONS



QUEENS PLAZA, Long Island City, Queens



Long Island City is a dynamic neighborhood with one of the largest business districts in the City. However, the area is dominated by a mix of transportation infrastructure, including the Queensboro Bridge, elevated rail tracks and expansive parking lots—altogether known as Queens Plaza. Shortly after the 2001 rezoning, NYCEDC and DCP, working with landscape architect Margie Ruddick, WRT Design and Marpillero Pollack Architects, developed a multi-dimensional plan to transform Queens Plaza into an appealing and dynamic gateway in order to attract residents and businesses by providing new public space and logical transit pathways. The plan, called the Queens Plaza Improvement Project, included a 1.5 acre park, improved corridors and readjusted traffic flows. Intended for leisure and beautification, Dutch Kills Green was also designed to passively guide pedestrians and bicyclists through the neighborhood as well as mitigate the impact of the imposing transit infrastructure. Corridor improvements included nearly 500 tree plantings, new lighting features, improved crosswalks and the installation of benches. Further, protected bicycles lanes were inserted into the existing roadway and are delineated by wide plantings. The improvements have significantly bettered the pedestrian and cyclists connectivity in and around Long Island City.

INVEST IN PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Explore opportunities for new open space in the neighborhood, such as pedestrian plazas and green spaces. Identify opportunities for the conversion of currently underused lots into inviting community gathering spaces. Focus interventions on key locations where they complement other activities, such as the bus hub at the intersection of Fulton Street and Broadway as well as the Callahan-Kelly Playground. The underutilized public space and roadway around the bus hub and MTA depot offer an opportunity for a re-design that could incorporate a public plaza and outdoor seating space for the adjacent diner. This re-imagined space would better serve current transit users and strengthen the relevance of the bus hub while proving an amenity for pedestrians as well as the surrounding businesses. Access to the Callahan-Kelly Playground from surrounding neighborhoods and directly from the Broadway Junction station entrance could be improved. Existing amenities, such as benches, should be improved and opportunities for additional programming should be explored.

IMPROVE STREETSCAPE CONDITIONS

Improving the physical condition of the streetscape in this area would create a safer and more welcoming environment for pedestrians. Widen sidewalks where feasible and ensure that they are regularly cleaned and properly maintained. Plant street trees, improve lighting and introduce wayfinding that will help pedestrians better navigate the area. Where missing and appropriate to support nearby uses, introduce street furniture, such as benches, bus shelters and trash cans. These elements together would create a more inviting environment for pedestrians and would enhance walkability and safety in the neighborhood. Focus interventions, particularly in the short-term, along key connectors such as Fulton Street, and Van Sinderen and East New York Avenues.

IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR RE-USE OF TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Explore the feasibility of re-purposing vacant and underused spaces connected to the transportation infrastructure to activate dead spaces and transform them into new assets for the community. The Design Trust for Public Space is currently developing recommendations for ways to activate public space under elevated tracks in the Broadway Junction area. This project may provide opportunities for local groups, artists, the MTA, and City agencies to launch temporary uses such as art installations, cultural festivals, farmers markets and street fairs on lots

currently limited for development by the overhead infrastructure. Explore long-term opportunities for the creation of a permanent public open space on the MTA-controlled site at Williams Place between Atlantic Avenue and Herkimer Street, which is not suited for development because of its location below elevated transportation infrastructure. Such a space, at the heart of Broadway Junction and surrounded by new development, could provide the neighborhood with a dynamic, programmable public space that generates more pedestrian activity in this area, improving safety and neighborhood perception, and creates a place where the community can come together.



LA MARQUETA, Harlem, Manhattan

[case study]



Image: © Jason Lam <https://flic.kr/p/8qhDtq>

La Marqueta is an example of a multi-dimensional approach to activating space under elevated tracks. Located under the elevated Metro North rail viaduct, La Marqueta was once the Park Avenue Retail Market that closed in 1985. In 2010 the Harlem Community Development Corporation (HCDC) put forth a redevelopment plan for La Marqueta in collaboration with NYCEDC. Building on HCDC's extensive community outreach and planning, NYCEDC developed a new vision that would transform La Marqueta into a center for innovation and workforce development while leveraging the area's rich history of food selling and manufacturing. In partnership with New York City Council, NYCEDC issued a RFP for a commercial kitchen incubator in Building 4, a permanent structure under the tracks. The incubator, with business development services, wholesale space and a retail market, supports food start-ups, with the goal of creating an economic engine for La Marqueta, the neighborhood and the City. The NYCEDC incubator has attracted many entrepreneurially-minded residents to La Marqueta and the space under the tracks. Opened every Sunday from June to October, Flea Marqueta also features entertainment and community events, including free dance classes and pop-up parks.

C. CONNECT TO THE SURROUNDING NEIGHBOR- HOODS

APPLY APPROPRIATE ZONING TO EXISTING RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The western portion of the subarea is characterized by long-standing residential blocks, particularly to the west of Sackman Street and north of Fulton Street. These blocks currently lie within a zoning district designated for manufacturing uses. Changing the zoning to a residential district would recognize the current uses, allow new housing and require new buildings to be consistent in form with the existing built environment. This will prevent out-of-context development and will also strengthen the integration of this portion of Ocean Hill with the rest of the neighborhood and Broadway Junction.

STRENGTHEN CONNECTION TO EAST NEW YORK AND CYPRESS HILLS ALONG COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

Allow for a mix of uses, including commercial and residential uses, along the major commercial corridors, particularly along Broadway and Bushwick Avenue to the west and Atlantic Avenue, Fulton Street and Pennsylvania Avenue to the east. This will promote retail continuity and activity along these commercial streets, as well as establish a stronger link between the neighborhoods that converge around Broadway Junction. A diverse mix of uses, such as supermarkets, retail stores, entertainment and community facilities, particularly along major commercial streets, would enable area residents to access retail and services within their neighborhood.

Integrate residential edge with adjacent Ocean Hill neighborhood



Strengthen mixed-use edge along commercial corridors



Redevelop central blocks at the core of Broadway Junction





Above (photo):
An example of mixed-use development along transit in Harlem.



Below (photo):
Open space at MetroTech Center in Downtown Brooklyn.

CATALYST PROJECT:

Under the Elevated

An underused site owned by the MTA on Williams Place between Atlantic Avenue and Herkimer Street may provide opportunities for temporary uses such as art installations, cultural festivals, farmers markets and street fairs. In the long-term the space may become a permanent public open space. Such

a public space, at the heart of Broadway Junction and surrounded by new development, could provide the neighborhood with a dynamic, programmable public space that generates more pedestrian activity in this area, improving safety and neighborhood perception.



Site on Williams Place between Atlantic Avenue and Herkimer Street today

A public space for community gatherings



Potential use of this site as a space for temporary community events



SUSTAINABILITY VI



SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is a key value for residents and community-based organizations in East New York. The area is home to one of the most active and vibrant networks of community gardens in the City. These gardens serve as an important source of food security for residents, as well as a means of converting vacant land to an active green use while building community ties. Community organizations, such as the Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation have utilized green building practices such as solar collectors in their developments

and actively promote green retrofits and energy efficiency measures. The Cypress Hills Community School, which opened in 2010, is a green building featuring an educational greenhouse.

At the same time, there is room to strengthen the area's connections to open space, reduce energy and resource usage, and provide access to more fresh food in order to create a cleaner, healthier environment for East New York residents. On some neighborhood streets, a lack of street

trees creates bleak streetscapes and exacerbates problems such as stormwater run-off and the urban heat island effect. Despite the presence of local community gardens, many residents lack sufficient access to healthy food options as few full-service grocery stores are found in the area. The area is also home to a number of brownfield sites, vacant or underutilized properties which may need environmental remediation to remove pollutants from the soil, but could also serve as an opportunity for transit-oriented development.

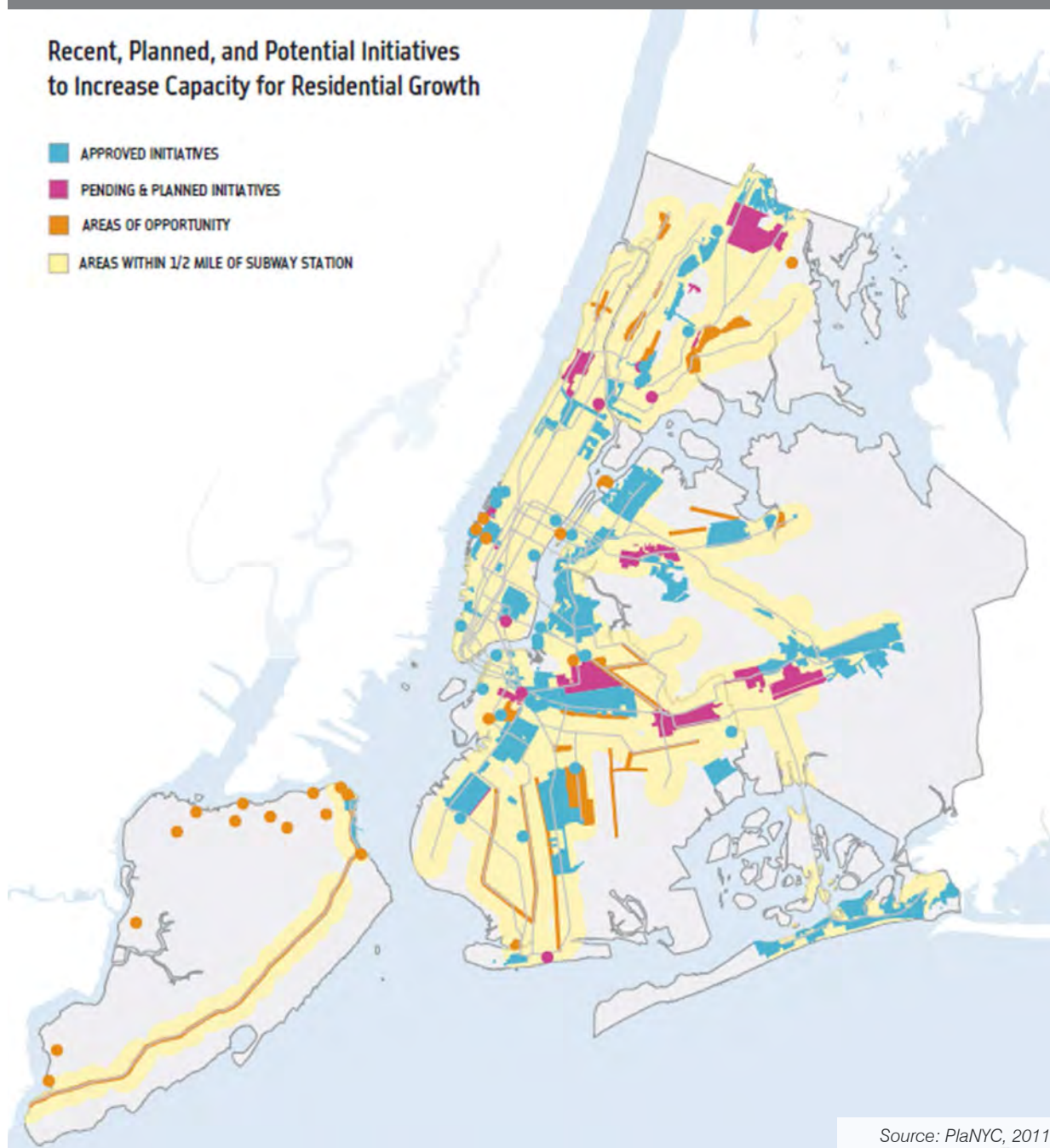


*Left (photo):
Community gardeners in East New York with their harvest.*

POTENTIAL FOR TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Recent, Planned, and Potential Initiatives to Increase Capacity for Residential Growth

- APPROVED INITIATIVES
- PENDING & PLANNED INITIATIVES
- AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY
- AREAS WITHIN 1/2 MILE OF SUBWAY STATION



Source: PlaNYC, 2011

PlaNYC

New York City made a strong commitment to sustainability with the release of PlaNYC in 2007. This plan, along with subsequent updates, serves as the city's strategic plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve the city's environmental performance in areas such as access to parks, water quality, recycling and composting, and brownfield redevelopment. One of the central goals of this plan was to promote transit-oriented development by creating new housing opportunities within a half-mile of subway stations. Numerous city agencies have developed strategic plans to meet the sustainability objectives set forth in PlaNYC, such as the Department of Environmental Protection's Green Infrastructure Plan. The Departments of Health and City Planning have worked together to establish Active Design Guidelines and the FRESH program which promotes supermarkets in underserved neighborhoods. DCP has recently passed Zone Green which updated the zoning code to allow greater flexibility for the use of green building practices such as solar energy, wall insulation, and green roofs. These initiatives have provided numerous tools for green neighborhood planning across the city; coordinating these existing plans and programs as well as community efforts in East New York can enhance the neighborhood's environmental performance to become a greener, healthier community.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Existing buildings and new development have a large effect on a community's environmental performance. Development that is close to transit and local shops and services can decrease the use of cars, and related carbon emissions. Buildings constructed or retrofitted with green building technologies such as increased insulation, solar panels, and water conserving plumbing can reduce energy and water usage.

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

The principle of transit-oriented development, which seeks to promote greater transit usage and reduced auto dependency by aligning development patterns with existing and new transit networks, is at the root of the Sustainable Communities East New York study. Varied retail offerings and a mix of uses are a key part of livable communities, providing destinations within walking distance and reducing the need for vehicle trips outside the neighborhood.

Opportunities:

- Implement land use and transportation recommendations of this study to enable transit-oriented development that capitalizes on the existing transit resources in East New York.
- Support Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation's efforts to plan for mixed-use redevelopment on significant sites close to transit.

BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT

Brownfields are vacant or underutilized properties that often need environmental remediation to address historic pollution before they can be redeveloped. East New York is home to a cluster of brownfields that have the potential for reuse with proper remediation. Conducting necessary environmental clean-up will allow these sites to be redeveloped as more productive uses in conjunction with land use planning for the area. The East New York Community Brownfield Planning District has been designated as a pilot area for coordination between the Office of Environmental Remediation (OER) and DCP. Additionally, Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation, is currently in Phase II of planning for the redevelopment of strategic sites in the area as part of a New York State Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) grant.

Opportunities:

- Continue partnership with OER to identify and promote the remediation of brownfields.
- Support Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation's efforts to promote redevelopment opportunities on brownfield sites as part of its BOA grant.



Above (photo):
New Lots Plaza provides housing in proximity to transit and retail.

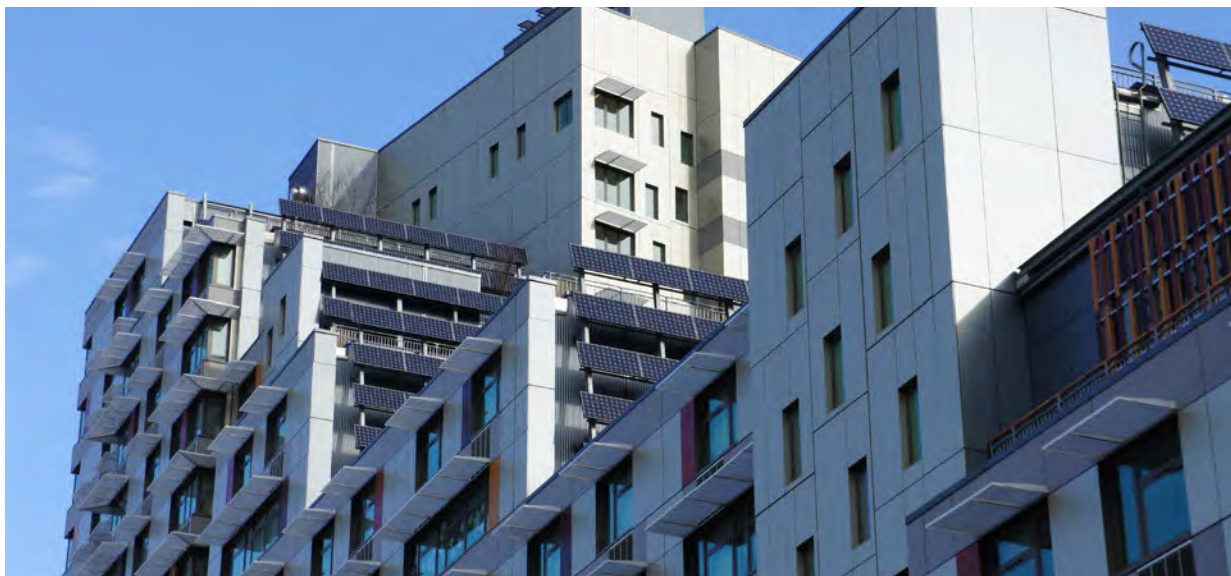
GREEN BUILDING

Green buildings can promote environmental quality in many ways, including conserving energy and water, producing renewable energy, and supporting the urban forest and habitat. The Greener, Greater Buildings Law, established in 2010 updated New York City's building code to require more stringent green building practices including energy audits and benchmarking of larger buildings. New development spurred by land use changes in the study area will comply with recently upgraded energy code requirements, and offer an opportunity to incorporate further green building practices. In addition, Zone Green, a set of changes to the Zoning Resolution recently initiated by DCP, provides greater flexibility for innovative green building practices such as rooftop solar, green roofs, increased insulation, and passive solar shading devices.

East New York falls into the Greenpoint-Gateway Solar Empowerment Zone, one of five such zones citywide in which special benefits are available to support the installation of solar panels for electricity as well as hot water. These zones were designated in areas where solar energy production is most feasible and most important to the electric grid. Greater adoption of solar power will reduce carbon emissions and pollution and reduce costs for residential and commercial building owners and tenants.

Opportunities:

- Continue to promote adoption of solar energy within East New York.
- Promote the incorporation of green building practices into new developments to reduce energy usage as well as operating costs.



Above (photo):
Solar Panels at Via Verde in the Bronx

DUMONT GREEN East New York, Brooklyn

[case study]



Dumont Green provides energy efficient, affordable housing for families in East New York, Brooklyn. Most notably, it features solar panels on the roof capable of producing 80,500 watts of energy, the largest solar system on a multifamily development to date when the project was completed in 2011. This renewable, non-polluting energy source provides 80% of the power needed for common areas such as the lobby, hallways, and laundry room. As well, units feature energy efficient appliances, which reduce energy usage as well as monthly costs for tenants.

All 176 units are affordable to households earning up to 60% of area median income (\$51,540 for a family of four), providing much needed housing for low-income families. Thirty six units are designated for formerly homeless individuals, with on-site support services.

This project was developed through a partnership between NYC Housing Preservation & Development, NYC Housing Development Corporation, Hudson Companies, and Bank of America. NY State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) provided funding for investments in energy efficiency and the solar energy system.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green infrastructure refers to landscape interventions such as trees, bioswales, green roofs and bluebelts that can provide many of the functions of traditional “grey infrastructure” by helping remove pollutants from the air and water. Green infrastructure also often has added recreational and aesthetic benefits.

STREET TREES

Trees provide shade, which mitigates the urban heat island effect and reduces the amount of energy used for cooling, lowering both the cost of cooling and greenhouse gas emissions. The New York City Department of Parks & Recreation estimates that

each street tree reduces energy costs by \$50 per year. In addition, street trees filter harmful pollutants such as ozone, sulfur dioxide and particulate matter from the air. This is particularly relevant for East New York, where the rate of asthma hospitalization among children and adults is 80 percent higher than the average for New York City. While many factors contribute to asthma, additional street trees could help remove asthma-triggering pollutants from the air. Street trees also retain and filter stormwater, and have been found to increase property values.

East New York has been designated as one of six Trees for Public Health priority neighborhoods by

MillionTreesNYC, based on its high asthma rate and low tree canopy coverage as compared to other areas of the city. As part of this designation, the Department of Parks and Recreation developed an urban forestry management plan for the neighborhood which aims to increase the urban tree canopy.

Opportunities:

- Continue to implement the goals of DPR’s urban forest management plan for East New York, including establishing a “Friends of the Trees” community-based organization to assist in maintenance of trees.
- Encourage local businesses and schools to act as stewards for street trees along commercial corridors.



*Left (photo):
Street trees on Atlantic Avenue provide shade and other benefits.*

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Green infrastructure can help manage stormwater and is often more cost-effective than traditional “grey infrastructure” – which collects and transports sanitary sewage and stormwater via pipes to treatment plants and outfalls. Many parts of New York City are served by a combined sewer system, where sanitary sewage and stormwater are transported together to plants for treatment before it is discharged into waterways. However, during precipitation events such as rainstorms, the sewer system can become overcharged with stormwater. When the volume of combined sewage exceeds the capacity of treatment plants, a portion of it is discharged directly into waterways. This flow of untreated sewage along with stormwater is known as a combined sewer overflow, or CSO, event. CSO events can have a negative effect on water quality and recreational activity.

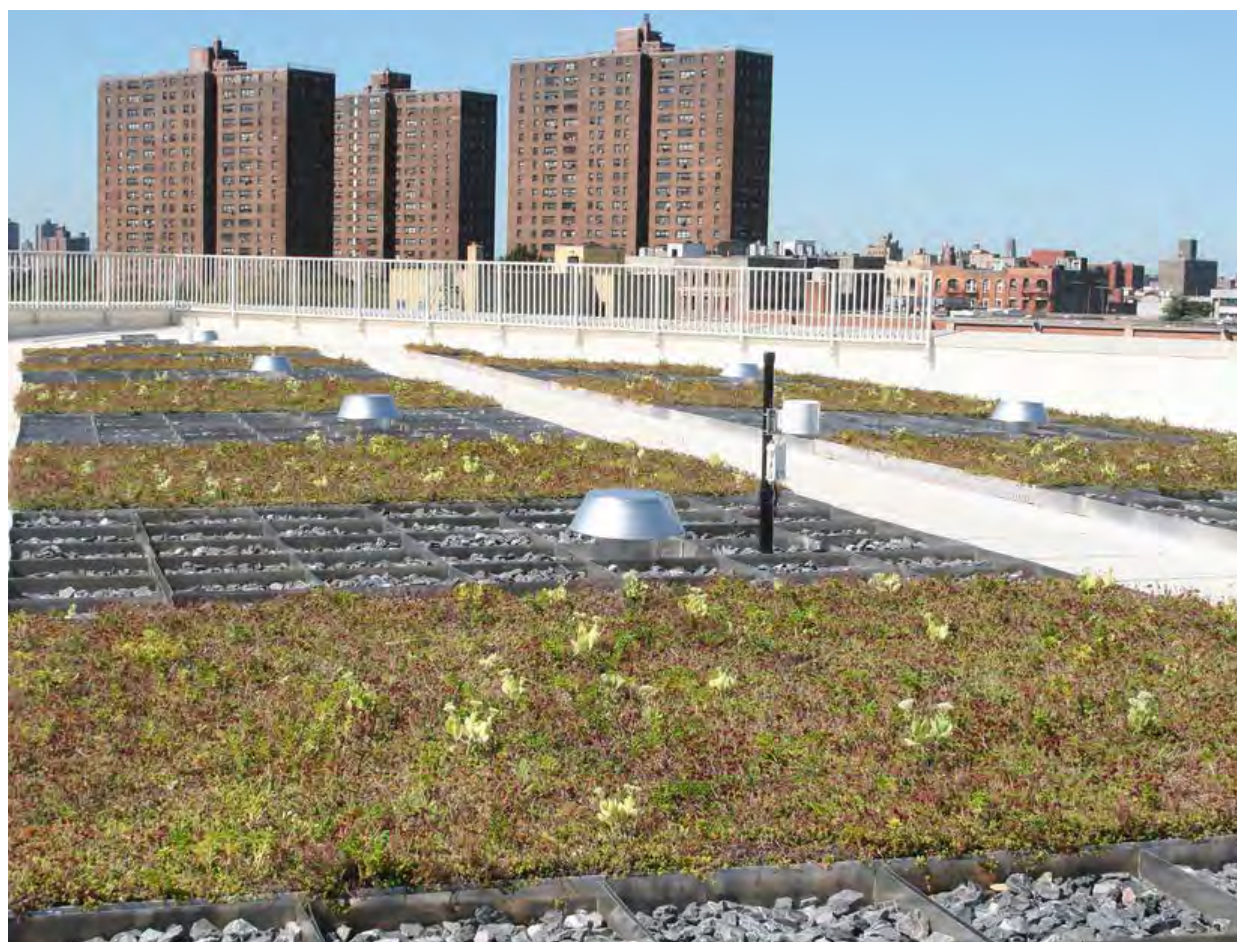
Green infrastructure such as bioswales and green roofs retain (absorb) or detain (slow the flow of) stormwater, which reduces the volume of water flowing through the combined sewer system during storms and reduces the risk of an overflow event. These measures also filter pollutants from stormwater naturally, reducing the cost of treatment at plants. Green infrastructure can also provide aesthetic and recreational benefits. The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has developed a Green Infrastructure Plan to incorporate green infrastructure as a central strategy to manage the city’s stormwater and reduce the number of CSO events.

East New York is part of the Jamaica Bay watershed, and is served by a combined sewer system. Jamaica Bay is a critical natural resource, home to a large and complex marine ecosystem which supports numerous aquatic and bird species. The Jamaica Bay watershed has been designated a priority watershed by DEP, which has initiated a pilot program to introduce green infrastructure elements such as right-of way bioswales.

Below (photo):

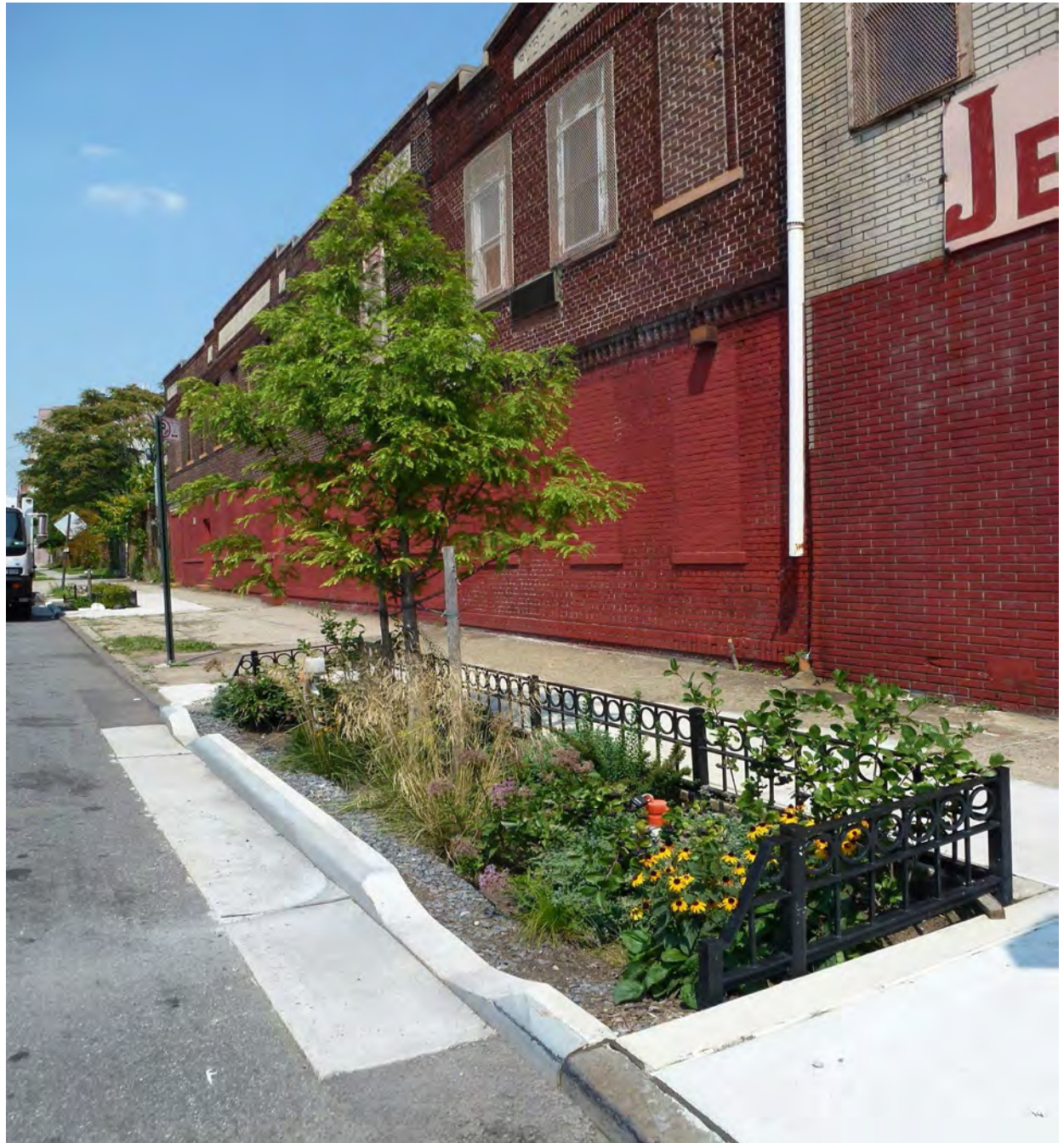
This blue and green roof constructed on the offices of Osborne Association, a non-profit in the South Bronx, and partly funded through a DEP Green Infrastructure Grant, will treat 100,000 gallons of stormwater annually, thereby improving water quality in the East River.

Image: © NYC Department of Environmental Protection



Opportunities:

- Continue to implement green infrastructure measures such as enhanced tree pits and bioswales where feasible within public rights-of-way and other available public property such as parks and schoolyards.
- Local community organizations may apply for a DEP Green Infrastructure grant for a large-scale project such as a green roof, which can serve as a demonstration site for the neighborhood. Encourage wider adoption of green infrastructure practices such as green roofs, bioswales and rain gardens on residential properties and community facilities.
- Green infrastructure practices in the industrial area can mitigate potential pollution sources and the large expanses of impervious surface found there. The Department of City Planning's Open Industrial Uses Study is identifying best practices for stormwater management and pollution prevention that can be incorporated into new and existing open industrial facilities. In addition, the large, flat roofs of warehouses are often suitable for green or blue roofs, and parking lots can be retrofitted with bioswales or pervious pavement.



*Right (photo):
A bioswale in the East New York IBZ helps filter stormwater.*

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Reducing the amount of waste destined for landfills by recycling and composting is an important way to conserve resources. PlaNYC has set a goal to divert 75 percent of New York City's solid waste from landfills by increasing rates of recycling and composting. The current waste capture rate (the portion of recyclable materials which are actually recycled) in Brooklyn Community District 5 (encompassing East New York) is 28 percent, as compared to the Brooklyn-wide rate of 41 percent. This demonstrates that there are significant gains to be made in increasing the recycling rate in East New York. In addition, the Department of Sanitation (DSNY) has recently piloted new programs in limited areas to collect organic waste (food scraps) for recycling.

Opportunities:

- Education campaigns at schools, churches and other community centers can encourage recycling.
- Local schools, institutions and multi-family buildings can enroll in the organic waste collection pilot program, and community gardens can become sites for compost collection. Following the results of DSNY's pilot, expansion of the residential organics collection program to East New York can be explored.
- Special events such as Grow NYC's Stop n' Shop can promote material reuse and provide needed household goods for residents.



Right (photo):
Building compost bins at Padre Plaza in the Bronx, NYC
Compost Project, funded and managed by NYC Dept of
Sanitation, Bureau of Waste Prevention, Reuse and Recycling
Image: © NYC Recycles, Department of Sanitation

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Many of the same qualities that support a clean environment also support a healthy community. Neighborhoods with access to parks and open space experience environmental benefits as well as opportunities for physical activity for residents. Gardens that produce wholesome fresh food can support the quality of the environment as well as balanced choices and personal nutrition.

PARKS & OPEN SPACE

East New York is close to neighborhood parks, with most of the study area falling within a quarter-mile, or roughly a five-minute walk, of a local park, and the entire study area falling within a half-mile (10-minute walk) from a park. Area parks include: Callahan-Kelly Playground, Grace Playground, Sperandeo Brothers Playground and City Line Park. These parks consist largely of paved playgrounds, ball fields and sports facilities, offering various options for active recreation. However, these parks provide few natural areas or options for passive recreation such as walking.

The study area is also a half mile from Highland Park and about one and a half miles from Gateway National Recreation Area, regional parks that offer an array of recreational opportunities and natural areas. Recent improvements to pathways around the reservoir will expand recreational opportunities at Highland Park. Future parkland to be opened at the former Pennsylvania and Fountain Avenue landfills as part of the Gateway National Recreation



Area will provide additional open space and bring the communities of East New York closer to recreational opportunities.

Opportunities:

- Proposed streetscape and pedestrian improvements within the study area would improve area residents' access to Highland Park and other significant open space resources.
- With its location just above and adjacent to the Broadway Junction station, Callahan-Kelly Playground has the potential to serve as a central community gathering spot. However, the park is elevated above street level and the station exit, and access to the park is not inviting. Access could be improved with a redesign of the park entrance. See Broadway Junction subarea chapter for detailed recommendations.
- Additional programming at neighborhood parks could promote greater use among diverse demographic groups such as seniors.
- Implement greenways, wayfinding signs and streetscape improvements along key access points to improve access to regional parks including Highland Park and the Jamaica Bay unit of Gateway National Recreation Area.
- The updated General Management Plan for Gateway National Recreation Area seeks to make this natural area more accessible to surrounding communities with additional access points and recreational opportunities.



*Right (photo):
Grace Playground on Pitkin Avenue provides recreational space.*

VANDERBILT AVENUE Brooklyn



Image: © NYC Department of Transportation

Vanderbilt Avenue is a major connector between northern Brooklyn and Grand Army Plaza—the primary entrance to Prospect Park, the Brooklyn Museum, the Brooklyn Library and other attractions. It has also seen many bicycle fatalities and other serious injuries. In 2008, the NYC Department of Transportation developed a plan to 1) improve the bike corridor along Vanderbilt as part of PlaNYC's greener transportation network proposal, 2) improve pedestrian comfort and safety, 3) calm traffic for all users and 4) improve the streetscape.

The plan included dedicated bicycle lanes, new signs and markings, construction of landscaped islands, raised medians and new plantings on medians and sidewalks. As a result, cyclists no longer ride in the "door zone" and Vanderbilt Avenue, a vibrant commercial corridor, is better suited to sustain and support these businesses as a green and walkable avenue.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Active transportation – biking and walking – has public health as well as environmental benefits. Active transportation is human powered – thus it reduces energy consumption and associated carbon emissions. It also provides physical activity which can improve physical and mental well-being.

Improved streetscape conditions in East New York as recommended throughout this report will enhance neighborhood walkability by making streets safer and more attractive. DOT has recently implemented new bike lanes in the neighborhood, providing another transportation option for residents. Making walking and bicycling safer will encourage more residents to use these modes of transportation, particularly younger and older community members.

Opportunities:

- Implement streetscape improvements described in earlier chapters to increase pedestrian safety, particularly along Atlantic Avenue and other key corridors.
- Continue to strengthen neighborhood bike network. DOT has recently added bike lanes and routes within the neighborhood, including on Pitkin Avenue. Continue to add additional facilities for bikers along these routes and expand the network to include additional streets.
- Biking classes, demonstrations and group rides can make biking a safer and more attractive transportation choice for local residents.
- Extending the Brooklyn-Queens Greenway to Jamaica Bay would connect East New York to additional recreational opportunities and natural areas.



HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS

The consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables has been shown to lower risk for chronic health issues like obesity and diabetes. However, in some neighborhoods, there are few places to purchase fresh produce. East New York has one of the lowest levels of grocery store area per person (.2 square feet) of any high-needs neighborhood studied by the Department of City Planning. This is lower than both the citywide average of 1.5 square feet/person, and the average of .8 square feet/person for other high-needs neighborhoods. The lack of full-service grocery stores limits access to fresh foods and forces residents to shop outside the neighborhood. The same study found that based on population and retail demand, there is potential to support 84,000 additional square feet of grocery store retail space in East New York (i.e. more than four 20,000 sq foot stores). East New York has been designated as part of the FRESH incentive zone, meaning that qualified grocery stores that wish to open in the area can seek zoning and tax incentives. Additional grocery stores would have a positive impact not only on public health, but would also generate economic growth and jobs.

East New York is also home to one of highest concentrations of community gardens in the city. Gardens are an important local food source and community asset. However, some residents report that gardens are dwindling as community members who have maintained the gardens age.

Opportunities:

- Continue to market FRESH incentives within East New York to increase the number of full-service grocery stores selling fresh produce in the neighborhood.
- Identify opportunities to establish a farmers market at an available, accessible location.
- Continue to promote the enrollment of local stores in the Department of Health's Healthy Bodega program, which encourages bodega owners to stock health items like produce and low fat milk.
- School-based programs such as the greenhouse at Cypress Hills School can help educate the next generation of urban gardeners.

*Left (photo):
NYC Department of Transportation provides
safe biking classes for kids.
Image: © NYC Department of Transportation*

FRESH MARKET, Morrisania, Bronx

[case study]



The FRESH program seeks to promote the development of full-service grocery stores in currently underserved neighborhoods around the city. To receive FRESH Food Store certification, store owners must guarantee that the store will devote a minimum of 30% of total floor area to fresh foods (dairy, meat, frozen foods, produce), including a minimum of 500 square feet for fresh produce.

This Associated market on Third Avenue in the Bronx was built using FRESH financial and zoning incentives. The financial incentives, in the form of tax exemptions, allowed the market operator to enter a market which otherwise may not have been financially feasible. Zoning incentives allowed the market to develop at a size larger than is typically allowed in the manufacturing zoning district in which it is located, and reduced the amount of required parking. The grocery store was built on the ground level of Las Casas, a 227 unit affordable housing development. The store provides access to fresh food for residents of the development as well as the surrounding Morrisania neighborhood.



THE FUTURE OF EAST NEW YORK

VII



THE FUTURE OF EAST NEW YORK

The recommendations outlined here, developed in close collaboration with the community of East New York and Cypress Hills, lay out a vision for the future of the study area. The recommendations respond to community priorities to create more housing and economic opportunity, provide more shopping options within the neighborhood, create a more attractive and safer streetscape, provide more recreational opportunities and make East New York and Cypress Hills a greener, healthier place.

While the study area has been examined as three distinct subareas, the recommendations for all three areas work in concert to support a holistic vision for a complete, livable neighborhood that provides housing, jobs, transit, goods and services, and a healthy and safe environment.

For the residential and mixed-use areas in East New York and Cypress Hills east of Pennsylvania Avenue, residents have identified mixed-income and affordable housing, as well as better retail options, as priorities. This study's vision addresses these goals by laying out a vision for neighborhood land use that allows for growth along key corridors while preserving primarily residential areas. By promoting housing at higher densities along transit corridors as appropriate, allowing new residential development in additional areas, and making use

of the range of available programs to support affordable housing, East New York can provide opportunity for new housing that meets the needs of residents at various income levels and of various household types. New housing will allow East New York to retain current residents as well as continue to accommodate a growing population within the community. As the local population grows, so too will demand for grocery stores, restaurants, household goods and other types of stores and service providers, which are currently in limited supply within the area. Increased retail activity will provide jobs and activate street life. In turn, more activity on the streets along with improvements to the conditions of major corridors will make East New York a healthier, safer place to live and work.

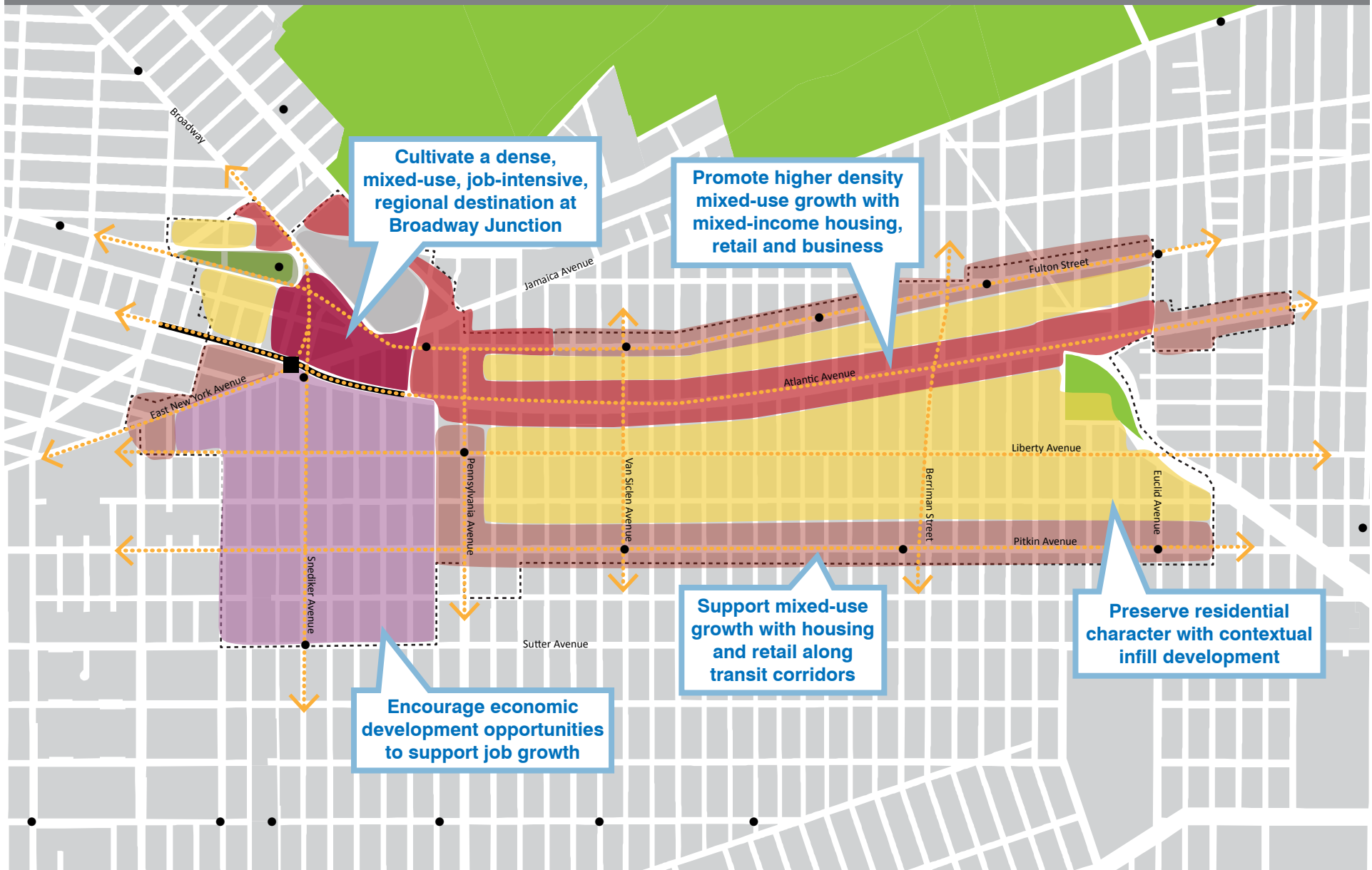
The Industrial and Business area, which currently divides the neighborhoods of East New York, Cypress Hills, Bushwick, Ocean Hill and Brownsville from each other with inactive uses, imposing buildings and desolate character, will instead connect these neighborhoods together with more attractive and safer streets. The Industrial and Business area will become a richer source of employment, economic opportunity and retail services for area residents by encouraging a more diverse mix of commercial and industrial uses.

Broadway Junction's robust transit resources create a unique opportunity to establish a regional destination with retail, educational, or institutional uses as well as housing, to serve as an economic engine, create job opportunities and capitalize on the area's accessibility from the adjacent neighborhoods, the city and the region. Land use changes and streetscape improvements will connect the neighborhoods surrounding Broadway Junction to the transit assets there.

Achieving the vision for East New York set out in this report will require collaborative action on the part of city agencies, community leaders, elected officials, local businesses and other stakeholders. While some of these recommendations can be achieved in the near future, others call for long-term commitment.

While some implementation funds have been secured, such as a Brownfield Opportunity Areas Step 3 grant from New York State to support a neighborhood rezoning, and funding from City Council to support streetscape improvements on Atlantic Avenue, for other action items funding must be sought.

OVERVIEW OF STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS



- Preserve residential character
- Higher density mixed-use growth
- Industrial and business uses
- Open space
- Mixed-use growth along transit corridors
- Regional scale development
- MTA Train Yard and Bus Depot
- New York City Subway Station
- LIRR Station
- Enhance connectivity through the neighborhood

