

A. INTRODUCTION

Under City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR), neighborhood character is an amalgam of several elements that give an area its distinctive personality and help distinguish it from other neighborhoods. These components include land use; street layout; scale, type, and style of development; historic features; patterns and volumes of traffic; noise levels; and any other physical or social characteristics. However, not all of these elements affect neighborhood character in all cases; a neighborhood usually draws its character from a few determining elements. This chapter examines neighborhood character in the 35-acre Project Area (17 acres of which would be developed by Columbia University as an Academic Mixed-Use Area), primary study area, and secondary study area, and analyzes the effects of the Proposed Actions on neighborhood character in these areas.

PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

The Proposed Actions would clearly and substantially alter neighborhood character, as defined by CEQR, in the Project Area. The aging and industrial area would be replaced with a major graduate school and academic research campus of Columbia University, as well as mixed-use development adjacent to the waterfront and on the east side of Broadway. The Proposed Actions would improve the streetscapes, provide active retail uses along Broadway, West 125th Street, and Twelfth Avenue, improve connections to the waterfront, and introduce substantial new publicly accessible open space.

The changes in the Project Area in both 2015 and 2030 would not adversely affect neighborhood character in the primary and secondary study areas. Columbia's proposed urban design (in Subdistrict A) would create inviting visual corridors toward the waterfront and would improve the pedestrian experience on West 125th Street, encouraging residents of the study areas, workers, and visitors to walk to the waterfront and to the West Harlem Waterfront park, a New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) project, which will be completed in 2008. Redevelopment along the west side of Twelfth Avenue in Subdistrict B¹ would add to the attractiveness of the waterfront as a destination. Redevelopment in the section of the Other Area east of Broadway would introduce new residential and commercial uses, which would enliven the Broadway corridor in the Project Area and primary study area.

¹ CPC is contemplating certain modifications to Subdistrict B. The proposed modifications would rezone Subdistrict B to a modified M1-2 light manufacturing district to support light manufacturing and retail uses. It is anticipated that this modification would not result in any projected development sites in Subdistrict B. The proposed modifications are more fully described in Chapter 29, "Modifications to the Proposed Actions." Chapter 29 also analyzes the potential environmental impacts that could result from the proposed modifications.

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In Subdistrict A, the Proposed Actions would facilitate new Columbia University land uses to replace the current mix, characterized primarily by auto repair shops, light manufacturing, storage companies, parking lots, and garages, to create new publicly accessible open spaces, enhance urban design and visual resources, and preserve and create an appropriate context for two historic resources, the Studebaker Building and the former Warren Nash Service Station building. The redevelopment in Subdistrict A would also require the relocation of the West Market Diner and demolition of the former Sheffield Farms Stable (currently occupied by a moving and storage company), both historic resources. The 1948 dining car of the West Market Diner would be relocated to a new site in the Project Area or study area and restored to the extent practicable. Demolition of the former Sheffield Farms Stable is disclosed as a significant adverse impact in Chapter 8, “Historic Resources.” However, there are a number of buildings and historic structures that are more prominent on the urban landscape, some of which are visual landmarks, and which contribute more significantly to the character of the neighborhood (e.g., the Studebaker Building, the former Warren Nash Service Station building, and the two viaducts). Therefore, the demolition of the former Sheffield Farms Stable, while having an adverse effect on neighborhood character, would not constitute a significant adverse impact.

In both project phases, the Proposed Actions would displace jobs, some of which are held by residents of the study areas, and replace them with a greater number of employment opportunities in a broader range of job classifications—including entry level positions, skilled trades (primarily construction trades), administrative support, and professional service positions in finance and general administration—thus expanding the potential base of employment for local residents. In general, the Proposed Actions would introduce new residents, either living in University housing or seeking housing in the primary and secondary study areas. As disclosed in Chapter 4, “Socioeconomic Conditions,” by 2030 the new residential demand from faculty, researchers, and graduate students, coupled with the effect that redevelopment of the Project Area would have on the attractiveness of the study areas as places to live (“destination effect”), could lead to rent increases in those units not protected by rent control, rent stabilization, or a public housing program, which was found to be a significant adverse indirect residential displacement impact. However, housing in the primary study area would remain typified by large publicly subsidized housing complexes and other rent regulated apartments, representing 73.1 percent of all units in the primary study area, which would be unaffected by the Proposed Actions. Therefore, the significant adverse indirect residential displacement impact of the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character.

The population characteristics of the new residents would probably more closely reflect the characteristics of Manhattan residents as a whole, with higher incomes and a higher proportion of white and Asian peoples, but the numbers of new residents would not be high enough to make a significant difference in the population characteristics prevailing in the study areas. While changes in population characteristics relating to race or ethnicity can affect neighborhood character, they are not in and of themselves beneficial or adverse under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA)/CEQR.

The limited indirect retail displacement that could result from increased rents in the immediate vicinity of the Project Area would not lead to major changes within the primary study area’s commercial strips, and would not result in adverse changes to neighborhood character. Given the high residential density and the strong residential market in the study area, there would still be the local demand for neighborhood retail and services necessary to maintain the strong retail presence along West 125th Street and the avenues within the study area. Within the secondary study area, potential indirect business displacement in the manufacturing district on Amsterdam

Avenue also was not found to be significant (see Chapter 4), and thus would not significantly affect neighborhood character.

Along with the increase in density and activity, the Proposed Actions would increase travel demand, including auto and truck trips, transit riders, and pedestrians. The traffic impacts predicted to occur as a result of the Proposed Actions would primarily be located along 125th Street, a street that is already heavily traveled and subject to congestion, so the change from the Proposed Actions would not affect neighborhood character there. The increases in traffic on the local side streets in the Project Area would be associated with the increases in activity from the new, denser development and would reflect the new neighborhood character in the Project Area. With implementation of the transportation improvements included as part of the Proposed Actions, these increases are not predicted to create significant adverse traffic impacts. The increase in traffic and the installation of a traffic light on West 125th Street between Broadway and Twelfth Avenue would lead to a significant adverse noise impact on pedestrians (see Chapter 20, “Noise”). The noise category of this location would deteriorate from “marginally unacceptable,” a condition that is common in Manhattan, to “clearly unacceptable.” However, in 2030 this site would be surrounded by commercial uses and a University building, which would be constructed to fully mitigate the effect of high ambient noise levels. Thus, the noise effects of the Proposed Actions would not affect neighborhood character.

In summary, the Proposed Actions would significantly change neighborhood character in the Project Area, but this change would not be adverse. The Proposed Actions would also not have a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character in the primary and secondary study areas.

B. METHODOLOGY

STUDY AREAS

The neighborhood character analysis was performed for three study areas that generally form the basis of the land use and socioeconomic impact analyses: the Project Area, which is bounded by West 125th Street on the south, generally West 133rd Street on the north (with a small segment reaching to the north side of West 134th Street), Broadway on the east, and the Hudson River on the west, plus the properties fronting on the east side of Broadway, between West 131st and West 135th Streets; the primary study area, which conforms to a ¼-mile radius as recommended in the 2001 *CEQR Technical Manual*; and the secondary study area, which is modified (from the ½-mile radius standard) to reflect the natural geographic boundaries and physical barriers, including St. Nicholas Park and Morningside Park, a substantial change in grade, and the City College of New York.

SCREENING FOR NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER COMPONENTS

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, an assessment of neighborhood character is generally needed when a proposed action would exceed preliminary thresholds in any one of the following areas of technical analysis: land use, urban design, visual resources, historic resources, socioeconomic conditions, traffic, or noise. The Proposed Actions, which would encompass major changes in land use and density throughout the Project Area, would substantially affect all of these components of neighborhood character, as follows:

- *Land Use.* According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, when development resulting from a proposed action would “conflict with surrounding uses; conflict with land use policy or other

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public plans; change land use character; or result in a significant land use impact,” an assessment of neighborhood character would be appropriate. Land use is considered in the neighborhood character analysis because of the extent of the land use changes anticipated as a result of the Proposed Actions.

- *Urban Design and Visual Resources.* The Proposed Actions would modify urban design and visual resource characteristics in the Project Area, introducing substantially different building bulk, form, size, scale, and arrangement, as well as widened sidewalks with landscape and streetscape improvements, north-south midblock open areas, and other publicly accessible open spaces—all components of a neighborhood’s urban design characteristics. The major change in building size and form would also alter views and visual resources. All of these changes are noted in the *CEQR Technical Manual* as conditions suggesting that neighborhood character analysis would be appropriate. Therefore, urban design and visual resources are included in the neighborhood character assessment.
- *Historic Resources.* According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, when a proposed action would result in substantial direct changes to a historic resource or substantial changes to public views of a historic resource, or when a significant impact on historic resources has been identified in that technical analysis, then a neighborhood character analysis would be appropriate. The Proposed Actions would alter and incorporate one of the area’s most significant architectural resources (the former Warren Nash Service Station building) into the Academic Mixed-Use Development, would move and restore a portion of another historic resource (the West Market Diner), and would result in the demolition of one historic resource (the former Sheffield Farms Stable). Therefore, historic resources are included in the neighborhood character assessment.
- *Socioeconomic Conditions.* According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, changes in socioeconomic conditions would have the potential to affect neighborhood character when they result in substantial direct or indirect displacement or addition of population, employment, or businesses; substantial differences in population or employment density; or a significant socioeconomic conditions impact is identified. As discussed in Chapter 4, the Proposed Actions would result in direct and indirect displacement of population, employment, and businesses; add a substantial residential and worker population to the Project Area; and alter the type of employment. Thus, socioeconomic conditions are included in the neighborhood character assessment.
- *Traffic and Pedestrians.* Changes in traffic and pedestrian conditions can affect neighborhood character in a number of ways. For traffic to have an effect on neighborhood character, it must be a contributing element to the character of the neighborhood (either by its absence or its presence), and it must change substantially as a result of a proposed action. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, such substantial traffic changes can include change in level of service (LOS) to C, D, E, or F; change in traffic patterns; change in roadway classifications; change in vehicle mixes; substantial increases in traffic volumes on residential streets; or significant traffic impacts. When a proposed action results in substantially different pedestrian activity and circulation, it has the potential to affect neighborhood character. Since the Proposed Actions would alter traffic and pedestrian patterns and cause significant traffic impacts (see Chapter 17, “Traffic and Parking,” and Chapter 18, “Transit and Pedestrians”), traffic and pedestrians are considered in the assessment of neighborhood character impacts.

- *Noise.* According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, if a proposed action would result in a significant adverse noise impact and a change in acceptability category, as defined by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) external noise exposure standards, then an assessment of neighborhood character is appropriate. Noise exposure is classified in four categories: “acceptable,” “marginally acceptable,” “marginally unacceptable,” and “clearly unacceptable.” The classifications apply to the most noise-sensitive land use observed in the immediate vicinity of noise monitoring locations. The Proposed Actions would result in a traffic-related noise impact, and so noise is considered in the assessment of impacts on neighborhood character.

As described in Chapter 2, “Procedural and Analytical Framework,” this analysis assesses future conditions in both 2015 and 2030. The analysis that follows addresses each of these components either singly or in combination, as appropriate, to identify potential adverse impacts on neighborhood character from the Proposed Actions.

C. EXISTING CONDITIONS

As described above, the neighborhood character analysis addresses the Project Area, the primary study area, and the secondary study area. However, these study areas are mapped over three distinct underlying neighborhoods, which influence the character of the project’s study areas. To help orient the analysis, the discussion of existing conditions begins with these neighborhoods before examining the characteristics of the three study areas.

UNDERLYING NEIGHBORHOODS

MANHATTANVILLE

The Manhattanville neighborhood includes the Project Area and portions of the primary and secondary areas. It is broadly defined by West 140th Street to the north, West 125th Street to the south, St. Nicholas Park to the east, and the Hudson River to the west. Most of Manhattanville lies in a valley oriented toward the Hudson River. The eastern portions of this neighborhood, in addition to Hamilton Heights to the north and Morningside Heights to the south, sit high above the Project Area, the elevation of which is much closer to that of the Hudson River. Manhattanville has an irregular street grid and blocks of different sizes and shapes, which reflect the changes in elevation; irregularly shaped parks bordering the neighborhood to the east and west; superblock developments (both educational/institutional and residential) throughout the neighborhood; diagonal orientation of the major street (West 125th Street) leading to and from the river; and interruptions caused by the Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct. Both Riverside and St. Nicholas Parks are characterized by dense foliage and hilly topography that act as natural buffers from both the Hudson River and Harlem, respectively.

Manhattanville contains a mix of land uses. These include the low-density industrial buildings in the Project Area, medium- to high-density residential development, and a number of institutions, most notably the 35-acre City College Manhattanville campus, prominently located atop a hill overlooking both Harlem to the east and the remainder of Manhattanville to the west. Visually, this neighborhood is strongly defined by its elevated transportation viaducts: the Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct along Broadway—which acts generally as a border between the manufacturing and residential areas in this neighborhood—and the viaducts carrying Riverside Drive, the Henry Hudson Parkway, and the Amtrak rail line along the Hudson River. Broadway, West 125th Street, and Amsterdam Avenue are the commercial corridors that service this

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neighborhood; however, the commercial character of these corridors is much less intense when compared with these same corridors in adjacent neighborhoods.

MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS

The Morningside Heights neighborhood is located south of Manhattanville, with its northern end on a bluff overlooking the Project Area. Like Manhattanville, Morningside Heights is strongly defined by its topography. The Morningside Heights street grid conforms to both the changes in elevation, the irregularly shaped parks that border this neighborhood to the east and west, and superblock developments (both educational/institutional and residential) throughout this neighborhood, resulting in an irregular street pattern and creating blocks of varying sizes and shapes. This neighborhood is generally defined as the area between Morningside and Riverside Parks to the east and west, respectively, extending from Cathedral Parkway northward to West 125th Street. Although this neighborhood is located along the Hudson River, its active uses are separated from the river by Riverside Park, with its extensive greenery and hilly topography, and the Amtrak and Henry Hudson Parkway viaducts. Broadway is the main commercial route serving this neighborhood; the only other north–south route in this neighborhood is Amsterdam Avenue.

Morningside Heights is predominantly residential and educational/institutional in character, with Columbia University its largest single land use. In addition to Columbia’s well-defined main campus, the University also occupies a number of buildings throughout the neighborhood adjacent to its campus, mostly for University housing, academic, and administrative services. There are a number of other institutions in this neighborhood, including the Bank Street College’s Bank Street North facility, Barnard College, Jewish Theological Seminary, Manhattan School of Music, Teachers College, Union Theological Seminary, and the landmark Riverside Church.

HAMILTON HEIGHTS

The Hamilton Heights neighborhood is located north of West 140th Street and is entirely within the secondary study area. Residential buildings in this neighborhood, commonly referred to as Sugar Hill, are typically three- to five-story row houses, the scale of which is preserved by the Hamilton Heights Historic District. Commercial uses are located along both Broadway and West 145th Street. Uses along the Hudson River include Riverside Park, the Amtrak rail line, the Henry Hudson Parkway (Route 9A), and the 28-acre Riverbank State Park, which sits atop the North River Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP).

PROJECT AREA

The Project Area lies in a valley with bluffs to the north and south and a hill to the east. Four viaducts running north–south (the IRT No. 1 subway line to the east, and Riverside Drive, the Henry Hudson Parkway, and the Amtrak rail line to the west), in addition to the predominantly low-density industrial uses—which contrast sharply with the surrounding residential uses and community facilities—define the Project Area’s character. The viaducts and natural topography form distinct physical and visual boundaries that separate the Project Area from the rest of the Manhattanville neighborhood as well as its surrounding neighbors, including Hamilton Heights to the north, Morningside Heights to the south, and Harlem farther to the east. The elevated subway and Riverside Drive viaducts overshadow the streets below—Broadway and Twelfth Avenue, respectively.

The Project Area also differs from the primary and secondary study areas due to its use, which is primarily industrial/transportation, its low-density development, and the lack of cohesiveness of this development. Uses now prevalent in this area include transportation and utility infrastructure; warehouses and storage; surface parking lots; auto-related uses, such as repair shops and garages; and a few remaining manufacturing uses. Development in the Project Area has been limited due to its current low-density manufacturing zoning, which is not conducive to higher-density redevelopment or economic growth. More than half of the approximately 2,700 jobs in the Project Area are held by residents of the primary and secondary study areas (see Chapter 4 for greater detail).

While the Hudson River is a visual resource for the Project Area, accessibility to the waterfront is limited. Access to the waterfront is restricted by a number of transportation structures at various elevations, and, until recently, the existing waterfront was an uninviting paved lot adjacent to the access road to the highway. As of the summer of 2006, the waterfront in the Project Area is basically a construction site for the West Harlem Waterfront park. From within the Project Area, the side streets provide some (limited) views to the Hudson River through the high arches of the Riverside Drive viaduct.

The proposed rezoning addresses Project Area subdistricts individually with consideration of their location, existing character, and potential for redevelopment. As described in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” and discussed below, these areas are: Academic Mixed-Use Area (Subdistrict A), Waterfront Area (Subdistrict B), Mixed-Use Development Area (Subdistrict C), and the two Other Areas.

ACADEMIC MIXED-USE AREA (SUBDISTRICT A)

The Academic Mixed-Use Area (Subdistrict A) comprises the portion of the Project Area south of West 133rd Street and east of Twelfth Avenue, including the lots fronting on the east side of Broadway between West 131st and West 134th Streets. Land uses and building types vary throughout this subdistrict but are predominantly light industrial (including transportation and utilities).

Restricted by zoning regulations, redevelopment in this area has been limited. Newer uses, which have had to conform with zoning, have either occupied the area’s former automobile service facilities (adaptive reuse of these facilities in the form of warehouses and similar storage facilities) or replaced these buildings with lower-density structures or no structures at all (surface parking lots). Adaptive reuse of former automobile service facilities and other uses include a storage facility located in the historic Sheffield Farms Stable at 3229 Broadway and two small churches along West 131st Street. Meat wholesaling establishments and other manufacturing and warehousing uses remain in this area, although the number of these establishments has been continually decreasing over the years. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Manhattanville Bus Depot opened in 1991 on the block bounded by Broadway, Twelfth Avenue, and West 132nd and West 133rd Streets. There are few residential uses in this subdistrict, and these were built before 1961, when this area was mapped with a manufacturing district. A number of properties in Subdistrict A contain vacant buildings or lots.

Despite periods of economic decline following the stock market crash in 1929 and the Great Depression that immediately followed, a few of the more distinctive buildings constructed in this area remain. Highlighting Manhattanville’s past as a former hub of automobile showrooms, assembly plants, and service centers once known as “Automobile Row” are the 118-foot-tall terra-cotta-trimmed Studebaker Building at 615 West 131st Street (which is currently being

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renovated for use as administrative office space by Columbia University), and the 100-foot-tall former Warren Nash Service Station building at the southeast corner of Broadway and West 133rd Street. Other buildings in the area that convey a sense of this history, though to a lesser extent due to alterations that have changed their appearance, include the former Chevrolet Building on Broadway between West 133rd and West 134th Streets, and the former Glidden Buick Company Service Station on Broadway between West 131st and West 132nd Streets.

In addition to current uses, the character of this subdistrict is defined by its topography. This area sits in a valley, and two distinct elevated transportation viaducts border this subdistrict, the 52-foot-high Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct to the east above Broadway, and the 80-foot-high Riverside Drive viaduct to the west above Twelfth Avenue. The Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct, which emerges from a tunnel at West 122nd, rises to full height above West 125th Street and reenters a tunnel north of West 133rd Street, is built with steel towers spanned by plate girders and a central, double-hinged parabolic braced arch above West 125th Street; the 125th Street Station structure is centered above the arch. Views of the Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct are prominent west of Broadway. The Riverside Drive viaduct, supported on 130-foot-long steel girders and arches with a larger arch spanning over West 125th Street, carries Riverside Drive over the Manhattan Valley from St. Clair Place to West 135th Street. The arches of the Riverside Drive viaduct frame westward views of the Hudson River. These two north–south viaducts, in addition to the differences in topography to the north and south, further define this area as one separated from its adjacent neighborhoods.

There are few streets (Broadway, West 125th Street, and West 133rd Street being the exceptions) that connect to adjacent neighborhoods, which adds to a sense of isolation in this subdistrict. (The Riverside Drive viaduct does not provide connections to the subdistrict below.) The four local east–west streets (West 129th through West 132nd Streets) are interrupted either by the subway embankment or by the Manhattanville Houses superblock, and do not extend to Amsterdam Avenue, the next major north–south street east of Broadway. Traffic along these streets is limited but handles a high percentage of trucks and other service vehicles. In addition, this area experiences bus traffic associated with MTA Manhattanville Bus Depot. The streetscapes in this area do not contain street trees or other street furnishings found in the adjacent residential neighborhoods, and pedestrian traffic is minimal. The portion of West 125th Street that borders and bisects this area (at an angle, creating atypical block shapes) is an unwelcoming wide street with virtually nonexistent street (sidewalk) activity, very unlike the commercial character of 125th Street in Central Harlem to the east. Similarly, there is limited streetscape activity along Broadway in the shadow of the Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct. Noise levels along Broadway, West 125th Street, and Twelfth Avenue are relatively high (in the CEQR “marginally unacceptable” category); noise levels are lower along the lightly trafficked streets in the subdistrict (West 130th and West 131st Streets), as they are shielded from the noise generated by passing IRT trains (see Chapter 20) by the buildings along Broadway.

Unlike the commercial character of the Broadway and West 125th Street corridors to the north and east, respectively, there are limited commercial uses along these major streets in Subdistrict A. A three-story commercial building housing El Mundo department store is located along the east side of Broadway between West 133rd and West 134th Streets, the southern end of the Broadway commercial corridor extending northward. The Dinosaur Bar-B-Que restaurant opened at 646 West 131st Street at Twelfth Avenue in December 2004. A small historic diner, re-clad in brick in the 1970s and currently closed, is located on West 131st Street at Broadway.

The small population living in 135 units in Subdistrict A is located in six five- to six-story attached buildings along the west side of Broadway between West 132nd and West 133rd Streets, in a six-story building at 602 West 132nd Street west of Broadway, at the Iglesia de Dios Pentecostal church property at 622 West 131st Street, and at the Iglesia el Encuentro con Dios church property at 601 West 130th Street. As described in Chapter 4, this population differs slightly from the population of the primary and secondary study areas in that the proportion of Hispanic residents is somewhat higher.

Existing traffic conditions on streets in Subdistrict A are acceptable, with individual lane movements at most intersections operating at LOS C or better during both peak periods. The exceptions are Twelfth Avenue, Broadway, West 133rd Street, and West 125th Street, where specific movements operate worse than LOS C. Pedestrian facilities in Subdistrict A also operate at acceptable levels during all peak periods.

WATERFRONT AREA (SUBDISTRICT B)

The Waterfront Area (Subdistrict B) is defined as the Project Area west of the Riverside Drive viaduct and east of Marginal Street. Similar to conditions that define the Subdistrict A, this area (Subdistrict B) is characterized by the structures that border and cross over it: the elevated Henry Hudson Parkway, the Riverside Drive viaduct, and the elevated Amtrak Empire Line. The gentle sloping topography of this area historically allowed easy entry between Manhattan's shoreline to and from its interior when compared with the high bluffs immediately to the north and south. Both recreational and commercial maritime uses were once located in this area, but the area has, in effect, has turned its "back" to the waterfront. This area also marks a break in Riverside Park, which extends from West 125th Street south to West 72nd Street and north from West 135th Street. While the Hudson River is a visual resource for the Project Area, it is only accessible to pedestrians from limited points along Marginal Street. The waterfront is adjacent to the elevated Henry Hudson Parkway viaduct and a number of access ramps to this highway at West 125th Street.

The land uses in this subdistrict are generally within the shadows of these transportation facilities and are mostly commercial and automobile-related; a large portion of this subdistrict comprises surface parking. Buildings are typically one to three stories tall and indicate a history of warehousing/light manufacturing uses. Adaptive reuse of these buildings has been limited and consists chiefly of Fairway Market, a specialty food store that opened at West 132nd and Twelfth Avenue in 1996. A new bar-restaurant with an outdoor seating area was recently constructed at the northwest corner of Twelfth Avenue and West 133rd Street. There are no residential uses or residents in Subdistrict B.

Traffic on local streets in this subdistrict is generally light, except in the morning and evening peak hours, when cars are moving to and from the Henry Hudson Parkway. Even then, only specific movements (e.g., left or right turns) operate at levels of service below LOS C. Pedestrian facilities in this subdistrict operate at acceptable levels during all peak periods. Noise levels are relatively high in this subdistrict along West 125th Street and Twelfth Avenue due in large part to traffic volumes associated with the Henry Hudson Parkway and its access ramps at West 125th Street.

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT AREA (SUBDISTRICT C)

The Mixed-Use Development Area (Subdistrict C) contains four parcels on the east side of Twelfth Avenue; three are located north of West 133rd Street, and one is north of West 134th

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Street (the historic former Lee Brothers Storage Building). Two industrial uses, a commercial cleaner, and a beverage distributor are located in two 40-foot-tall buildings on the east side of Twelfth Avenue north of West 133rd Street. The third building in this group is a 90-foot-tall warehouse/storage facility. Just north of West 134th Street is the former Lee Brothers Storage Building, occupying a 140-foot-tall masonry structure, which rises well above the Riverside Drive viaduct, where it is visible from vantage points to the south, west, and north. These buildings are literally in the shadow of both the Riverside Drive viaduct above Twelfth Avenue and the 35-story Riverside Park Community buildings (3333 Broadway) to the east. As with Subdistrict B, there is no residential population in Subdistrict C. Traffic, pedestrian, and noise characteristics are similar to those in Subdistricts A and B.

OTHER AREAS

There are two distinct Other Areas: an area along the waterfront west of Marginal Street, and an area on the east side of Broadway between West 134th and West 135th Streets. Construction of the West Harlem Waterfront park has begun in the Other Area west of Marginal Street. Existing traffic conditions along the waterfront west of Marginal Street, as well as along Broadway between West 134th and West 135th Streets, are generally acceptable. Most lane movements operate at LOS C or better during both peak periods. Pedestrian facilities in both these areas operate at acceptable levels during all peak periods, although the lack of lights and crosswalks, and loading areas and curb cuts, make this area unattractive to pedestrians.

Four properties comprise the Other Area east of Broadway. These include: (1) the historic two- and three-story terra-cotta and brick-clad former Claremont Theater building (a New York City Landmark), currently occupied by local shops on the ground floor, including a furniture store (the upper floors are vacant); (2) the two-story Charles B. Rangel Community Health Center on West 135th Street just east of Broadway; (3) the three-story Hamilton Job Center on West 135th Street just east of the Rangel Community Health Center; and (4) a five-story residential building located at 525–527 West 134th Street. These commercial uses and community facilities are part of and reinforce the commercial character of the Broadway corridor. There are approximately 89 residents in the Other Area east of Broadway. The residential property in the Other Area is an extension of the residential uses that comprise the rest of this block to the east and the general residential character of the primary study area between Broadway and the City College campus. Traffic, pedestrian, and noise conditions are described below, as part of the primary study area.

PRIMARY STUDY AREA

In contrast to the lack of visual cohesion that characterizes much of the Project Area, the primary study area includes Manhattanville and portions of Morningside Heights, which contain well-defined building types, streetscapes, and densities. The primary study area contains mainly residential uses and community facilities, along with relatively small amounts of the low-density manufacturing, industrial, and transportation uses in a small five-block manufacturing district located south and east of West 130th Street and Amsterdam Avenue. A portion of the 35-acre City College campus is located in the primary study area, prominently situated on top of a hill overlooking both Harlem to the east and the rest of Manhattanville to the west. Other notable educational/institutional uses in the primary study area include Columbia-owned buildings along West 125th Street, adjacent to and south of the Project Area.

Residential uses bordering the Project Area to the north, south, and east take the form of high-density superblock development. These residential complexes include the 35-story Riverside

Park Community (3333 Broadway), the 20-story New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Manhattanville Houses, the 21-story NYCHA General Grant Houses, the 21-story Morningside Gardens on the west side of Amsterdam Avenue between West 129th and West 133rd Streets, and the 24-story Riverview Towers on the east side of Riverside Drive between West 139th and West 140th Streets. The remaining residential buildings in the primary study area are generally medium-density row houses or apartment buildings; some of these are located in the primary study area's two historic districts: the Riverside Drive/West 135th/136th Streets Historic District, and the Tiemann Estate Historic District (see Chapter 8).

The scenic Riverside Park is located on the bluffs and hillsides overlooking the Hudson River. The park's design makes use of the natural topography of the site, including the design of Riverside Drive as a curving road lined with trees, and the hillside on which the park was built is landscaped with grassy lawns, paths, and extensive tree coverage. However, access to the Hudson River is limited by the Henry Hudson Parkway and the Amtrak Empire line, which are both located along the eastern shore of the Hudson River. While the Henry Hudson Parkway and Amtrak viaducts create physical and visual barriers to the river from within the primary study area, views of the Hudson River are available from the heights of Riverside Park with its extensive greenery and hilly topography.

The street grid in the primary study area conforms to both the changes in elevation, the irregularly shaped parks that border this neighborhood to the east (St. Nicholas Park) and west (Riverside Park), and superblock developments (both educational/institutional and residential) throughout this area. These combine to create an irregular street pattern with blocks of varying sizes and shapes. With the exception of Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue, most streets in the primary study area do not conform to the standard Manhattan grid; many local streets adjacent to the Project Area are interrupted (or removed) to create the high-density residential superblock development discussed above. West 125th Street and St. Mary's Place (West 126th Street) cut through the street grid at an angle from Morningside Avenue to the Hudson River, creating atypically shaped blocks along this commercial corridor.

Commercial uses in the form of local retail establishments are located along Broadway (north of West 135th Street), West 125th Street, and sporadically along Amsterdam Avenue, typically on the ground floor of residential buildings or in freestanding one- to two-story buildings.

As discussed above in "Project Area," the Manhattan Valley IRT subway viaduct is visible for long distances along West 125th Street, Broadway, and a number of side streets. However, views of this visual resource are blocked from the east by NYCHA General Grant Houses.

There are approximately 35,488 residents living in 13,336 housing units in the primary study area. Median household incomes in the primary study area are a little more than half (approximately 56 percent) of Manhattan's median household income. The housing is primarily in moderately-priced rental units (11,431), and most of these (9,746 units or 85.3 percent), are rent-protected (e.g., public housing, other housing subsidies and programs, or rent stabilization). As discussed in Chapter 4, the population in the primary study area is mixed, but more than half characterize themselves as Hispanic (of any race), a third as African-American, and 11 percent as white.

Of the approximately 6,900 jobs in the primary study area, the largest group of jobs (nearly 44 percent of all employment) is in the educational, health, and social services category. The combination of categories of construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, and transportation, warehousing, and utilities comprise about 20 percent of employment in the primary study area.

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Information from the 2000 U.S. Census journey-to-work report indicates that more than half of primary study area jobs are held by residents of the primary study area.

Existing traffic conditions on streets in the primary study area are acceptable, with individual lane movements at most intersections operating at LOS C or better during the AM and PM peak periods. Noise levels are highest along Broadway, where IRT trains raise ambient noise levels, bringing them to the “marginally unacceptable” level. As noted in Chapter 20, this category of noise condition is typical of many locations in Manhattan.

SECONDARY STUDY AREA

The secondary study area is mostly residential in character, but institutions—Columbia University to the south and City College to the east—have a significant presence. Most of the superblock development in the secondary study area contains educational/institutional uses, including the northern portion of City College’s 35-acre campus. Residential uses, most notably those north of West 140th Street in Hamilton Heights, are located on smaller lots on standard city blocks as opposed to the residential superblocks adjacent to the Project Area in the primary study area. The character of the Hamilton Heights Historic District, immediately north of City College, is one of tree-lined streets lined with three- to five-story row houses and five- to seven-story apartment buildings designed in a variety of styles.

The secondary study area south of West 122nd Street is only three blocks wide, extending from Riverside Drive to Morningside Drive, buffered on either side by Riverside and Morningside Parks. The character of this area is defined by Columbia’s main campus, which is bounded by West 120th Street to the north, West 114th Street to the south, Amsterdam Avenue to the east, and Broadway to the west. In addition to Columbia, there are a number of other institutions in this neighborhood, including Bank Street College’s Bank Street North facility, Barnard College, Jewish Theological Seminary, Manhattan School of Music, Teachers College, Union Theological Seminary, and the landmark Riverside Church.

With few exceptions, the street pattern north of West 140th Street and east of Convent Avenue conforms to the standard Manhattan grid; St. Nicholas Terrace, Morningside Drive, and Riverside Drive all follow the contours of their respective adjacent parks. Commercial uses and traffic volumes increase on West 125th Street east of Morningside Avenue, where it functions as Harlem’s major east–west commercial corridor. Other commercial corridors in the secondary study area include West 145th Street, Broadway (north of West 140th Street), and, to a much lesser extent, Amsterdam Avenue. Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue are the only north–south streets that traverse the entire secondary study area. A wide median is located in the center of the Broadway roadbed in the secondary study area.

Similar to the primary study area, access to the Hudson River, which defines the western border of the secondary study area, is still limited. Both the Henry Hudson Parkway and the Amtrak Empire line continue to act as physical barriers between Riverside Park and the river. Activity along the waterfront uses is limited to the Riverbank State Park, which sits atop the North River WPCP at West 140th Street.

There are approximately 43,315 residents occupying approximately 15,360 housing units in the secondary study area.¹ Like the primary study area, most of the housing units are rentals (83.5

¹ In this chapter, information on the secondary study area does not include data on the primary study area. In Chapter 4, “Socioeconomic Conditions,” the secondary study area is defined to include the primary

percent) and nearly all of these (12,222 or 95.3 percent) are rent-protected. Population characteristics of the secondary study area are different from those of the primary area. Median household incomes in the secondary study area are approximately 64 percent of Manhattan's median household income, compared with 56 percent in the primary study area. Although overall this population can be characterized as being strongly Hispanic and African-American, it contains a greater mix of white and Asian categories (28 percent, compared with 16 percent in the primary study area). The proportion of African-American residents is about the same (slightly lower than a third). Those classifying themselves as Hispanic (of any race) are 41 percent of the population, compared with 52 percent in the primary study area.

The approximately 27,000 jobs in the secondary study area are more strongly oriented to education, health, and social services (54 percent) than in the primary study area, reflecting this study area's location closer to Columbia University—which employs approximately 7,150 on its Morningside Heights campus in the secondary study area—and the other educational institutions in the Morningside Heights portion of the secondary study area, and to City College in Manhattanville. Given the different land use patterns in the secondary area, the proportion of industrial-related jobs (construction, manufacturing, wholesale, transportation, warehouse, utilities) is lower (approximately 14 percent) than in the primary study area. Although the percentage of those who live and work in the secondary study area is lower than in the primary area, it is still estimated to be higher than 50 percent.

Existing traffic conditions on streets in the secondary study area are acceptable, with individual lane movements at most intersections operating at LOS C or better during the AM and PM peak periods. However, some intersections operate with individual lane movements at levels of service lower than LOS C; these are generally located along 110th, 120th, 125th, and 145 Streets.

D. 2015 FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

PROJECT AREA

Given the current zoning restrictions and the general condition of much of the Project Area, substantial change is not anticipated in the future without the Proposed Actions by 2015. And while there are several projects proposed or planned within the Project Area in the future without the Proposed Actions, the Project Area (east of Marginal Street) is expected to retain its most prominent characteristics, and overall neighborhood character would be minimally affected. The character of the Project Area would continue to contrast sharply with the character of the primary and secondary study areas.

One significant change in the Project Area by 2015 is the completion of the West Harlem Waterfront park (located west of Marginal Street) and other related recommendations as identified in EDC's 2002 West Harlem Master Plan. In addition to the waterfront park (see discussion in "Other Areas," below), the plan calls for transportation and streetscape improvements throughout the Project Area to encourage access to this new park. Although the design is not yet complete, streetscape and access improvements are expected to include widened sidewalks, bicycle lanes, new street lighting and furniture, plantings, and way-findings.

study area. Therefore, some of the data presented in this chapter for the secondary study area differ from the data presented in Chapter 4.

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ACADEMIC MIXED-USE AREA (SUBDISTRICT A)

The buildings in this area have remained relatively unchanged and are not expected to change substantially in the future without the Proposed Actions. Some changes in tenancy of existing buildings could be expected, with potential increases in such uses as moving and storage. These uses would occupy buildings currently in industrial or transportation use and would not change the overall character of this area because these uses are common in this area. Current zoning would continue to prevent a substantial change in the types of uses permitted in this subdistrict. The Project Area is expected to continue to have a mixture of vacant properties, manufacturing buildings, and transportation and utility-related uses.

In the future without the Proposed Actions, Columbia is proposing three projects in Subdistrict A (see Chapter 2 for a list of projects expected in the future without the Proposed Actions). Columbia will collaborate with the City to create a new public secondary school that will focus on education in science, math, and engineering. This building will house administration space above the public secondary school. Just north of this new school, Columbia will convert the landmark former Warren Nash Service Station building to administrative space. The third Columbia project will renovate and rehabilitate the landmark Studebaker Building on West 131st Street for additional administrative uses.

Tuck-It-Away Associates, L.P., has submitted rezoning applications for four parcels it owns in Subdistrict A, and Hudson North American has submitted a rezoning application for one other parcel. Rezoning of these sites, if approved, would allow for limited commercial and/or residential redevelopment at these locations. Given the limited number of parcels proposed for rezoning and the projected size of these developments (see Chapter 2) compared with the overall size of this subdistrict, these developments would have little effect on overall neighborhood character, which would continue to be characterized by its warehousing, storage, auto repair, and other low-density industrial uses. The isolated residential redevelopment of parcels west of Broadway under these rezonings would be incongruous within the context of neighborhood character in the future without the Proposed Actions. If the rezonings are not approved, it is assumed that these sites will remain in their current uses.

Other changes in this subdistrict include streetscape improvements along streets leading to the West Harlem Waterfront park as recommended in the West Harlem Master Plan (see above). Traffic and pedestrian volumes are expected to change in this subdistrict due to the completion of other planned projects in the future without the Proposed Actions. The planned projects in this subdistrict, in addition to other planned projects in the remaining portions of the Project Area and in the primary study area, would result in some increases in both vehicular and pedestrian volumes on both local and through streets.

The projects anticipated in the future without the Proposed Actions are being developed within the boundaries of existing blocks—and therefore would not obstruct any view corridors—and would not result in the removal of any of the architecturally distinguished buildings that make up this subdistrict. While an increase in activity would result from the new construction and renovation, the overall neighborhood character is not likely to change significantly.

In the future without the Proposed Actions, traffic conditions on streets in Subdistrict A will decline slightly. Individual lane movements at most intersections will continue to operate at LOS C or better during both peak periods. However, the traffic analysis (see Chapter 17) identified several lane movements expected to operate at levels of service below LOS C; these are located primarily at intersections along Twelfth Avenue and Broadway. Most pedestrian facilities in this

subdistrict will operate at LOS B or better during the AM, midday, and PM peak periods. However, there are a few pedestrian locations where LOS will decline to LOS C or lower. In general, the traffic and pedestrian conditions in the future without the Proposed Actions are not expected to be different enough to change neighborhood character over existing conditions.

WATERFRONT AREA (SUBDISTRICT B)

There are no other developments proposed for the Waterfront Area (Subdistrict B) by 2015. However, consistent with the recommendations of EDC's West Harlem Master Plan, several intersections along West 125th Street and on Twelfth Avenue will be improved to allow for better access to the West Harlem Waterfront park. While the uses in this subdistrict are expected to experience minimal change, streetscape improvements and the presence of the park would increase pedestrian traffic and overall activity through this area.

In the future without the Proposed Actions, traffic conditions in Subdistrict B will decline at unsignalized intersections. Several lane movements that currently operate at LOS C or better during the AM and PM peak periods will decline to LOS D, E, or F. All pedestrian facilities in this subdistrict will operate at acceptable levels during all peak periods. In general, the traffic and pedestrian conditions in the future without the Proposed Actions are not expected to be different enough to change neighborhood character over existing conditions.

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT AREA (SUBDISTRICT C)

There are no new projects proposed for Mixed-Use Development Area (Subdistrict C) by 2015; therefore, the character of this area would remain unchanged.

Traffic conditions in Subdistrict C will decline in the future without the Proposed Actions. Several lane movements that currently operate at LOS C or better during the AM and PM peak periods will decline to LOS D, E, or F. This is because under the No Build condition, several projects in the immediate vicinity of the Project Area (the Columbia academic building at the McDonald's site, the Columbia administration building at the Studebaker Building, the Columbia general office building at the former Warren Nash Service Station building, and the proposed public secondary school with Columbia office space that would be located at the U-Haul site) are expected to be completed and to add trips to the roadways bordering each of the Subdistricts. Pedestrian facilities will operate at acceptable conditions.

OTHER AREAS

The waterfront area west of Marginal Street between St. Clair Place and West 133rd Street will be substantially improved by 2015 with the completion of the West Harlem Waterfront park (currently under construction). This waterfront park, which follows the recommendations made in EDC's West Harlem Master Plan, will include walking and biking paths, an excursion pier to allow docking for excursion and ferry boats, a recreation pier, an ecological platform, a small multi-purpose building, and several passive recreation areas, such as lawns and sitting areas. The open space will also include traffic calming measures and streetscape improvements on Marginal Street. This new park will create active waterfront use and activity where none currently exist, and will effectively connect the two sections of Riverside Park to the north and south. EDC's West Harlem Master Plan also calls for the relocation of a Fairway Market parking lot to an upland location to provide for additional waterfront use; however, this component has yet to be finalized.

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Tuck-It-Away Associates, L.P., has submitted a rezoning application for one parcel located in the Other Area east of Broadway at 3320 Broadway. On this site, the applicant has identified a development scenario in which the former Claremont Theater portion of the building (the northern portion of the building) would remain. The existing three-story warehouse portion of the building (not the Claremont Theater portion) would be demolished, and a new residential building would be developed. The residential development associated with this site would be consistent with the residential character along Broadway north of West 135th Street. No additional projects are planned for the area on the east side of Broadway between West 134th and West 135th Streets.

In the future without the Proposed Actions, traffic conditions along the waterfront west of Marginal Street and along Broadway between West 134th and West 135th Streets will deteriorate, but not enough to alter neighborhood character. Pedestrian facilities in both these areas will continue to operate at acceptable levels during all peak periods.

PRIMARY STUDY AREA

There are a number of new developments anticipated in the future without the Proposed Actions by 2015, including several proposals for the expansion of existing institutions. City College is proposing a number of projects on its 35-acre Manhattanville campus. These include a new 600-bed dormitory, conversion of existing space into a new School of Architecture, and two new science research buildings. Adjacent and south of the Project Area, Columbia proposes to develop an approximately 250,840-gross-square-foot academic building at the southwest corner of Broadway and West 125th Street. In addition, the low-rise portion of 560 Riverside Drive along West 125th Street will be renovated to provide a building entrance in this location, with the intention of enlivening the streetscape. These new developments would strengthen the presence of Columbia University and City College in Manhattanville, broadening the academic and institutional character of the primary study area.

Just north of the Project Area on the west side of Twelfth Avenue at West 135th Street, a vacant two-story building is being renovated for restaurant use. Other developments in the primary study area include the renovation of both the Mink Building on the east side of Amsterdam Avenue between West 126th and West 128th Streets and the former Taystee Factory on West 126th Street between Morningside and Amsterdam Avenues. These developments are further indication of the decline of the former manufacturing character of Manhattanville.

The City is also planning streetscape improvements along West 125th Street. Although the design has not been finalized, the streetscape improvements are expected to include widened sidewalks, bicycle lanes, new street lighting and furniture, plantings, and way-findings. These improvements are intended to increase pedestrian activity along West 125th Street and provide a more suitable and welcoming access point to the newly constructed West Harlem Waterfront park (see discussion above).

In the future without the Proposed Actions, traffic conditions on streets in the primary study area will continue to be acceptable. Compared with existing conditions, several more individual lane movements will operate worse than LOS C during the AM, midday, and PM peak periods, but these changes would not affect neighborhood character.

SECONDARY STUDY AREA

Columbia proposes to construct a new 170,000-gross-square-foot academic/academic research building on its main campus at the southeast corner of Broadway and West 120th Street, thereby adding to the educational/institutional character of the southern portion of the secondary study area.

In the future without the Proposed Actions, traffic conditions in the secondary study area are expected to deteriorate. Compared with existing conditions, there will be more intersections with lane movements operating at levels worse than LOS C during the AM and PM peak periods. In particular, the LOS at Broadway and West 110th Street would worsen because of anticipated development in the Project Area and primary study area in the future without the Proposed Actions. At East 125th Street and Madison Avenue, Second Avenue, and First Avenue, LOS would worsen because of other major developments anticipated in the future without the Proposed Actions, such as East River Plaza and Uptown NY. However, the character of the Project Area would not be substantially altered by these traffic increases.

E. 2015 FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

PROJECT AREA

By 2015, the Project Area would begin to change visibly and functionally, with the first stages of the Academic Mixed-Use Development and new development anticipated in Subdistrict B and the Other Areas. The southern and western portions of Subdistrict A and their adjacent streetscapes would be enlivened by the proposed construction of five new mixed-use academic buildings as Phase 1 of Columbia University's proposed 17-acre Academic Mixed-Use Development. It is also anticipated that new construction or enlargements of buildings west of Twelfth Avenue and in the Other Area east of Broadway would be developed as a result of the rezoning. The Proposed Actions would extend the commercial character of West 125th Street to the Hudson River and create a new commercial corridor along Twelfth Avenue and Marginal Street.

ACADEMIC MIXED-USE AREA (SUBDISTRICT A)

As currently contemplated, five new buildings (one academic research, three academic, and one mixed-use building containing academic space and University housing) would be developed by Columbia in Subdistrict A by 2015 on the north side of West 125th Street (see Chapter 1). In addition, during the construction period, additional sites would be under construction, and several properties would be in use for storage and staging of construction materials and equipment and interim parking (see Chapter 1).

The ground-floor space of many of the new buildings would contain active ground-floor uses, such as retail, galleries, performance spaces, and space for locally based community facilities. Active ground-floor uses would be located along West 125th Street, Broadway, and Twelfth Avenue, and the sidewalks would be planted with street trees. The proposed new buildings would range in height from 160 to 240 feet and would total approximately 1.6 million gross square feet (gsf) of new development. The five new buildings would replace approximately 293,000 square feet (sf) of primarily industrial buildings ranging in height from 10 to 70 feet.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the proposed Special Manhattanville Mixed-Use Zoning District would allow for a range of uses that would provide for the expansion of Columbia University, including provisions to maintain an appropriate scale and density within its surroundings, and

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would also continue to permit a range of manufacturing uses in Subdistrict A. The Special Manhattanville Mixed-Use Zoning District requirements are intended to promote a unified design through coordinated massing and building heights, and pedestrian improvements, contrasting sharply with this area's existing character. The Proposed Actions would result in a substantial change in land use, but these changes would not be adverse (see Chapter 3, "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy"). This new development would be more compatible than existing land uses with uses found in the adjacent neighborhoods and would be compatible with the educational/institutional character found in much of the primary and secondary study areas, which include the major institutions of Columbia University and City College, among others.

Unlike existing attached structures on relatively narrow lots, the proposed buildings would be freestanding, with large footprints. Active ground-floor uses would be required by the proposed zoning in these new buildings, as described above. The proposed zoning would also have glazing and transparency requirements, and along with active ground-floor uses, would provide a pedestrian-friendly approach to the West Harlem Waterfront park along West 125th Street. In addition to the visually open and accessible space at the bases of the buildings, two publicly accessible open spaces would be constructed on both sides of West 129th Street at its intersection with West 125th Street. These open spaces would be a visual improvement on blocks currently characterized by surface parking lots, nondescript garages, and commercial buildings.

The proposed buildings would be built on and conform to existing block shapes, thus preserving the existing street pattern in this subdistrict. The Proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse impacts on the visual resources in Subdistrict A, which include the Studebaker Building and the Manhattan Valley IRT and Riverside Drive viaducts, and would not block any view corridors. Views of the Riverside Drive viaduct and the Hudson River in the West 125th Street view corridor would be enhanced by the Proposed Actions. The new buildings with uniform streetwalls, set back from the property line to widen the sidewalks, would better frame views on these streets than the existing streetscape of garage openings, blank ground floors, roll-down metal gates, and chain-link fences. The two proposed buildings fronting the diagonally oriented West 125th Street—the approximately 140-foot-tall academic building at Broadway (Site 1) and the 190-foot-tall academic building between Twelfth Avenue and West 129th Street (Site 4)—together with buildings on the south side of West 125th Street, including the new Columbia academic building on the southwest corner of Broadway and West 125th Street, would better frame views on this street when compared with existing buildings.

In 2015 there would be clear signs of ongoing construction for Phase 2 of development. On the West 130th to West 131st Street block, the area east of Site 7 would be under construction, with excavation and below-grade construction completed and above-grade construction under way on the buildings on Site 6 and 6b, and on the central open space on that block. Several of the sites on the block directly north, from West 131st to West 132nd Streets, would have been cleared for use as laydown area and other construction support. Interim parking would be available on Columbia-owned/controlled properties east and west of the Studebaker Building, south of the former Warren Nash Service Station building on the east side of Broadway, and at the existing parking facility east of Broadway between West 133rd and West 134th Streets. This scene would mark a clear change from conditions in the future without the Proposed Actions, but it would be temporary and would not have a long term effect on neighborhood character.

The Proposed Actions would result in the demolition of the former Sheffield Farms Stable, identified as a historic resource, at 3229 Broadway, between West 129th and West 130th Streets.

However, there are a number of buildings and historic structures that are more prominent on the urban landscape, some of which are visual landmarks, and which contribute more significantly to the character of the neighborhood (e.g., the Studebaker Building, the former Warren Nash Service Station building, and the Broadway and Riverside Drive viaducts). The two viaducts—Broadway and Riverside Drive—that span the Manhattan Valley and delineate the Project Area from the neighboring areas are two of the most character-defining structures in the area. The Proposed Actions would not affect the viaducts and would preserve and create an appropriate context for the Studebaker Building and the former Warren Nash Service Station building. Therefore, the adverse effect on the former Sheffield Farms Stable, which is currently occupied by a moving and storage company, would not significantly adversely affect neighborhood character.

Under the Special Manhattanville Special Zoning District text, no fences, gates, or walls would be permitted in any of the open areas, and all open areas must be accessible directly from an adjoining public walkway. It is anticipated that various security measures would be used inside Columbia buildings, such as sign-in desks at main building entrances, and Columbia identification cards or keypads for entrance to internal facilities. The internal building security measures would be similar to those at the Morningside Heights campus and in typical office buildings in Manhattan. These security measures would not interfere with access to the adjacent waterfront area and would enhance safety for adjacent pedestrian activity. Therefore, security provided by Columbia's campus police would not have an adverse effect on neighborhood character.

The Proposed Actions would result in the construction of approximately 281 units of University-related housing in Subdistrict A, adding an estimated 384 residents to an area (Subdistrict A in Phase 1) without a residential population. Population characteristics of this new group of University-affiliated residents would be different from those of the study areas. Based on current characteristics, the proportion of whites and Asians/Pacific Islanders to African-Americans and Hispanics/Latinos would be greater. While changes in population characteristics relating to race or ethnicity can affect neighborhood character, they are not in and of themselves beneficial or adverse under SEQRA/CEQR. The new total population would be a small percentage (about 1 percent) of the total population in the primary study area and would not affect overall population characteristics in the neighborhood (see "Primary Study Area," below).

The Proposed Actions would not result in direct residential displacement in 2015. However, an estimated 683 jobs would be displaced from Subdistrict A, with an estimated 37 to 55 percent of the jobs displaced (227 to 376) held by residents of the study areas. The Proposed Actions are projected to generate 1,045 non-faculty, non-research employees within Subdistrict A by 2015 (of which 803 would be University-affiliated jobs and 242 would be non-University jobs at active ground-floor uses). These jobs cover a range of employment opportunities, including entry level positions, skilled trades (e.g., carpenters, plumbers, electricians), administrative support, and professional service positions in finance and general administration. Based on Columbia's current experience, it can be anticipated that approximately 30 percent (or 241) of the 803 University-affiliated positions may be held by residents in Northern Manhattan, including approximately 8 percent (64 jobs) by residents of Community Board 9 (CB9). The 242 non-University affiliated jobs would be expected to mirror existing local hiring practices (i.e., between 37 and 55 percent going to study area residents). While the Proposed Actions as of 2015 would therefore result in a net loss of jobs in Subdistrict A held by study area residents, this change would not materially alter the characteristics of the work force or the employment base in the primary or secondary study areas. Moreover, the Project Area would experience a net

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increase of jobs (see discussions below). Therefore, a significant adverse impact in neighborhood character would not occur as a result of the loss of local jobs.

Most intersections in Subdistrict A would operate at acceptable levels of service (LOS C or better) due to the implementation of project-related modifications to the transportation system. The proposed changes include the conversion of two-way streets to one-way and the installation of traffic signals along with appropriate lane markings at unsignalized locations. These improvements would support the new neighborhood character in the area and allow the increase in traffic, which would be typical of a more densely developed, lively area, to take place without adverse effects on neighborhood character.

Pedestrian facilities in Subdistrict A would continue to operate at acceptable levels (at LOS B or better during the AM, midday, and PM peak periods). Improvements to pedestrian facilities include widening sidewalks and crosswalks, and the installation of traffic lights. The pedestrian improvements would advance the quality of the pedestrian environment in the Project Area. Thus, the Proposed Actions would not have an adverse impact on neighborhood character in the Phase 1 portion of the Project Area.

The Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse noise impacts in Subdistrict A.

WATERFRONT AREA (SUBDISTRICT B)¹

With the Proposed Actions in 2015, commercial uses would become more prominent in the Waterfront Area (Subdistrict B). Six sites are estimated to be developed under the reasonable worst-case development scenario with one- and two-story commercial buildings (except for the southernmost block between St. Clair Place and West 125th Street, Marginal Street, and Twelfth Avenue, which would have a height limitation of 130 feet), their heights limited by the regulations of the proposed special district. These new buildings would house ground-floor retail with office space or similar compatible uses above. The Proposed Actions would result in the demolition of some structures and redevelopment of others, resulting in more than 100,000 sf of incremental development (see Chapter 2). The triangular former hotel at West 125th Street and the Fairway Market would remain.

New buildings with ground-floor retail associated with the projected development sites in Subdistrict B would improve the streetscape along the west side of Twelfth Avenue, which is currently characterized by parking lots, nondescript garage and storage buildings, billboard posts, and chain-link fences. Redevelopment in this area would enhance the West 125th Street corridor to the West Harlem Waterfront park, providing amenities (shops and restaurants) for waterfront open space users and creating a safer and more inviting entrance to the waterfront. While the uses in this subdistrict would clearly differ from those in the future without the Proposed Actions, the urban form of the buildings would not be perceptibly altered, because these redevelopment sites are relatively small, and most of the existing buildings in the area are also freestanding. Further, it is anticipated that the projected development in Subdistrict B would enhance views of the Riverside Drive viaduct by improving the streetscape along Twelfth Avenue under the viaduct and by creating pedestrian activity.

¹ As described earlier, CPC is contemplating certain modifications to Subdistrict B that would not result in any projected development sites in Subdistrict B. The proposed modifications are more fully described in Chapter 29, "Modifications to the Proposed Actions."

Although an estimated 6 businesses and 43 jobs could be displaced from Subdistrict B, more than 500 new jobs are projected to be generated in Subdistrict B as a result of the Proposed Actions. Assuming that the patterns of employment reported by the 2000 U.S. Census are maintained (see Chapter 4, section “D. Detailed Analysis, Direct Business and Institutional Displacement, Future with the Proposed Actions—2030”), the Proposed Actions would result in a sizable increase in the number of jobs held by study area residents within Subdistrict B.

The effects of the Proposed Actions on traffic and pedestrian conditions in Subdistrict B would be similar to those in Subdistrict A: They would increase activity but would generally improve traffic and pedestrian conditions, and thus would not have an adverse effect on neighborhood character.

The Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse historic resource or noise impacts in Subdistrict B.

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT AREA (SUBDISTRICT C)

As described in Chapter 1, no development is projected for the Mixed-Use Development Area (Subdistrict C) by 2015. Therefore, the character of Subdistrict C is expected to remain unchanged as a result of the Proposed Actions.

Most intersections in Subdistrict C would operate at acceptable levels of service in the future with the Proposed Actions. The one exception is Riverside Drive and West 135th Street, where LOS for the southbound left-turn and through movement would decline from LOS A to LOS F+ when compared with the future without the Proposed Actions. However, the impact on this one movement would not change traffic operations in the area enough to alter neighborhood character. Therefore, the additional person and vehicle trips would not have an adverse impact on neighborhood character.

OTHER AREAS

By 2015, redevelopment of three sites in the Other Area east of Broadway is expected as a result of the proposed rezoning. This projected redevelopment would consist of residential development along Broadway (with ground-floor retail) and West 134th Street, and an expansion of the existing Rangel Community Health Center on West 135th Street just east of Broadway, resulting in approximately 186,000 sf of incremental development, which would include an estimated 99 units of market-rate housing (see Chapter 2). The new uses and development would be compatible with the immediately adjacent residential and commercial uses and the ground-floor retail would extend the commercial character of Broadway. The project development would not result in any significant adverse impacts with respect to land use, urban design, and visual resources, or historic resources. The new units would add 262 residents to the Project Area. While the new development would directly displace four existing businesses and 35 employees, it would add an estimated 158 jobs, primarily in retail, social services, and building maintenance. Assuming that the patterns of employment reported by the 2000 U.S. Census are maintained (see Chapter 4, section “D. Detailed Analysis, Direct Business and Institutional Displacement, Future with the Proposed Actions—2030”), this would result in an increase in jobs held by study area residents within the Other Area east of Broadway.

The Other Area along the waterfront west of Marginal Street would be completely redeveloped as the West Harlem Waterfront park, independent of the Proposed Actions; therefore, the character of this area would also remain unchanged.

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Intersections along the waterfront west of Marginal Street and along Broadway between West 134th and West 135th Streets would operate at acceptable conditions due to the completion of project-related improvements to the transportation system. Pedestrian facilities in both these areas would continue to operate at acceptable levels during all peak periods due to the widening of key sidewalks and crosswalks to accommodate increased pedestrian traffic in the area. There would be no significant adverse noise impacts from increases in traffic in the Other Areas. Therefore, the additional person and vehicle trips would not have an adverse impact on neighborhood character.

CONCLUSION

By 2015, the character of the Project Area would begin to show signs of a substantial transformation. The Proposed Actions would transform the southern portion of the Project Area, replacing primarily low-scale industrial and auto-related uses along West 125th Street with modern educational/institutional uses, in effect expanding the character of the southern portion of the study areas northward and introducing uses compatible with the portions of the surrounding study areas to the north and east. The completed Phase 1 development would stand adjacent to an area still under construction, with the West 130th to West 131st Street block under active construction and portions of the block to the north in use for construction laydown areas and staging. The new buildings would be at a larger scale than those they replaced, and would be set back from the property line to widen sidewalks and enhance views down West 125th Street to the waterfront. The new development would include two publicly accessible open spaces. In addition, the area along Twelfth Avenue near the West Harlem Waterfront park would host a variety of commercial uses (with greater land utilization), which would support this relatively new resource. Anticipated changes in the other components that make up neighborhood character, including socioeconomic conditions (most notably comparable levels of local employment), transportation, and noise, would not be substantial and would not result in significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character. In summary, Phase 1 of the Proposed Actions, through changes in land use, zoning, and urban design, would change neighborhood character in the southern portion of the Project Area substantially. This change would not result in a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character.

PRIMARY STUDY AREA

Buildings constructed in the Project Area would signal the beginning of a substantial transformation in Manhattanville by 2015. However, this change would not significantly affect neighborhood character in the primary study area. While the existing manufacturing buildings in the Project Area contribute to the overall feel and character of Manhattanville, this influence is effectively limited by the Manhattan Valley IRT viaduct above Broadway, the residential superblock development bordering the Project Area to the north (Riverside Park Community) and east (Manhattanville Houses), and the change in topography and the high-density of educational/institutional uses immediately south along West 125th Street. Replacing existing uses in the Project Area with community facilities would strengthen the residential and educational/institutional character of the primary study area and would not have any adverse effects on its neighborhood character.

By making West 125th and West 129th Streets more attractive, and introducing publicly accessible open space and new retail uses along these streets and Twelfth Avenue, the redevelopment as a result of the Proposed Actions would draw people to and through the Project Area and begin to connect it to the primary study area.

The Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts on historic resources, urban design, or visual resources of the primary study area. Given the strong residential and educational/institutional character of the Morningside Heights portion of the primary study area and the expansion of such uses to the north, the Proposed Actions would not create a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character in the Morningside Heights portion of the primary study area. Replacing current uses in the Project Area with community facilities would be compatible with the residential and educational/institutional character of Morningside Heights.

The Proposed Actions could add up to 970 University-affiliated residents seeking up to 438 units of housing within the primary study area. This project-generated housing demand could lead to increases in rent that could in turn result in indirect residential displacement of an at-risk population (low-income households living in apartments that are not rent-protected). In addition, the new buildings and activity generated in Phase 1 would make the Project Area and its surroundings more attractive as a destination or a place to live, and this “destination effect” also would contribute to upward pressure on rents in the primary study area, and the indirect displacement of the at-risk population. However, as discussed in Chapter 4, the Phase 1 socioeconomic changes would not lead to significant indirect residential displacement, and so would not significantly affect neighborhood character. The limited indirect retail displacement that could result from increased rents in the immediate vicinity of the Project Area would not lead to major changes within the primary study area’s commercial strips, and would not result in adverse changes to neighborhood character. Storefronts that could be vacated due to indirect displacement would be unlikely to remain vacant; they would turn over to other retail uses that could afford to pay higher rents, while delivering similar services, and therefore the Proposed Actions would not affect employment characteristics in the primary study area. Given the high residential density and the strong residential market in the study area, there would still be the local demand for neighborhood retail and services necessary to maintain the strong retail presence along West 125th Street and the avenues within the study area.

Traffic conditions at most intersections in the primary study area would continue to function at acceptable levels of service (LOS C or better). The exception is the intersection of Amsterdam Avenue and West 125th Street, where several lane movements would operate at LOS D or worse. The project-related improvements discussed above would ensure that the transportation system could accommodate the projected increases in pedestrian and vehicle traffic. Therefore, the additional person and vehicle trips would not have an adverse impact on neighborhood character in the primary study area.

The Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse noise impacts in the primary study area.

SECONDARY STUDY AREA

As discussed in Chapter 3, the Proposed Actions are not likely to foster additional development in the secondary study area, as the neighborhoods within this study area are firmly established residential neighborhoods, distant from the Project Area, and thus not likely to support much additional development. In addition, the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts on land use, historic resources, urban design, or visual resources.

The Proposed Actions could add up to 164 University-affiliated residents seeking up to 74 housing units within the secondary study area, an increase in study area population of less than 1 percent. As in the primary study area, the Phase 1 development could begin to create a destination effect in the secondary study area, but because of its distance from the Project Area,

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this effect would not be significant. The project-generated housing demand from the University and non-University populations would therefore not be great enough to significantly affect neighborhood character. The population characteristics of the secondary study area would not change appreciably from those in the future without the Proposed Actions.

As discussed in Chapter 4, any potential for indirect business displacement in the manufacturing district on Amsterdam Avenue was found not to be significant, and thus there would be no effect on neighborhood character. Potentially vulnerable businesses in the manufacturing district are not of substantial economic value to the City; they can largely be relocated elsewhere in the City; they are not subject to regulations or publicly adopted plans to preserve, enhance, or protect them; and they are not a defining element of neighborhood character. In addition, there is an existing trend toward conversion of the area's traditional/historic manufacturing uses to other uses.

Traffic conditions in the secondary study area would deteriorate slightly in the future with the Proposed Actions. A greater number of intersections would have lane movements operating worse than LOS C during the AM and PM peak periods compared with the future without the Proposed Actions. The project-related improvements discussed above would ensure that the transportation system could accommodate the projected increases in pedestrian and vehicle traffic. The Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse noise impacts from increases in traffic in the secondary study area. Therefore, the additional person and vehicle trips would not have an adverse impact on neighborhood character in the secondary study area.

Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not result in significant neighborhood character impacts in the secondary study area.

F. 2030 FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

PROJECT AREA

By 2030, conditions in the Project Area in the future without the Proposed Actions are expected to be a continuation of those in 2015 (without the Proposed Actions). The Project Area is not anticipated to experience substantial change in the future without the Proposed Actions by 2030 due to restrictive zoning regulations. Some changes in tenancy of existing buildings could be expected, with potential increases in such uses as moving and storage uses that would occupy buildings currently in industrial or transportation use. Traffic volumes, pedestrian activity, and noise levels would not change appreciably. No substantial change in character in the Project Area is anticipated.

PRIMARY STUDY AREA

There are no known new developments proposed for the primary study area between 2015 and 2030; therefore, the residential and educational/institutional character of the primary study area is expected to remain unchanged (from the character in 2015).

SECONDARY STUDY AREA

There are no known new developments proposed for the secondary study area between 2015 and 2030; therefore, the residential and educational/institutional character of the secondary study area is expected to remain unchanged.

G. 2030 FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

PROJECT AREA

By 2030, redevelopment in the Project Area would be complete, moving northward from sites constructed by 2015. Including the development completed by 2015, the Proposed Actions would result in an estimated 6.8 million gsf of new space on the 17 sites that comprise the Academic Mixed-Use Area (Subdistrict A), including space for academic research, academic (instruction), housing for graduate students, faculty, and other employees, and related support space (see Table 1-8 and Figure 1-12 in Chapter 1). In combination with the development in Subdistrict B and the Other Areas completed by 2015 (see discussion above), the full redevelopment of the Project Area would bring a new mix of land uses to West Harlem, including expanded academic and institutional facilities, new commercial development, and a small amount of new housing. The transformation of the Project Area to this new mix of land uses would significantly change neighborhood character, but this change would not be adverse.

The discussion below primarily addresses Subdistrict A. The other subdistricts, with development having been completed by 2015, are discussed in “2015 Future with the Proposed Actions,” above.

As currently contemplated, full development of Subdistrict A would include 17 new Columbia University buildings, ranging in height from 80 to 320 feet (with mechanical). As discussed in Chapter 1, the design of these new buildings would be regulated by provisions in the proposed Special Manhattanville Mixed-Use Zoning District that are intended to promote a cohesive and strong urban design and to enhance visual character through coordinated massing and building heights, and pedestrian improvements. Following the requirements of the Special Manhattanville Mixed-Use Zoning District, the Academic Mixed-Use Development would use a coordinated system of building heights and massing to create an overall design that reflects the topography of the valley, and the heights of certain surrounding buildings and the two viaducts.

The design for this new development is intended to complement the Studebaker Building and the former Warren Nash Service Station building, both historic resources. (The Studebaker Building would be renovated and occupied by Columbia in the future without the Proposed Actions by 2015 for administrative use; the former Warren Nash Service Station building would be used by Columbia in the future without the Proposed Actions for office space, but would be turned into a building for academic or academic research use by 2030 with the Proposed Actions.) Active ground-floor uses would be required by the proposed zoning in many of the new buildings. These uses could include contain community-oriented uses, including retail, galleries, performance spaces, and other space for community services, such as day care, community, or recreation centers. Active ground-floor uses would be located along West 125th Street, Broadway, and Twelfth Avenue, and the sidewalks would be planted with street trees and other inviting streetscape amenities. The Proposed Actions would replace approximately 1.2 million gsf of an assorted mix of primarily industrial buildings, ranging in height from 10 to 125 feet. While the Proposed Actions would result in a substantial change in land use, these changes would result in a new, modern, Academic Mixed-Use Area, compatible with the educational/institutional character found in the primary and secondary study areas.

Active ground-floor uses and glazed, transparent storefronts required under the proposed rezoning would provide street-level visual interest, pedestrian activity, and neighborhood amenities along Twelfth Avenue, Broadway, and West 125th Street. The side streets, which

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would remain open to the public, would become inviting to pedestrians, thereby establishing connections and improved view corridors through the Project Area to the waterfront. In addition to the two publicly accessible open spaces on both sides of West 129th Street at its intersection with West 125th Street (constructed in 2015), the new development would include an approximately 40,000-sf privately owned, publicly accessible open space between West 130th and West 131st Streets, and a landscaped, midblock open area extending from West 125th Street to West 133rd Street.

The proposed buildings would be built on and conform to existing block shapes, thus preserving the existing street pattern in this subdistrict. The Proposed Actions would not result in any significant adverse impacts on the visual resources in Subdistrict A, which include the Studebaker Building and the Manhattan Valley IRT and Riverside Drive viaducts, and would not block any view corridors. As discussed above in “2015 Future with the Proposed Actions,” views of the Riverside Drive viaduct and the Hudson River in the West 125th Street view corridor would be enhanced by the new buildings along West 125th Street.

As discussed above in “2015 Future with the Proposed Actions,” the Proposed Actions would result in the demolition of the former Sheffield Farms Stable, which is disclosed as a significant adverse historic impact in Chapter 8. However, there are a number of buildings and historic structures that are more prominent on the urban landscape and that are visual landmarks, which contribute more significantly to the character of the neighborhood (e.g., the Studebaker Building, the former Warren Nash Service Station building, and the Broadway and Riverside Drive viaducts). The two viaducts—Broadway and Riverside Drive—that span the Manhattan Valley and delineate the Project Area from the neighboring areas are two of the most character-defining structures in the area. The Proposed Actions would preserve and create an appropriate context for the Studebaker Building and the former Warren Nash Service Station building. Therefore, the demolition of the former Sheffield Farms Stable, while having an adverse effect on neighborhood character, would not constitute a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character. By 2030, the Proposed Actions would also result in the relocation and rehabilitation of a portion (the 1948 dining car) of the West Market Diner (currently vacant), which contains historic interior features, to a new site in the Project Area. As discussed in Chapter 8, relocation and rehabilitation of the 1948 dining car would be undertaken in consultation with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), and would not result in significant adverse impacts on historic resources. Since the historic portion of the diner would be relocated to a new site in the Project Area or study area and restored to the extent practicable, relocating the diner would not result in adverse impacts on neighborhood character.

As discussed above in “2015 Future with the Proposed Actions,” under the Special Manhattanville Special Zoning District text, no fences, gates, or walls would be permitted in any of the open areas, and all open areas would have to be accessible directly from an adjoining public walkway. It is anticipated that various security measures would be used inside Columbia buildings, such as sign-in desks at main building entrances and Columbia identification cards or keypads for entrance to internal facilities. The internal building security measures would be similar to those at the Morningside Heights campus and in typical office buildings in Manhattan. These security measures would not interfere with access to the adjacent waterfront area and would enhance safety for adjacent pedestrian activity. Therefore, security provided by Columbia’s campus police would not have an adverse effect on neighborhood character.

By 2030, the redevelopment of Subdistrict A would directly displace 135 residential units, containing an estimated 298 residents (see Chapter 4, section D: “Detailed Analysis, Direct

Business and Institutional Displacement, Future with the Proposed Actions—2030”). The loss of this population would not substantially affect the Project Area’s neighborhood character, which is a generally industrial area today. (See discussion of residential displacement under discussion of primary and secondary study areas below.)

By 2030, it is assumed that virtually all of the remaining existing businesses, institutions, and their associated employment would be directly displaced from Subdistrict A. Added to the direct displacement in the other subdistricts, the Proposed Actions would directly displace approximately 880 jobs across a variety of economic sectors. The displacement of four institutional uses, including two churches, the Eritrean Community Center, and a nonprofit organization, would not be considered significant because the facilities can be relocated, and the services provided at the existing facilities in the Project Area are not dependent upon their location in Manhattanville (see discussion in Chapter 4). Under CEQR, the direct business displacement also is not considered significant, because the businesses do not have a critical economic value to the City, the economic sectors with the highest employment in the study areas (those which define the character of the area in an economic sense) are not, in large part, based in the Project Area, and a comparable number of local jobs would likely be created by the Proposed Actions by 2030.

By 2030 the Proposed Actions would displace an estimated 802 jobs in Subdistrict A. As discussed in Chapter 4, although the Proposed Actions would likely displace many jobs held by residents of the study areas—it is estimated that between 37 and 55 percent of the jobs displaced (297 to 441) would be jobs held by residents of the study areas—the Proposed Actions are expected to generate a greater number of equivalent jobs for residents of the study areas. Approximately 3,812 non-faculty, non-research jobs would be available in Subdistrict A by 2030 (including 3,162 University-affiliated jobs and 650 non-University jobs in active ground-floor uses), providing a broad range of employment opportunities—including entry level positions, skilled trades (primarily construction trades), administrative support, and professional service positions in finance and general administration. Many of these new positions would require comparable education levels to the jobs that would be displaced. Given that Columbia currently employs approximately 30 and 8 percent of its workforce for these types of jobs on its existing campuses from Northern Manhattan and CB9, respectively, it is reasonable to assume that, with the Proposed Actions, a comparable percentage of this type of University-affiliated employment would be recruited from within the primary and secondary study areas, yielding an estimated local employment potential of 253 University-affiliated jobs for study area residents and 949 University-affiliated jobs for Northern Manhattan residents as a whole. Combined with local jobs likely to be generated by active ground-floor uses, the total non-faculty, non-research employment for study area residents generated by the Proposed Actions within Subdistrict A is projected to be between 293 and 610 jobs. This change would not adversely affect employment characteristics in the primary or secondary study areas (see discussion in their respective sections below). Therefore, a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character would not occur as a result of the loss of local jobs.

Traffic conditions on most streets in the Project Area would function at acceptable levels due to the completion of project-related modifications to the transportation system, such as changing two-way streets to one-way and installing traffic signals at unsignalized locations. Due to project-related changes to area sidewalks and crosswalks, most pedestrian facilities in this subdistrict would operate at mid LOS D or better during the AM, midday, and PM peak periods. Therefore, the additional person and vehicle trips would not have an adverse impact on neighborhood character in the Project Area.

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By 2030, the Proposed Actions would install a traffic light at West 125th Street between Twelfth Avenue and St. Clair Place (West 129th Street) to avoid a traffic impact and improve pedestrian conditions. These changes would generate noise level increases at the location of the traffic light that would be readily noticeable and would constitute a significant noise impact. However, there are not now and nor would there be in the future with the Proposed Actions any sensitive noise receptors in this section of the Project Area; new buildings constructed as a result of the Proposed Actions would incorporate noise attenuation measures to avoid significant adverse noise impacts on their users. Therefore, although noise levels would be increased for pedestrians passing by at street level, there would not be a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character of Subdistrict A as a result of this noise increase.

CONCLUSION

By 2030, the Proposed Actions would have clearly and substantially altered neighborhood character in the Project Area. The entire aging industrial area would be replaced by a new mix of uses, including academic facilities in the form of space for scientific and other academic research, for the study of arts and humanities, and for education of professionals, plus active ground-floor spaces, publicly accessible open spaces, and a lively streetscape; by new commercial uses along Twelfth Avenue; and new or expanded community facilities and residential development along the east side of Broadway. The Proposed Actions would not alter street patterns, but would create large, modern buildings and a central “square.” The proposed zoning requirements would improve the streetscapes, using setbacks to widen sidewalks and landscaping, provide active retail uses and other publicly accessible uses along Broadway, West 125th Street and Twelfth Avenue, improve connections to the waterfront, and introduce substantial new publicly accessible open space. This transformation of land uses and urban design in the Project Area, while substantial, would not result in any significant adverse impacts with respect to land use or urban design and visual resources.

The Proposed Actions would preserve and create an appropriate context for two historic resources: the Studebaker Building and the former Warren Nash Service Station building. The 1948 dining car of the West Market Diner would be relocated to a new site in the Project Area or study area and rehabilitated. This would not result in significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character. Demolition of the former Sheffield Farms Stable in Subdistrict A, identified as a significant adverse impact in the historic resources analysis (see Chapter 8), would have an adverse effect on neighborhood character. However, there are a number of buildings and historic structures that are more prominent on the urban landscape and that are visual landmarks, which contribute more significantly to the character of the neighborhood. In particular, the two viaducts—Broadway and Riverside Drive—that span the Manhattan Valley and delineate the Project Area from the neighboring areas are two of the most character-defining structures in the area. The demolition of the former Sheffield Farms Stable therefore is not a significant adverse impact.

The direct residential displacement in Subdistrict A would not result in a substantial change in its neighborhood character. While the Proposed Actions would result in the displacement of existing businesses and jobs, many of which are held by residents of the study areas, new development in Subdistrict A would result in a larger and broader number of employment opportunities—including entry level positions, skilled trades (primarily construction trades), administrative support, and professional service positions in finance and general administration—thus preserving and expanding the potential base of employment for local residents.

The increase in density and activity associated with development in Subdistrict A would result in an increase in travel demand. The traffic impacts predicted to occur in 2030 as a result of the Proposed Actions would be located along 125th Street, a street that is already heavily traveled and subject to congestion, so the change from the Proposed Actions would not affect neighborhood character there. The increases in traffic on the local side streets in the Project Area, which are not predicted to create significant adverse traffic impacts in the Project Area, are part of the changes that occur when a neighborhood is enlivened with new, denser development. While the increase in noise levels from traffic generated as a result of the Proposed Actions would result in a significant adverse noise impact on West 125th Street between Broadway and Twelfth Avenue (see Chapter 20), there are no sensitive noise receptors in Subdistrict A at this location. Therefore, the noise impact would not affect community character in Subdistrict A.

PRIMARY STUDY AREA

By 2030, the transformation of the Project Area would be complete, and the resulting development would be compatible with the character of the primary study area. The Proposed Actions would revitalize West 125th Street, extending the commercial character of this major river-to-river boulevard west to the Hudson River. Development in the Project Area would invite connections to the primary study area from the north and south via a new landscaped midblock open area from 3333 Broadway to Columbia's Prentis Hall and 560 Riverside Drive buildings, and from the east by the improved streetscapes along the local streets between West 129th and West 133rd Streets. The redevelopment as a result of the Proposed Actions would draw people to and through the Project Area to the waterfront and its associated uses, which are not found in the primary study area.

The Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts on land use, historic resources, urban design, or visual resources of the primary study area. The Proposed Actions would add traffic along Broadway, West 125th Street, and Amsterdam Avenue (see discussion of Project Area, above). However, these are wide streets and are designed to carry high traffic volumes, and thus the way these streets would combine with other features of the community to create neighborhood character would not change substantially due to the anticipated increase in traffic or its associated noise. An increase in pedestrian volumes is expected along Broadway and West 125th Street and their crossings to and from the primary study area (and through the Project Area).

The number of residents (298) and residential units (135) directly displaced by the Proposed Actions in Subdistrict A would be less than 1 percent of the total of residents and residential units in the primary study area, substantially less than the 5 percent CEQR threshold for consideration of potential significant adverse impacts. As discussed in Chapter 4, direct residential displacement from the Proposed Actions is not considered a significant adverse impact, and the relatively small loss of units and population would not create a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character.

By 2030, the Proposed Actions could add up to 2,717 University-affiliated residents who could create a demand for up to 839 housing units within the primary study area, and this new population would be expected to have different socioeconomic characteristics compared with those of the existing study area populations. Based on current characteristics, the proportion of whites and Asians/Pacific Islanders to African-Americans and Hispanics/Latinos would be greater. This new population, combined with a non-University population drawn to the area by its increased residential attractiveness, would represent 7.5 percent of the 2030 primary study

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area population. As noted above in “2015 Future with the Proposed Actions,” while changes in racial or ethnic population characteristics can affect neighborhood character, they are not in and of themselves beneficial or adverse for purposes of CEQR analysis.

The projected University demand, combined with potential demand generated by a non-University population due to the increased livability and overall residential appeal of the neighborhood, would be partially absorbed by individuals’ purchases of owner-occupied housing in the study areas, as well as by turnover within the rent-regulated housing stock in the study areas. However, the remaining demand would place upward pressure on rents in the primary study area’s stock of moderately priced, market-rate apartments, which in turn could result in significant adverse indirect residential displacement impact on socioeconomic conditions in the primary study area by 2030. An estimated maximum of 1,318 unregulated units out of a total of 13,336 units in the primary study area would be vulnerable to these impacts, which was found to be a significant adverse socioeconomic impact (see discussion in Chapter 4). However, as noted above, the primary study area’s housing stock is not primarily characterized by its unregulated rental units. Rather, housing in the primary study area would remain typified by large publicly subsidized housing complexes and other rent-regulated apartments, representing 73.1 percent of all units in the primary study area, which would be unaffected by the Proposed Actions. Therefore, the significant adverse indirect residential displacement impact of the Proposed Actions would not result in a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character.

As discussed above in “Project Area,” the potential net gain in employment as a result of the Proposed Actions in 2030 would not adversely affect employment characteristics in the primary study area.

As discussed above in “2015 Future with the Proposed Actions,” the limited indirect retail displacement that could result from increased rents in the immediate vicinity of the Project Area would not lead to major changes within the primary study area’s commercial strips, and would not result in adverse changes to neighborhood character. Storefronts that could be vacated due to indirect displacement would be unlikely to remain vacant; they would turn over to other retail uses that could afford to pay higher rents, and therefore the Proposed Actions would not affect employment characteristics in the primary study area. Given the high residential density and the strong residential market in the study area, there would still be the local demand for neighborhood retail and services necessary to maintain the strong retail presence along West 125th Street and the avenues within the study area.

As identified above, the Proposed Actions would result in significant adverse noise impacts on West 125th Street between Twelfth Avenue and St. Clair Place (West 129th Street). The only sensitive receptor in the primary study area near this location is the Columbia-owned residential building at 560 Riverside Drive on the southwest corner of West 125th Street and St. Clair Place, just south of the Project Area. This building contains double-glazed windows and central air conditioning, which are measures typically used to maintain acceptable interior noise levels (see Chapter 20). Therefore, this increase in noise levels would not result in a significant adverse on neighborhood character in the primary study area.

SECONDARY STUDY AREA

By 2030, the Proposed Actions would transform the character of the Project Area to one that more resembles the predominant educational/institutional character of the secondary study area. The Proposed Actions are not likely to foster additional development in the secondary study area, as the neighborhoods within this study area are firmly established residential

neighborhoods, distant from the Project Area, and thus not likely to support much additional development. In addition, the Proposed Actions would not result in significant adverse impacts on historic resources, urban design, or visual resources in the secondary study area.

The Proposed Actions would add up to 645 University-affiliated residents seeking up to 292 housing units within the secondary study area. This project-generated housing demand, combined with a general upgrading effect of new development in the Project Area, could lead to increases in rent that could in turn result in some indirect residential displacement of an at-risk population. The extent of this effect in the secondary study area is not considered significant (see Chapter 4).

Potential indirect business displacement in the manufacturing district on Amsterdam Avenue was not found to be significant, and thus would not significantly affect neighborhood character. Potentially vulnerable businesses in the manufacturing district are not of substantial economic value to the City; they can largely be relocated elsewhere in the City; they are not subject to regulations or publicly adopted plans to preserve, enhance, or protect them; and they are not a defining element of neighborhood character. In addition, there already is a trend toward conversion of the area's traditional/historic manufacturing uses to other uses.

Although the Proposed Actions are too distant from the secondary study area to generate pedestrian or noise impacts, the traffic analysis predicts that significant traffic impacts would occur along West 125th Street east of Broadway, and one would occur at Broadway and West 145th Street. These impacts would occur at intersections that are already so congested that just a few vehicles would create a significant adverse impact as defined by CEQR. As described in Chapter 23, "Mitigation," all of these impacts would be mitigated. The small number of vehicles contributed by the Proposed Actions would worsen but would not change the congested character of these intersections, and so the Proposed Actions would not affect neighborhood character through changes in traffic. *