

INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS SUBAREA

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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

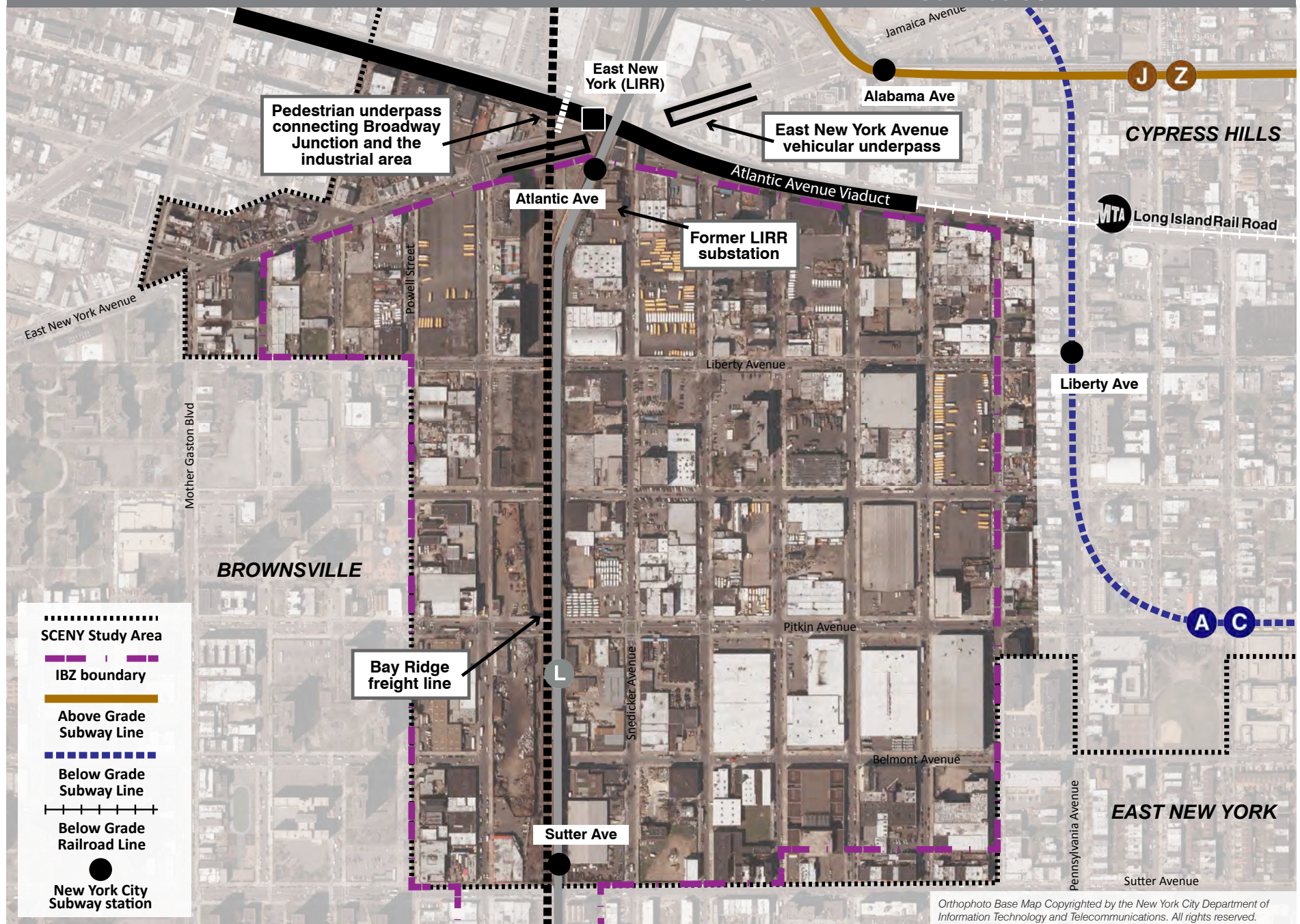
found throughout the City, and one of six in Brooklyn. This designation serves to support industrial businesses by providing services to area firms and tax incentives for businesses locating there. The portion of the East New York IBZ south of Sutter Avenue, the southern boundary of our study, was not 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.

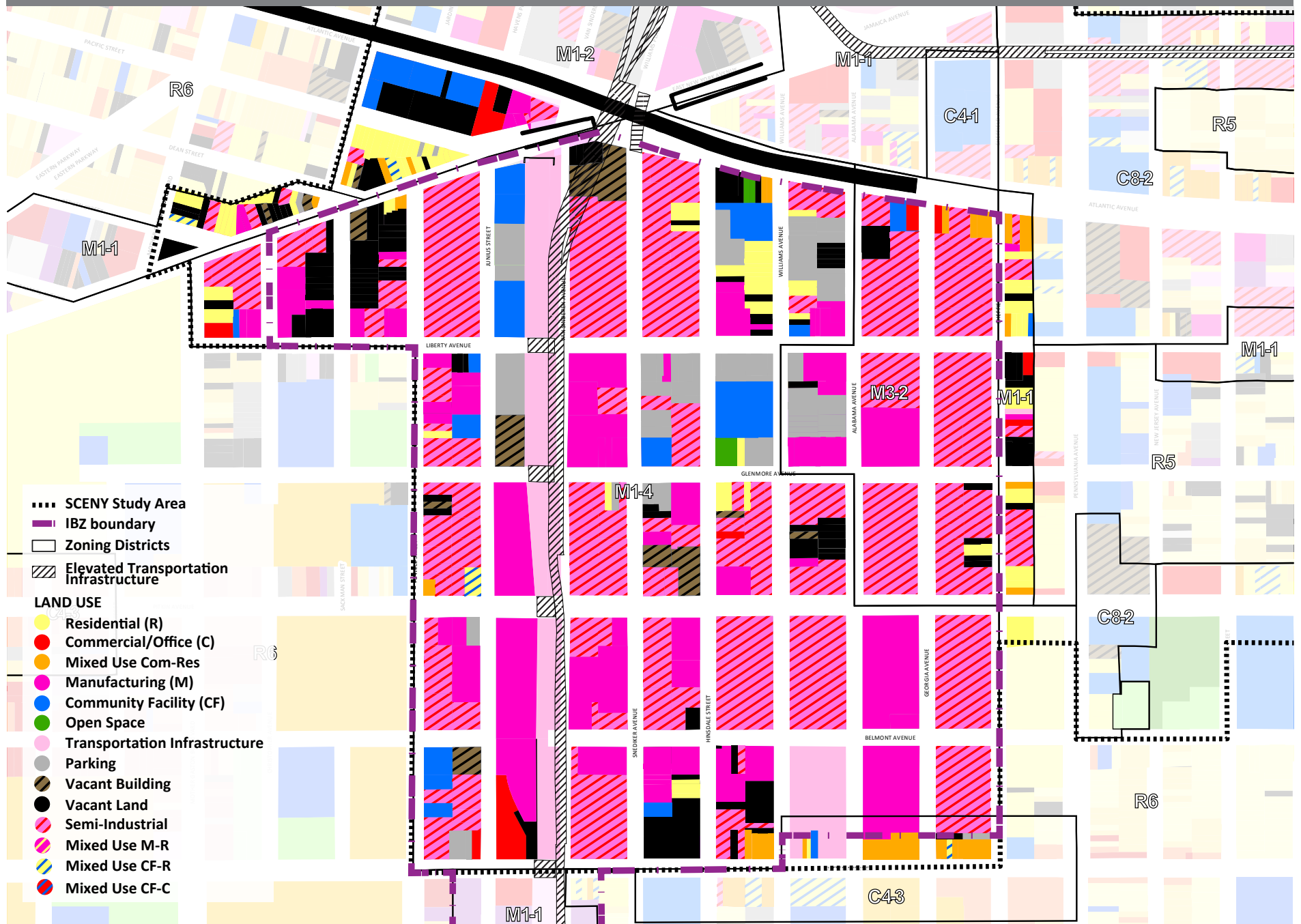


Above (photo): Bus parking is a common semi-industrial land use in the subarea.



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.

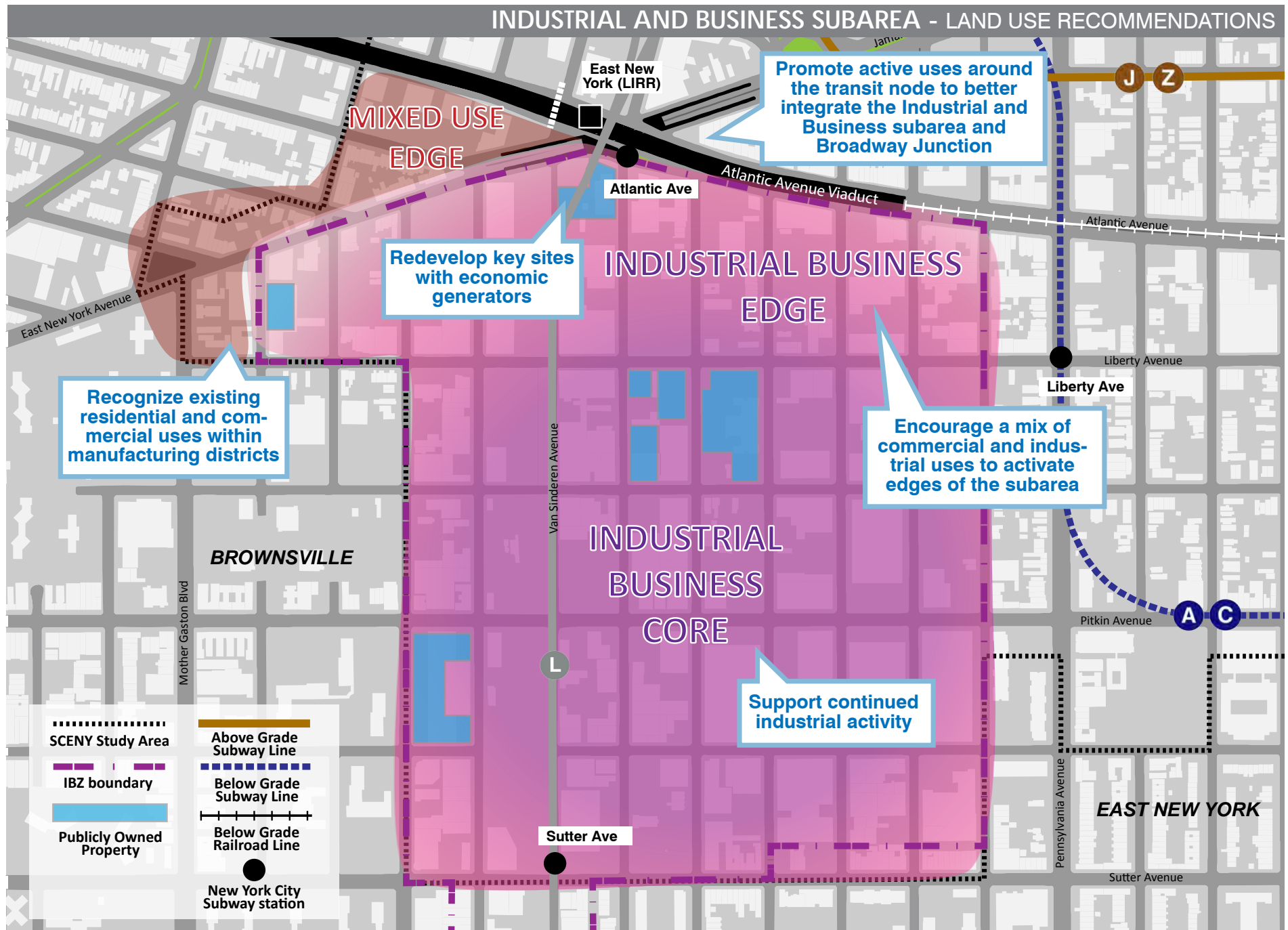
STRATEGIES

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

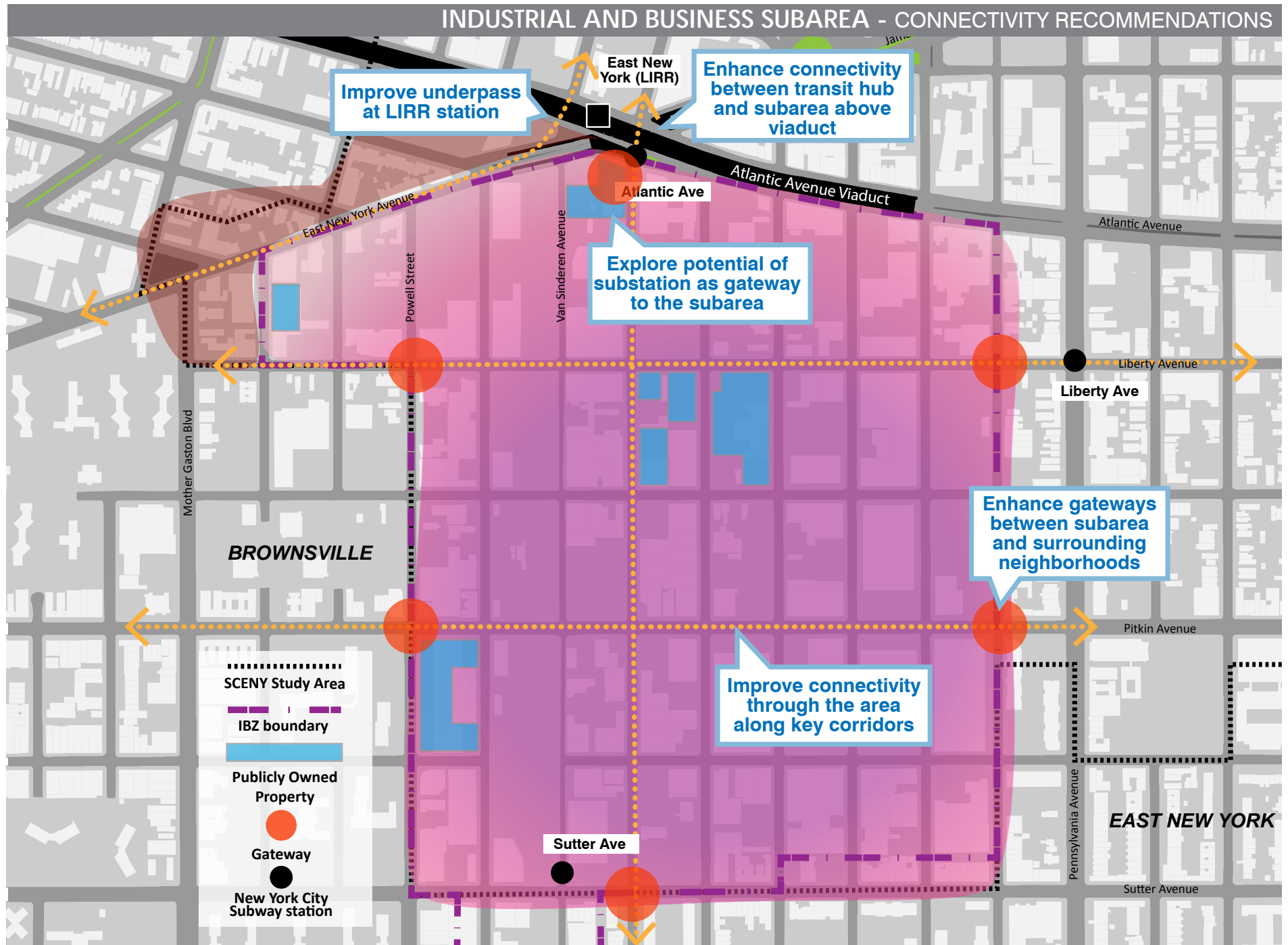
Streetscape conditions would be improved by encouraging active ground floor uses with transparent frontages along the street. Active uses and greater levels of transparency would bring additional “eyes on the street”, making the area feel safer to employers, workers, neighborhood residents and other 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/>

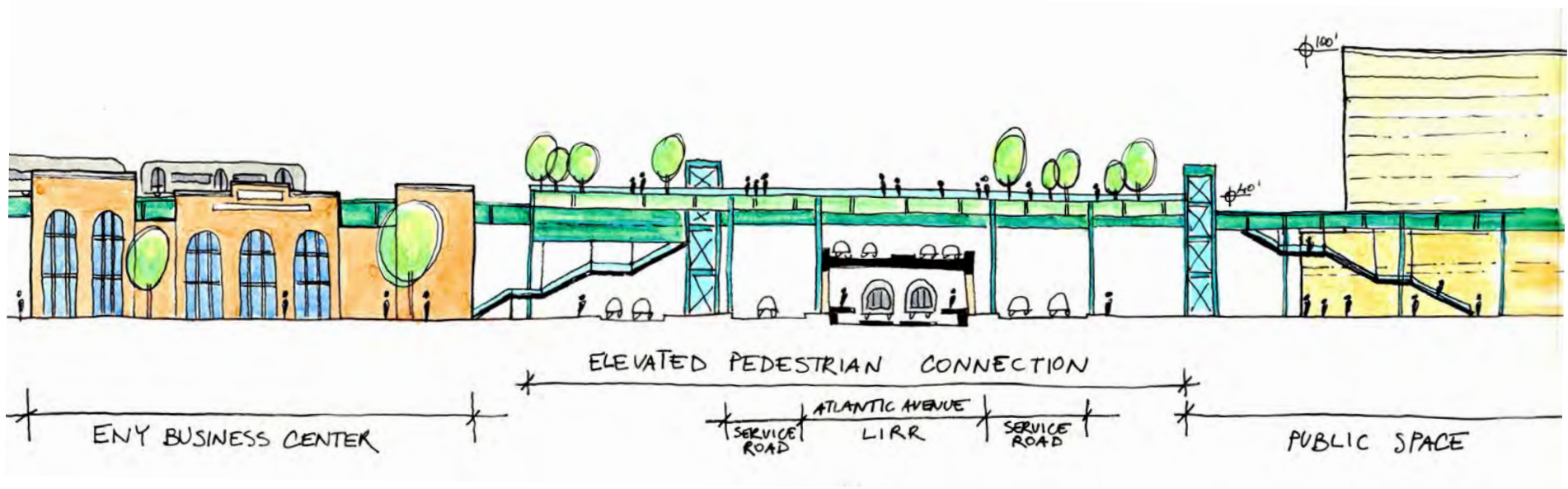
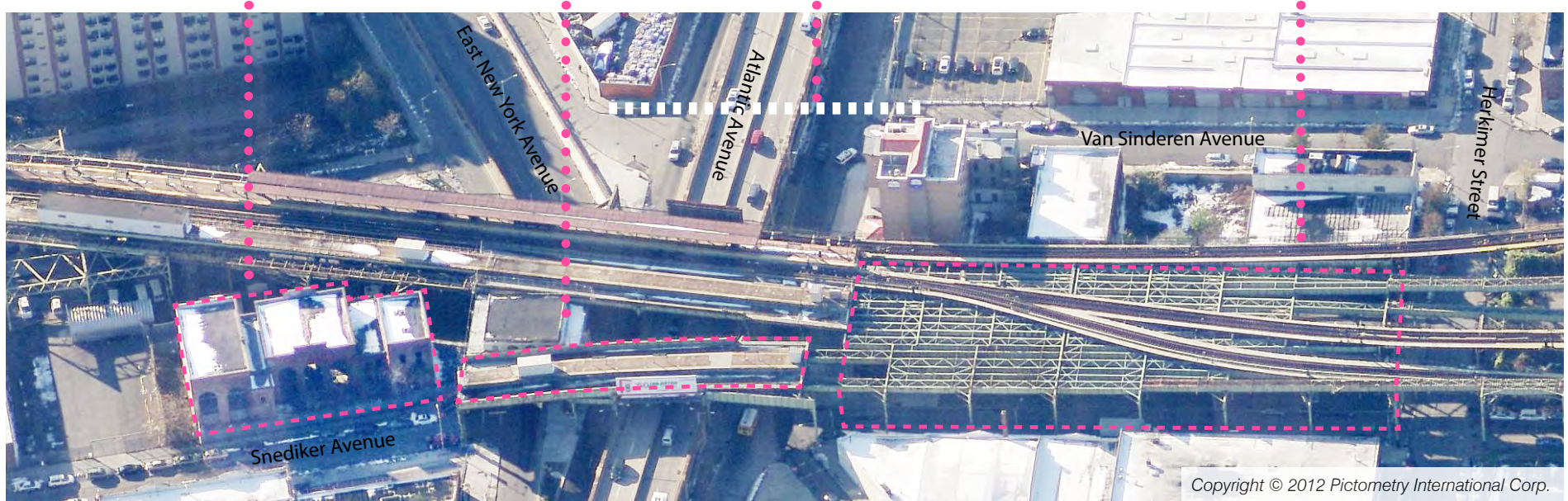
INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS SUBAREA - POTENTIAL ELEVATED PEDESTRIAN CONNECTION

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.