

**A. INTRODUCTION**

As defined in the *New York City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, neighborhood character is an amalgam of the various elements that give neighborhoods their distinct “personality.” These factors include land use, urban design, historic features, traffic volumes and circulation, noise levels, and other physical or social characteristics that define a neighborhood, although not all of these elements contribute to neighborhood character in all cases.

**PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS**

This analysis concludes that the proposed project would not have a significant change in neighborhood character with respect to land use, urban design and visual resources, historic resources, socioeconomic conditions, traffic and pedestrians and noise. Therefore, the proposed project would not have a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character. The proposed project would contain new market rate and affordable housing with supporting commercial and community facility uses and publicly-accessible open space, extending the residential character of nearby residential neighborhoods eastward onto the two project blocks. The proposed project has been designed to maintain as much as possible, the low-rise character of the project blocks, and to blend with the streetscapes of surrounding neighborhood. The existing one- to two-story buildings on the project site would be replaced with six-story building components along Bond Street, four-story townhouse components in the mid-block sections, and medium-rise components located further east on the project site. By distributing the respective building heights in this manner, Bond Street’s low-rise character would be maintained. The proposed buildings would be subject to the quality design requirements of a general large-scale development plan to ensure that the design of the proposed structures would not conflict with the neighborhood. It would also meet the Quality Housing Provision of the City. The proposed project would provide much needed local housing, both market rate and affordable, meeting the City’s objectives of maintaining a mix of housing types in the local community. Community facility space and amenities would also be provided for the local neighborhood. In addition, the proposed project would introduce a new publicly-accessible landscaped waterfront esplanade (approximately 0.7 acres) from which the public would be afforded an improved view of many visual and historic resources, including the historic Carroll Street Bridge, the Former Brooklyn Transit Power House, the canal itself and its bulkheads. This would be the first such open space along this stretch of the canal. While there would be increased pedestrian and vehicular activity on local streets, these increases would not be expected to significantly affect any of the neighborhoods in the study area. Any projected traffic impacts would be mitigated. In addition, any impacts to the on-site bulkheads would be mitigated through an archaeological investigation that would have the potential to yield knowledge as to the historical methods used in developing the canal. It is anticipated that the reconstructed bulkhead would be faced in wood to match the existing, and the project sponsors would coordinate the design with the State Historic

Preservation Office (SHPO) to ensure that the bulkhead design is in keeping with the historic character. The redevelopment of the two blocks would also provide for the environmental cleanup of the site.

## **B. METHODOLOGY**

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, an assessment of neighborhood character is appropriate when a proposed project would exceed preliminary thresholds in any one of the following impact categories: land use, urban design, visual resources, historic resources, socioeconomic conditions, traffic, or noise. An assessment should also be undertaken when the project may have moderate effects on several of the aforementioned areas. Potential effects on neighborhood character may include:

- *Land Use*: Development resulting from a proposed action would have the potential to change neighborhood character by introducing a new, incompatible land use; conflicting with land use policy or other public plans for the area; changing land use character; or resulting in significant land use impacts.
- *Urban Design and Visual Resources*: In developed areas, urban design changes have the potential to affect neighborhood character by introducing substantially different building bulk, form, size, scale, or arrangement. Urban design changes may also affect block forms; street patterns; or street hierarchies; as well as streetscape elements such as street walls, landscaping, curb cuts, and loading docks. Visual resource changes have the potential to affect neighborhood character by directly changing visual features such as unique and important public view corridors and vistas, or public visual access to such features.
- *Historic Resources*. A proposed action has the potential to affect neighborhood character when it would result in substantial direct changes to a historic resource or substantial changes to public views of a resource, or when a historic resources analysis identifies a significant impact.
- *Socioeconomic Conditions*. Changes in socioeconomic conditions have the potential to affect neighborhood character when they would result in substantial direct or indirect displacement or addition of population, employment, or businesses; or substantial differences in population or employment density.
- *Traffic and Pedestrians*. Changes in traffic conditions have the potential to affect neighborhood character when a proposed action would result in substantial changes to traffic, and when traffic is a contributing element to the character of the neighborhood (either by its absence or its presence). According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, such substantial traffic changes can include: changes from level of service (LOS) A or B to LOS C or below, changes in traffic patterns, changes in roadway classifications, changes in vehicle mixes, substantial increases in traffic volumes on residential streets, or significant traffic impacts as identified in that technical analysis. Changes in pedestrian conditions have the potential to affect neighborhood character when a proposed action would result in substantially different pedestrian activity and circulation.
- *Noise*. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a proposed action has the potential to affect neighborhood character if it would result in a significant adverse noise impact and a change in the acceptability category.

This chapter examines neighborhood character within a study area defined by 4th Avenue to the east, Wyckoff Avenue to the north, Smith Street to the west, and 12th Street to the south. While

study areas typically developed for an EIS analysis are delineated based on distance from the project site in accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual* (e.g., ¼ mile), this study area is designed to encompass the Gowanus Canal proper which extends through the center of the study area and the residential communities of Carroll Gardens to the west and 4th Avenue/Park Slope to the east, which are the neighborhoods that frame Gowanus. This study area is also the same as the land use study area presented in Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy.” As also described in Chapter 2, for the purposes of assessing compatibility of the proposed project with the existing neighborhood character, the study area is organized into the four following subareas (see also Figure 2-2):

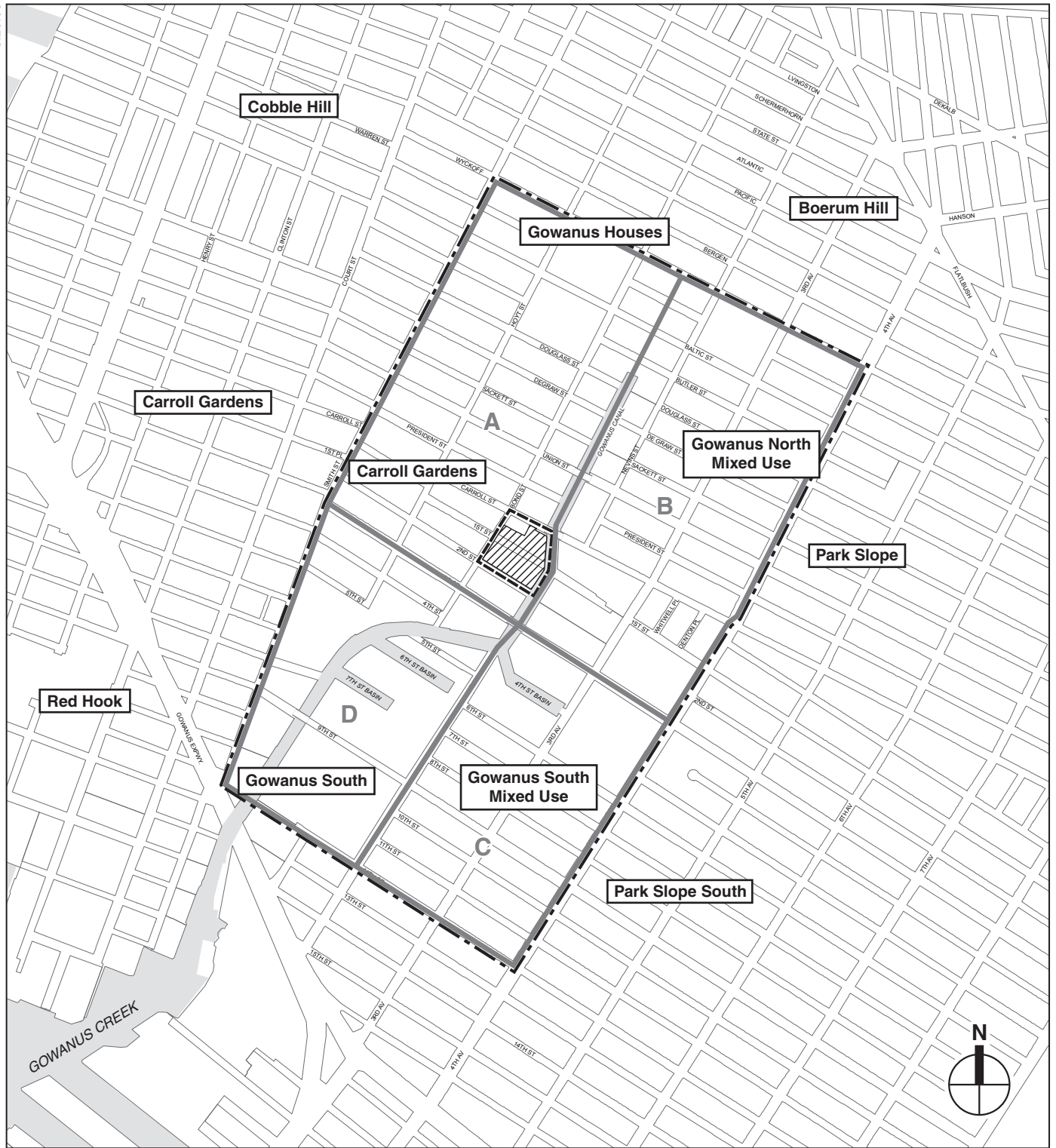
- *Subarea A: Carroll Gardens/Gowanus North/Boerum Hill:* This area is west of the canal and includes the project site. It is bound by Wyckoff Street to the north, the Gowanus Canal and Nevins Street to the east, 3rd Street to the south, and Smith Street to the north.
- *Subarea B: Gowanus North Mixed Use (East of Canal):* This area is east of the Gowanus Canal, bounded by Wyckoff Street to the north, 4th Avenue to the east, 3rd Street to the south, and the Gowanus Canal to the west.
- *Subarea C: Gowanus South Mixed Use (East of Canal):* This area is bounded by 3rd Street to the north, 4th Avenue to the east, 12th Street to the south, and 2nd Avenue to the west.
- *Subarea D: Gowanus South Industrial Area:* This area includes the canal’s industrial and commercial waterfront, and is bounded by 3rd Street to the north, 2nd Avenue to the east, 12th Street to the south, and Smith Street to the east.

### C. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The study area for this neighborhood character assessment is located at the confluence of several South Brooklyn neighborhoods, including Carroll Gardens, Boerum Hill, Park Slope, Park Slope South, and Gowanus (north and south). As discussed in Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy,” the study area includes a variety of zoning districts, although the majority falls within manufacturing districts. Residential districts are mapped in the northwest and northeast portions of the study area, as well as the southeast corner. As discussed in Chapter 3: “Socioeconomic Conditions,” the median housing value in this area is generally higher than the median housing value of Brooklyn and New York City. Median household income is also substantially higher than the median household income for Brooklyn and New York City. As mentioned above, the study area has been divided into four subareas to better analyze the proposed project and its impact on neighborhood character.

The proposed rezoning area and the project site are bounded by Carroll Street to the north, Bond Street to the west, 2nd Street to the south, and the Gowanus Canal to the east (see Figure 9-1). The structures on the site are mid-20th century manufacturing buildings, one to three stories in height. The buildings house warehousing uses, but are also partially vacant. A large portion of the project area along the waterfront is vacant land used for truck storage. Two City-owned parcels on Block 452, which are currently occupied by an Emergency Medical Services EMS facility and infrastructure associated with the historic Carroll Street Bridge, are not part of the project site, but are included in the area to be rezoned.

The project site occupies all of Block 458 (bounded by 1st Street, the Gowanus Canal, 2nd Street, and Bond Street) which contains a single lot (Lot 1), and Block 452 (bounded by Carroll Street, the Gowanus Canal, 1st Street, and Bond Street) Lots 1 and 15. In total, there are six buildings on the project site, the majority of which are one-story industrial buildings. Block 458



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contains a low industrial building that occupies the block's entire frontage along Bond Street, and a vacant lot used for truck parking/storage adjacent to the canal. Block 452, Lot 1 contains a single one- and two-story light-industrial building. Block 452, Lot 15 contains small one and two-story buildings.

There are no significant visual resources on the project site that contribute to the local neighborhood. Along the project site, visual access to the Gowanus Canal is available at the unimproved street ends of 1st and 2nd Streets. The pedestrian path on the Carroll Street Bridge provides the best and most accessible views of the canal. Apart from the Gowanus Canal bulkhead, which has been identified as a contributing feature to the State/National Register of Historic Places (S/NR)-eligible Gowanus Canal Historic District, the project site does not contain any historic resources.

There are three active businesses at the site; a perfume wholesale distributor and warehouse at 365 Bond Street, a garment wholesale distributor and warehouse at 363 Bond Street, and a surface parking lot utilized by trucks associated with neighborhood businesses. Together the businesses provide little on-site activity and employment, with a total of about 20 jobs. As a result there is little pedestrian activity within the site and no 24-hour activity. Access to the waterfront is limited to the two unimproved street ends. There is an existing access point to the water at the end of 2nd Street.

1st and 2nd Streets dead end at the canal and are lightly traveled by vehicles with the exception of the trucks accessing the truck parking facility via 1st Street. Bond Street carries a single lane of traffic northbound, and is lightly traveled. Carroll Street is a local one-way eastbound street except between Bond Street and Nevins Street where it operates as a two-way east-west street; it narrows where the street crosses the canal. The sidewalks surrounding the project site are lightly used by pedestrians.

Noise levels measured at three receptor locations in the immediate vicinity of the project area were found to be moderately high, with traffic being the only evident noise source. In terms of the CEQR noise exposure guidelines, existing noise levels along Carroll and 2nd Streets are in the "acceptable" category; and existing noise levels at the receptor on Bond Street are in the "marginally unacceptable" category (for residential uses).

## **STUDY AREA**

### *SUBAREA A: CARROLL GARDENS/GOWANUS NORTH/BOERUM HILL*

This subarea is primarily residential, with industrial, warehouse and vacant uses located along the western frontage of the Gowanus Canal. The canal waterfront also contains vacant parcels, a former oil terminal, and parcels used for vehicle storage.

Immediately to the west of the project site, across Bond Street, is the Carroll Gardens residential neighborhood. Carroll Gardens contains mostly residential uses with supporting institutional uses, including schools and churches. Two- four-story rowhouses are the predominant housing type, with larger apartment buildings of up to six stories are present as well. Ground-floor commercial uses are concentrated along Smith Street, which is the area's principal commercial corridor. Although the area is largely built-out, a few undeveloped lots are present along the west side of Bond Street that are used for vehicle storage. The Carroll Gardens Historic District and Carroll Gardens Historic District Boundary Increase are characterized by four-story

brownstone rowhouses with deep and landscaped front yards (the result of a planned layout dating from the mid 19th century).

The street grid of the study area is generally regular, although there are some offsets in the Carroll Gardens Historic District at President and Carroll Streets (between Hoyt and Smith Streets) that interrupt view corridors in views to the east. The topography slopes downward to the east, toward the canal, which is the lowest point in the study area. The elevation west of Bond Street rises steadily; east of Bond Street the topography is essentially flat.

As described in Chapter 7, “Historic Resources,” the S/NR-eligible Gowanus Canal Historic District runs along the banks of the canal and contains several contributing historic resources. Contributing elements to the S/NR-eligible Gowanus Canal Historic District in this subarea include the Gowanus Canal waterway and bulkheads, and the Pumping Station south of Butler Street. This subarea also includes the Carroll Street Bridge and Operator’s House (New York City Landmark [NYCL], S/NR-eligible), the Carroll Gardens Historic District (S/NR-listed and NYCL) and Carroll Gardens Historic District Boundary Increase (S/NR-eligible and NYCL-eligible), Cobble Hill High School at 347 Baltic Street (S/NR-eligible), Wyckoff Street rowblocks between Hoyt and Smith and Bond and Nevins Streets, respectively, which constitute a Boerum Hill Historic District Boundary Increase (S/NR-eligible), the Saint Agnes Church Complex, between Sackett, Douglass, Hoyt, and Bond Streets (S/NR-eligible; NYCL-eligible), and a row of townhouses at 59-97 2nd Street (S/NR-eligible), which are similar in style to the houses in the Carroll Gardens Historic District, but are smaller and have smaller front yards. These houses are thought to have housed workers from the many industries along the nearby canal.

As discussed in Chapter 3, “Socioeconomic Conditions,” this subarea has experienced a substantial increase in residential population since 1990. Census tracts 69, 75 and 77, which comprise the majority of the subarea, saw population growth ranging from approximately 7 to 12 percent between 1990 and 2000. This is attributable to a corresponding increase in residential occupancy rates in the area. Vacancy rates are low, and housing is in high demand in this area.

Smith Street, 3rd Street, and Union Street are the most traveled roadways through this subarea. 3rd Street is an east/west street, with two-way traffic crossing the canal. Bond Street carries a single lane of traffic northbound, and is lightly traveled. None of the intersections immediately surrounding the rezoning area operate with notable congestion at any of the peak hours. Streets that dead-end at the canal are very lightly traveled by both pedestrians and vehicles for at least a block before it. At Union, Carroll and 3rd Streets, movable bridges of various styles span the canal. As stated above, the bridge at Carroll Street is a NYCL and has been determined eligible for the S/NR.

The Gowanus Canal waterfront in this subarea is generally inactive and there are few if any uses that generate more intensive street activity. Access to the waterfront and views are generally limited to dead end streets and the bridge crossings. West of Bond Street, street activity increases in the residential neighborhoods and is most evident along Smith Street which is the commercial and transportation corridor for the study area. Pedestrian traffic volumes are greatest along Smith Street which has commercial and community facility uses and a greater concentration of shops and restaurants.

North of 3rd Street, noise levels in the study area are moderate, with street traffic being the primary source of noise.

*SUBAREA B: GOWANUS NORTH MIXED USE (EAST OF CANAL):*

This subarea, to the northeast of the project site and separated from the project site by the canal, is primarily industrial, with a small concentration of residential use. Light industrial buildings dominate the east waterfront of the Gowanus Canal along with parking and vacant buildings. Most of the buildings are one to two stories in height. East of Nevins Street and north of 1st Street, residential and commercial uses are interspersed among the light-industrial buildings. A distinct pocket of residential use is present at the intersection of Carroll Street and 3rd Avenue, characterized by three- and four-story apartment buildings along 3rd Avenue, and smaller, two- to three- story buildings along Carroll Street. North of Baltic Street, the area is almost entirely residential, and includes the Wyckoff Houses, a complex of three 21-story buildings owned by NYCHA. Residential uses are also present along 4th Avenue, where the Gowanus North neighborhood meets the Park Slope residential neighborhood. 4th Avenue is a wide, major commercial and transportation corridor separating these corridors. The avenue has seen substantial mid rise residential development in recent years. Thomas Greene Playground, a public playground and outdoor public pool complex is located on the full block bounded by 3rd Avenue and DeGraw, Douglass, and Nevins Streets.

The topography of the subarea slopes slightly downward to the west toward the canal, which is the lowest elevation in the study area. The street grid is regular, interrupted only on its western edge by the canal. Views to the waterfront are available from immediately surrounding streets and dead ends.

Among the industrial buildings along the canal in this subarea is the Former Brooklyn Rapid Transit Powerhouse, located between 1st and 2nd Streets, Nevins Street and the canal. As described in Chapter 7, "Historic Resources," this building was constructed in 1902 as part of a larger complex of buildings for the BRT Corporation, and is considered a contributing building to the S/NR-eligible Gowanus Canal Historic District. Also contributing to the S/NR-eligible Gowanus Canal Historic District within this subarea is the R. G. Dun & Co. Building, a former printing plant at Nevins and Butler Streets. Other historic resources within this subarea are a former ASPCA Shelter at 233 Butler Street (S/NR-eligible; NYCL-eligible) and the Our Lady of Peace Roman Catholic Church Complex (S/NR-eligible), along Carroll Street between Whitwell and Denton Place.

As discussed in Chapter 3, "Socioeconomic Conditions," the neighborhoods of this subarea have also seen an increase in residential population since 1990. In fact, this subarea has seen the greatest percentage of growth in the study area. Census Tract 125, entirely contained in the subarea, experienced a 23.9 percent growth in population between 1990 and 2000. Census Tracts 123 and 127, which comprise the remainder of the subarea, also saw a significant population increase over that decade. This is also attributable to an increase in area residential occupancy rates. New construction since 2000 has further increased the residential housing base and population of this area.

3rd and 4th Avenues are the most heavily traveled streets in this portion of the study area. At Union, Carroll, 3rd Streets, and 9th Street movable bridges of various styles span the canal. Based on field observations, most sidewalks in the study area operate without much congestion. Noise levels in this subarea are limited to traffic noise along the major thoroughfares.

*SUBAREA C: GOWANUS SOUTH MIXED USE (EAST OF CANAL)*

This portion of the study area is characterized primarily by a mix of industrial uses housed in two- to three-story manufacturing buildings, commercial uses, and a distinct residential area in the southeast corner. Residential uses are more common east of 2nd Avenue, interspersed with light manufacturing uses, as the area transitions into the residential Park Slope South neighborhood. Many residential buildings on 3rd and 4th Avenues contain ground-floor retail. As in subarea B, 4th Avenue continues through this subarea as a wide avenue and main transportation and commercial corridor. The avenue has also grown increasingly residential in the last few years.

The street grid of the area is regular, although bisected by the Gowanus Canal and the 2nd Avenue and 4th Street basins that connect to the canal. In this subarea, the streets slope slightly downward toward the west and the lower elevation of the canal.

This subarea also includes several contributing features to the S/NR-eligible Gowanus Canal Historic District; the Burns Brothers Coal Pockets at 2nd Avenue and 5th Street, the 3rd Avenue Bridge, the American Can Company building on the southeast corner of 3rd Street and 3rd Avenue, and the Brooklyn Improvement Company Office Building on the southwest corner of 3rd Avenue and 3rd Street. The Brooklyn Improvement Company is also designated as a NYCL. In addition to these historic resources, the 4th Avenue Subway Station (S/NR-listed) is located in the southeastern portion of the study area, the IND Subway Viaduct (S/NR-eligible) runs along 10th Street, and there is a cluster of late 19th century wood-frame houses on 11th and 12th Street between 3rd and 4th Avenues (S/NR-eligible).

As discussed in Chapter 3, “Socioeconomic Conditions,” the neighborhoods of this subarea have seen an increase in residential population since 1990. Census tracts in this subarea experienced growth in population of 12 to 13 percent between 1990 and 2000, primarily due to increases in residential occupancy rates. In more recent years, (post-2000) residential construction and conversions have further increased the housing base and population in this subarea.

3rd and 4th Avenues are the major north/south thoroughfares through this subarea and 3rd Street is a major east/west street due to the 3rd Street bridge crossing the canal, which carries two lanes of traffic. Based on field observations, most sidewalks in the study area operate without much congestion. Noise levels are moderate and mostly due to traffic.

*SUBAREA D: GOWANUS SOUTH INDUSTRIAL AREA*

Unlike the more mixed land uses of the subareas described above, this subarea is primarily industrial, with a small residential pocket in the northwest corner. Uses include manufacturing, a large commercial complex and associated parking, and one and two family residential buildings. The limited residential structures in this part subarea are located on small lots and set behind front yards. South of 3rd Street and east of the Gowanus Canal, the industrial uses are heavier, including a concrete plant, Con Edison facility, and a metal recycling business, although these uses are physically separated from the project site by a long distance (900 feet or more) and the canal. Industrial and commercial buildings in this area tend to be located on large parcels and there is no regular streetwall. A large, mostly vacant, City-owned parcel known as “Public Place” is located in this subarea. There is also a commercial center comprising a Loews and a Pathmark.

Several historic resources are located within this subarea, including three buildings that contribute to the S/NR-eligible Gowanus Canal Historic District: the Kentile Building and its



associated large neon sign, located at 9th Street between 2nd Avenue and the Gowanus Canal, the former Roulston Wholesale Grocer, located at 9th Street and 2nd Avenue, and the former Ice House/Brewery at Bond and 4th Streets. In addition to these resources, the IND Subway Viaduct (S/NR-eligible) runs through the southern portion of the subarea.

The street grid in this subarea is irregular, characterized by large, industrial superblocks that are bisected by the canal, which swings to the west south of 3rd Street with several basins at 6th and 7th Streets that extend for approximately one block each. The elevated Gowanus Expressway also swings west at the southern border of the study area, bisecting the grid on a diagonal line.

South of 3rd Street the study area is somewhat noisier due to the higher levels of active industrial uses and associated truck traffic, and the traffic associated with Hamilton Avenues and the Gowanus Expressway. Based on field observations, most sidewalks in the study area operate without much congestion, and are particularly lightly traveled in the industrial areas.

## **D. THE FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

### **REZONING AREA AND PROJECT SITE**

In the future without the proposed project, no changes are expected within the proposed rezoning area and project site by 2011. The existing businesses and EMS facility in the rezoning area are assumed to continue functioning as they do today.

### **STUDY AREA**

In the future without the proposed project, several commercial and residential projects are expected to be completed in the study area by 2011. As described below, these projects will continue a trend towards development of a wider mix of uses in the light-industrial area along the Gowanus Canal and the continued growth of the residential neighborhoods. It is expected that current trends toward development of a wider mix of uses in formerly industrial areas will continue; and the neighborhoods surrounding the Gowanus Canal will continue to evolve into a more diverse mix of uses. Overall, the new developments in the study area would complement existing uses in the immediate vicinity. The new buildings may slightly increase pedestrian and vehicular activity in this area, but would not be likely to materially change the neighborhood character.

#### *SUBAREA A: CARROLL GARDENS/GOWANUS NORTH/BOERUM HILL*

In this area, two new developments are anticipated near the intersection of Bond and Carroll Streets, a 24-dwelling-unit residential development is proposed to be completed at 340-346 Bond Street, and a 15-dwelling-unit residential development is proposed to be completed at 361 Carroll Street. Two more residential developments are anticipated in the predominantly residential portion of the study area north of 3rd Street and west of Bond Street. A development at 103-113 3rd Street (at Bond Street) will add 45 dwelling units to the area, and a development at 306 Bond Street (between Union and Sackett Streets) will add 11 dwelling units. These projects will reinforce the existing residential character of the surrounding area.

#### *SUBAREA B: GOWANUS NORTH MIXED USE (EAST OF CANAL)*

A new, 18,130 square foot hotel is planned for the intersection of 3rd Avenue and President Street. This hotel will increase the diversity of uses in a section of the study area that already

contains residential and commercial uses interspersed with light-industrial uses. Another anticipated development that will add commercial uses to a predominantly industrial section of the study area is a two-story Con Edison office building on 4th Avenue between 1st and 3rd Streets.

*SUBAREA C: GOWANUS SOUTH MIXED USE (EAST OF CANAL)*

A new building is under construction at 410 4th Avenue (at Seventh Street) that will contain 59 dwelling units, and another residential building is under construction at 436 4th Avenue.

*SUBAREA D: GOWANUS SOUTH INDUSTRIAL AREA*

This subarea will include a Whole Foods Market (commercial retail) that is opening on 3rd Street between 3rd Avenue and the canal.

## **E. PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

### **REZONING AREA AND PROJECT SITE**

The proposed project would transform the two project site blocks from low-density, industrial and vacant sites to a medium-density residential development with supporting commercial and community facility uses. There would also be significant streetscape improvements along both the project bordering streets, such as Bond as well as 2nd and 1st Streets which would be improved as at new corridors leading to the waterfront and the proposed 0.7 acres of project-developed publicly-accessible open space along the canal including at the public street ends.

The proposed residential buildings would be of a variety of heights, with low- to mid-rise elements at the western ends of the blocks and nearer the existing Carroll Gardens residential community, with the taller elements of the proposed project developed along the canal, facing the proposed open space and waters of the canal. At the base of the buildings there would be commercial space (approximately 2,000 square feet) fronting on 1st Street and a community facility space (approximately 2,000 square feet) fronting on 2nd Streets. The residential units and supporting spaces would serve the residents of the proposed buildings and the surrounding neighborhood and create a varied and active streetscape. The commercial use would support on-site activity and provide local goods and services to the residents of the project and neighborhood, as well as visitors to the open space. The community facility space is expected to be occupied by the Gowanus Dredgers for equipment storage and community education. This use would support waterfront public access and education as well as community activity at the project site, in addition to accommodating current on-site recreational activities along the canal.

In addition to the proposed residential, commercial and community facility uses on the project site, a substantial new public waterfront open space would be created along the entire Gowanus Canal waterfront between 2nd Street on the south and Carroll Street on the north. The new waterfront open space would provide public access to the waterfront and views along the canal and of the historic Carroll Street Bridge. Apart from the Gowanus Canal bulkheads, there are no other on-site historic resources that could be adversely impacted. Any impacts to the on-site bulkheads would be mitigated through an archaeological investigation that would have the potential to yield new information regarding historical methods used in developing the canal. It is anticipated that the reconstructed bulkhead would be faced in wood to match the existing, and

the project sponsors would coordinate the design with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to ensure that the bulkhead design is in keeping with the historic character. Neither the adjacent Carroll Street Bridge nor the operator's house adjacent to the site would be physically altered or impacted. New views of the bridge would, however, be opened up from the projects open space.

### STUDY AREA

#### *SUBAREA A: CARROLL GARDENS/GOWANUS NORTH/BOERUM HILL:*

The proposed project would extend the residential character of nearby residential neighborhoods eastward onto the two project blocks where currently there is no residential use. The proposed new buildings would transition from mid- to low-rise buildings along Bond Street with low-rise (4-story) buildings in the midblock, and taller (up to 12 stories) residential building elements further to the east, maximizing the separation of these taller elements with the nearby Carroll Gardens residential neighborhood and taking advantage of the open space corridors provided by the canal and proposed adjoining open space. The taller elements of the project would be of greater density and taller than the buildings in the existing neighborhoods, but the proposed general large scale development plan has been designed to create a transition between the existing low-rise neighborhood to the west and the greater massing and 12-story structures along the canal. Thus, the massing for the buildings would step down from the water to meet the neighboring residential neighborhood, creating a compatible transition between the new buildings and the existing neighborhood, with midblock townhouses and front stoops that conform to the character of the existing neighborhood. As a result, the proposed project would be visible from locations west of Bond Street, but would not be intrusive. Thus, the proposed project would not adversely affect the neighborhood's visual setting or resources.

With the proposed streetscape improvements, the project site would become more visually connected with Carroll Gardens to the west. With the improved east-west streets, the proposed project would provide a physical and aesthetic link between the project site streets and the local neighborhood grid where today no such connection exists. The improved streets would also create a north/south connection along the canal waterfront. New public view corridors along the waterfront would be opened up to the public with direct and easy access to the project's waterfront open space.

The proposed project's new population would not be expected to introduce a new household or population demographic or socioeconomic characteristic that is markedly different from the current neighborhood, nor would it accelerate a trend toward increased market rate rents in the study area. There is already a very strong demand for housing in the area, which has substantially increased the population and market rate housing costs in the study area over the past 15 years and has gradually shifted the demographic and socioeconomic profile for much of the study area over the past two decades. The proposed project's mix of market-rate and affordable housing would serve to relieve, rather than increase, market pressure in the study area and provide for a continual diversity of household incomes in the study area. The increase in development on the project site would also bring an increase in street activity both from the future project residents and the anticipated increase in community use of the project streets as local residents make use of the proposed publicly-accessible waterfront.

Sidewalks along the project site would be improved and draw more pedestrians. With the added population resulting from the proposed project, the sidewalks in the area would be noticeably

busier, although they would continue to operate with acceptable levels of service and would not be overly congested. Although project-generated transit trips would use routes to and from the subway stations during the traditional commuter hours—primarily using the Smith Street subway stations—the increase in pedestrians that would result from the proposed project would not be expected to result in any significant impacts to pedestrian conditions or overcrowding and congestion or transit impacts. Thus, no adverse impacts in the local neighborhood are expected from this additional pedestrian and transit activity. The increase in residents with the project and pedestrian and transit activity and absence of any major on-site commercial component within the proposed project is also likely to support the successful Smith Street retail corridor. While local streets would see more vehicular traffic and local intersections would need to handle this traffic increase. At most locations the increases in traffic are not significant or can be mitigated.

The increase in vehicular traffic on neighborhood streets is not expected to result in a noticeable increase in local noise levels. Noise levels are expected to remain as “acceptable,” or “marginally acceptable” which is quite common for similar residential areas of New York City.

*SUBAREA B: GOWANUS NORTH MIXED USE (EAST OF CANAL):*

This area is physically separated from the project site by the Gowanus Canal, and would not have any direct conflict with this industrial waterfront in this subarea. Due to the physical separation by the canal, it is not likely that the proposed project will affect land uses in the neighborhood subarea.

The 12-story project elements are expected to be visible from locations in the subarea, but at the proposed scale, no neighborhood views or views from public parks or open spaces would be adversely impacted.

As discussed above, the proposed project’s new population would not be expected to introduce a new household or population demographic or socioeconomic characteristic that is markedly different from the current neighborhood, nor would it accelerate a trend toward increased market rate rents in the study area. The mix of market rate and affordable housing units is also expected to relieve some of the housing pressure for housing in the study area.

Pedestrian trips to and from the Union Street subway station at Union Street and 4th Avenue are expected to increase slightly, but would not adversely impact these stations with the proposed project in place. Because this area is separated by the canal, it is not expected to see a significant increase in pedestrian or vehicular traffic as a result of the proposed project. Likewise, no significant changes in noise levels are expected.

*SUBAREA C: GOWANUS SOUTH MIXED USE (EAST OF CANAL):*

Like Subarea B, this area is physically separated from the project site by the Gowanus Canal, and has also seen an increase in residential development in recent years. As discussed in Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy,” the area is also partially located in an Industrial Business Zone (IBZ), which promotes the continuation of existing manufacturing uses. It is not expected that the proposed project would adversely impact neighborhood character in the subarea.

The 12-story project elements are expected to be visible from some locations in the subarea, but there are several tall buildings in this subarea and an elevated subway viaduct along 9th Street which currently block views to the project site. Where the buildings would be visible, no

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neighborhood views or views from public parks or open spaces are expected to be adversely impacted.

As discussed above, the proposed project would bring a mix of market rate and affordable housing units to the area, which is expected to relieve some of the market pressure for housing in the study area. No significant increases in pedestrian or vehicular traffic are expected for this subarea and noise levels are not likely to be affected.

#### *SUBAREA D: GOWANUS SOUTH INDUSTRIAL AREA*

This subarea serves as a buffer between the residential uses to the north and the heavier residential uses in its southernmost area. It is largely separated from the project site and this more industrial/commercial neighborhood is not likely to be affected by the proposed project. Manufacturing uses are also protected in this area, which is also partially included in the IBZ discussed above.

Elements of the proposed project are expected to be visible from locations in the subarea, but as in the other portions of the study area, no neighborhood views or views from public parks or open spaces are expected to be adversely impacted. Pedestrian and vehicular trips are not expected to substantially increase in this portion of the study area as a result of the proposed project. \*