

**Draft Scope of Work for a
Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Brooklyn-Queens Expressway/Interstate 278 (“BQE”) from Atlantic
Avenue to Nassau Street Project (BQE Central Project), Brooklyn
CEQR No.: 26DOT006K
October 2, 2026**

1: Introduction

The New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT) is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the rehabilitation of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway/Interstate 278 (“BQE”) from just north of Atlantic Avenue to Nassau Street in Brooklyn (“BQE Central” or the “Project”). The Brooklyn section of the BQE stretches 12.1 miles from the Verrazzano Bridge, which links Brooklyn and Staten Island, to the Kosciuszko Bridge, which connects Brooklyn and Queens. Construction of the BQE Central section was completed in 1954, and the construction of the full BQE through Brooklyn was completed by 1964.

The BQE Central Project involves an approximately 1.5-mile section of the BQE within Downtown Brooklyn (see **Figure 1**), including 21 bridges and structures. Among them is the unique 0.4-mile-long triple cantilever section, which is more than 70 years old. The structure takes advantage of a substantial change in elevation between the Brooklyn waterfront and Brooklyn Heights. It is composed of three levels, including two levels of highway and the Brooklyn Heights Promenade, elevated above Furman Street. The structure is supported off of a retaining wall system that extends from ground level to the top of the bluff. The cantilever section begins south of Joralemon Street and ends at Washington Street. BQE Central generally operates with two lanes in each direction; a short section of the highway between the Manhattan Bridge and just south of Sands Street operates with three full lanes in the Staten Island-bound direction only.

The project limits include the BQE Central roadway, shoulders and offsets, support structures, Furman Street, the Brooklyn Heights Promenade, local street overpasses and underpasses between Atlantic Avenue and Nassau Street, and adjacent New York City-owned property, including parking lots, maintenance and storage areas, and open space. Within the project limits, the BQE parallels the eastern and southern shore of the East River through a densely developed urban area, with a wide range of land uses in proximity to the project limits. **Figure 1** shows the project limits and notable landmarks, locations, and features within and near the project limits.

The neighborhoods that abut BQE Central through the project limits are among the oldest in Brooklyn, having been settled as early as the 1600s.¹ From south to north, the neighborhoods are Brooklyn Heights, Fulton Ferry, DUMBO, and Vinegar Hill. Surrounding uses adjacent to BQE Central within the project limits include houses and apartments, open space, commercial uses, offices and live/work studios, and a complex network of bridges and roadways associated with the BQE and its connections to the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges. Along much of the waterfront is Brooklyn Bridge Park, formerly a working waterfront that was converted to open space with residential and commercial uses. Downtown Brooklyn is a

¹ Wallenfeldt, Jeff. “Brooklyn.” Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Brooklyn-borough-New-York-City>. Accessed January 25, 2023.



bustling business district, consisting of high-rise commercial towers and hotels, federal, state, and county courthouses and offices, campuses for multiple universities and colleges, retail corridors, high-rise apartment buildings, and entertainment venues.

The area encompassed by the project limits, particularly near the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges, and surrounding neighborhoods are a transportation hub for cars, trucks, buses, cyclists, other micromobility users, and pedestrians. BQE Central facilitates vehicular access between Brooklyn and Manhattan via connections to the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges. It also provides access to and from Downtown Brooklyn and adjacent commercial districts to other parts of New York City and the region. There are multiple subway lines that cross the project limits with nearby stations, and these stations generate pedestrian and bicycle traffic to and from surrounding commuter neighborhoods. Many cyclists, other micromobility users, and pedestrians also cross the project limits to reach parks and other uses along the East River waterfront.

Per the guidelines of the City of New York's City Environmental Quality Review (*CEQR Technical Manual*), this Draft Scope of Work (Draft Scope) describes the Project's background and context, provides a description of the Project, and presents the analysis methodologies that will be used in the Draft EIS (DEIS) to assess the potential environmental effects of the Project. Specifically, this Draft Scope includes the following sections:

- Section 2 includes discussion of the Purpose and Need for the Project;
- Section 3 provides a description of the Project and its major elements;
- Section 4 identifies the major discretionary state and local permits and approvals that would be required for the Project;
- Section 5 provides a brief overview of the environmental review process;
- Section 6 summarizes the organization of the DEIS to be prepared, describing the methodologies and scopes of work to be utilized to assess each environmental impact category; and
- Section 7 provides information on how to comment on this Draft Scope.

2: Purpose and Need for the Project

Project Needs

Based on the observed conditions of this section of the BQE, NYC DOT has identified two needs that the Project must address:

- The need to address structural deterioration; and
- The need to maintain regional vehicular connectivity and mobility.

The following sections provide background and data to support these identified needs.

The Need to Address Structural Deterioration

The Project is needed to address identified structural deterioration of BQE Central. Construction of the BQE Central section was completed in 1954, in accordance with the design practices of the time, and its bridges, which comprise 21 Bridge Identification Numbers (BINs), have undergone only limited structural rehabilitation since that time. The most prevalent bridge type along this section of the BQE is reinforced concrete, including the unique

multi-level triple-cantilever structure. The remaining bridges within the project limits are composed of concrete portal frames, multi-girder steel, and concrete-encased steel structures.

NYC DOT has completed a number of technical investigations to assess the condition of the structures within this section of the corridor, beginning with in-depth inspections performed in 2016, and continuing with: vibration monitoring studies (2017 to present); materials service life analysis and non-destructive evaluation (NDE) of the reinforced concrete cantilever structures (2016 with updates in 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2025) and South Abutment of Columbia Heights overpass (2021); weigh-in-motion (WIM) data collection (2019 to present); load rating analysis (2016, 2021, 2022, 2024, and 2025); and targeted structural health monitoring of the reinforced concrete cantilever structures (2021 to 2023).

In April 2003, a report was prepared for NYSDOT titled *Seismic Analysis and Displacement-Based Evaluation of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, New York* as part of the in-depth inspection, load rating and seismic vulnerability study of the BQE from Atlantic Avenue to Washington Street. Site specific ground motions were developed, following the completion of a supplemental geotechnical investigation program (soil boring and testing). An evaluation of soil borings concluded that there is no potential for soil liquefaction from Atlantic Avenue to Washington Street. Based on those findings, liquefaction is not likely an issue elsewhere in the remainder of the project limits.

The Seismic Vulnerability Study identified the following seismic vulnerabilities and recommendations to address them:

- Installation of concrete infill walls, bracing and diaphragms to prevent the distortion of the framed structures and excessive flexural and shear demands on the concrete frames, columns and walls supporting the roadways.
- Installation of permanent tiebacks to reduce lateral displacement and excessive shear and flexural demands on the walls and roadway deck slabs. The tiebacks would also prevent net uplift on the piles and the resulting pullout from the pile cap as the connections are not designed for tensile forces.
- Replace with bearings capable of resisting the seismic demands (forces and displacements).

In 2024, a supplementary seismic vulnerability analysis for the structures located north of the Washington Street bridge was carried out. The supplementary seismic study concluded that the structures located between, and including, Adams Street and Sands Street bridges, required localized reinforcement to meet the estimated seismic demands.

All roadway deck core samples taken under prior investigation studies that were tested for chloride content have been found to exceed the threshold at which corrosion of the reinforcing steel is expected to accelerate. Long-term exposure to deicing chemicals and lack of a watertight seal at the deck relief joints have resulted in reinforcing steel corrosion and section loss, concrete spalling, map cracking, and efflorescence in the vicinity of the relief joints on the underside of the roadway deck slab. Similar conditions have been observed within the splash zones of the walls.

As a result of the above, recent Biennial Inspection Reports (2021 through 2025) contained dozens of flags related to the condition of the underside of the cantilever deck at the relief

joints. These flags consist of red, yellow, and safety flags, which represent the following conditions:

- Red Flag - A structural flag that is used to report the failure or potential failure of a primary structural component that is likely to occur before the next scheduled biennial inspection.
- Yellow Flag - A structural flag that is used to report a potentially hazardous structural condition which, if left unattended, could become a clear and present danger within two years from the current inspection. This flag would also be used to report the actual or imminent failure of a non-critical structural component, where such failure may reduce the reserve capacity or redundancy of the bridge but would not result in a structural collapse.
- Safety Flag - Flag used to report a condition presenting a clear and present danger to vehicular or pedestrian traffic but poses no danger of structural failure or collapse.

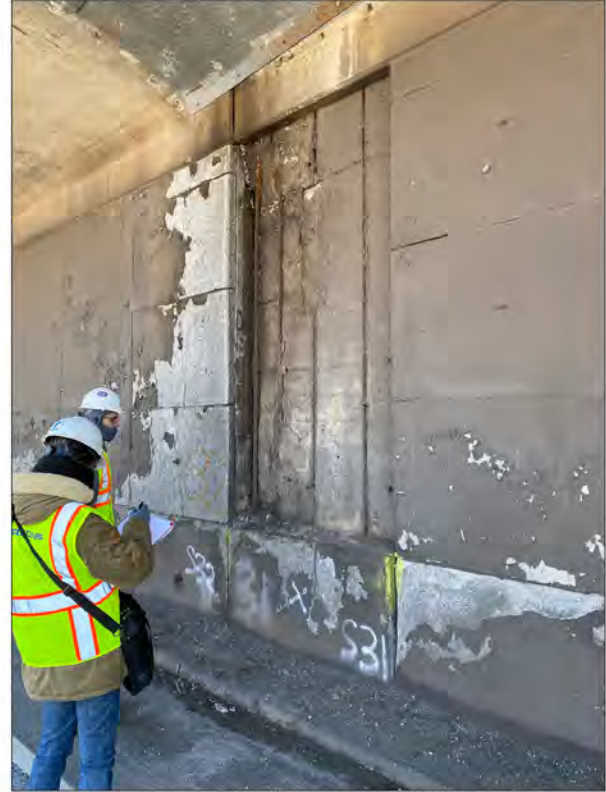
To address these flags and other structural conditions described above, NYC DOT relies on a combination of resources to address identified conditions, ranging from monitoring to in-house repairs and capital repairs, to extend the useful life of structures, but multiple structures are nearing the end of their operational service life, as shown by the following:

- Visible signs of deterioration, including scaling, efflorescence, transverse cracking, map cracking, and spalling, with exposed and corroded rebar at the underdeck, walls, and substructure components (see **Figure 2**);
- Deck core results confirmed that the original concrete deck was not air entrained for freeze-thaw resistance, which is the likely cause of the microcracking parallel to the surface commonly observed on the concrete deck cores;
- High chloride levels that have led to the onset and propagation of steel rebar corrosion in the structural decks and substructure components, which is more critical for the cantilever areas of the roadway deck where deterioration is accelerated by the lack of a waterproofing membrane and water is leaking through failed relief joints' seals;
- Deteriorated concrete beneath the surface, as detected by Non-Destructive evaluations and verified by probe samples;
- Spikes and variations in monitored vibration levels in the Columbia Heights bridge have been observed, partially as a result of roadway pavement conditions. Levels are currently below limits that would indicate vibration-induced structural damage; and
- In 2025, the load ratings for the Queens bound structures were updated using revised loads based on the data obtained from the Weigh-In-Motion (WIM) system, reflecting enforcement of overweight live-load limits on the Queens bound BQE. These updated loads were lower than those previously used and similar to the AASHTO loads, and therefore the load ratings improved slightly (approximately 15 percent). However, the updated loads based on the WIM system have not yet been finalized for the Staten Island bound structures, since the WIM study for the Staten Island bound BQE began later. Based on the updated WIM factors for the Queens bound structures, it is expected that the load ratings for the Staten Island bound structures will also improve once the new data is available. It is worth noting, however, that material degradation of the reinforced concrete deck is an ongoing process, regardless of changes in the WIM factors.

Steps were taken to mitigate salt spray on the load-bearing walls, depicted in **Figure 2**, by switching to non-corrosive anti-icing and de-icing materials and reduce further chloride contamination of the deck.



1
Reinforced concrete deck soffit showing spalled concrete, exposed, and corroded concrete reinforcement bars, efflorescence, and scaling. This condition is typical at underside of deck relief joints. Photo taken during recent interim repairs with removal of unsound concrete in progress.



2
Missing granite cladding on load bearing wall. Spalled concrete and exposed vertical reinforcement. This condition is typical of deck relief joints.

The Two-lane Implementation Project, which eliminated a travel lane in each direction from the cantilevered sections of BQE Central in 2021, reduced traffic and the resultant wear and tear on the cantilever sections of the roadway, and therefore, reduced the live load from the lane fully located on the cantilever portion of the roadway deck, which controls the flexural demand on the structure. It also reduced to some extent the vibrations observed on the cantilever section by decreasing the traffic loads at the tip of the cantilever over this section of the BQE. However, the two-lane operation has not addressed the causes of material deterioration at and adjacent to the roadway deck relief joints, nor did it provide a physical restraint to the cantilever areas of the roadway deck.

As BQE Central continues to age, more and more structural elements will need repair, and the cost for these repairs will increase. Furthermore, there is uncertainty in the exact condition of the reinforcement of the concrete structural elements, which results in unpredictable costs for repairs. In some cases, NYC DOT cannot anticipate the full extent and associated costs until the repair is underway. If NYC DOT does not pursue a planned capital project to rehabilitate BQE Central, the feasibility and risks associated with interim repairs would affect highway operations, place continued strain on the agency's annual budgets, and could require interventions that affect the safety of local streets. Therefore, there is a need to address the structural deterioration on BQE Central.

The Need to Maintain Regional Vehicular Connectivity and Mobility

The BQE is the only interstate highway that connects Brooklyn to the boroughs of Queens and Staten Island, and it is needed to maintain regional connectivity for passenger vehicles and freight. Along with the Staten Island Expressway in Staten Island, the Bruckner Expressway in the Bronx, and the Long Island Expressway in Queens, it provides a route around Manhattan for drivers traveling between New Jersey and New England and New Jersey and Long Island.

The BQE is a primary north-south route for motorists traveling to, from, and through Brooklyn. South of Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn features a regular street grid with multiple north-south streets that extend as far south as the Belt Parkway and serve as an alternative route to the BQE. However, north of Atlantic Avenue, the borough has an irregular street grid with limited arterial routes that extend north-south through multiple neighborhoods. Therefore, the BQE is the primary north-south option for vehicles traveling the length of the borough and between neighborhoods in south Brooklyn (i.e., Bay Ridge and Sunset Park) and neighborhoods in north Brooklyn (i.e., Williamsburg and Greenpoint).

Along its route between the Bronx and Staten Island, the BQE provides connections to the regional interstate network and major bridge and tunnel crossings, including the RFK Bridge/I-278, the Long Island Expressway/I-495, the Queens Midtown Tunnel, the Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Williamsburg Bridges, the Hugh L. Carey Tunnel/I-478, and the Verrazzano Narrows Bridge and Staten Island Expressway/I-278. It is the only interstate running the length of Brooklyn from north to south, and there are no arterial roads or limited access highways that provide a fully parallel and redundant route.

New York City's freight network is complex and multimodal, but is primarily dependent on trucks, which deliver approximately 90 percent of goods in the city. The BQE is the only direct truck route from Brooklyn to points southwest and it provides an alternative route to the heavily used Interstate 95 corridor. The BQE also provides crucial freight access to the New York City boroughs and Long Island. Many freight-oriented businesses are located near the BQE, taking

advantage of the regional connections that it provides. In 2022, neighborhoods along the BQE in Brooklyn were home to over 4,400 industrial businesses employing some 98,500 people,² and BQE Central carries approximately 13,000 trucks per day, representing about 10 percent of total daily traffic.³

The growth of e-commerce, which was accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has substantially increased freight volumes to businesses and residences. More than 80 percent of New Yorkers receive at least one package at home each week, and nearly 1 in 5 New Yorkers receive packages on four or more days per week, leading to an increase in delivery vehicles on city streets and the highway network. In the two-year period between January 2020 and December 2021, NYC DOT estimated that freight traffic across the Hudson River between New Jersey and New York increased by over 50 percent, and it expects the amount of freight to continue increasing. Earlier estimates had already projected regional freight movement growth of 68 percent between 2012 and 2045; given the recent surge in freight traffic, this growth is likely to be even higher than projected. This growth is expected to increase demand on the BQE.⁴ NYC DOT and other City agencies are investigating strategies to reduce New York City's reliance on trucks to move freight. These include more extensive use of the City's waterways and the use of alternative vehicle types (e.g., sprinter van, cargo bike, etc.) for last-mile delivery. However, these efforts would only partially reduce the heavy use of the BQE to transport freight.

BQE Central carries a large volume of traffic, over 130,000 vehicles per day. The operation of BQE Central heavily influences traffic flow on sections of the BQE outside the project limits, and therefore, it is integral to regional connectivity and mobility. Delays along BQE Central impede traffic flow along the BQE outside the project limits and impact the efficient movement of people, goods, and services.

There is a need to maintain regional vehicular connectivity and mobility along the BQE Central section to ensure travelers can efficiently reach their destinations.

Project Purpose and Objectives

NYC DOT is proposing the rehabilitation of BQE Central to address identified structural deficiencies and maintain the regional vehicular connectivity and mobility that the highway provides.

The project objectives should address the identified transportation needs and support and refine the purpose of a project. NYC DOT has identified two objectives for the Project, which are to:

- Address structural deterioration of BQE Central to extend its service life and reduce maintenance costs; and
- Maintain regional vehicular connectivity and mobility.

² New York City Economic Development Corporation analysis of Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages microdata from the New York State Department of Labor. Analysis prepared November 2023.

³ NYC DOT traffic count data.

⁴ NYC DOT analysis of citywide freight data.

3: Project Alternatives

The DEIS will evaluate two alternatives for the BQE Central Project: a No Build Alternative and a Build Alternative. These alternatives are described below.

No Build Alternative

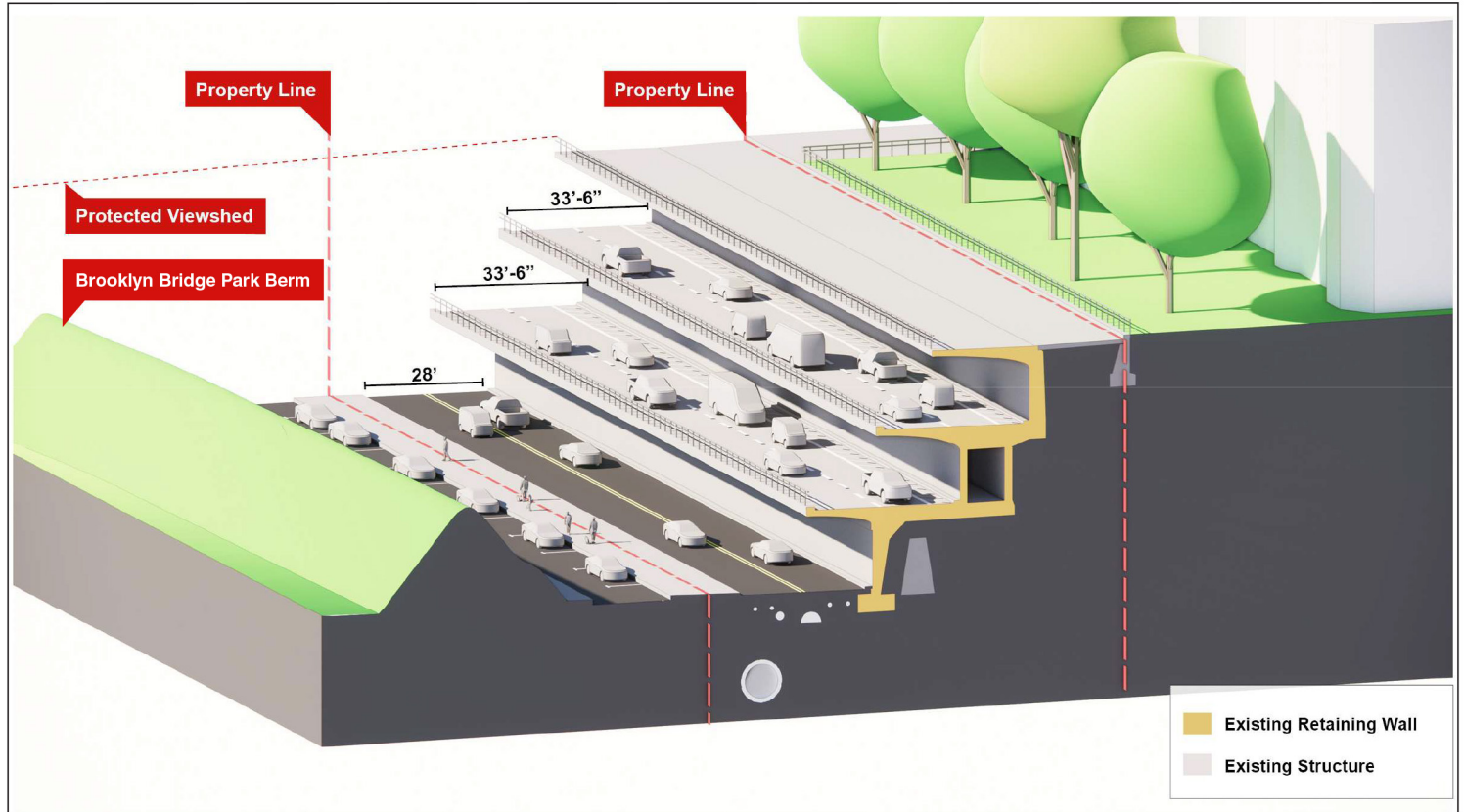
The No Build Alternative assumes that no improvements would be made to the transportation corridor other than those already programmed for construction and routine maintenance. Although the No Build Alternative does not address the identified needs or meet the stated purpose and objectives for the BQE Central Project, the DEIS will evaluate the No Build Alternative as the baseline condition against which the potential benefits and effects of the Build Alternative are assessed.

The No Build Alternative would retain the current operation of BQE Central, and would maintain the existing mainline and ramp alignments, lane widths, shoulder widths, horizontal and vertical clearances, and all other roadway geometry features. With the No Build Alternative, BQE Central would continue to operate as it does today, with two lanes in each direction except for a short section of the highway between the Manhattan Bridge and just south of Sands Street which operates with three full lanes in the Staten Island-bound direction only. NYC DOT would continue inspections, monitoring, emergency response, and interim repairs to the extent practicable to maintain safe operation for as long as possible. However, these actions would not comprehensively address the underlying material deterioration, restore the entire facility to a state of good repair, or provide for service-life extension. NYC DOT would need to evaluate future options for the highway once interim repairs could no longer achieve a state of good repair. NYC DOT would also continue the WIM program that regulates and tickets overweight vehicles that use the triple cantilever section of the BQE.

Proposed Project / Build Alternative

The Project would involve a major rehabilitation of all 21 structures within the project limits to address structural deficiencies and increase their service life (**Figure 3**). The New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has determined the portion of the BQE between Brooklyn Heights and the Kosciuszko Bridge to be eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places (S/NR-eligible). In addition, the Brooklyn Heights Promenade is within the Brooklyn Heights Historic District, which the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) has designated a New York City Landmark district; the district is also S/NR-listed. The Project would generally retain the historic integrity of the highway within the project limits, including the triple cantilever structure.

NYC DOT would replace the superstructure of the Columbia Heights overpass and relocate and reconstruct its north abutment. NYC DOT would rehabilitate all the other bridges and structures within the project limits to extend their service life. At the triple cantilever section, the Project would maintain the existing mainline and ramp alignments, lane widths, shoulder widths, horizontal and vertical clearances, and other roadway geometric features. With the Build Alternative, BQE Central would continue to operate as it does today, with two lanes in each direction except for a short section of the highway between the Manhattan Bridge and just south of Sands Street which operates with three full lanes in the Staten Island-bound direction only. East of Adams Street, NYC DOT would explore addressing non-standard features where practicable. The Project would correct current drainage issues and would provide a new bridge railing that meets current design standards.



The project limits include a portion of the property at 25 Joralemon Street. NYC DOT would acquire the portion of the property that is vacant and encased within the existing BQE structure. NYC DOT would not acquire the occupied portion of this structure that is immediately east of the BQE. The project limits also include small sections of mapped parkland adjacent to the roadway, which NYC DOT would incorporate through alienation legislation by the New York State legislature, including a home rule action by the New York City Council. The Project would require City Map amendments to account for these alterations to land use.

To fully rehabilitate the structure, NYC DOT would construct two temporary bypass structures alongside the current highway that would carry traffic during construction (see **Figures 4a through 4c**). One bypass structure would parallel the triple cantilever section from just north of Atlantic Avenue to Columbia Heights; this structure would be located within the Furman Street right-of-way below the promenade elevation. A second bypass structure would carry traffic from Columbia Heights, potentially above the Brooklyn Bridge, and through Dumbo, tying back into the highway structure just west of the Manhattan Bridge. Upon the completion of construction, NYC DOT would demolish both temporary structures.

NYC DOT anticipates that construction would commence in 2029 and would be completed before 2040. NYC DOT continues to develop the construction means and methods for the Project. As part of these efforts, NYC DOT will explore innovations aimed at shortening the duration of construction.

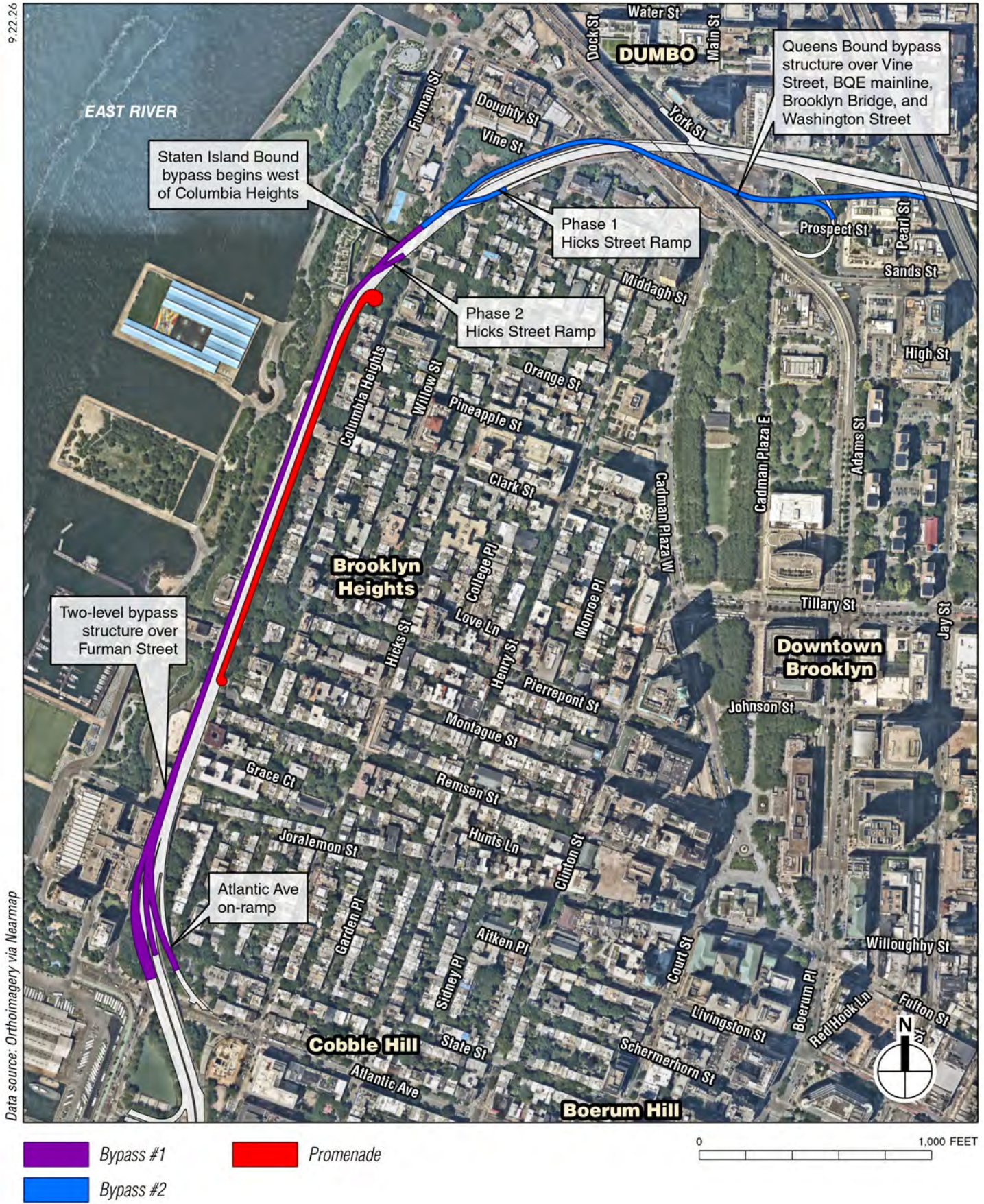
4: Project Approvals and Coordination

Based on the acreage that would be directly affected by the Project; the status of the triple cantilever and Brooklyn Heights historic district as historic resources; the BQE's adjacency to parkland, including the Brooklyn Heights Promenade that is part of the structure; the extent and duration of construction activities and associated disruption; and the potential for public controversy, the Project would meet multiple criteria for consideration as a Type I action under CEQR (6 NYCRR Part 617.4(b)(6)). The action is more likely to have significant impacts and therefore, NYC DOT intends to prepare an EIS for the Project.

Table 1 summarizes the major permits and approvals that may be required for the Project.

5: Environmental Review Process

The environmental review process provides a means for decision-makers to systematically consider environmental effects along with other aspects of project planning and design, to evaluate and compare reasonable alternatives, and to identify and mitigate, where practicable, any significant adverse environmental impacts. NYC DOT, as lead agency, has determined that the Project has the potential to result in significant adverse environmental impacts. Therefore, an EIS must be prepared. Any proposed action funded, approved, or directly undertaken by a New York State or local agency must comply with the provisions of SEQR and its implementing regulations (6 NYCRR Part 617).



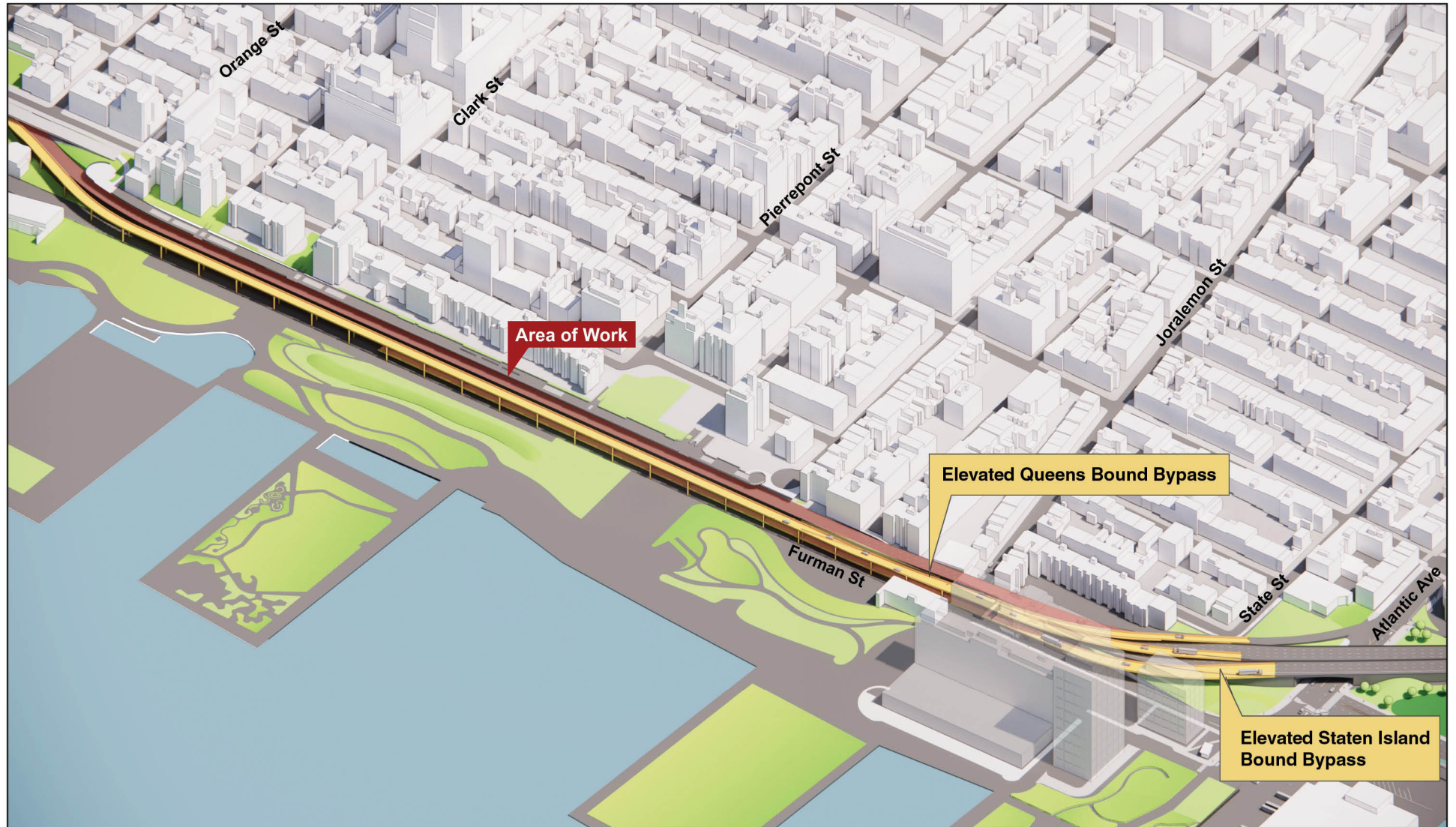




Table 1: Potential Major State and Local Permits, Approvals and Coordination

Agency/Entity	Permit/Approval/Consultation/Coordination
New York State Legislature	Passage of parkland alienation bill
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)	Consultation related to State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) Construction General Permit approval
New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)	Consultation to determine potential archaeological sensitivity and/or the presence of historic resources and determine Project's potential effects in accordance with Section 14.09 of the New York State Historic Preservation Act
New York State Department of State (NYS DOS)	Coastal zone consistency determination.
New York City Council	Passage of home rule message related to parkland alienation
New York City Planning Commission (CPC) / New York City Department of City Planning (DCP)	ULURP for City Map amendments to address minor right-of-way acquisition, easements appurtenant to mapped right-of-way, and parkland alienation New York City Waterfront Revitalization Program—Consistency Assessment
New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services	Coordination for Project-related property acquisition
New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYC DEP)	Coordination related to Stormwater Permit approval for construction as well as review of hazardous materials, air quality, and noise analyses
New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks)	Consultation regarding effects on New York City parkland and associated parkland alienation requirements
NYC DOT Office of Construction Mitigation and Coordination (OCMC)	Coordination related to work zone traffic control permits for construction in city streets
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC)	Consultation to determine potential archaeological sensitivity and/or the presence of historic resources
New York City Public Design Commission	Review of design for above-grade facilities and public amenities, including architecture and landscape architecture.

NYC DOT has prepared this Draft Scope to describe the proposed content of the DEIS, the methodologies to be used in the impact analyses, and allow for public and stakeholder participation as recommended by 6 NYCRR Part 617. NYC DOT will host public scoping meetings to solicit feedback on this Draft Scope and will also accept comments in writing during the scoping comment period. Refer to **Section 7** for information on how to comment on this Draft Scope.

NYC DOT will consider comments submitted on the Draft Scope and will issue a Final Scope of Work (Final Scope) to respond to those comments received during the review period and finalize changes to the assessment to be conducted in the DEIS. The Final Scope will include responses to comments submitted on the Draft Scope and any modifications, as necessary, to address those comments.

NYC DOT will then prepare the DEIS based on the Final Scope. As stated above, the DEIS and subsequent Final EIS (FEIS) will serve to fulfill the statutory obligations of SEQR and CEQR. Once NYC DOT has determined that the DEIS is complete, a Notice of Completion (pursuant to SEQR/CEQR) will be prepared, distributed, and published in accordance with

applicable regulations. The DEIS will then be subject to additional public review, in accordance with SEQR and CEQR procedures, including a public hearing and a period for public comment. After the DEIS public comment period has closed, a FEIS will be prepared that will include a summary of the comments received on the DEIS, responses to all substantive comments, and any necessary revisions to the DEIS to address those comments. No sooner than 10 days after publishing the FEIS, NYC DOT, as lead agency, will prepare a Statement of Findings that will describe the Project, its potential environmental impacts, and any required mitigation.

6: Organization and Scope of the Environmental Impact Statement

The format of the DEIS and methodologies that will be used to assess the potential environmental impacts of the Project will follow SEQR and CEQR guidelines. The 2025 *CEQR Technical Manual (CEQR Technical Manual)* will be used to evaluate the Project's impacts.

Each impact analysis will include an inventory of existing conditions establishing a baseline from which future conditions can be projected (Existing Condition). In addition, where relevant, the impact analysis will include a determination of future conditions known to occur or expected to occur in the future regardless of the Project (the future without the Project or No-Action condition). Finally, each impact analysis will include an analysis of the Project's likely effects on its environmental setting (the future with the Project or With-Action condition) in the expected year of completion (Analysis year). The Project's Build analysis year is 2040.

The DEIS will contain the following:

- A description of the Project and the environmental setting;
- A description of the methodologies utilized for each technical area;
- A discussion of the analysis and the results;
- A statement of the potential significant adverse environmental impacts of the Project;
- An identification of any potential significant adverse impacts that cannot be avoided if the Project is implemented;
- An identification of irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources that would be involved if the Project is built; and
- A description of measures proposed to minimize or fully mitigate any potential significant adverse environmental impacts.

The scope of work for each of the technical areas to be analyzed in the DEIS is described below. Each technical analysis will include detailed consideration of impacts that could occur from construction of the Project (rehabilitation of the existing highway) as well as consideration of the impacts once the construction is complete and the rehabilitated highway is fully operational. Because the Project would involve the use of two temporary bypass structures to carry highway traffic during construction, where relevant, the DEIS will describe construction and operation of the bypass structures and the potential effects from these activities on the surrounding communities. The potential cumulative effects of construction at the Project site, along with the construction activities associated with other planned projects in the area near the Project, will also be discussed.

The methodologies utilized for each analysis will be presented in each respective chapter in the DEIS.

Executive Summary

The DEIS will include an Executive Summary that will provide the reader with a clear and concise understanding of the information provided within the main sections of the DEIS. The Executive Summary will highlight relevant material from the DEIS to provide a synopsis of the Project, potential environmental impacts associated with the Project's construction and/or operation, measures to mitigate potential impacts of the Project, and alternatives to the Project.

The DEIS Executive Summary will consist of the following:

- A brief description of the Project, including background leading to its development and anticipated analysis years.
- A list of involved and interested agencies and required approvals/permits.
- A concise list of the anticipated significant adverse impacts and proposed mitigation measures.
- A description of the alternatives to the Project considered in the DEIS.

Project Description

The first chapter of the DEIS introduces the Project and sets the context in which to assess impacts. The chapter will contain a detailed description of the Project; the background and history of the Project, including a summary of the legal framework; previous investigations and actions; and a statement of purpose and need and anticipated benefits of the Project. The chapter will also include a discussion of the approvals required for the Project, including other discretionary actions, as well as procedures to be followed and the role of the DEIS in the process.

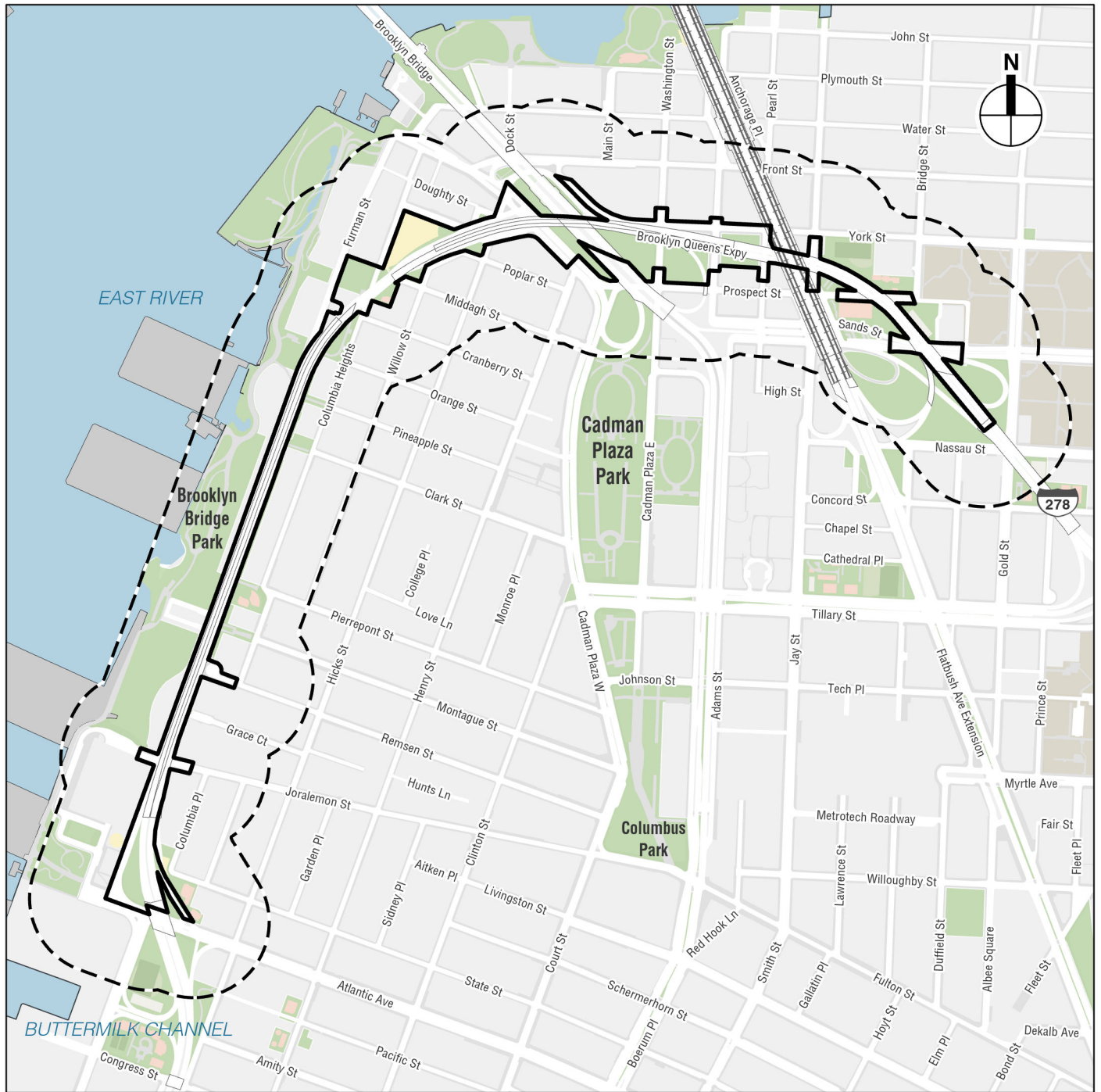
Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy

A land use analysis characterizes the uses and development trends in the area that may be affected by a proposed project and determines whether the project is compatible with those conditions or may adversely affect them. Similarly, the analysis considers the Project's compliance with, and effect on, the area's zoning and other applicable public policies.

Following *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, the land use, zoning, and public policy analysis will be conducted within a study area extending 400 feet from the project limits (including temporary construction period elements such as the two bypass structures; see **Figure 5**). The land use analysis will characterize the uses and development trends in the area that may be affected by the Project, describe the public policies that guide development, and determine whether the Project is compatible with those conditions and policies or whether it may affect them. In addition to considering the Project's effects in terms of land use compatibility and trends in zoning and public policy, this chapter will also provide a baseline for other analyses in the EIS.

The land use chapter will provide the following:

- A brief development history of the Project site and the study area.
- Describe conditions in the study area, including existing uses and recent development trends;



- Project Site
- Study Area (400-foot perimeter)

0 1,000 FEET

- Describe existing zoning and recent zoning actions, if any, in the study area;
- Describe other public policies that may apply to the study area including OneNYC, New York City's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, and any formal neighborhood or community plans;
- Identify other future projects in the study area that would be completed by the analysis year ("No Build projects"). Describe how these projects would affect land use patterns and development trends. Notably, a proposed redevelopment of the Brooklyn Marine Terminal would occur immediately to the southwest of the BQE Central project limits and will require consideration as a No Build project. Also, describe any pending zoning actions or other public policy actions that could affect land use patterns and trends in the study area, including plans for public improvement; and
- Assess the impacts of the Project on land use and land use trends, zoning, and public policy. Project impacts related to issues of compatibility with surrounding land use, consistency with zoning and other public policies, and the effect of construction and operation of the Project on development trends and conditions in the area will be assessed.

Socioeconomic Conditions

The socioeconomic character of an area includes its population, housing, and economic activity. Socioeconomic changes may occur when a project directly or indirectly changes any of these elements. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the six principal issues of concern with respect to socioeconomic conditions are whether a proposed project would result in significant impacts due to: (1) direct residential displacement; (2) direct business displacement; (3) indirect residential displacement; (4) indirect business displacement due to increased rents; (5) indirect business displacement due to retail market saturation; and (6) adverse effects on a specific industry.

Because the Project would not introduce new populations, employees, or businesses to the study area and would not permanently change access to any existing or future businesses and employers, the Project is unlikely to require detailed analysis of socioeconomic conditions. However, in accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* methodologies, the DEIS will include a preliminary screening assessment of the Project's potential to affect any of these issues of concern upon completion of the rehabilitation project. Based on the preliminary screening assessment, if it is determined that the Project would exceed any of the thresholds warranting further analysis, a preliminary assessment will be prepared. If a preliminary assessment cannot rule out the potential for significant adverse impacts, a detailed analysis will be prepared following *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance.

Community Facilities and Services

Under *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, a project can affect community facility and services when it physically displaces or alters a community facility (direct effects) or causes a change in population that may affect the services delivered by a community facility (indirect effects). With regard to indirect effects, the demand for community facilities and services is directly related to the type and size of the new population generated by any proposed development. The DEIS will include a preliminary screening assessment of the Project's potential to affect community facilities. As the Project would not displace or alter a community

facility, including access to such facilities, nor would it introduce a new residential population, a detailed analysis of the Project's potential direct and indirect effect on community facilities—including schools, childcare facilities, libraries, police/fire protection services, and health care facilities—is not expected to be warranted.

Open Space

The *CEQR Technical Manual* recommends performing an open space assessment if a project would have a direct or indirect effect on an area open space. The Project would not introduce a new residential or non-residential population warranting an analysis of indirect effects. The Project may incorporate small sections of parkland into the transportation right-of-way and would result in construction activities within and directly adjacent to parklands. Therefore, the EIS will evaluate the potential direct effects of the Project on parks.

Publicly accessible open spaces in the vicinity of the Project include Van Voorhees Park, Adam Yauch Park, Brooklyn Bridge Park, the Brooklyn Heights Promenade, Pierrepont Playground, Fruit Street Sitting Area, Squibb Park, Harry Chapin Playground, Hillside Dog Park, Anchorage Plaza, Cadman Plaza Park, Clumber Corner, Bar and Grill Park, Susan Smith McKinney Steward Park, Maritcha R. Lyons Park, Bridge Park 3, Trinity Park, and Golconda Playground. An assessment of the Project's direct effects on area open spaces resulting from operation of the facilities will be provided (i.e., if relevant, potential increases in noise, air pollutants, or shadows from the Project on adjacent public open spaces will be assessed).

Shadows

The *CEQR Technical Manual* requires a shadows assessment for projects that would result in new structures more than 50 feet taller than what would exist in the No-Action condition (or substantially different in bulk configuration), and either over 250 feet in maximum height or adjacent to a sunlight-sensitive resource. Sunlight-sensitive resources include publicly accessible parks, plazas, and other open spaces, sunlight-sensitive features of historic resources, and sunlight-sensitive natural resources.

The Project would rehabilitate above-grade structures but would not substantially alter the height or width of the BQE mainline structures, and therefore, a shadows analysis is unlikely to be warranted. However, at Columbia Heights and possible other locations, there could be minor changes in the width or height of overpasses. Therefore, the EIS will evaluate these changes in accordance with CEQR methodology.

If required, the shadows assessment will follow the tiered methodology described in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, and will include the following tasks:

- Develop a map and database of publicly accessible open spaces, historic resources with sunlight-dependent features, and natural features located in the longest-shadow study area.
- Develop a three-dimensional computer model including a worst-case representation of the Project, topography, streets, existing buildings, and the sunlight-sensitive resources developed in the preceding step.

- Using computer modeling software, determine the extent and duration of new shadows that would be cast on sunlight-sensitive resources as a result of the Project on four representative days of the year, accounting for intervening and surrounding buildings.
- Document the analysis with graphics comparing shadows resulting from the No-Action condition with shadows resulting from the Project, with incremental shadow highlighted in a contrasting color. Include a summary table listing the entry and exit times and total duration of incremental shadow on each applicable representative day for each affected resource.

Historic and Cultural Resources

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a historic and cultural resources assessment is required if a project has the potential to affect either archaeological or architectural resources. The Project involves ground disturbance in an area of Brooklyn with a long history of human occupation, and previous studies have identified archaeological sensitivity at some locations near the Project limits. The BQE and many adjacent structures are designated as National, State, and/or local historic sites and districts.

The Project would require state permits and would therefore be subject to requirements of the New York State Historic Preservation Act (SHPA) of 1980, as set forth in Section 14.09 of the New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law. The law requires that state agencies consider the effects of their actions on any historic and cultural resources listed on or determined eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places (S/NR). The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) must determine whether a proposed action would have any impacts on the characteristics of a site or property that qualify it for the S/NR. In addition, because the Project would involve city actions, the historic and cultural resources analysis will be prepared in consultation with the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC). Consultation will also be required with LPC under the New York City Landmarks Law as the Brooklyn Heights Promenade that is part of the BQE triple cantilever is located within the New York City designated Brooklyn Heights Historic District.

Consultation will be initiated with both LPC under CEQR and OPRHP under Section 14.09 regarding the potential for archaeological sensitivity of the project limits (the project site). The archaeological resources study area will include all areas where the Project would result in subsurface disturbance. The architectural resources study area will be approximately 90 feet beyond the border of the project limits where no above-grade structures would be built; the study area would extend to approximately 400 feet beyond the border of the project limits where above-ground structures are proposed.

A submission will be prepared and submitted to OPRHP through the online Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS) to initiate consultation with OPRHP for their review of the Project. The CRIS submission will include: a project description (including identification of all involved city and state agencies and actions); maps locating the project limits and relevant project drawings, as appropriate; and photographs and descriptions of existing structures/built resources within the project limits. Information will also be provided regarding previously identified archaeological sites and architectural resources located within the archaeological and architectural resources study areas.

The historic and cultural resources analysis includes the following tasks:

Archaeological Resources

- Initiate consultation with LPC to request a preliminary determination of the potential archaeological significance of the project limits. The OPRHP CRIS submission described above will also initiate consultation with OPRHP to request a preliminary determination of the potential archaeological sensitivity of the project limits.
- If determined necessary by LPC and/or OPRHP, a Phase 1A Archaeological Documentary Study (Phase 1A Study) would be prepared and submitted to LPC and OPRHP for review and comment. The conclusions and recommendations of the Phase 1A Study would be summarized in the DEIS. If any additional archaeological analyses are determined to be necessary (e.g., a Phase 1B Archaeological Investigation, Phase 2 Archaeological Survey/Evaluation, and/or Phase 3 Data Recovery/Mitigation) and are completed during the environmental review, the conclusions and recommendations of these investigations would also be summarized in the DEIS. If work cannot be completed until after the environmental review, the commitments to undertake necessary steps to evaluate archaeological resources would be submitted to LPC and OPRHP for review and comment and all agency comment letters would be included in an appendix to the DEIS.

Architectural Resources

The architectural resources analysis will consider whether the Project would affect any historic architectural resources either directly by physically altering the resource or indirectly through alteration of the context or visual environment of these resources.

- Map and briefly describe known architectural resources within the study area. Consistent with the guidance of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, known architectural resources include New York City Landmarks (NYCLs) and Historic Districts; properties calendared for consideration as NYCLs by LPC or determined eligible for NYCL designation (NYCL-eligible); S/NR-listed properties or formally determined eligible for S/NR listing (S/NR-eligible), or properties contained within a S/NR-listed or eligible district; properties recommended by the New York State Board for listing on the S/NR; and National Historic Landmarks (NHLs);
- Consistent with the *CEQR Technical Manual*, an architectural historian would conduct a field survey of the study area, as described above, to identify any potential architectural resources that could be affected by the Project. Potential architectural resources are properties not identified by one of the programs listed above, but that appear to meet their eligibility requirements. The field survey will be supplemented with research at relevant repositories, online sources, and current sources prepared by LPC and OPRHP; and
- Seek determinations of eligibility from LPC and OPRHP for any potential architectural resources. Map and describe any identified architectural resources.

Effects Assessment

- Assess potential impacts—including visual and contextual changes and any direct physical impacts—of the Project on historic and cultural (archaeological and architectural) resources within the project site or in the study area that are expected in the future without the Project and the future with the Project;
- If warranted, the analysis would identify any measures necessary to avoid, minimize or mitigate any potential significant adverse impacts on historic and cultural resources to be undertaken in consultation with LPC and OPRHP; and

- If warranted, develop a Letter of Resolution in consultation with OPRHP to document any measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate any adverse impacts and the process to implement them.

The results of the consultation undertaken with LPC and SHPO will be summarized in the EIS.

Urban Design and Visual Resources

According to the methodologies of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a preliminary urban design and visual resources assessment is appropriate when there is the potential for a pedestrian to observe, from the street level, a substantial physical alteration beyond that allowed by existing zoning, including the following: projects that would cause a change to the bulk and form permitted “as-of-right” resulting in a building over 250 feet tall, have a project area greater than 1.5 acres, or are classified as general large-scale developments; projects that require a special permit to allow the modification of bulk and yard requirements or special uses such as hotels, self-storage, transportation facilities, or assembly spaces; projects that introduce new or change the location of public or private streets or public open spaces; and projects that have the ability to obstruct views or access to visual resources beyond a *de minimis* amount. A detailed analysis is then prepared if warranted based on the preliminary assessment. Because the project site is greater than 1.5 acres, a preliminary assessment of urban design and visual resources is warranted and will be prepared. This analysis will follow the methodologies of the *CEQR Technical Manual*.

The study area for the preliminary assessment of urban design and visual resources will be consistent with that of the study area for the analysis of land use, zoning and public policy. However, longer views to the Project will be identified and assessed as warranted. The preliminary assessment will include a concise narrative of the existing project site and study area, the future No-Action condition, and the future With-Action condition. The analysis will draw on information from field visits to the study area, and the narrative will address any changes in the visual experience of the pedestrian. The narrative will also describe the Project as it relates to visual resources, including the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn Bridge Park, and the waterfront. The assessment will include ground-level photographs of the project site and study area and three-dimensional representations of the No-Action and With-Action Scenarios using the existing conditions photographs, along with other graphical representations of the Project as warranted.

Natural Resources

An assessment of natural resources is conducted when a natural resource is present on or near a development site and the Project may involve the direct or indirect disturbance of that resource. The *CEQR Technical Manual* defines natural resources as water resources, including surface water bodies and groundwater; wetlands, including freshwater and tidal wetlands; terrestrial resources, such as grasslands and thickets; shoreline resources, such as beaches, dunes, and bluffs; gardens and other ornamental landscaping; and natural resources that may be associated with built resources, such as old piers and other waterfront structures. The Project would result in upland disturbance of existing impervious surfaces comprising roads and bridges. The Project could also result in the disturbance of adjacent pervious surfaces associated with parkland and retained fill.

Existing natural resources in the study area will be characterized, including floodplains, terrestrial resources (i.e., ecological communities and wildlife), groundwater resources,

aquatic resources, and threatened, endangered, and special concern species. The environmental review will assess the potential for the Project to affect natural resources, including short-term construction effects, long-term effects, and potential mitigation needs.

The natural resources assessment will include the following tasks:

- Based on existing information and site reconnaissance conducted twice during the growing season (e.g., once in late spring to early summer and again in late summer to early fall), characterize the existing natural resources (ecological communities, wildlife, floodplains, groundwater resources, aquatic resources, and threatened, endangered, and special concern species), within the study area. Aquatic resources of the East River will be characterized at a level of detail necessary to evaluate the potential of the Project to impact these resources.
- Assess potential effects to natural resources in the future without the Project (“No-Action condition”), accounting for any changes that may alter natural resources within the study area.
- Assess potential impacts to natural resources from the Project. Potential impacts to natural resources will be assessed by considering the construction of new structures, changes in available habitat, and visual and noise disturbances to wildlife within the study area. The assessment assumes that the Project does not include in-water construction and would only have the potential for indirect impacts during construction or operation due to stormwater discharges.

The No-Action condition for natural resources within the study area will be described in the EIS as the baseline condition. The EIS will assess the potential effects of the Project on natural resources, in comparison to the No-Action condition, considering short-term and long-term impacts and will include recommended measures to enhance resources, where appropriate, with the Project.

Hazardous Materials

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a hazardous materials assessment should be conducted when elevated levels of hazardous materials exist on a site, when a project would increase pathways to their exposures, either human or environmental, or when an action would introduce new activities or processes using hazardous materials, thereby increasing the risk of human or environmental exposure. The potential for significant impacts related to hazardous materials can occur when:

- Elevated levels of hazardous materials exist on a site and the project would increase pathways to human or environmental exposures;
- A project would introduce new activities or processes using hazardous materials and the risk of human or environmental exposure is increased; or
- The project would introduce a population to potential human or environmental exposure from off-site sources.

To evaluate potential for impacts relating to hazardous materials during construction and operation of the Project, the hazardous materials chapter of the DEIS will include:

- A review of existing information such as Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, city directories and other historical resources to develop a profile of the historical uses of the project limits and surrounding properties. The aforementioned uses will also be utilized to determine if any adjacent or surrounding properties or uses have the potential to have adversely impacted subsurface conditions within the project limits;
- A review of local, state, and federal regulatory database listings to understand documented conditions that may have adversely impacted subsurface environmental conditions within the project limits; and
- A review of available online resources maintained by EPA and NYSDEC to further understand existing conditions relating to contamination in the project limits. If necessary, public records may be obtained for further evaluation via Freedom of Information Law (FOIL).

The hazardous materials chapter of the DEIS will summarize the findings of existing historical land use studies and subsurface investigations already undertaken for the Project and will describe the procedures by which the soil and groundwater disturbance for the Project would be undertaken. The analysis will identify the need for additional subsurface site investigation (e.g., collection and laboratory analysis of soil, groundwater and/or soil vapor samples) and procedures required to reduce the potential for significant adverse impacts due to hazardous materials, including procedures during construction to manage and dispose of excavated material and procedures to protect the health of local residents, construction workers, and future users of the rights-of-way, easement, existing structures and acquisition parcels.

Water and Sewer Infrastructure

The *CEQR Technical Manual* outlines thresholds for analysis of a project's effects on water supply infrastructure and wastewater and stormwater conveyance and treatment infrastructure. For water supply infrastructure, analysis is warranted if a project would result in an exceptionally large demand for water or is in an area that experiences low water pressure; as the Project would not result in any incremental demand for water, a water supply analysis is not warranted.

For wastewater and stormwater conveyance and treatment infrastructure, analysis is required for projects exceeding certain development thresholds (generally 400 residential units or 250,000 square feet of non-residential development for areas in Brooklyn served by combined sewer systems, such as the project limits) and/or projects affecting a large area (more than 5 acres) which would result in an increase in impervious surface coverage.

As the Project would involve impervious surface coverage within the project limits, which would be greater than 5 acres in size, an analysis is warranted. The Project would not result in any incremental sanitary sewage generation and would not have any potential impacts on sanitary sewage conveyance and treatment infrastructure. Therefore, the analysis will consider only the potential impacts of stormwater resulting from the Project. The analysis will:

- Describe the existing stormwater drainage system and surfaces (pervious or impervious) in the project limits, and estimate the amount of stormwater generated in the project limits.
- Describe any changes to the stormwater drainage system and surface area coverage within the project limits expected in the future without the Project.
- Describe any changes to the sewer system serving the project limits that are expected to occur in the future without the Project.
- Discuss the Project's stormwater management system, including any stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) and any changes to stormwater conveyance infrastructure resulting from the Project, including any planned sustainability elements and best management practices (BMPs) that are intended to reduce stormwater runoff from the project limits.
- Describe the changes to the project limits' proposed surface area (pervious or impervious) and estimate volume and peak discharge rates of stormwater from the project limits with the Project.
- Based on the assessment of future stormwater generation, determine the change in flows and volumes to the sewer system and/or waterbodies due to the Project.

Solid Waste and Sanitation Services

A solid waste assessment determines whether a project has the potential to cause a substantial increase in solid waste production that may overburden available waste management capacity or otherwise be inconsistent with the City's Solid Waste Management Plan or with state policy related to the City's integrated solid waste management system. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a solid waste assessment is appropriate if a project has the potential to generate 50 tons per week or more of solid waste, compared to the future without the Project, or No-Action condition. Since the Project would not result in new waste-generating uses in the study area, it is unlikely to generate more than 50 tons per week of solid waste.

The DEIS will include a preliminary screening assessment of the Project's potential to affect solid waste and sanitation services. The DEIS will provide an estimate of the additional solid waste expected to be generated by the Project using Table 14-1 of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, and assess its effects on the City's solid waste and sanitation services. If the Project would introduce facilities generating a large amount of solid waste, a detailed assessment of solid waste and sanitation services will be provided. The assessment will:

- Describe existing and future New York City solid waste disposal practices.
- Estimate solid waste generation by the project limits for existing, No-Action and With-Action conditions.
- Assess the impacts of the Project's solid waste generation on the City's collection needs and disposal capacity. The Project's consistency with the City's Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) will also be assessed.

Energy

Analysis of energy focuses on a project's consumption of energy and, where relevant, potential effects on the transmission of energy that may result from a project. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a detailed assessment of energy impacts would be limited to actions

that could significantly affect the transmission or generation of energy or that generate substantial indirect consumption of energy (such as a new roadway).

The Project would not introduce a new energy source or affect transmission infrastructure thereof. The Project would rehabilitate the BQE, but it would not change its capacity or vehicular volumes as compared to the No Build Alternative. Therefore, the Project would not require analysis of energy consumption. The DEIS will include appropriate information to document these conclusions consistent with *CEQR Technical Manual* methodologies.

Transportation

Traffic

In accordance with criteria established in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a quantified traffic and parking analysis is warranted if a project would result in more than 50 vehicle trips through any one intersection during a given peak hour. Because the Project would rehabilitate an existing facility and would not itself generate new residents, employees, or visitors as compared to the No Build Alternative, the operation of the Project is not expected to exceed the 50 peak hour vehicle trips or 200 peak hour transit/pedestrian trip thresholds in the *CEQR Technical Manual*. However, BQE Central is an important regional transportation facility, and an understanding of the potential benefits and impacts on future transportation operations is important in demonstrating the Project's consistency with its stated purpose and need. Therefore, the EIS will include a quantified analysis of traffic conditions.

The traffic analysis will include the following tasks:

- Traffic data collection: traffic data collection was conducted during the spring of 2025 and will be augmented with additional traffic counts from 2023. This work included manual and automated traffic counts, and collection of relevant historical counts from the NYCDOT Traffic Information Management System (TIMS). These data were summarized and used to develop a large-scale, detailed traffic model. The model will support ongoing traffic analysis throughout the Project, including analysis of construction-period conditions.
- Existing Conditions Analysis: Current peak hour traffic volumes for two peak hours (AM and PM) will be used to assess the capacity of the BQE mainline and ramps, and of the study area intersections. Peak hours were determined based on the results of traffic counts conducted in 2025 and supplemented with other years that comply with CEQR guidance.
- Future without the Project (the "No-Action" condition): Traffic analysis for the No-Action condition will include estimation of volumes and levels of service for the build year. This analysis will include examination of the Weekday AM and PM peak hours. 2025 daily peak hour traffic will be grown to obtain inputs for the build year. Appropriate annual background growth rates will be determined which meet CEQR guidelines and will be based on historical and current traffic counts. Trip-making assessments of programmed and potential development activities within the study area will also be conducted. This analysis will include consideration of "soft sites," where no development proposals currently exist, but where development may reasonably be expected to occur by the build year, based on current zoning regulations. Finally, the analysis will consider any programmed changes to roadway geometry, traffic control devices, roadway direction, or infrastructure that would affect traffic volumes, roadway capacity, and traffic operations levels of service.

- Future with the Project (the “With-Action” condition): Similar analyses will be undertaken to determine the effects of With-Action conditions when the Project is built and fully operational. Traffic models will be used to quantify any changes in local and regional traffic patterns that would result from changes to the roadway network. Future anticipated growth rates and other metrics for the No-Action and With-Action conditions will be compared to determine whether the Project will have a substantial impact on the highway mainline and ramps within the study area.

Transit

In accordance with criteria established in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a quantified transit analysis is warranted if a project would result in more than 200 transit or pedestrian trips during a given peak hour. The Project would not generate new transit trips, nor would it change access to or the operation of transit routes in the study area. The EIS will characterize transit operations in the study area.

Pedestrian Facilities

In accordance with criteria established in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a quantified pedestrian analysis is warranted if a project would result in more than 200 pedestrian trips during a given peak hour. The Project would not generate new pedestrian trips. The EIS will characterize pedestrian conditions in the study area as well as any improvements to pedestrian facilities associated with the Project.

Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Vehicular Safety Assessment

Recent study area crash data will be obtained from NYC DOT to examine vehicular and pedestrian safety issues. The data will be analyzed to identify high vehicle and/or pedestrian/bike crash locations, based on CEQR criteria.

Design scenarios will be reviewed to avoid adverse effects on pedestrians or vehicle safety. Feasible improvement measures will be identified in consultation with NYC DOT, in order to mitigate any potential safety issues identified during this review. State and federal crash reduction factors will be used to develop proposed improvements to both highways/ramps and local intersections.

Parking Conditions

The completed Project is not anticipated to affect demand for parking or reduce the amount of available local parking. The EIS will characterize parking conditions in the study area.

Air Quality

Under CEQR, an air quality analysis determines whether a project’s operation would result in stationary or mobile sources of pollutant emissions that could have a significant adverse impact on ambient air quality. The Project would not introduce stationary sources of pollution (e.g., smokestacks or ventilation structures). Therefore, an analysis of stationary sources is not warranted.

The Project would serve future automobile and truck volumes. However, it would not increase capacity of the roadway, result in a significant relocation of vehicle emissions, or result in a change in dispersion characteristics as compared to the No Build Alternative. Therefore, a mobile source analysis is also not warranted.

The DEIS will describe background conditions on air quality and document conclusions with respect to the Project's potential to affect or not affect air quality emissions in the study area.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change

In accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions analysis discloses the GHG emissions that could result from a large-scale project and assesses the consistency of the project with the City's and State's goals to reduce GHG emissions as established within PlaNYC and the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA).

As discussed above, the Project would not introduce stationary sources of pollution or affect energy consumption. Additionally, the Project is not anticipated to result in a change to regional traffic patterns or generate additional vehicle trips when compared to the No Build Alternative. Therefore, operational GHG emissions will be qualitatively discussed.

The Project's generated GHG emissions during construction will be quantified and the consistency of the Project with the City's established GHG reduction goal will be assessed. Estimated GHG emissions will be prepared for the years of construction and reported as carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) metric tons per year. GHG emissions other than carbon dioxide (CO₂) would be included if they would account for a substantial portion of overall emissions, adjusted to account for the global warming potential.

As the Project is in a flood hazard zone, the potential impacts of climate change on the Project will be evaluated. The discussion will focus on sea level rise, changes in storm frequency and intensity projected to result from global climate change, increased precipitation, and change in heat impacts and the potential future impact of those changes on the Project's infrastructure and uses.

Noise

Since the operation of the Project would not result in the introduction of any new stationary or mobile sources of noise, and consequently, would not have the potential to impact nearby sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the Study Area, no further assessment of operational noise and vibration impacts are required.

Public Health

According to the guidelines of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a public health assessment may be warranted if an unmitigated significant adverse impact is identified in other CEQR analysis areas, such as air quality, water quality, hazardous materials, or noise. If unmitigated significant adverse impacts are identified in any one of these technical areas and the lead agency determines that a public health assessment is warranted, an analysis will be provided for that specific technical area.

Neighborhood Character

Neighborhood character is determined by several factors, including land use, socioeconomic conditions, community facilities, open space, historic and cultural resources, urban design, visual resources, shadows, transportation, and noise. According to the guidelines of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, an assessment of neighborhood character is generally needed when a project has the potential to result in significant adverse impacts in one of the technical

areas presented above, or when a project may have moderate effects on several of the elements that define a neighborhood's character. Based on an evaluation of the Project's impacts, an assessment of neighborhood character during construction and operation of the facilities will be prepared following the methodologies outlined in the *CEQR Technical Manual*. The analysis will begin with a preliminary assessment, which will involve identifying the defining features of the area that contribute to its character. If the preliminary assessment establishes that the Project would affect a contributing element of neighborhood character, a detailed assessment would be prepared to examine the potential neighborhood character-related effects of the Project through a comparison of future conditions with and without the Project.

Construction

The DEIS will include a chapter describing the construction schedule and logistics for the construction of the Project. This chapter will include a discussion of key construction period elements, such as the proposed temporary bypass structures. The chapter will also provide a summary that will discuss anticipated on-site construction activities, potential staging and transport of construction materials, and estimates of construction workers for the Project.

Construction impacts, though temporary, can have a disruptive and noticeable effect on the adjacent community, as well as people passing through the area. Because the construction duration for the Project is anticipated to be long-term (i.e., greater than two years in accordance with the CEQR Technical Manual) and would occur in proximity to sensitive receptors, the Project could have substantial and extended construction effects. Large-scale development near sensitive receptors with a long construction duration requires a detailed assessment of the potential impacts of construction activities. For each of the technical areas, appropriate construction analysis year(s) will be selected to represent reasonable worst-case conditions relevant to that technical area, which can occur at different times for different analyses. For each technical area, the analysis will consider the potential for cumulative effects due to concurrent construction of other nearby projects, such as the Brooklyn Marine Terminal Redevelopment.

Based on the currently anticipated scope of the Project, the construction chapter will need to address construction-period effects on:

- **Open Space:** As described above, multiple parks are located adjacent to BQE Central. Reconstruction of the roadway may temporarily restrict access to parks, and the construction activities may affect the usage of parks during the construction period. The EIS will characterize the potential effects of construction activities on parkland and any measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse construction effects on the occupancy or use of the parkland.
- **Shadows:** The proposed temporary bypasses will introduce new structures above and adjacent to sunlight-sensitive resources including Brooklyn Bridge Park and New York City parkland. Although temporary, these structures may be in place over multiple years, and therefore, the EIS will assess the potential incremental shadows associated with these structures on the adjacent sunlight-sensitive features. The assessment of construction-period shadows will use the same tiered methodology as described in the "Shadows" section above.

- **Historic and Cultural Resources:** The historic and cultural resources chapter of the EIS will identify architectural resources in the study area. The construction chapter will identify measures to avoid inadvertent damage to the resources during the construction period as well as measures to recover or avoid archaeological resources that may be encountered within the project limits.
- **Urban Design and Visual Resources:** The proposed temporary bypasses will introduce new, temporary structures that may be in place for up to 10 years and could obstruct views of visual resources during that time. Therefore, referencing the urban design and visual resources chapter, the construction chapter will characterize the potential effects of the bypasses on urban design and visual resources.
- **Natural Resources:** If the natural resources chapter of the EIS identifies any sensitive habitats or threatened or endangered species in the study area that could be sensitive to construction activities (e.g., migratory birds, bats), the EIS will identify measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate construction-period effects on these resources.
- **Hazardous Materials:** The hazardous materials chapter of the EIS will summarize the findings of existing historical land use studies and subsurface investigations already undertaken for the Project and will describe the procedures by which the soil and groundwater disturbance for the Project would be undertaken. The analysis will identify the need for additional subsurface site investigation (e.g., collection and laboratory analysis of soil, groundwater and/or soil vapor samples) and procedures required to reduce the potential for significant adverse impacts due to hazardous materials, including procedures during construction to manage and dispose of excavated material and procedures to protect the health of local residents, construction workers, and future users of the rights-of-way.
- **Transportation:** Based on the Project's anticipated construction needs, an analysis of construction-related transportation impacts is warranted. This assessment will consider construction logistics and construction vehicle trips from workers and deliveries as well as the diversion of highway volumes in determining potential transportation-related impacts. In accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a detailed traffic analysis will be performed for intersections expected to incur 50 or more incremental construction trips in passenger car equivalents (PCEs) to identify the potential for significant adverse traffic impacts during peak construction activity (worker travel and truck deliveries). Based on anticipated construction logistics, which may include the temporary closure and/or narrowing of public rights-of-way (ROWs), including roadways and pedestrian facilities (i.e., sidewalks, corner reservoirs, and crosswalks), preliminary Maintenance and Protection of Traffic (MPT) strategies will be developed to inform analysis needs for typical peak travel hours on a representative weekday (i.e., AM and PM).

Data will be obtained and summarized to establish the baseline traffic and pedestrian volumes to evaluate existing operating conditions at study area locations during the prescribed analysis peak hours. The potential future construction effects resulting from construction activities and public ROW disruptions will be evaluated pursuant to the procedures outlined in the *CEQR Technical Manual* to determine the potential for significant adverse traffic and pedestrian impacts. Where potential impacts are identified, improvements would be explored to mitigate those impacts to the extent practicable. The construction transportation analysis will also describe reductions in the amount of available local parking due to construction activities and will provide estimates on the

number of parking spaces that may be needed during peak construction at each construction site and describe how such parking demand may be accommodated on-site and/or by the parking resources in the surrounding neighborhoods.

- **Air Quality:** Emissions from the diversion of vehicles to temporary bypasses and potentially local streets, construction worker and delivery trips to and from the Project site, on-site construction equipment, on-road construction-related vehicles, and dust generating construction activities, have the potential to affect air quality. This assessment will include a quantitative air quality analysis of construction equipment sources and construction-related vehicles using the EPA Motor Vehicle Emission Simulator (MOVES5) emission model and EPA/American Meteorological Society (AMS) AERMOD dispersion model to determine the potential for air quality impacts on nearby sensitive receptor locations.

Because the level of construction activities would vary throughout the construction period, the approach to formulate the reasonable worst-case scenarios for analysis will be based on an estimated monthly construction work schedule, equipment employed, equipment emission rates, and usage factors. Locations will be selected for modeling based on the periods of highest emissions and the distance between the construction activities and the receptors. Other less intensive construction periods will either be modeled or presented as a qualitative discussion, based on the reasonable worst-case period results. The pollutants of concern include carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matter (PM), and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂).

In addition, vehicle emissions from traffic diverted to temporary bypasses and potentially local streets will be modeled alongside construction equipment, dust generating activities, and construction vehicles. Where appropriate, the cumulative effect will be projected.

The potential for significant adverse impacts will be determined by a comparison of the model predicted concentrations to the NAAQS, or by comparison of the predicted increase in concentrations to applicable interim guidance thresholds.

- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change:** Due to the anticipated construction activities and duration, a quantified analysis of GHG emissions during the construction phase will also be provided (presented in the DEIS chapter that will include the overall Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change analysis). GHG emissions from on-site fuel usage and the extraction/production of materials or fuels needed to construct the Project will be included as part of the Project's total emissions. Features of the Project that demonstrate consistency with the City's GHG reduction goal will also be described.
- **Noise:** A detailed analysis of noise from construction of the Project will be provided. Appropriate noise descriptors to describe the existing noise environment will be selected. The L_{eq} and L₁₀ levels will be the primary noise descriptors used for the analysis. Noise receptors will be located at sensitive receptors (i.e., residences, open spaces, houses of worship, schools, etc.) along the roadway segments to be rehabilitated, bypass roadways, and potential staging sites. Existing noise levels at the selected receptors will be determined based on 20-minute spot measurements conducted during daytime traffic peak periods and the late-night period at 14 locations representing noise receptors near construction work areas and along routes for diverted traffic, including the temporary bypasses. Receptors were selected to represent noise-sensitive uses that would experience noise from construction operations or traffic diversions. Late-night period noise measurements will be utilized for construction activities. The measurements were

conducted using Type I instrumentation. Representative worst-case time periods throughout the construction schedule will be selected for analysis. Noise levels due to construction (including operation of on-site equipment, construction vehicles, and diverted highway traffic) will be predicted at each sensitive receptor for each analysis time period using computerized models consistent with *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance. If necessary, based on the results of the construction noise analysis, the feasibility, practicability, and effectiveness of implementing measures to mitigate any significant construction noise impacts will be examined.

Construction activities have the potential to result in vibration levels that may result in structural or architectural damage, and/or annoyance or interference with vibration-sensitive activities. A construction vibration assessment will be performed. This assessment will determine critical distances at which various pieces of equipment may cause damage or annoyance to nearby buildings based on the type of equipment, the building construction, and applicable vibration level criteria. Should it be necessary for certain construction equipment to be located closer to a building than its critical distance, vibration mitigation options will be proposed.

- **Neighborhood Character:** A construction impact analysis for neighborhood character is typically needed if construction would require continuous use of property for an extended duration and would therefore have the potential to affect the nature of the land use and character of the neighborhood. For example, if construction requires use of a single property for staging for several years, it may result in a “land use” that is not compatible with other nearby land uses. The neighborhood character assessment will consider the Project’s construction activities and any use of properties within the study area to determine if construction would result in extended conflicts with existing land uses in the surrounding area that would have a significant adverse impact on the character of the area.

Effects on Disadvantaged Communities

A preliminary review of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation’s (NYSDEC) Disadvantaged Communities Assessment Tool shows three designated Disadvantaged Communities (DACs) that overlap with or are adjacent to the project limits. This assessment will be prepared pursuant to Section 8-0109(2)(k) of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law (known as the “Environmental Justice Siting Law” or “EJSL”), which requires that an EIS include a statement of the effects of a proposed project on DACs, including whether the action may cause or increase a disproportionate pollution burden on a DAC. On January 29, 2025, the NYSDEC proposed amendments to the SEQRA regulations codified at 6 NYCRR Part 617 to implement the SEQRA-related provisions of the EJSL. In May 2026, DEC finalized SEQRA regulations to incorporate the SEQRA-related requirements of the EJSL. The CEQR Technical Manual includes guidance for this assessment. The assessment will be prepared following relevant guidance from NYSDEC and the CEQR Technical Manual. Following NYSDEC and CEQR Technical Manual guidance, the assessment will establish the study area, identify DACs in the study area along with their burdens and vulnerabilities, identify potential effects on DACs, and determine whether potential adverse impacts are likely to result in a disproportionate pollution burden on a DAC.

Alternatives

The purpose of an alternatives analysis is to examine reasonable and feasible options that avoid or reduce Project-related significant adverse impacts while still achieving the stated goals and objectives of the Project. The alternatives are usually defined once the full extent of the Project's impacts have been identified. However, the alternatives analyzed must include a No Build Alternative, as required by CEQR. The chapter may also include an alternative(s) that reduces any significant adverse impacts identified in the EIS analyses; if impacts are identified, alternatives will be analyzed at that time. If the Project would result in unmitigated significant adverse impacts, the EIS will also include a No Unmitigated Impacts Alternative. The alternatives analyses will be qualitative, except where significant adverse impacts of the Project have been identified, or if an alternative with fewer overall impacts would nevertheless have new significant adverse impacts.

DEIS Summary Chapters

In accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, the DEIS will include the following summary chapters, where appropriate to the Project:

- **Mitigation:** Where the technical analyses in this EIS identify significant adverse impacts caused by the Project, measures to mitigate those impacts will be identified and described. The mitigation chapter will address the anticipated impacts requiring mitigation, likely mitigation measures, and the timing of the mitigation measures. Where impacts cannot be practicably mitigated, they will be disclosed as unavoidable adverse impacts.
- **Unavoidable Adverse Impacts:** A chapter that summarizes any significant adverse impacts that are unavoidable if the Project is implemented regardless of the mitigation employed (or if mitigation is impossible);
- **Growth-Inducing Aspects of the Project:** A chapter that will discuss the “secondary” impacts of the Project that could trigger further development; and
- **Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources:** A chapter that will summarize the Project's impacts in terms of the loss of environmental resources (e.g., use of fossil fuels and materials for construction, etc.), both in the immediate future and in the long term.

7: How to Comment

A copy of the Draft Scope can be obtained online at the project website: www.nyc.gov/bqe.

To solicit comments on the Project, the alternatives to be assessed in the DEIS, and the Draft Scope, public meetings have been scheduled for the following dates and times:

November 10, 2026 (In Person)
6:30 PM to 8:30 PM
New York City College of Technology,
300 Jay Street,
Brooklyn, New York 11201

November 12, 2026 (Virtual)
6:30 PM to 8:30 PM
Via Zoom
Register for the meeting link at
www.nyc.gov/bqe

Please register for these meetings at www.nyc.gov/bqe.

In addition to the opportunity to provide oral comments at the public meetings, NYC DOT will accept written comments on this Draft Scope until **November 23, 2026**. Comments

may be provided at the public meetings; by completing a comment form on the Project website at www.nyc.gov/bqe; by email to BQECentral@dot.nyc.gov; or via U.S. mail to the following address:

NYC Department of Transportation
Division of Bridges – BQE Central Project Team
Attention: Albert Silvestri
55 Water Street, 5th Floor
New York, NY 10041