

**A. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION**

The Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation (BNYDC) is proposing a mixed-use development project called Admirals Row Plaza (the “proposed project”) on a 6.08-acre site at the corner of Navy Street and Nassau Street in the Borough of Brooklyn, Block 2023, Lot 50 that is currently owned by the United States Army-National Guard Bureau (NGB) (see **Figure 1-1**). A principle objective of the proposed project is the siting of a full-service, large-format supermarket to serve neighborhood residents in an area that is underserved by grocery stores carrying fresh food. BNYDC also seeks to further its core mission of providing light industrial space for small businesses. The proposed project would also enable the rehabilitation and/or reconstruction and adaptive reuse of two historic structures.

BNYDC intends to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to develop the proposed project as it is described and assessed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Through the RFP process, a developer will be designated to develop the project.

The proposed project would contain approximately 293,294 total square feet of development, including a supermarket of approximately 74,161 square feet, approximately 79,068 square feet of retail ranging from small local stores to destination retailers, approximately 7,024 square feet of community facility/non-profit office space, approximately 127,364 square feet of light industrial space, and approximately 215 square feet of enclosed bicycle parking space. In addition, approximately 295 accessory parking spaces would be provided in a surface lot. The light industrial space would be developed above the supermarket and would have a separate entrance from inside the Brooklyn Navy Yard industrial park, which borders the project site. The proposed project is expected to be constructed and operational by 2014.

Development would incorporate both new construction and the rehabilitation and/or reconstruction and adaptive reuse of two existing historic structures, known as Building B and the Timber Shed. In total, three new buildings would be developed, ranging in height from approximately 32 to 99 feet (see **Figures 1-2** through **1-5**). The new development would be compliant with New York City Local Law 86 of 2005 and would be designed to meet the standards for LEED Silver Certification by the U.S. Green Building Council. Work on Building B would meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and work on the Timber Shed would seek to meet those Standards. The proposed project would result in the demolition of the remainder of the existing historic structures located on the project site, which has been determined to be eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places as a historic district.

In 1971, the City of New York reopened most of the former Brooklyn Navy Yard as a City-owned industrial park, under the management of a local development corporation. The Brooklyn Navy Yard industrial park—which excludes the project site—is currently under the management of BNYDC. The project site—which was not sold to the City by the federal government with the

rest of the Brooklyn Navy Yard in 1967—is currently owned and controlled by NGB, which proposes to sell it to the City of New York in accordance with Congressional authorization under Public Law 100-202. The City would in turn lease the site to BNYDC to facilitate the development of the proposed project. Disposition of the project site by NGB to the City of New York is subject to separate review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), as implemented by Federal regulations appearing at 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 800. Beginning in 2007, NGB has led a Section 106 process in anticipation of disposition of the project site.

The proposed City actions (described below in Section E, “Required Public Approvals”) trigger the New York City Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) and require environmental review under the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) procedures. The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development (ODMED) is the CEQR lead agency for the proposed project, and several additional agencies are involved or interested agencies in the environmental review, including the New York City Department of City Planning (DCP); the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS); the New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS); the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP); the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT); the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC); the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, acting in its capacity as the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO); and NGB.

## **B. PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED**

Under its long-term lease for the Brooklyn Navy Yard industrial park with the City, BNYDC’s mandate is to create jobs, maximize revenue, develop underutilized areas within the Brooklyn Navy Yard industrial park, and modernize the Navy Yard’s infrastructure. Redevelopment of the project site with light industrial and retail uses directly relates to BNYDC’s mission of job creation.

BNYDC’s proposed project will be an engine for substantial job growth directly benefiting the communities that surround the project site. There are 17,000 residents in the three New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments just outside the Brooklyn Navy Yard industrial park’s gates, many of whom are in need of employment opportunities. The proposed project would create approximately 578 supermarket, light industrial, retail, and community facility/non-profit office jobs. BNYDC has a strong track record in placing local residents in jobs; its employment center has placed more than 1,000 people in quality jobs over the last four years. A local hiring plan for the proposed project would be developed in coordination with BNYDC, the developer to be designated pursuant to the forthcoming RFP, the selected supermarket operator, local elected officials, community leaders (particularly from the local NYCHA developments), and job training entities.

The Brooklyn Navy Yard industrial park currently has approximately 4.5 million square feet of fully occupied industrial space within its campus and is expected to further expand over the next several years. The new industrial space to be developed as part of the proposed project would help the City meet the strong demand for light industrial space and create hundreds of additional employment opportunities.

Development of the proposed supermarket on the project site would fulfill the City’s two-decade-old commitment to the surrounding community to address a serious public health issue

by providing access to fresh produce. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the City engaged in community discussions about possible development opportunities on the project site. Given the project site's location at the southwest corner of the historic boundaries of the Brooklyn Navy Yard—in close proximity to three public housing complexes that have roughly 17,000 people with a median annual income of under \$15,000 per household and with few opportunities to access fresh produce—the community strongly advocated the establishment of a supermarket on the site. Residents and community leaders believed that a supermarket that could provide fresh, affordable produce would address a serious public health issue in their largely minority, low-income community.

More recently, a 2008 study by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), DCP, and the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) found that many low- and moderate-income neighborhoods across the City—including the project neighborhood—are underserved by grocery stores offering a full line of grocery products, including fresh fruits and vegetables, fresh meats, dairy, and other food and nonfood products. The study found that existing and potential developers and operators of grocery stores face significant barriers that hamper viability and profitability, including outside pressures for large-format retail space. Grocery store operators are often unable to compete for the City's limited number of large, ground-floor storefronts against more profitable businesses, such as retail bank branches, drug stores, and discount variety stores. Other regulations—such as higher parking requirements for food stores over other types of neighborhood retail—can drive up the cost of development. Current zoning regulations also restrict grocery stores to 10,000 square feet in M1 zoning districts.

As a response to the study, the City has established the Food Retail Expansion to Support Health (FRESH) program, which is intended to facilitate the development of stores selling a full range of food products with an emphasis on fresh fruits and vegetables, meats, and other perishable goods. The program provides zoning and financial incentives targeted toward the development of grocery stores and supermarkets in the FRESH program areas and other underserved areas in all five boroughs. The project site is located outside of the FRESH program's zoning incentive-designated areas in Brooklyn. However, as the project site is located in an area that the 2008 survey determined to be underserved by grocery stores, it is within an area eligible for EDC financial incentives.

## **C. BROOKLYN NAVY YARD HISTORY**

During the 1620s, the land that eventually comprised the historic boundaries of the Brooklyn Navy Yard was privately owned by the Rapelyes, a Dutch Huguenot family who originally purchased a 335-acre tract of high ground, meadow, and swamp from the Native Americans. Notable settlements on the property included Remsen's mill, dam, and toll bridge, established during the early 1700s, on 70 acres along the western strand of Wallabout Bay. In 1700, the project site—a 6.08-acre segment of the former Brooklyn Navy Yard complex—was located within Remsen's Mill Pond and the surrounding wetlands. By 1783, the Mill Pond was expanded with dammed upland areas, and the old Brooklyn Navy Yard was established to the north of the project site.

By 1827 the Brooklyn Navy Yard was developed with formal streets and several large structures; the Mill Pond was reduced in size; and the Wallabout Bridge bisected the Navy Yard. In 1850, to enable the United States government to develop the project site for naval housing, the Mill Pond was filled, leaving a drainage channel terminating at the Cider Mills, adjacent to

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the Navy Yard. At that time, two structures were present on the project site: Building 16 and Building B. By 1890, Buildings H, C, B, D, E, F, G and several of the accessory parking garages on the project site were completed. Buildings E and F were completed by 1906. On-site changes between 1906 and 1943 were limited to a reconfiguration of Building 16 (no longer extant on the project site).

At the time of its construction, the Brooklyn Navy Yard was one of six such yards commissioned by the United States Navy. In its initial years, the Brooklyn Navy Yard functioned primarily as a depot for supplies, but during the early 19th century, it served as the Navy's primary shipbuilding and repair facility. Shipbuilding activity increased during the War of 1812, when the yard fitted out more than 100 naval vessels. During the mid-19th century, the growth of shipping and port activities in New York City further enhanced the Navy Yard's development. During the Civil War, the Navy Yard served as a key depot for the distribution of stores and supplies to the Union fleet, and the Naval Laboratory prepared most of the medicines used by the Union Navy.

In the 20th century, the Navy Yard's workforce increased substantially during World War I and World War II. During World War I, the workforce expanded from 6,000 to 18,000; during World War II, the government increased the workforce to 70,000 employees, including women who were hired for the first time as mechanics and technicians. During the Korean War, the aircraft supercarriers U.S.S. Saratoga, Constellation, and Independence were built at the Navy Yard. The last vessels built at the Navy Yard—six amphibious landing platforms—were constructed between 1960 and 1965.

In 1966, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara closed the Brooklyn Navy Yard along with over 90 other military bases and installations. At the time of its closing, the Brooklyn Navy Yard employed more than 9,000 workers and was the oldest continually active industrial plant in New York State. A majority of the Navy Yard—excluding the project site—was sold the following year to the City of New York. The City reopened the former Brooklyn Navy Yard in 1971 as a City-owned industrial park, under the management of a local development corporation (Commerce, Labor and Industry in the County of Kings [CLICK]). The Brooklyn Navy Yard industrial park—which excludes the project site—is currently under the management of the BNYDC.

### **PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT SITE**

The 6.08-acre project site, which was not sold to the City of New York in 1967 with the rest of the former Brooklyn Navy Yard complex, has remained under the ownership and control of NGB. In 1986, and again in 1995 and 2004, the City had proposed to redevelop the project site, but those projects did not go forward.

As part of the 1995 proposed redevelopment of the site, SHPO was consulted under Section 106 of NHPA. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was executed in 1996 among SHPO and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), with LPC and BNYDC as concurring parties. To mitigate the adverse effect of the demolition of the historic structures on the project site, the MOA stipulated that Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) Level II photographic documentation of these buildings be undertaken and ~~the preparation of~~ a salvage plan be prepared. In 2004, SHPO determined that the deteriorated state of the buildings would make a salvage operation unsafe and would yield few salvageable items. HABS documentation of the Admirals Row Officers' Quarters (not including the Timber Shed) was prepared and accepted by SHPO in 2005.

Since 2007, consultation among the NGB, SHPO, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), and various consulting parties has been proceeding under Section 106 with respect to the federal disposition of the Admirals Row site. USACE is serving as the real estate agent in assisting NGB in meeting its requirements with respect to this federal undertaking. The consultation process has involved the preparation of multiple studies to assess the historical and archaeological issues associated with the Admirals Row site. The information contained in these studies has been made public through posting on a website maintained by NGB, and through discussion at six Section 106 consulting parties meetings that have been hosted by NGB between April 2008 and February 2011, as well as through public meetings in December 2007, July 2008, and May 2011. These studies and meetings have served to inform the decision-making process with respect to the potential effects of the federal disposition of the site, potential alternatives to the proposed project, and corresponding mitigation measures. In Summer 2011, an MOA for the federal disposition of the Admirals Row site was executed among the ACHP, SHPO, and NGB; the City of New York, as purchaser of the property, would be required to sign the MOA upon completion of the transfer of the property. The 2011 MOA and the alternatives analysis that was prepared as part of this Section 106 consultation is discussed in detail in Chapter 5, “Historic and Cultural Resources.”

## D. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT SITE

The 6.08-acre project site is bounded by Navy Street to the west, Nassau Street<sup>1</sup> to the south, and the Brooklyn Navy Yard industrial park to the north and east. The project site has been determined eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places as a historic district. The site includes 20 vacant structures (see **Figure 1-6**). These include Buildings B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, K, and L, 10 three-story residential buildings that formerly served as officers’ housing. Each of the residences is oriented toward Nassau Street and has a one-story detached accessory garage. The garages are linked to the houses by concrete footpaths. The front, rear, and side yards of each residence are overgrown with trees, vines, and underbrush.

Another vacant structure on the site that contributes to its historic significance is the Timber Shed, a long brick building that was formerly used for timber storage related to ship construction.<sup>2</sup> The site also includes former recreation fields and facilities, including two concrete pads of former tennis courts and a former parade ground. The site has been unused for over twenty years, and the structures on the site are severely deteriorated. The boundaries of the project site are marked by a brick wall along Navy Street, a brick wall and wrought iron fence along Nassau Street, and a chain link fence to the north and east.

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<sup>1</sup> Current street signage designates Nassau Street to be west of Navy Street and Flushing Avenue to be east of Navy Street. However, the City’s official Zoning Map indicates that Nassau Street formally extends east of Navy Street to N. Elliott Place before becoming Flushing Avenue. Thus, consistent with the City’s Zoning Map, the EIS chapters reference Nassau Street as the project site’s southern boundary.

<sup>2</sup> In Spring 2011, Building 198—a contributing building and a shower room that had been converted to a transformer substation—was demolished by NGB as part of the site’s ~~ongoing~~ remediation, which is ~~occurring~~ occurred independently of the proposed project. This ~~ongoing~~ remediation is described in Chapter 7, “Hazardous Materials.”

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The project site is currently zoned M1-2, a zoning designation that permits light industrial uses, as well as offices and most retail uses.

### **PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

The proposed project would facilitate a proposal to develop approximately 293,294 total square feet of development, including a supermarket of approximately 74,161 square feet, approximately 79,068 square feet of neighborhood-oriented retail ranging from small local stores to destination retailers, approximately 7,024 square feet of community facility/non-profit office space, approximately 127,364 square feet of light industrial space, and approximately 215 square feet of enclosed bicycle parking space. In addition, approximately 295 accessory parking spaces would be provided in a surface lot. The light industrial space would be developed above the supermarket and would have a separate entrance from inside the Brooklyn Navy Yard industrial park, which borders the project site.

Parking for the new light industrial space would be provided in existing parking areas inside the Brooklyn Navy Yard industrial park. On-grade parking accessed from both Nassau Street and Navy Street would be provided on the project site for the retail and office uses and a signal-controlled intersection would be created at the site's new driveway on Nassau Street, pursuant to warrant studies. Accessory signage for the proposed uses would be developed within the parameters generally allowed for M1 zoning districts. Development would incorporate both new construction and rehabilitation and/or reconstruction of two existing historic structures, known as Building B and the Timber Shed. The new development would be compliant with New York City Local Law 86 of 2005 and would be designed to meet the standards for LEED Silver Certification by the U.S. Green Building Council.

The proposed project site would also facilitate the implementation of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway project, an independent City-sponsored project, a portion of which will run along Flushing Avenue/Nassau Street adjacent to the project site. The proposed project would provide sufficient space for widened sidewalks to accommodate the implementation of the greenway with protected bike-only lanes along the site's frontage that would be separated from vehicular traffic and a separate pedestrian sidewalk.

### ***REUSE OF THE TIMBER SHED AND BUILDING B***

The proposed project would rehabilitate and/or reconstruct and adaptively reuse the Timber Shed and Building B. Work on Building B would meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. As more fully described in Chapter 5, "Historic and Cultural Resources," NGB indicated in letters dated January 26, 2011 and April 21, 2011 that the stabilization and rehabilitation or reconstruction of the Timber Shed and Building B will not be required mitigation measures associated with the disposition of Admirals Row and the deteriorated Timber Shed and Building B would be transferred to the future owner of the property in "as is" conditions. However, BNYDC is committed to the retention, reuse, and rehabilitation or reconstruction of the Timber Shed and Building B as part of the proposed project and have incorporated them into the design for the proposed project. BNYDC will make the retention, reuse, and rehabilitation or reconstruction of the Timber Shed and Building B a commitment in the lease or other legally binding agreement with the developer to be designated pursuant to the RFP. The Timber Shed would be stabilized and rehabilitated or reconstructed with the goal of meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The other structures on the project site that contribute to its historic significance would be removed for the proposed project.

To the extent practicable, four of the mature trees on the project site would be preserved and maintained in the proposed site plan.

#### *PARKING AND CIRCULATION*

Approximately 295 accessory parking spaces would be provided for the retail and community facility/non-profit office uses in a new, on-grade parking lot to be constructed on the project site and accessed from both Nassau Street and Navy Street. Parking and access for the proposed light industrial space would be provided in existing areas inside the adjacent Brooklyn Navy Yard industrial park.

The proposed project would provide sufficient interior bike parking spaces to meet the requirements under the proposed zoning. The proposed project would also include outdoor bike racks that would provide additional bike parking spaces for the retail uses.

#### *SUSTAINABLE DESIGN*

Sustainable design integrates architectural elements and engineering systems to optimize the performance of proposed buildings and their interaction with the environment. BNYDC is considering a variety of sustainable design features for the proposed project. These could include high-performance building materials, water conservation measures such as gray water reuse, high-efficiency lighting design and HVAC (heating, ventilating, and air conditioning) systems, and the use of Energy Star appliances. As described in Chapter 8, “Water and Sewer Infrastructure,” a green roof would be located on the Nassau Street retail building and landscaped areas and plantings would be located in the parking lot area to decrease stormwater runoff. Further, BNYDC will make the development and implementation of other best management practices, in addition to the green roof and landscaped areas, a commitment in the lease or other legally binding agreement with the developer to be designated pursuant to the RFP. In addition, the planting of trees on the site would contribute to the City’s goals of adding one million new trees Citywide. The new development would be compliant with New York City Local Law 86 of 2005—which requires capital construction projects that receive City funds to be built in accordance with LEED, and that such projects be designed to reduce the use of energy and potable water—and would be designed to meet the standards for LEED Silver Certification by the U.S. Green Building Council.

#### *CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE AND PHASING*

Construction of the proposed project would begin in 2012 and last approximately 16 months. The project would be fully built in 2014. The construction phasing is described in more detail in Chapter 13, “Construction Impacts.” As described in Chapter 5, “Historic and Cultural Resources,” a Construction Protection Plan would be prepared to protect Building B and the Timber Shed during demolition of other existing structures, their rehabilitation and/or reconstruction, and construction of the new buildings on the site. Any mature trees to be preserved on-site also would be protected during construction activities.

### **E. REQUIRED PUBLIC APPROVALS**

The proposed project would require several City approvals. Some of these are discretionary actions requiring review under the CEQR process; others are ministerial and do not require environmental review. The discretionary actions required for the proposed project include:

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- **Acquisition:** Acquisition of the Admirals Row development site by the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services from NGB;
- **Disposition:** Disposition of the development site by the New York City Department of Small Business Services to BNYDC, pursuant to a long-term Master Lease;
- **Zoning Map Change:** Rezoning of the site and adjacent portions of Block 2023, Lot 1 from an M1-2 zoning district to an M1-4 zoning district (see **Figure 1-7**) to eliminate the minimum parking requirements under the M1-2 zoning district. Under the M1-2 zoning district, the project would be required to provide over 1,000 accessory parking spaces under the proposed program. The proposed supermarket, retail, and community facility/non-profit office uses are anticipated to generate demand of up to approximately 295 accessory parking spaces, which is substantially less than the 1,000 spaces that would be required under existing zoning regulations. As described above, the parking demand from the proposed light industrial space would be met through the use of existing parking areas within the Brooklyn Navy Yard industrial park;
- **Zoning Text Amendment:** A text amendment to Section 74-742 of the Zoning Resolution (ZR) of the City of New York to allow BNYDC to apply for special permits from the City Planning Commission (CPC) for a Large-Scale General Development (LSGD) that is situated within Community District 2 in the borough of Brooklyn and under ownership of the federal government;
- **Special Permit:** A Special Permit pursuant to ZR Section 74-743(a)(2) to allow certain rear yard encroachments;
- **Special Permit:** A Special Permit pursuant to ZR Section 74-744 to allow signage that exceeds the otherwise applicable use regulations;
- **Special Permit:** A Special Permit pursuant to ZR Section 74-53 to allow a group parking facility with more than 150 parking spaces accessory to development uses;
- **Special Permit:** A Special Permit pursuant to ZR Section 74-922 to allow Use Group 6 and/or 10A with no limitation on floor area per establishment within retail buildings; and
- **Z.R. §62-811 Certification:** A Certification by the CPC Chairperson pursuant to ZR Section 62-811 for compliance with waterfront public access and visual corridors.

As noted above, disposition of the project site by NGB to the City of New York is subject to separate review under NEPA and Section 106 of NHPA, as implemented by Federal regulations appearing at 36 CFR Part 800. \*