DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Far West Midtown presents the only opportunity to provide for the expansion of the Midtown Central Business District, helping to ensure that the City's economy has the capacity to grow and support, through increased employment and tax revenues, the record high levels of population recorded in the year 2000 Census. The construction of new mass transportation facilities such as the extension of the Number 7 Subway line, would make the area far more accessible to existing and future workers and residents, and would integrate better this area into the local and regional transportation network. These improvements could be funded, in part, through increased development densities. Coupled with the area's locational advantages and its large tracts of underutilized and unbuilt land, these improvements afford opportunities for future large scale development, including new commercial, office, residential and open space uses. In order for this area to better serve both the existing and future needs of the City, this comprehensive planning strategy addresses the following goals:

- Recognize the full range of existing users and activities, and respond to the constraints and opportunities which currently exist;
- Establish growth areas and future uses to support the long-term growth of the Midtown CBD;
- Expand and extend the existing transportation infrastructure to support future growth and accessibility to the area, and ensure that other transportation needs, including parking, are met;
- Establish urban design controls that will encourage innovation while ensuring appropriate future development; and
- Create a variety of open spaces and waterfront access alternatives to serve residents, workers and visitors.

This chapter describes a framework for the growth and development of Far West Midtown. Based on the recommendations in this framework, over the next 20 years, the area would be transformed with new transportation facilities, up to 30 or 40 million square feet of new offices, hotels, residential uses, and expanded exhibition and sports facilities, as well as a variety of regional and neighborhood open space. The *Framework* includes the following components: (1) Land Use and Density, (2) Urban Design, and Open Space, (3) Transportation. It recommends land use, density, and urban design strategies for six distinct areas within the overall study area as the remainder of the area continues to develop efficiently under existing zoning.

Superblock and 34th Street Corridor

This corridor extends from the existing Pennsylvania Station west to the Javits Convention Center and Route 9A, generally between West 30th and West 35th streets. It presents the greatest opportunity for large scale development due to its central location and the presence of the large sites created by the superblocks. This high-density corridor would link major transportation hubs and the tenants of existing residential

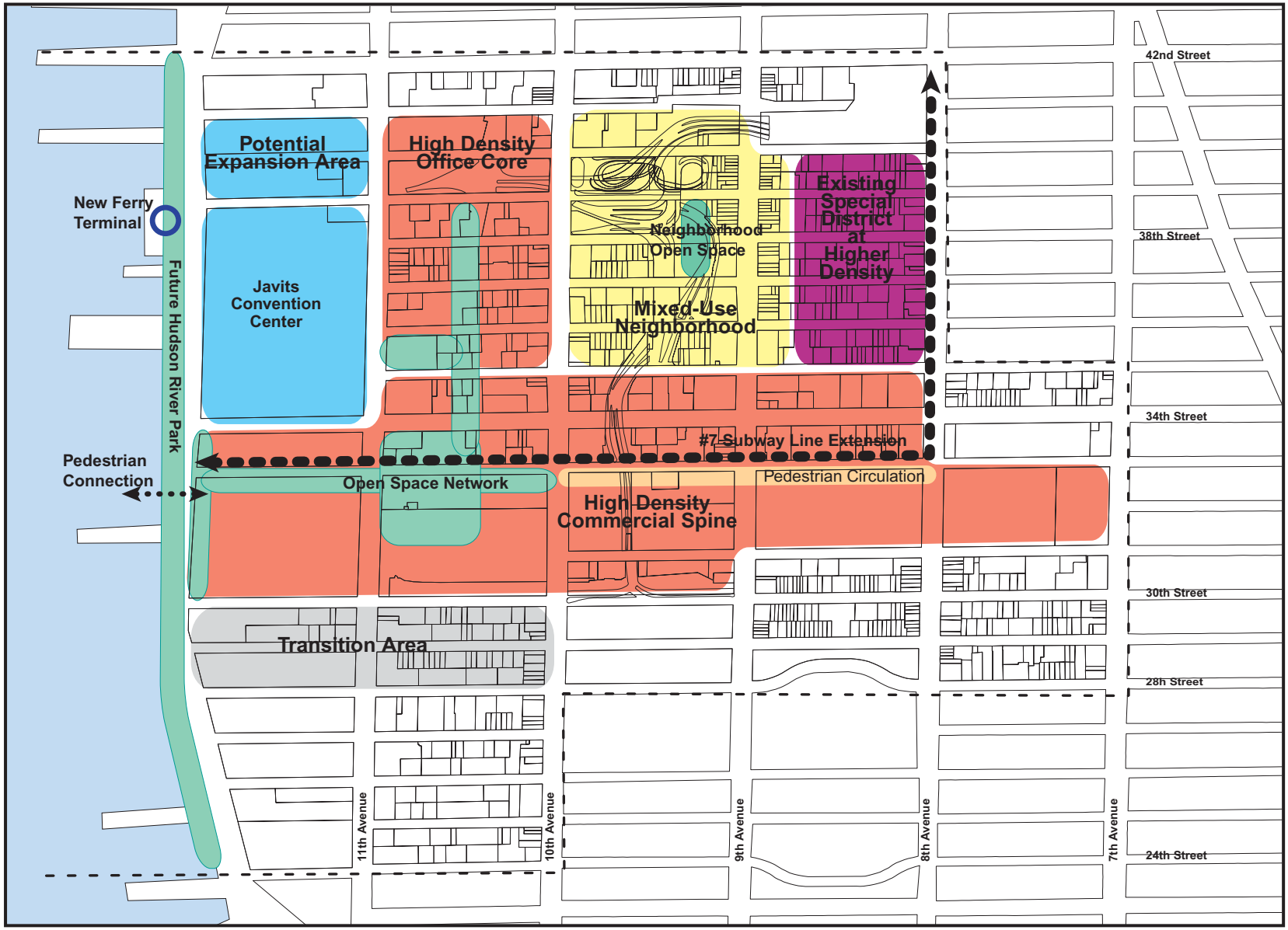


Figure 11: Conceptual Development Framework

buildings on West 34th Street with large scale development, including large floor plate office buildings, hotels, possibly a multi-use exhibition and sports/entertainment facility, and regional open space.

Tenth to Eleventh Avenue Corridor
Envisioned as a commercial office core with new open space serving the Javits Convention Center and office workers, this area is located between Tenth and Eleventh avenues from West 35th to West 41st streets, across from the Javits Convention Center. Together with the superblock corridor, this area has significant potential to accommodate the expansion of the Midtown Business District. There is a noted absence of residential uses in this area and a large amount of vacant and underutilized land. Transportation improvements would provide easier access between this area and other parts of the City and the Region.

Ninth to Tenth Avenue Corridor
Extending from West 35th to West 41st streets, the *Framework* proposes to remove the prohibition on residential development and encourages new mixed-use development and neighborhood open space to strengthen the existing residential community and provide an appropriate transition to the proposed high density office uses to the west.

28th to 30th Street Area
This area, between Tenth and Twelfth avenues from West 28th to West 30th streets, contains low-intensity industrial, commercial, and arts-related uses. The *Framework* proposes a modest increase in permitted density and a continued prohibition on new residential development in order to accommodate CBD support uses and provide a transition between future high density uses to the north on the MTA Rail Yards, and continued moderate intensity uses to the south in Chelsea.

Garment Center Area
This portion of the Garment Center, the midblocks between Eighth and Ninth avenues from West 35th to West 41st streets, contains a mix of garment oriented loft buildings and parking lots. The *Framework* retains the Special Garment Center District, while increasing the permitted density to encourage new development on underbuilt lots.

Convention Center Area
This area, primarily north of the Javits Convention Center, between Eleventh and Twelfth avenues from West 39th to West 41st streets, contains the block recently purchased by the New York Convention Center Development Corporation and the MTA West Side Bus Depot. Expansion northward would require the relocation of the MTA West Side Bus Depot and would not preclude expansion to the south as part of a multi-use facility. The *Framework* retains the existing medium-density zoning to encourage and enable adequate expansion of the Javits Convention Center.

These six distinct areas would be integrated through a cohesive urban design and open space plan underlaid by a set of recommendations for transportation and infrastructure improvements. The *Framework* would transform the area, resulting in a built environment with a distinct yet flexible building form and a diversified open space program connecting Midtown with the renewed waterfront. As

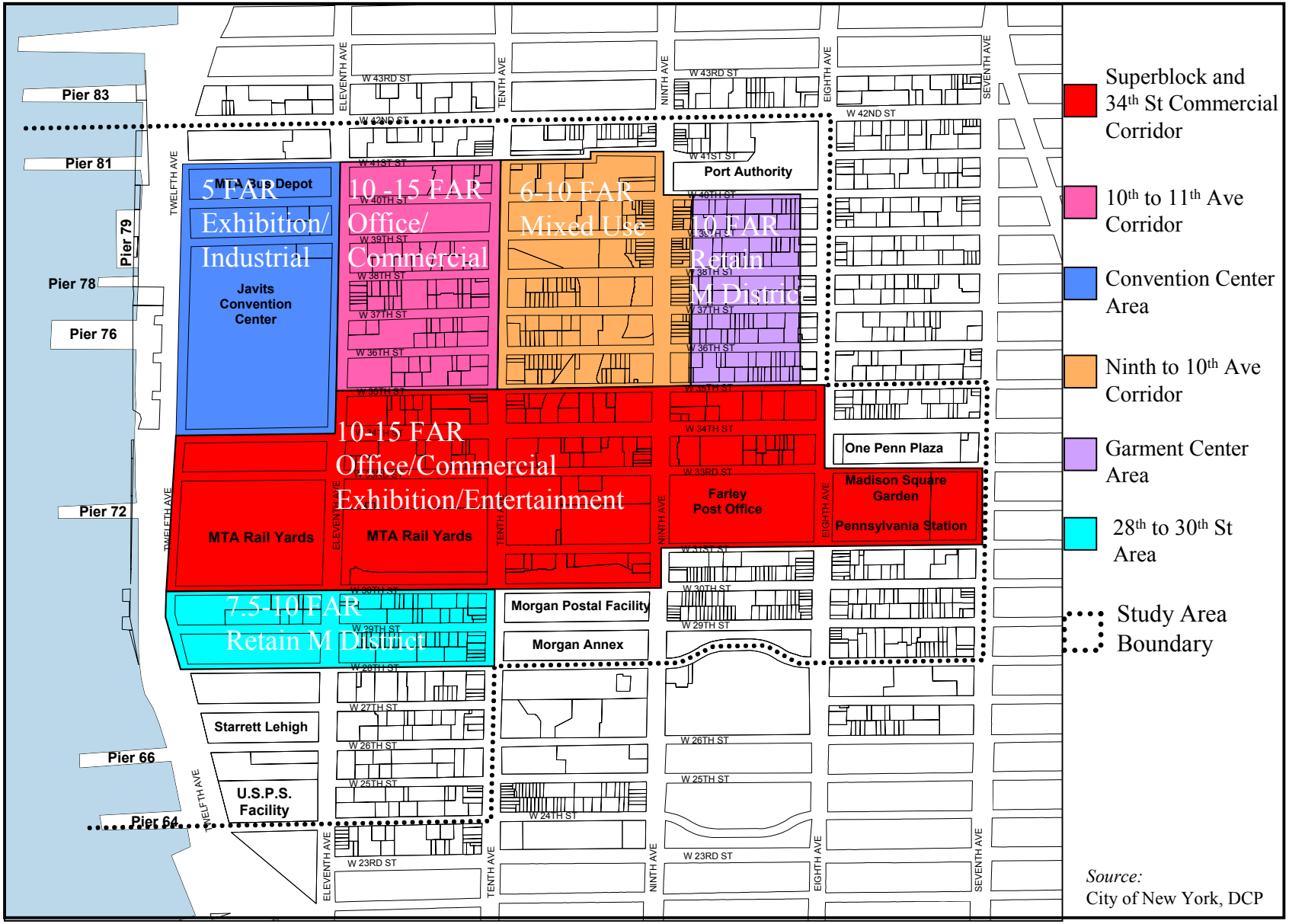


Figure 12: Proposed Land Use and Density

detailed in the Implementation Chapter, funding for these critical transportation and other infrastructure improvements would be achieved in part through the increase in densities.

Land Use and Density

Land use and density changes are recommended for the six distinct areas within the Far West Midtown study area. These recommendations seek to maximize the opportunities for this area, foremost among them being the opportunity to provide expansion space for the Midtown CBD.

Superblock and 34th Street Corridor: High Density Commercial Spine

This corridor extends from Seventh to Twelfth avenues, and it includes the superblocks containing 2 Penn Plaza and Pennsylvania Station, the Farley Building, the Daily News Building (Westyard Distribution Center) at Tenth Avenue between West 31st and West 33rd streets, and the MTA Rail Yards between Tenth and Twelfth avenues. It also includes both sides of West 34th Street, which provides the primary east-west access extending from Midtown to the Javits Convention Center and Route 9A.

Except for a mix of residential and commercial uses between Eighth and Tenth avenues along West 34th Street, the corridor is characterized primarily by commercial and industrial uses with a significant amount of below-grade and vacant land. This corridor presents the greatest opportunity for large scale, high-density development due in part to its location, near 34th Street and the existing transit infrastructure immediately to the east. This corridor has the greatest potential to serve as the center of Far West Midtown, anchoring the area with high-density commercial uses, including large floor plate office buildings, hotels, and retail uses, as well as sports and exhibition facilities and regional open space.

Under current zoning, which ranges from 2.0 to 10.0 FAR, the development potential is limited. As the primary connection to Midtown, a high-density commercial zone of 15.0 FAR is recommended. This density would facilitate development over the MTA Rail Yards, which would be costly due to the complexity and expense of constructing platforms over the operating rail yards. A high-density district would be consistent with the zoning and land uses characteristic of major streets in Manhattan's business districts. At 15.0 FAR, this area could accommodate approximately 25 million square feet of potential development over the next 20 years.

MTA Rail Yards

The MTA Rail Yards cover approximately 26 acres between Tenth and Twelfth avenues and provide the most significant opportunity for development within the corridor. Reuse of the space above the MTA Rail Yards requires platforms to be constructed at the existing street grade, which could then provide for either of two uses: a Multi-Use Facility or predominantly Office development.

Multi-Use Facility Alternative: The MTA Rail Yards could accommodate large-scale development including a multi-use exhibition and sports/entertainment facility, a relocated Madison Square Garden, offices, hotels, and regional open space. These uses would produce approximately 7.5 million square feet of development over the next 20 years.

Table 4: Multi-Use Facility Alternative

Proposed Use	Potential Development (square feet)
Multi-Use Facility	3,000,000
Office/Commercial	1,500,000
Hotels	2,000,000
Relocated MSG	1,000,000
Open Space	350,000

The proposed multi-use facility, located on the western rail yard, would also accommodate the expansion needs of the Javits Convention Center, providing approximately 366,000 square feet of additional space for exhibition and meeting room facilities. Such a facility could also provide a home for the New York Jets and provide a venue for other events. This facility would be consistent with the plans put forward by NYC 2012 for an Olympic Stadium at this location. Under this alternative, the eastern rail yard, could accommodate a new state-of-the-art Madison Square Garden, ancillary hotel and office uses, and a large regional open space.

Office-Use Alternative: In the absence of a multi-use facility or a new MSG, the MTA Rail Yards provide an opportunity for a planned development of large-scale office, hotel and related uses, as well as open space. This alternative would allow the platforms to be integrated into the larger area through a new street and open space system. A density of 15.0 FAR would provide up to 17 million square feet of development potential.

Table 5: Office-Use Alternative

Proposed Use	Potential Development (square feet)
Office/Commercial	16,000,000
Hotels	1,000,000
Open Space	350,000

This alternative is similar to the MTA's 1988 Master Plan proposal for mixed-use, high-density development, allowing 12.0 FAR atop the rail yards. That plan projected approximately 12 million square feet of development.

Ninth Avenue and 33rd Street

The area atop the rail lines running between Pennsylvania Station and the MTA Rail Yards (between Ninth and Tenth avenues from West 31st to West 33rd streets) has been the subject of several office development proposals at 12.0 FAR. These proposals were advanced in the 1980's prior to plans for relocating Amtrak facilities into the Farley Building and proposals for the extension of the Number 7 Subway line. In light of these plans, the site's location near Pennsylvania Station, and the overall framework for the Far West Midtown area, an increase in density from 12.0 to 15.0 FAR is recommended.

Farley Building

The Farley Building (General Post Office), located on the block between Eighth and Ninth avenues from West 31st to West 33rd streets, will be converted into the new Pennsylvania Station by 2004. Consistent with the *Framework* of a high-density corridor, an increase in density at this site would result in additional unused development rights. Because of the landmark significance of the Farley Building, these development rights could be transferred by special permit to adjacent sites, or potentially be used in part atop the Ninth Avenue annex portion of the building, depending on a determination that such a development is appropriate, and that the needs of the new Pennsylvania Station and the U.S. Postal distribution facility are not compromised.

Madison Square Garden Block

Located between West 31st and West 33rd streets from Seventh to Eighth avenues, this eight-acre superblock contains the Madison Square Garden (MSG) arena and corporate offices, as well as the 2 Penn Plaza office building. It sits atop Pennsylvania Station, which is the terminus for the Long Island Railroad, Amtrak, and New Jersey Transit and the confluence of both the Seventh and Eighth avenue subways. Its rail and mass transit accessibility is rivaled only by that of Grand Central Station. Despite these unique locational advantages, the existing zoning limits the permitted FAR for most of the block to 6.0, substantially less than is warranted in light of its location. If MSG were to be relocated, the block represents a unique opportunity for additional high-density development with more generous LIRR station facilities serving as a gateway to the new, Far West Midtown.

34th Street Corridor

Bordering the superblocks on the north, West 34th Street is the primary east-west street within the study area. While West 34th Street is zoned predominantly 15.0 FAR east of Seventh Avenue, the permitted density decreases to 10.0 FAR between Seventh and Ninth avenues, 6.0 FAR between Ninth and Tenth avenues, and 5.0 and 2.0 FAR west of Tenth Avenue. Together with the adjacent superblocks, West 34th Street has the greatest potential for providing a 15.0 FAR, high-density commercial spine, connecting Midtown with the Javits Convention Center and a potential Number 7 Subway line terminus at Eleventh Avenue.

Tenth to Eleventh Avenue Corridor: High Density, Office Core

This corridor is located opposite the Javits Convention Center, and extends between West 35th and West 41st streets. It is characterized by low-density auto-related uses, offices, parking lots and garages, and bus storage. In addition, between West 39th and West 40th streets is the northern tube of the Lincoln Tunnel. The area contains few residential uses. As a consequence, it provides an opportunity for assemblage of large development sites. This corridor contains a mix of manufacturing and commercial zones with FARs of 5.0, 6.0, and 10.0. The 6.0 and 10.0 FAR commercial districts were mapped in conjunction with the creation in 1986 of the Special Jacob K. Javits Convention Center District. The special district has not achieved its original purpose, and the Javits Convention Center continues to be isolated without surrounding supporting activities.

Similar to the Superblock and 34th Street Corridor, allowing an FAR of up to 15.0 would facilitate commercial development compatible with the Javits Convention Center, and would result in an increase in development potential from approximately 2.5 million square feet under the existing zoning to approximately 8 million square feet over the next 20 years. Because of the potential for assemblage of large development sites, this area provides an opportunity for large floor plate office development in conjunction with new on-site open space to serve office workers and the Javits Convention Center.

Ninth to Tenth Avenue Corridor: Mixed-Use Neighborhood

Extending between West 35th and West 41st streets, this area is zoned at densities of 5.0 and 6.0 FAR. It contains 1,700 housing units, as well as a preponderance of parking and vehicle storage uses. Other transportation uses in this area include the center and southern tubes of the Lincoln Tunnel, ramps to the PABT, the Lincoln Tunnel Expressway, and Dyer Avenue. Despite the significant residential presence, the existing zoning prohibits new residential development outside of the Ninth Avenue frontage. In addition, the 1993 and 1994 rezonings of Ninth Avenue to allow residential development have not resulted in new housing or mixed-use development.

New mixed-use development in this area would help reinforce the residential character of the neighborhood while allowing for new housing, commercial uses and neighborhood open space. To facilitate these goals, densities of 6.0 to 10.0 FAR are recommended. These changes would result in up to 1.7 million square feet of residential and commercial development potential over the next 20 years.

28th to 30th Street: Transition Area

This four-block area, between Tenth and Twelfth avenues from West 28th to West 30th streets, primarily contains low-intensity commercial and industrial uses at 2.0 FAR west of Eleventh Avenue and 5.0 FAR east of Eleventh Avenue. These uses consist of a Con Edison storage block, auto-related uses, parking and vehicle storage, warehouses, and small offices. There is also a small residential presence consisting of seven buildings with approximately 64 dwelling units in this subarea. To the north are the MTA Rail Yards and to the south are moderate-density commercial, industrial, and arts-related uses.

These four blocks are recommended to provide a transition from the proposed high-density commercial uses to the north, to the moderate-density uses to the south in Chelsea. Rezoning to allow densities of 7.5 to 10.0 FAR while continuing to prohibit new residential uses would allow for modest development flexibility while providing continued locations for business district support uses. This density change is projected to result in approximately 3.5 million square feet of industrial and commercial development over the next 20 years

Garment Center Area: Existing Special District at Higher Density

Current uses in this area, the midblocks between Eighth and Ninth avenues from West 35th to West 40th streets, consist of garment manufacturing and garment industry related uses, as well as retail, offices, restaurants, and parking. The PABT located to the immediate north. Although the area is zoned at 5.0 FAR, the majority of the buildings are built to 10.0 FAR or above. The area contains a number of vacant and underbuilt sites ranging from 2,500 square feet to 30,000 square feet.

Retaining the Special Garment Center District would continue to limit conversions of existing midblock buildings to office use, but would not restrict new office development. This subarea would be rezoned to 10.0 FAR, permiting a density and scale more consistent with the built context. Given this area's location adjacent to the PABT, the Eighth Avenue

subway, and Midtown, this increase in density should encourage development on underutilized sites. New space would be developed while retaining existing manufacturing and garment-related uses in existing midblock buildings. At 10.0 FAR, the unbuilt sites would provide approximately 1.0 million square feet over the next 20 years.

Convention Center Area: Potential Expansion Area

This area is situated primarily north of the Javits Convention Center, between Eleventh and Twelfth avenues from West 39th to West 41st streets. By December 2004, 17 U.S. cities will have convention centers that exceed the 900,000 square feet of space at the Javits Convention Center, which limits its ability to compete for certain shows and conventions. The New York Convention Center Development Corporation recently purchased the block to the north of the Javits Convention Center in anticipation of an expansion northward. However, any further expansion northward would require the relocation of the MTA West Side Bus Depot located between West 40th and West 41st streets. Expansion northward would not preclude expansion to the south as part of a multi-use facility. Any future zoning changes for this area would allow for a northward expansion as well as the continued operation of the MTA West Side Bus Depot. The *Framework* assumes approximately 1.0 million square feet of new development associated with the expansion of the Javits Convention Center.

Table 6: Summary of Land Use and Density Recommendations

Area	Proposed Land Use	Proposed Density	20 Year Build Out (sq ft)	Full Soft site Build-Out (sq ft)
Superblock and 34th Street Corridor	Office/Commerical Exhibition/Entertainment Sports Facility	10.0 to 15.0 FAR	24,000,000	39,000,000
Tenth to Eleventh Avenue Corridor	Office/Commercial Hotel	10.0 to 15.0 FAR	5,800,000	13,000,000
Ninth to Tenth Avenue Corridor	Residential Office/Commercial Retail	6.0 to 10.0 FAR	1,700,000	4,700,000
28th to 30th Street Area	Office/Commercial Industrial	10.0 to 15.0 FAR	3,000,000	6,200,000
Garment Center Area	Industrial Office/Commercial Hotel	7.5 to 10.0 FAR	1,000,000	2,100,000
Convention Center Area	Exhibition Facilities	5.0 FAR	1,000,000	1,700,000

Urban Design and Open Space

Far West Midtown provides the unique opportunity to establish an urban form and create vibrant new neighborhoods within the larger context of the overall plan. Given the absence of a prevailing built context, in conjunction with the proposed land use and density proposal, the area could accommodate several distinct neighborhoods with their own unique urban scale, streetscape and open space. Furthermore, with so many developable sites of significant size, there is room for innovative urban design on a scale that has not been possible in Manhattan for many years. Far West Midtown could become a showplace for design with its own strong identity.

One of the main challenges posed by the development of Far West Midtown is how to give a sense of place to an area that has no strong characteristic built form. This is an area that for decades has been seen only as a way for moving cars and buses in and out of the City – as a place you pass through on the way to somewhere else. Because of the likelihood of large assemblages and significant development, if built out at the densities of Midtown over a relatively brief time span, the architectural character of the development may tend to be homogenous. To integrate the new and existing built environment of the area and connect the area to the remaining parts of the City, it is necessary to tie together the disparate elements that characterize Far West Midtown.

Therefore, it is crucial that the urban design and open space goals for the area foster the creation of a sense of place, establish connections to surrounding areas and allow for a variety of buildings that would collectively define this area. This section sets forth design principles related to urban design and open space as part of an overall development strategy. It also discusses specific principles attributed to the six distinct areas established under the land use and density plan.

Areawide Design Principles

To establish an urban design identity for Far West Midtown, it is necessary to lay the groundwork for strong interconnections between buildings, streets, and open space. Although the uses, building types and forms, streetscape characteristics, and open space amenities may vary in each of the six distinct areas, areawide design principles would provide the comprehensive framework that would unify the entire area. The principles apply broadly to the building form and massing, streetscape and open space.

Building Form and Massing

Encourage as-of-right development and design flexibility: An important consideration is to preserve design flexibility by allowing a wide variety of building forms and design solutions that can work within an as-of-right environment. New development would be subject to a simple yet effective palette of design controls for street wall heights, massing, setbacks, and towers. Both design flexibility and as-of-right development would be consistent with one of the overriding goals of the plan -- to support the development of an expanded business district. This approach is consistent with the City's previously articulated goal to encourage as-of-right development in the Downtown and Midtown Central

Business Districts. Flexible bulk controls established in 1982 for the Special Midtown District, for example, have fostered an environment for significant development, which, in turn, has reinforced its thriving commercial nature and enhanced its unique built character.

Allow for a wide range of building forms and heights: This would strengthen the *Framework's* vision of different neighborhoods characterized by distinct land uses. This approach recognizes that different land uses demand specific programmatic requirements that translate into specific space needs and building forms. Departing from a "one size fits all" regulation, this approach would allow for the larger floor plates and higher street walls required for commercial development as well as a variety of building forms for residential buildings.

Concentrate bulk on avenues and wide streets: With large sites and little existing built fabric that needs to be retained, some avenues and major cross town streets are ideal for high-density commercial development. Following traditional Manhattan development, the building mass would be encouraged to locate away from the midblocks toward the avenues. This would create typical higher density development along the avenues and lower scale midblock, providing more light and air on the narrow streets.

Encourage building variety: Appropriate design controls would seek to avoid an endless series of slab type buildings and encourage varied streetwalls and towers.

Streetscape

Reconnect blocks and streets interrupted by below-grade tunnel ramps and rail-cuts: A critical aspect of streetscape is the reuse of spaces given over to below-grade railroad right of ways, and the Lincoln Tunnel infrastructure. Where possible, the urban fabric should be restored by decking over the open rail cuts, ramps and below-grade access roads. This would provide a better pedestrian environment while effectively utilizing an untapped resource for development and open space.

Re-establish the street grid on superblock sites: Wherever possible, the traditional city street grid would be re-established on the MTA Rail Yards. This connection would allow continuity with the grid pattern, and promote a visual and physical connection to the waterfront. It would provide for better circulation and pedestrian movement, as well as create opportunities for a more active street life.

Encourage street wall and retail continuity: To provide for an active pedestrian and streetscape environment, street wall and retail continuity is desirable along the avenues and major crosstown streets. A variety of street wall heights with retail continuity would provide context to the streetscape, continuity with existing buildings, and an active pedestrian environment.

Create a vibrant pedestrian environment through streetscape elements: Consistent streetscape elements such as tree planting and landscaping, lighting, paving treatments and street furniture, can help unify the area. These elements

provide continuity, give an identity to Far West Midtown, and will connect the area with Midtown to the east.

Open Space

Establish a varied type and scale of open space: Throughout Far West Midtown, a generous and varied open space network would be established and integrated with the adjacent building forms and needs of the six distinct areas. The area as a whole would benefit from open spaces with a varied scale and programming which can serve diverse populations and provide relief from the dense urban environment. These spaces would include a regional open space in the heart of the commercial core, sidewalk widenings, plazas and covered pedestrian spaces, and neighborhood open space including parks and playgrounds in the mixed-use area.

Integrate the open space into the streetscape system and waterfront: In order to integrate the open spaces, buildings and streetscape, an axial north-south open space corridor would connect with an east-west open space corridor tying Midtown to the waterfront.

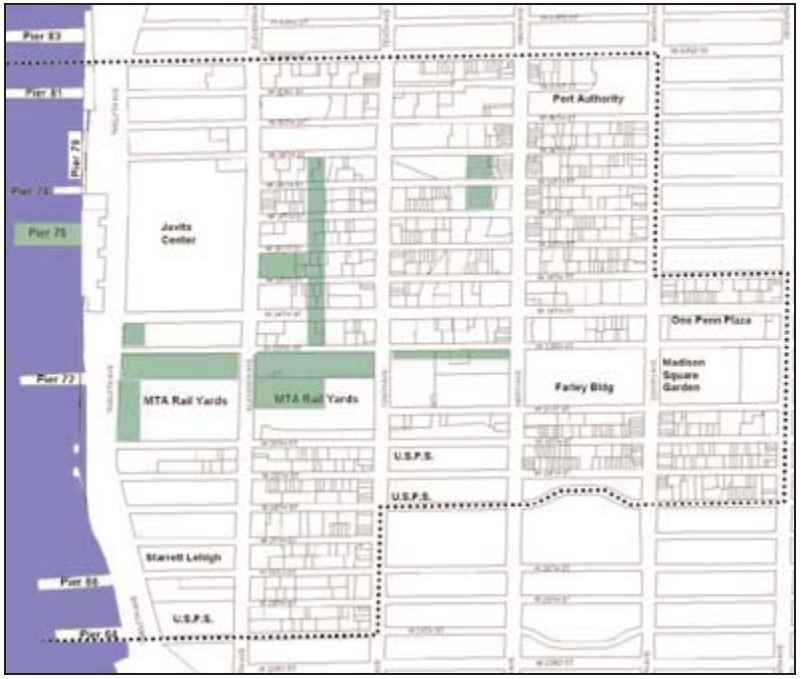
Area Specific Design Principles

The following section articulates urban design and open space principles for the six distinct land use and density areas.

Superblock and 34th Street Corridor

This corridor contains five superblocks and West 34th Street, the primary east-west access between Midtown and the study area. The superblocks provide significant opportunities for large scale development and establishing a new urban design

FIgure 13: Areawide Open Space



and streetscape context with regional open space and connections to the Hudson River.

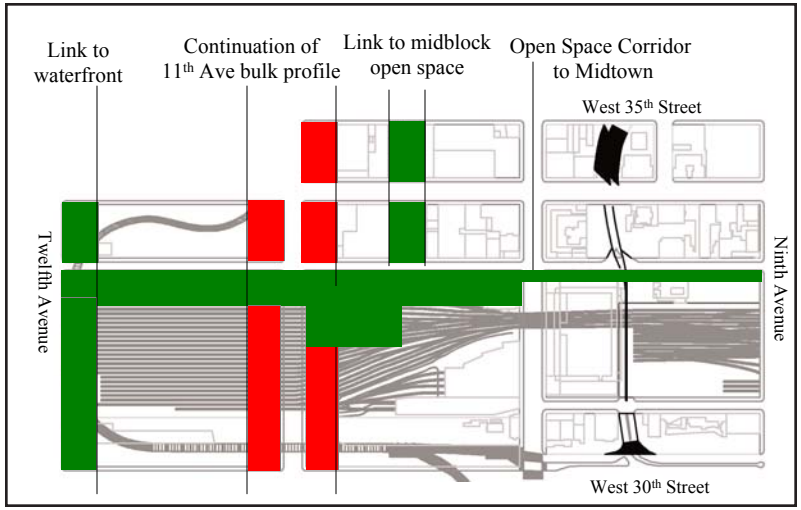
Redevelopment of the MTA Rail Yards would be subject to careful site planning requirements that incorporate several key principles. One of the overriding goals for the rail yards would include their integration into the surrounding neighborhoods while providing for significant development. This would include distributing the building mass to reinforce connections to surrounding areas, including the Tenth to Eleventh Avenue Corridor and West 34th Street, re-establishing to the extent possible the street grid to provide

visual as well as physical connections through the site, and providing significant public and regional open space. This new open space would be reached from Midtown and the Pennsylvania Station area by a green pedestrian corridor along West 33rd Street, that would continue across Route 9A to the new Hudson River Park.

Large-scale development with entertainment or sports- related uses for the MTA Rail Yards should ensure that the street facade has active ground floor uses and the sidewalks are well-landscaped. The potential height and length of these facilities directly on the street, as well as the impact on the surrounding neighborhood would be addressed through active ground floor uses and streetscape elements.

Since the Superblock and 34th Street corridor would form the principle pedestrian route from Midtown to Far West

Figure 14: Superblock and 34th Street Open Space



Midtown, it would be particularly important to incorporate streetscape improvements and open space access into the developments along the route. A well-planted and generously scaled path connecting back into Midtown would be designed to link up with the north-south midblock open spaces, either together with sports facilities or as a continuation of the Tenth to Eleventh Avenue Corridor.

Tenth to Eleventh Avenue Corridor

Since the completion of the Javits Convention Center in 1986, the stretch of blocks from West 35th to West 41st streets between Tenth to Eleventh avenues was recognized as vital to creating a sense of place in the area. The Special Jacob K. Javits Convention Center District was created soon after in an attempt to spur development and enact design controls to shape buildings, as well as provide linear pedestrian connections between West 34th and West 37th streets. The Eleventh Avenue frontage across from the Javits Convention Center was intended to act as a front door for the facility, but the potential for the area has never been realized.

This corridor remains a central component of any future development within Far West Midtown. Together with the Superblock and West 34th Street corridor, these blocks would form the central axes of commercial development. Creating a sense of place as well as encouraging varied building designs and forms are critical components for the area's redevelopment. Available sites and likely large assemblages accommodate the current trend towards high-coverage, large floor plate buildings in commercial development. To encourage a range of buildings forms, urban design controls

Figure 15: Eleventh Avenue looking north

would seek to address slab size, massing, and the streetscape environment.

As the front door to the Javits Convention Center, the development of the Eleventh Avenue blockfronts would be a strong defining point of the area. A variety of building types with ground floor retail and other active uses would enliven a newly landscaped tree-lined corridor, and the Javits Plaza at West 35th Street across from the Javits Convention Center would be expanded and redesigned with greenery. A midblock promenade extending north from the new regional open space atop the MTA Rail Yards to West 39th Street would provide the relief of green spaces in a dense urban environment. This promenade would be enlivened through outdoor cafes, seating areas, wide pedestrian paths and landscaping.

Ninth to Tenth Avenue Corridor

The *Framework* encourages new mixed-use development and neighborhood open space to strengthen the residential community and provide an appropriate transition to the proposed high density office uses to the west. This area would also be enhanced by decking over portions of the Lincoln Tunnel Expressway to re-establish the street grid and create neighborhood parks with playgrounds and recreation facilities to serve local residents. New design controls would seek to integrate new development with the existing neighborhood fabric, and streetscape improvements, including fencing and landscaping for below-grade space that cannot be decked over.

This area contains the greatest concentration of existing residential units in Far West Midtown, many of which are in tenement buildings. More contextual building forms that are of a lower-scale than elsewhere in the district would be appropriate given the existing buildings and land use and density proposed for the area. This lower scale would form a transition to the dense loft district character of the Garment Center to the east.

Like the Tenth to Eleventh Avenue Corridor, the block pattern in this area is broken up by transit infrastructure, in this case, open cuts for the Lincoln Tunnel approaches. A key goal in this area will be to re-weave the urban fabric and restore the Manhattan grid by decking over the below-grade transit infrastructure for new buildings and open space. Further, there should be a continuity between the at-grade streets, sidewalks, and platforms, where possible.

This corridor currently contains a few small neighborhood open spaces, such as a bird aviary, which are established on portions of Port Authority owned sites. In the blocks from Ninth to Tenth avenues, two large sites capable of being programmed for more active recreational uses are proposed. These sites would serve nearby residents and allow the entire area to have a locally accessible resource for both modest-sized recreation facilities and park space with a neighborhood feel.

28th to 30th Street

This area marks the transition between the proposed higher density uses to the north (including the MTA Rail Yards) and

Figure 16: Midblock Open Space

lower density mixed uses to the south, comprising arts-related uses, light manufacturing and commercial uses. Though there is not a strong built fabric, this area and that to the south have several high coverage high street wall buildings. Bulk and building massing should ensure that similar types of buildings are allowed in this area.

Garment Center Area

The Special Garment Center District zoning would be retained, while allowing for the redevelopment of infill sites. Many of the structures in the area are loft buildings with high lot coverage and high street walls. In keeping with the area's character and to encourage in-fill development, bulk controls should allow for higher street wall buildings, which are prohibited today.

Convention Center Area

The possible expansion of the Javits Convention Center, either to the north or south of its existing location, presents unique urban design issues relating to the massing of the expanded portion and its relationship to the surrounding area, and streetscape treatment. In addition, any expansion should give consideration to retaining the street grid along West 34th Street and West 39th Street, and enhancing the West 42nd Street connection.

Transportation

Significant improvements to the mass transit system are required as a pre-condition for redevelopment to occur and function successfully in Far West Midtown. An extension of the Number 7 Subway line to Far West Midtown is the key to connecting the area to the mass transit and regional rail system. Only a subway can move the large numbers of people associated with redevelopment without placing unacceptable strains on the existing vehicular and pedestrian network. The Number 7 Subway line extension is therefore a prerequisite for redevelopment of the Far West Side. Given the potential levels of development and existing levels of congestion, additional capital and operational improvements to the area's transportation network are absolutely necessary to resolve the area's transportation issues.

The transportation recommendations are based on a detailed transportation study that analyzed 20-year projections of development assuming no areawide changes in zoning and two development alternatives based on the *Framework's* density and use recommendations. The known projects and development proposals that are well-advanced and likely to occur, even in the absence of a comprehensive plan, were estimated to produce 7.0 million square feet of new commercial, retail, and residential development in the study area.

The 20-year development alternatives include the 7.0 million square feet of development projected to occur in the absence of new zoning in addition to the development anticipated to occur as a result of zoning changes. One alternative projects predominantly office development on the westernmost rail yard while the other projects a multi-use exhibition and sports facility on the site. These two development alternatives are summarized below:

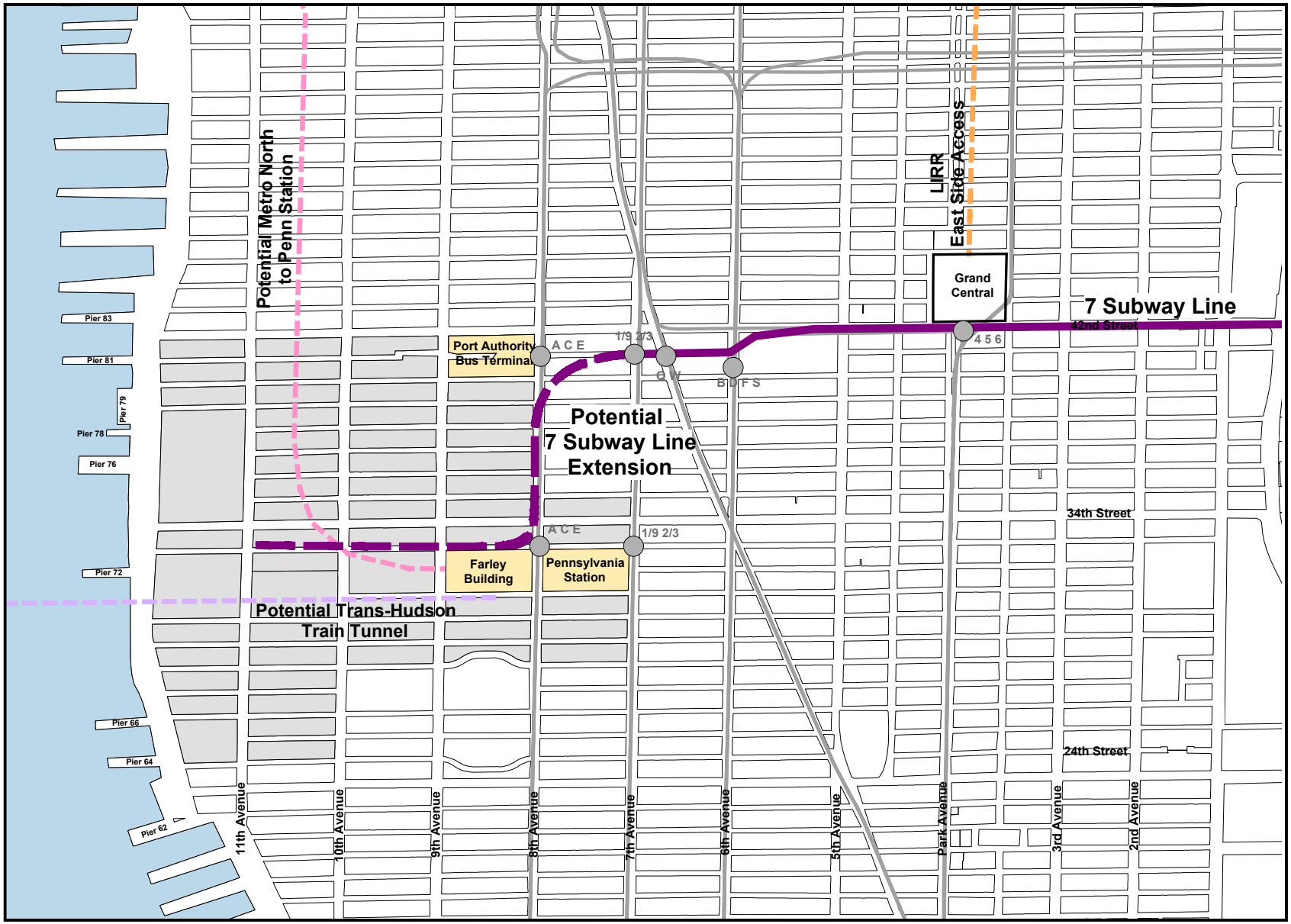


Figure 17: Proposed Large Scale System Improvements

Office Use Alternative: This alternative projects 32.5 million square feet of new development over a 20-year period. This projection assumes primarily office, retail, and hotel development with residential and non-residential development between the Ninth and Tenth Avenue Corridor.

Multi-Use Facility Alternative: This alternative projects 30.1 million square feet of new development over a 20-year period. It is similar to the Office Use Alternative, except that in lieu of office space on the westernmost rail yard, a multi-use sports and entertainment facility is assumed to be located on this site. Slightly more office development is assumed in the other areas and non-residential development is still provided in the Ninth to Tenth Avenue Corridor

Generally, the transportation recommendations are similar for both of the development alternatives. Where the alternatives would necessitate different transportation improvements, these differences are noted.

Certain transportation improvements would be required in conjunction with future land use change, even if the zoning in the area were to remain the same. The recommended transportation improvements identified for the two development alternatives are intended to address issues associated with projected traffic, parking, transit, and pedestrian movement resulting from changes in land use and density. Because the recommended improvements are based on 20-year projections of growth, the majority of which is unlikely to occur in the next 10 years, these improvements may be implemented over time as development takes place.

With the implementation of the recommended transportation improvements, which include relatively low-cost measures to more significant improvements requiring capital infrastructure investment, the redevelopment of Far West Midtown would result in traffic flows consistent with traffic movement in the Midtown Business District. Traffic, which currently becomes more congested as vehicles approach the Lincoln Tunnel, would operate at generally acceptable levels. Traffic flows near the Lincoln Tunnel would be similar to those at the Queens Midtown Tunnel and the Queensborough Bridge on the East Side.

Public Transit

Like other parts of Manhattan, public transit would be essential to supporting the area's future development. Rail transit, in particular, has the ability to move large numbers of people within Far West Midtown and to link this area with the City and regional transportation networks. This section identifies the subway, rail, and bus improvements that would be needed to accommodate future development of the area.

Large Scale System Improvements

Various plans to expand the City's subway and regional rail in the area and in parts of Manhattan outside the study area have been proposed or are in the planning or implementation stages. Figure 17 shows the locations of the subway and rail improvement projects, which have been factored into the transportation analysis under the future no development and development alternatives.

Number 7 Subway Line Extension: Extension of the Number 7 Subway line is the most significant improvement that can be

implemented to link Far West Midtown with the City's subway system and the region's rail transportation network. This concept dates back to 1927 when the line was first opened. At that time, plans had been drawn up to extend the line to Twelfth Avenue along either West 41st or West 42nd streets. The possible extension of the Number 7 Subway line was considered again in the late 1970s in connection with the planning of the Javits Convention Center.

More recently, the City has proposed extending the Number 7 Subway line in a way that would connect the line to the PABT and Pennsylvania Station, and the Javits Convention Center. In response to the City's proposal, the MTA and Department of City Planning are currently seeking requests for qualifications for a consultant to provide services for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and related environmental studies and analysis for a Number 7 Subway line extension. This EIS will also examine alternative routes, and undertake preliminary engineering and cost estimating. As proposed by the City, the extension would provide direct subway access between Grand Central Station, the PABT, and Pennsylvania Station, and it would link this area of Manhattan to both the City's subway system and the regional transportation network. This alternative would begin by extending the Number 7 Subway line terminus at Seventh Avenue and West 41st Street to Eighth Avenue. The line would then run underneath Eighth Avenue to West 33rd Street, connecting to Pennsylvania Station and the Farley building. The route would then extend west along West 33rd or West 34th streets with a terminus at Eleventh Avenue, providing mass transit access to the Javits Convention Center and surrounding area. While several alternatives will be studied by the MTA, the transportation analysis for this study is based on the Eighth Avenue alignment alternative proposed by the City.

Preliminary analysis by the City indicates that this expansion would be cost effective and could be built with a minimum amount of disruption. Moreover, such an extension would provide direct subway access for this under-served area of Manhattan, enabling it to better support existing activities, such as the Javits Convention Center, and to accommodate future development.

Farley U.S. Post Office Building: The Farley Post Office building will be reconstructed to provide new and expanded facilities for Amtrak in the eastern portion of the building with direct underground connections to Pennsylvania Station. The project involves relocating the operations of Amtrak from Pennsylvania Station to the adjacent Farley building. Post office operations will continue to be conducted in the western half of the Farley building. The project is designed and construction is expected to be completed by 2004.

Additional Large Scale System Improvements

In addition to the Number 7 Subway line extension, there are also several other regional transportation initiatives that would enhance the movement of people by subway and rail in Manhattan, and would be expected to improve access to the Far West Midtown area. These initiatives could be implemented by 2020. The transportation analysis for the development alternatives assumed that if the East Side Access project is built, then a small percentage of the commuter ridership numbers (modal split) would be shared by the Far

West Midtown area. Although not included in the transportation analysis, the other two projects, if constructed, would improve transit service and lessen any impact of future development in Far West Midtown.

East Side Access project currently being studied by the MTA would result in the re-assignment of Long Island Railroad (LIRR) trains from Pennsylvania Station into Grand Central Station and may make existing capacity available at Pennsylvania Station.

Metro-North into Pennsylvania Station Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is currently studying the potential of bringing Metro-North trains into Pennsylvania Station by building a rail spur off of the Amtrak Empire.

Access to the Region's Core (ARC) is studying a new connection that would provide a second Hudson River tunnel for New Jersey Transit to provide additional Midtown Manhattan service and perhaps link Pennsylvania Station with Grand Central Station or with the Sunnyside rail yards in Queens.

Subway Station Improvements

The analysis for this report assumed the expansion of the Number 7 Subway line using the available information about ridership, station platforms and entrance/exit stairways. However, a more detailed analysis by the MTA utilizing origin/destination data will be necessary to project more accurately future levels of service at all subway stations.

Based on the analysis of the future development alternatives, physical improvements to several subway stations are recommended to accommodate the increase in passenger volume. These improvements include new entrances and exits, stairway widening, new fare control areas, and platform construction or expansion. Under the Office-Use Alternative the project-generated subway trips would affect station elements at five of the ten stations in the study area. Six of the ten stations would require physical improvements under the Multi-Use Facility Alternative.

Table 7: Subway Stations Requiring Improvement Measures

Subway Stations	20 Year Development Alternatives	
	Office-Use	Multi-Use Facility
34th St and 6th Ave IND	X	X
34th St and 7th Ave IRT	X	X
34th St and 8th Ave IND	X	X
42nd St and 6th Ave IND		X
42nd St Times Square IRT	X	X
42nd St and 8th Ave IND	X	X

Bus Service

The transportation analysis recommends a significant expansion of bus service to address potential adverse impacts identified for the development alternatives. The recommended improvements call for additional and more frequent buses on a number of bus lines in order to service the anticipated increase in ridership. The analysis identified that under both development alternatives, a total of 14 bus lines would be affected during the AM peak hour. The Office-Use Alternative would require 105 additional buses, while the Multi-Use Facility Alternative would require 64 additional buses to mitigate the impacts of future development. During

the PM peak hour, 17 lines (Office-Use) and 16 lines (Multi-Use Facility) are affected. The PM peak analysis indicates that bus impacts would be mitigated by providing 138 (Office-Use) and 61 (Multi-Use Facility) additional buses. The recommended service improvements to address the significant effects are presented in Table 8 for each individual bus route. All of the existing bus lines are shown on Figure 8 in the Existing Conditions section of this report.

Table 8: Bus Lines Affected by Development Alternatives

Bus Line Affected	20 Year Development Alternatives			
	Office-Use		Multi-Use Facility	
	AM	PM	AM	PM
M-4 North Bound	X	X	X	X
M-4 South Bound	X		X	
M-5 North Bound		X		X
M-5 South Bound	X	X	X	X
M-6 North Bound		X		
M-7 North Bound		X		X
M-7 South Bound	X		X	
M-10/M-20 North Bound		X		X
M-10/M-20 South Bound	X	X	X	X
M-11 North Bound	X	X	X	X
M-11 South Bound	X	X	X	X
M-31 North Bound	X	X	X	X
M-31 South Bound	X	X	X	X
M-34/M-16 East Bound	X	X	X	X
M-34/M-16 West Bound	X	X	X	X
M-42 East Bound	X	X	X	X
M-42 West Bound		X		X
M-104 North Bound	X	X		X
Q-32 East Bound		X		X
Q-32 West Bound	X		X	

The NYCT general practice is to provide additional bus service where demand warrants increased service, taking into account financial and operational constraints. However, to minimize the cost of operating additional buses, several routes could be converted to articulated buses to decrease the total number of buses required and to provide more efficient service. Existing buses have a capacity for 70 passengers while articulated buses have a capacity for 145 passengers. It is recommended that the following existing routes be converted to articulated buses: M-31, M-34/M-16, and M42 as an alternative means of accommodating projected demand under the development alternatives.

Ferry Service

Though ridership on ferries is expected to increase under the development alternatives, existing service at Pier 79 has adequate capacity for additional riders. In addition, plans to rebuild and enlarge the Pier 79 ferry terminal and expand the number of slips to six are expected to be implemented by 2004. Therefore, no additional service improvements are warranted. However, improved pedestrian connections to Pier 79 should be explored in conjunction with the future expansion of the Javits Convention Center.

Vehicular Circulation and Traffic

In addition to public transit improvements, investments in the roadway infrastructure would be required to accommodate future development in the area. The proposed roadway infrastructure investments would address existing congestion while accommodating future growth under both development alternatives. Improvements to the traffic network would also benefit pedestrian circulation and safety.

Most improvement measures are low- and moderate-cost, requiring operational and regulatory changes in order to implement. However, certain physical changes to the roadway infrastructure are also recommended. The operational measures consist of: shifting green signal time from one approach to another; adding additional traffic signal phases (i.e. protected left turn); approach re-striping; and lane channelization. The regulatory changes include parking regulation modifications, including approach re-striping and daylighting. Daylighting is defined as the removal of on-street parking and standing for 150 linear feet from an intersection to provide for an additional moving lane.

Higher cost measures, including roadway reconstruction for traffic circulation and sidewalk widening for pedestrian circulation, are also recommended. Figure 18 indicates the specific locations for each type of infrastructure improvement for the Office-Use Alternative which would require slightly more improvements than the Multi-Use Facility Alternative. Sidewalk widening improvements for the Multi-Use Facility Alternative are shown in Figure 19 as this alternative would require slightly more improvements than the Office-Use Alternative.

Operational Measures

Shifting green signal time from one approach to another to provide more time to the intersection approach with the heaviest traffic volume. This standard measure is usually a 1- to 3- second green time shift, although greater shifts could be proposed and implemented.

Providing an additional traffic signal phase for turning vehicles to result in a "protected" phase that provides for an unobstructed movement of either traffic or pedestrians. An example of an additional traffic phase is a protected left turn (green arrow) which permits only left turns and stops all other traffic at an intersection. Currently all southbound left turns off of Route 9A are permitted during a protected left turn phase. Another example is a pedestrian phase. This type of phase stops all vehicular traffic and only permits pedestrian movements. It is currently in place on Seventh Avenue at West 32nd Street, in front of Madison Square Garden.

Approach re-striping is generally implemented with the daylighting measure. This provides for an additional moving lane to process vehicular traffic. An example of approach re-striping is on the westbound West 42nd Street approach to Twelfth Avenue (Route 9A).

Lane channelization is implemented to clearly define the proper or desirable vehicular paths for all drivers. Exclusive turning lanes are clearly delineated to encourage their use by turning drivers. Through-lanes are delineated to encourage their use by drivers intending to proceed through the intersection.

Regulatory Changes

Parking regulation modifications are proposed to limit on-street parking in certain locations in order to provide additional capacity for moving vehicles. The suggested changes include prohibiting parking or standing on certain streets, removal of parking meters, relocating bus stops or daylighting an approach. These changes are proposed

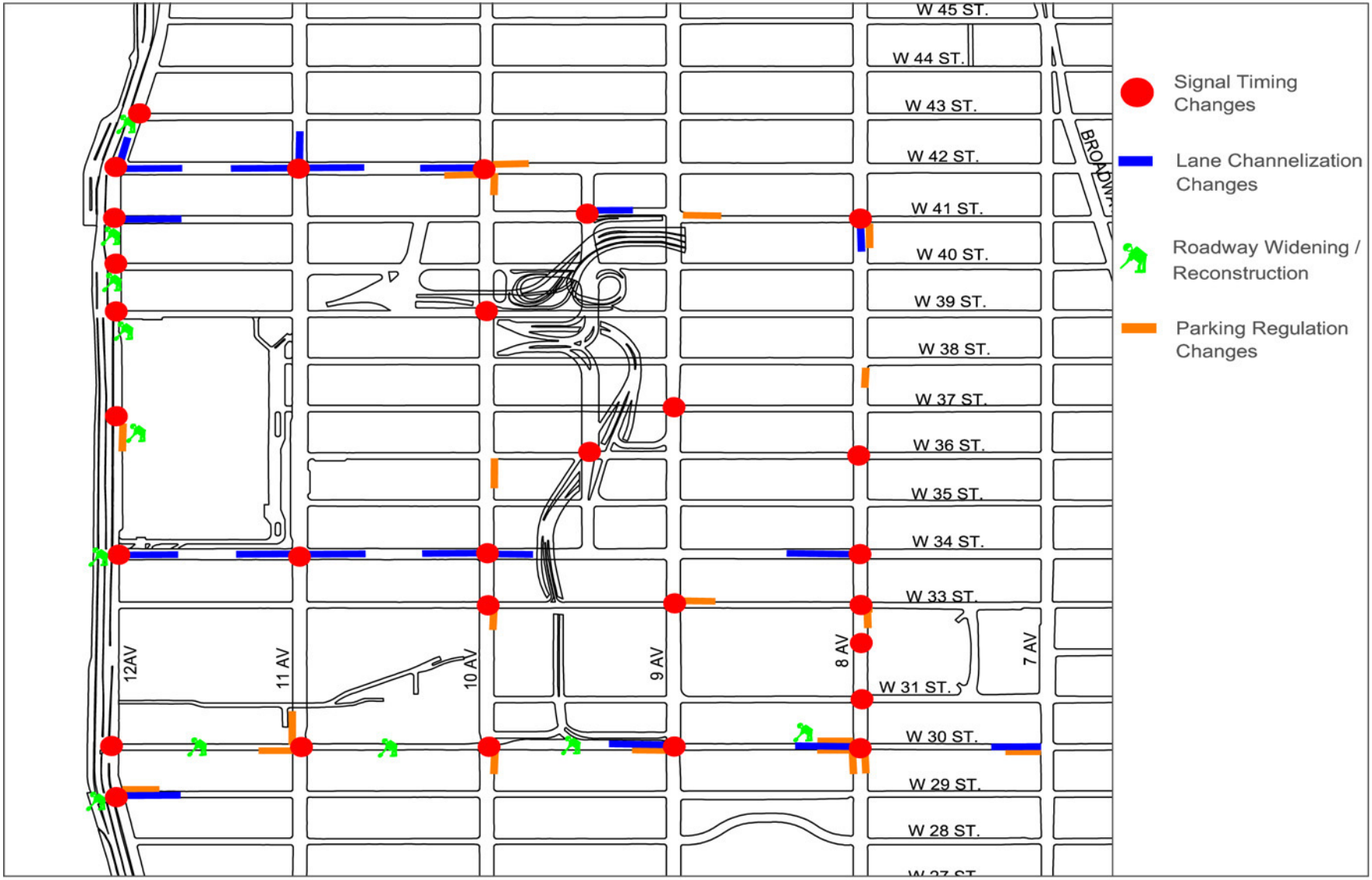


Figure 18: Proposed Traffic Improvement Measures, Office-Use Alternative

primarily for the peak hours, but in certain locations include other specified hours (i.e. 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM), or at all times.

Physical Street Improvements

Roadway capital construction is recommended along Route 9A in the northbound direction to provide for an additional moving lane. Additionally, improved eastbound access from Route 9A into the study area is recommended, specifically along West 30th Street.

The West 30th Street corridor from Route 9A east to Eighth Avenue is identified for physical changes in order to accommodate the projected vehicle and pedestrian movement. The recommendations for this corridor include roadway and sidewalk widening.

Parking

Although mass transit would account for the vast majority of projected trips, additional off-street parking would be needed to accommodate vehicles displaced when existing off-street parking lots are developed, and to help meet the demand generated by new development.

Automobile Parking

Under the Office-Use Alternative, the analysis projects the need for approximately 50,500 parking spaces to support the existing and projected development. The incremental parking demand associated with this development alternative would be approximately 21,300 parking spaces, resulting in a projected shortfall of approximately 20,500 spaces. The Multi-Use Facility Alternative would require 45,300 total spaces. The incremental parking demand associated with this alternative would be 16,400 spaces, resulting in a projected shortfall of approximately 15,500 spaces. One option for meeting these parking shortfalls would be to mandate on-site parking in conjunction with new development. Based upon the density and use projected in the development alternatives, the following parking rates are recommended.

Table 9: Required Parking Spaces for Development Alternatives

Parking Space Ratios	Spaces Provided	
	Office-Use	**Multi-Use Facility**
1 per 2 dwelling units	1,126	1,126
0.638 per 1,000 Sf office	17,375	12,713
.0965 per 1,000 Sf retail	921	847
0.464 per 1,000 Sf hotel	1,021	1,435
0.810 per 1,000 Sf conv center	162	246
Total	**20,605**	**16,145**

Bus Parking

The transportation analysis confirmed that approximately 500 on- and off-street bus storage spaces would be displaced by future development within the Far West Midtown area. The creation of an off-street storage facility, near the PABT and Lincoln Tunnel, would alleviate concerns and impacts that these buses will have on both the local street network and neighborhood character. The displaced bus spaces could be concentrated in a single, enclosed facility on a full-block site, or located on several sites within smaller facilities.

A bus storage facility would, ideally, be close enough to the PABT and Lincoln Tunnel to minimize the distance these buses must travel on the local street network, and reduce their

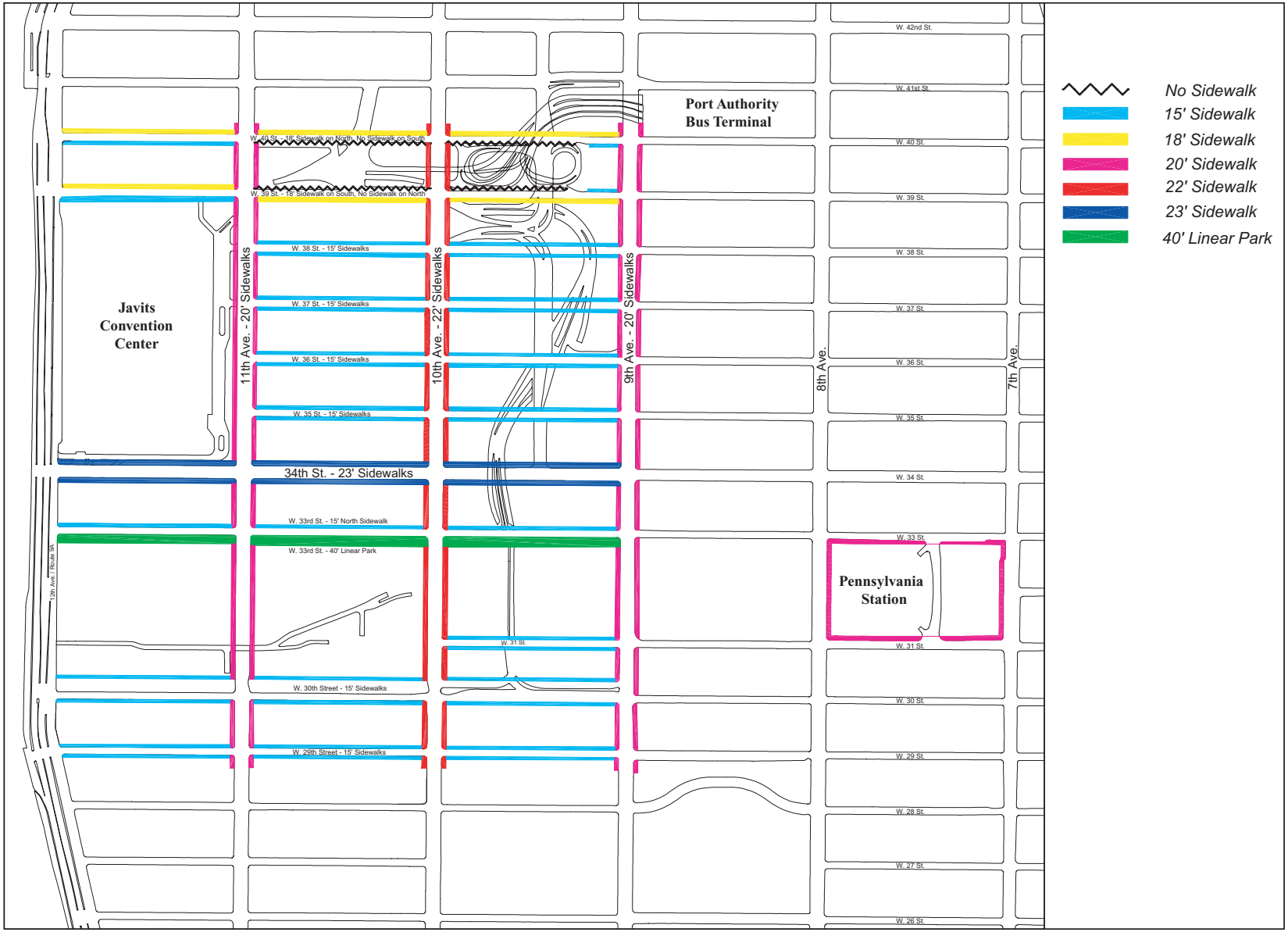


Figure 19: Proposed Sidewalk Improvement Measures, Multi-Use Facility Alternative

presence in the road network. Possible relocation sites include manufacturing zoned land at two locations: between West 27th and West 30th streets; and creating a platform over the Lincoln Tunnel access roads on the block between Ninth and Tenth avenues from West 38th to West 39th streets. A single storage facility – or several smaller facilities – large enough to accommodate 600 buses would be required.

Pedestrian Circulation

Pedestrian activity in the study area would increase substantially as development takes place. Sidewalk widenings to provide additional pedestrian circulation space would be proposed in a number of locations, including along Ninth through Twelfth avenues and West 33rd through West 40th streets. The sidewalks would be widened to be consistent with sidewalk widths typically found in other areas of the traditional Midtown Business District, helping to ensure adequate pedestrian circulation space and pedestrian safety. The current sidewalk widths, which range from 12 feet to 15 feet, although adequate to accommodate the existing land uses, would be inadequate in the no development and development alternatives, necessitating additional pedestrian circulation space.

Additional pedestrian circulation space can be provided by requiring new developments to provide such space on their zoning lots, similar to requirements in the Special Midtown District to the east. To the extent that pedestrian circulation space is provided on site, the need for sidewalk widenings into the street is avoided, thus reducing potential capital costs and effects on roadway capacity. It is recommended that the required pedestrian circulation space be implemented wherever the zoning controls are revised to facilitate the projected development alternatives. A summary of the proposed pedestrian circulation space requirements is presented below.

Sidewalks

The transportation analysis identifies a number of significant sidewalk improvement measures to be implemented in order for Far West Midtown to accommodate the anticipated future pedestrian levels. The sidewalks along Ninth, Tenth, and Eleventh avenues from West 29th to West 40th streets are all currently 15 feet wide and would require widening to a minimum of 20 feet.

All of the sidewalks from Ninth to Twelfth avenues along West 29th through West 31st and West 33rd through West 38th streets would need to be expanded to a minimum width of 15 feet. West 39th and West 40th streets between Ninth and Twelfth avenues would entail: (a) removing the north sidewalk between Eleventh and Dyer avenues (adjacent to the Lincoln Tunnel entrance plaza); (b) expanding the south sidewalk from 12 feet to 18 feet between Eleventh and Dyer avenues and to 15 feet between Eleventh and Twelfth avenues; and (c) expanding the north sidewalk from 12 to 18 feet between Eleventh and Twelfth avenues.

Table 10: Avenue Sidewalk Recommendations

Location (Between W 29th & W 40th St)	**Sidewalk Widths (ft)**	
	Existing	**Proposed**
Ninth Avenue	15	20
Tenth Avenue	15	20
Eleventh Avenue	15	20

Additionally, the sidewalks surrounding the current Madison Square Garden block also require mitigation measures. Under the Office-Use Alternative, neckdowns, totaling 10 feet on West 33rd Street at Eighth Avenue are recommended. Under the Multi-Use Alternative, it is recommended that sidewalks be widened to a minimum of 20 feet. The additional circulation space called for in the sidewalk widening recommendations, may also be achieved by providing on-site circulation space in conjunction with new development

It is also recommended that crosswalks throughout the entire study area be a minimum of 17 feet wide, or the width of the adjoining sidewalks, whichever is larger west of Eighth Avenue.

Table 11: Street Sidewalk Recommendations

Location (Between Ninth & Twelfth aves)	**Sidewalk Widths (ft)**	
	Existing	**Proposed**
West 29th to 31st St	13	15
West 33rd to 38th St	13	15
West 39th to 40th St		
North side (11th Ave to Dyer Ave)	12	Removed
South side (11th Ave to Dyer Ave)	12	18
North side (11th Ave to 12th Ave)t	12	15
South side (11th Ave to 12th Ave)	12	18

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The implementation of the *Far West Midtown Framework* will require a multi-pronged strategy that provides the financing for the necessary infrastructure improvements needed to support increased development, mechanisms to assure completion of infrastructure improvements, and appropriate zoning changes incorporating the elements of the comprehensive plan for Far West Midtown. Major infrastructure elements for the area include the extension of the Number 7 Subway line and Metro North, public open space and waterfront access, bus storage facilities, and street and pedestrian improvements. Financing strategies have been proposed that create a financial linkage between the proposed zoning density increases in Far West Midtown and the provision of needed infrastructure. These strategies should be evaluated by a team of financial and legal experts retained by the City and State. These strategies are consistent with the plans for the 2012 Olympics, should the City be successful in its efforts in bringing this event to New York.

Special Purpose Zoning District

A special purpose zoning district is recommended to provide the regulatory framework for growth and development in Far West Midtown and to achieve urban design objectives. Mandatory on-site improvements such as pedestrian circulation space and on-site open space; streetscape improvements; special regulations concerning parking and loading; identification of required elements associated with redevelopment over the MTA Rail Yards; and potential infrastructure financing through a zoning bonus mechanism could all be addressed in this district. The Special District could include the following elements:

- *Bulk and urban design controls* to encourage a variety of creative designs in an as-of-right environment: Such controls should allow a wide range for street wall heights, massing options, and setbacks for different tower types. Streetscape improvements, where appropriate, can also be incorporated into the regulations.
- *Special use regulations* where appropriate to achieve commercial and residential development goals.
- *Mandatory on-site improvements,* including such items as pedestrian circulation space and publicly accessible open space: The special district would designate those lots where such improvements would be required. Implementation would be at the time of redevelopment of the zoning lot. The required pedestrian circulation space includes measures recommended in the transportation analysis. The open space requirements could include elements recommended in the *Far West Midtown Framework*, including the open space corridor extending north from West 34th Street between Tenth and Eleventh avenues, and the pedestrian corridor extending east-west along West 33rd Street.
- *Development requirements for the MTA Rail Yards* and reuse of spaces over below-grade rights of way. While specific site planning would be required for

redevelopment over the large below-grade spaces, including the MTA Rail Yards between Tenth and Twelfth avenues, the special district should incorporate the minimum requirements necessary to achieve the significant objectives of the *Framework*. These include neighborhood and regional open space requirements, circulation requirements, and waterfront access across Route 9A.

- *Additional regulatory mechanisms* to achieve transportation and circulation improvements: The transportation analysis recommends specific requirements for on-site parking to replace parking lost through development and to accommodate parking associated with the demand generated by the redevelopment. These requirements can be incorporated into the special district. In addition, special requirements for on-site loading and pick-up and drop-off facilities for commercial tenants can also be incorporated in the special district.

- *A zoning bonus mechanism* allowing an incremental increase in permitted FAR in exchange for a monetary contribution for necessary capital improvement project financing. (see below)

Zoning Map Changes

The *Framework* recommends a range of density and use changes for the study area. These can be implemented through zoning map changes in conjunction with new special district controls. Changes in permitted use are not contemplated in the Special Garment Center District where only increases in density are proposed to encourage infill development, and in the manufacturing district south of West 30th Street. The zoning for much of the area west of Ninth Avenue generally prohibits new residential development and would require changes to allow new housing.

Specific Infrastructure Improvements

Number 7 Subway Line Extension

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) and the Department of City Planning (DCP) are coordinating efforts as co-lead agencies, to obtain consultant services for the completion of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on both the Number 7 Subway line extension and the recommended density and use changes. The Far West Midtown recommendations combined with environmental studies and analysis for the Number 7 Subway line extension will provide the base data for the consultant. While the EIS will examine a wide range of alternative routes, City Planning believes that a route linking Grand Central Station, Times Square, the Port Authority Bus Terminal, Pennsylvania Station, and the Javits Convention Center would provide the most long-term benefits.

Upon completion of the study, the MTA will be responsible for construction, maintenance, and operation of the Number 7 Subway line extension. The costs for construction would be financed by bonds or capital from the Federal government, State of New York, MTA, and City of New York. These costs could be reimbursed through the proposed District Improvement Fund (discussed below).

MTA Rail Yard Platforms

Reuse of the 26 acres above the MTA Rail Yards requires that platforms be constructed at the existing street grade, allowing for development of up to 17 million square feet at 15.0 FAR. According to preliminary data, platform costs are approximately $250 million for the 807,000 square foot rail yard between Eleventh and Twelfth avenues. At an FAR of 15, this estimate results in a platform cost of approximately $21 per buildable square foot. Per square foot costs would be higher with lower permitted densities. The size of the platform required for the eastern rail yard may vary depending on the location of open space and buildings. Assuming a platform size of 408,000 square feet, preliminary data shows that platform costs would be approximately $141 million, or $23 per buildable square foot at 15 FAR. Platform construction would likely be undertaken in conjunction with development.

Regional Open Space

The *Framework* for Far West Midtown identifies new, regional open space to be located on the MTA Rail Yard platforms, and in a midblock corridor between Tenth and Eleventh avenues from West 34th to West 39th streets. The midblock corridor open space can be designated in the special purpose district, and implemented through a mandatory lot improvement requirement, zoning incentive, or possibly land acquisition. It is recommended that a public entity be responsible for operation and maintenance. Regional open space designated for the MTA Rail Yard platforms should also be designated in the special purpose district and made a requirement for redevelopment of the site.

Pedestrian Connection over Route 9A

One of the key elements of the *Framework* is improved access to the Hudson River Park and Pier 79 ferry terminal, which would benefit existing and new businesses and residents. A requirement for this access via a pedestrian connection over Route 9A between the park and the MTA Rail Yard platform can be incorporated into the special district controls and made a requirement for development of the site.

Neighborhood Open Spaces

The *Framework* identifies areas between Ninth and Tenth avenues for the development of neighborhood open spaces. If constructed over existing below-grade rights of way, these spaces could be implemented by a public entity and funded in part through the proposed District Improvement Fund.

Javits Convention Center Expansion

By December 2004 17 U.S. cities will have convention centers that exceed the 900,000 square feet of space at the Javits Convention Center, which limits its ability to compete for certain shows and conventions. The New York Convention Center Development Corporation recently purchased the block to its immediate north in anticipation of an expansion northward. However, any further expansion northward would require the relocation of the MTA West Side Bus Depot located between West 40th and 41th streets. Expansion northward would not preclude expansion to the south as part of a multi-use facility. Zoning changes would continue to accommodate a northward expansion as well as continued operation of the MTA West Side Bus Depot. Any northward expansion must also ensure the relocation of the bus depot.

Bus Facility
Currently, there are approximately 500 on- and off- street bus storage spaces in the vicinity of the PABT and another 100 on-street spaces to the north in Clinton. The demand for bus storage spaces in Manhattan far exceeds this number and requires numerous buses to return to New Jersey empty while waiting for the evening commute. The demand for an off-street storage facility would increase with the redevelopment of the area. Many of the current storage locations are likely to be displaced in the long term.

This facility could be constructed and financed by the Port Authority, City of New York, public entity, or combination of these groups. The costs could be reimbursed through the proposed District Improvement Fund, or through the sale of Port Authority development rights on rezoned parcels, bus parking revenue, or a combination of these mechanisms. Alternatively, a zoning bonus could be offered to private developments that include significant bus parking facilities.

Tow Pound Facility
The Tow Pound facility that operates from Pier 76 is inconsistent with the new Hudson River Park and the new uses being proposed in the area. Any relocation site, ideally, must be accessible to Midtown. Possible relocation sites include manufacturing zoned land between West 27th and West 30th streets. As part of implementing the *Framework* for Far West Midtown, consideration should be given to identifying appropriate relocation sites, land acquisition, and construction of an inland tow pound facility that could be a stand alone, or part of a multi-use development.

Other Transportation Improvements
The transportation analysis identifies a range of other improvements that would be required to support redevelopment. These include certain street and sidewalk widenings, signal modifications, and modifications to on-street parking regulations. Capital improvements can be implemented by the City or, in the case of Route 9A, State DOT and reimbursed in part through the proposed District Improvement Fund. Other improvements require regulatory and operational changes that would fall primarily under the jurisdiction of City DOT. Subway station and other mass transit capital improvements identified in the Improvement Plan could be implemented by the MTA/New York City Transit.

Comprehensive Streetscape Improvements
Preparation of a comprehensive streetscape plan, including signage, sidewalk and streetscape improvements, is recommended. While certain elements may be implemented through special district controls and redevelopment, other elements could be implemented by a public agency and funded in part through the District Improvement Fund.

Financing Strategies

All of the costs associated with the proposed infrastructure improvements outlined above are not estimated as part of this study. The costliest of the proposed improvements, the extension of the Number 7 Subway line, will be studied as part of the EIS for that project. NYC 2012, the organizing committee for New York City's 2012 Olympic bid, has provided preliminary estimates for the platforms over the

MTA Rail Yards. While not determined, it is expected that costs for the recommended transportation and infrastructure improvements would exceed several billion dollars.

As an alternative to special financing strategies (discussed below), the City and State (or relevant state agencies) could fund the capital improvements out of general or agency-specific (e.g., in the case of the MTA, fares and tolls) revenues. In this alternative, the tax (or agency-specific) revenues generated by development would be considered adequate support for the incremental debt service. While this alternative would not require any additional legislation or regulatory mechanisms, the capital improvements for Far West Midtown would be placed in direct competition with all other City and State capital priorities, decreasing the likelihood that these improvements – necessary for the redevelopment of the area – would be implemented in a coordinated and timely manner. The City, State and public transportation agencies such as the MTA and the Port Authority face many demands on their limited capital resources, even before the September 11th attack on the World Trade Center created more demands while depriving the public sector of billions in anticipated tax revenues.

To reduce the burden of Far West Midtown development on general government and transportation agency bonding resources, critical transportation and other infrastructure improvements could be funded, at least in part, through tax increment financing and a zoning bonus.

Tax Increment Financing Strategy
Under this strategy, the City and State would fund the necessary capital improvement projects and the City would implement a tax increment financing district, which dedicates a portion of the property taxes to reimbursing the debt service on bonds for the capital improvements. This strategy requires the following elements:

- Designate the Far West Midtown Improvement District and develop a District Improvement Plan specifying the specific infrastructure and other improvements to be funded under the plan.
- Seek state legislation for a tax increment financing district, permitting dedication of property tax increments to support debt service on bonds to finance capital improvements called for in the District Improvement Plan. This mechanism would provide an ongoing revenue stream to support long-term borrowing.
- The bond proceeds would constitute the District Improvement Fund.

Zoning Bonus Strategy
Under this strategy, the City and State would fund capital improvement projects initially and would be reimbursed via a zoning bonus mechanism requiring a contribution into a District Improvement Fund. This strategy includes the following elements:

- Designate the Far West Midtown Improvement District and develop a District Improvement Plan.
- The City and State would initiate construction of

capital improvements necessary to support development using general obligation bonds or other general revenue sources.

- A Special Zoning District would permit the current base FAR as-of-right. Increased densities (zoning bonus) would be permitted in conjunction with a monetary contribution to the district improvement fund administered by the NYC Comptroller. Based on the densities recommended in the plan, the increase in permitted zoning square feet would range from 25 million to 49 million square feet for the entire study area.

- The District Improvement Fund could reimburse City capital expenditures to implement the District Improvement plan or it could fund such capital expenditures directly.

These financing strategies are not mutually exclusive, and both are recommended to support the capital improvements necessary to support the long term growth and development of Far West Midtown. Under both strategies, consideration should also be given to dedicating revenues from the sale of MTA and Port Authority development rights to capital expenditures supporting the District Plan. The tax increment financing strategy would ensure an ongoing revenue stream resulting from private investment and increased property values which could support a significant share of the necessary capital expenditures. However, economic development tax incentives would be wholly or partly precluded, depending on the size of the dedicated revenue stream. The zoning bonus strategy would not require state legislation, and economic development property tax incentives would not affect the revenue stream to the District Improvement Fund. In addition, the increases in land value created by the proposed increases in zoning densities would be used to suppport upfront financing for necessary infrastructure improvements.

Implementation Steps

The following initial steps are proposed to move forward with implementation of the plan for Far West Midtown:

- Obtain public input to refine the proposals for Far West Midtown.

- Complete MTA/City EIS for extension of the Number 7 Subway line and the recommended density and use changes and take steps to implement.

- Evaluate feasibility and cost of proposed improvements through appropriate studies.

- Evaluate financing options by a team of financial and legal experts, and initiate appropriate legislation to implement.

- Develop special purpose zoning district regulations and map changes in conjunction with public input. As part of this process, test alternative bulk and design concepts, and identify in greater specificity on-site and open space improvements.

- Prepare a district improvement plan which will serve

as the blueprint for infrastructure and capital improvements. The timing of these improvements would be based, in part, on the level of development that takes place over time.

- Implement zoning text and map amendments.

Many of the steps needed for implementation can proceed simultaneously. Environmental work for the Number 7 Subway line extension, including route selection and preliminary engineering, and on proposed land use and density changes, can begin immediately and could be completed in approximately three to four years. Public discussion on the *Framework* would take place over the next year at the same time work is started on drafting new special zoning district regulations and financing proposals are evaluated. Comprehensive zoning changes would be considered for adoption following completion of the EIS with completion of the Number 7 Subway line extension between 2009 and 2012.

Department of City Planning

Joseph B. Rose, *Director*

Lance Michaels, *Executive Director*

Sandy Hornick, *Deputy Executive Director, Strategic Planning*

Glen A. Price III, *Director of Studies Implementation*

David Karnovsky, *General Counsel*

Manhattan Office
Richard Barth, *Director*
Meenakshi Srinivasan, *Deputy Director*
Peter Pfeffer, *Project Director*
William Haas, *Co-Project Manager*
Aron Kirsch, *Co-Project Manager*
Patrick Too, *Project Urban Designer*
Douglas Woodward, *Project Urban Designer*
Albert Depas
Gleno Holder
Jackie Winslow

Transportation
Jack Schmidt, *Director*
Jerry Cheng, *Project Manager*
Stratos Prassas, *Traffic Engineering Team Leader*
Chiragi Amin
Karen Blatt
Katie Chin
Lise Dorestant
Emilio Feliz
Ruthie Gray
Jonathan Kerner
Ismail Khan
Kenneth Laidlow
Andrea Malester
Andre McGlashen
Olga Olovyannikov
Alan L. Ripps
Judy Ross
Al Smith
Nick Stossell
Julio Toro
Michael Tumbarello
Anne-Marie Turner
Lydia Velazquez
Ted Wright

Housing, Economic and Infrastructure Planning
Eric Kober, *Director*
Barry Dinerstein, *Deputy Director*
Bill Sears

Additional City Planning Contributors
Gerald Anderson, *Reproduction Specialist*
Ray Figueroa, *Deputy Director Administrative Services*
Floyd Lapp, *Former Director Transportation*
Andrew S. Lynn, *Former Executive Director*
Carol Segarra, *Graphics*
John Young, *Former Manhattan Office Deputy Director*