

A. INTRODUCTION

The proposed action would not result in significant adverse impacts related to urban design and visual resources.

This chapter provides an assessment of the potential effects on urban design and visual resources that could result from the proposed action. As described in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the proposed action includes zoning map and text amendments as well as a site selection and acquisition actions to facilitate the creation of the proposed publicly accessible High Line open space in an area spanning all or part of 15 blocks in the West Chelsea section of Manhattan. By 2013, the proposed action is anticipated to result in new above-ground development that would differ in height, bulk, form, setbacks, size, scale, use and streetscape elements from that which currently exists in the proposed action area. It would also result in new above-ground development in an area containing both visual resources and publicly accessible views to resources outside of the primary study area. Given the above conditions, an analysis of urban design and visual resources is therefore appropriate as per the guidelines set forth in the *CEQR Technical Manual*. For analysis purposes, the urban design and visual resources study area is coterminous with the study area used for analysis in Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy,” defined by a quarter-mile radius around the proposed action area (see Figure 8-1.)

Together, the urban design components and visual resources of an area define the distinctive identity of a neighborhood. As stipulated by CEQR, the analysis of urban design will assess the effects of the proposed action on those attributes that constitute the physical appearance of buildings and streets in the study area. These attributes include building bulk, use, and type; building arrangement; block form and street pattern; streetscape elements; street hierarchy; and natural features. Bulk is created by the size of a building and its massing on a site. Height, length, and width define a building’s size while volume, shape, setbacks, lot coverage, and density define its mass. The analysis of visual resources provided in this chapter assesses the effects of the proposed action on the visual resources of the study area, which are its unique or important public view corridors, vistas, or natural or built features. Waterfront views, public parks, landmarked structures, and landmarked districts are all examples of visual resources. As stipulated by CEQR, only views of visual resources from public and publicly accessible locations will be assessed.

The proposed action would bring about significant improvements to the urban form of the proposed action area, replacing parking lots and low-rise structures (many of which are vacant or contain storage and auto-related uses) with low-to high-density residential and commercial development. These changes would result in appreciable differences in the bulk, height, scale, form, setbacks, size, streetscape elements, and use of buildings. The proposed action would extend the vibrance of the

Figure 8-1
Urban Design Study Area

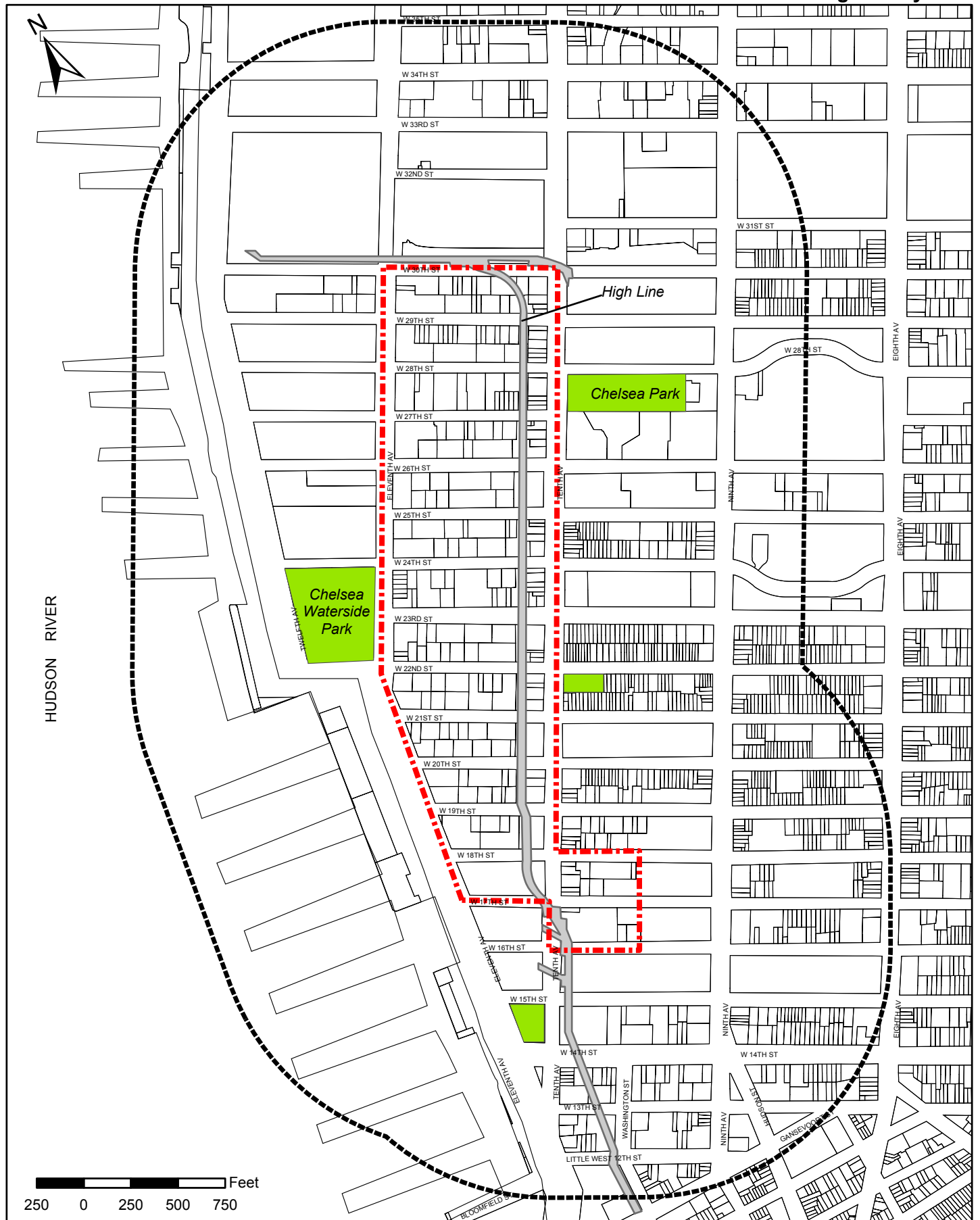


Figure prepared by Philip Habib & Associates

Legend:

- Primary Study Area (Proposed Action Area)
- Secondary Study Area (1/4-Mile Radius)

Chelsea neighborhood by allowing a mix of commercial and residential uses westward to the waterfront. New developments would be regulated by the Special District's bulk controls, ensuring consistency with the existing built context of West Chelsea and the surrounding area, including walk-up apartment buildings, high lot coverage loft buildings, and the lower scale buildings of the Chelsea Historic District. Higher density, tower-on-a-base residential buildings would be located in the northern portion of the study area, providing a transition to the high density envisioned in Hudson Yards to the north. Ground floor retail would be located within many of the new residential buildings, allowing for an expansion of the area's distinctive art gallery district. These changes would significantly enhance the area's streetscape by encouraging pedestrian activity and vibrancy, and removing many of the auto-related uses that dominate the area.

The proposed site selection and acquisition actions for the High Line elevated rail would also introduce to the City a new open space atop a remnant of West Chelsea's industrial history. Transforming this historic structure with a new open space amenity would provide unique views of Manhattan and the Hudson River, and introduce landscaping and green space to this area of Manhattan. New development adjacent to the High Line would contain uses and built forms that compliment this new open space.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Urban Design

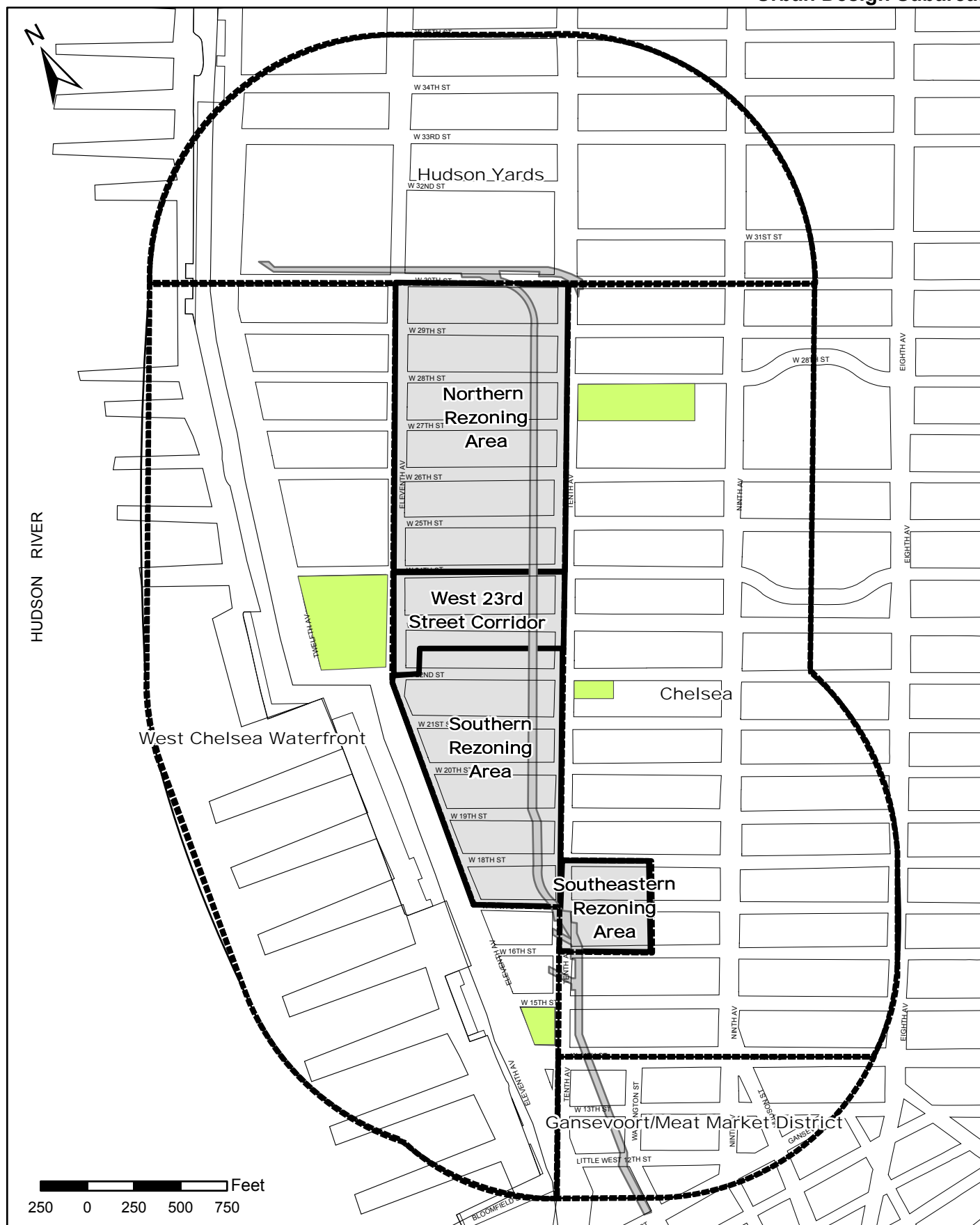
Overview

The primary study area is contiguous with the proposed action, an approximately 15-block area in Manhattan bounded roughly by the Hudson River, Tenth Avenue, Twelfth Avenue, and West 16th Street. For the assessment of urban design, the proposed action area, as illustrated in Figure 8-1, has been divided up into four subareas, which are listed below.

- Northern Rezoning Area
- West 23rd Street Corridor
- Southern Rezoning Area
- Southeastern Rezoning Area

The secondary study area, which extends a quarter-mile radius from the proposed action area, contains all or part of approximately 80 blocks in Manhattan. The secondary study area has been roughly divided into four subareas: Hudson Yards, the West Chelsea Waterfront, Chelsea, and Gansevoort/Meat Market District. These areas are illustrated in Figure 8-2. In the assessments that are provided in this chapter, the term "urban design study area" will be used to refer to both the primary and secondary study areas together as a whole.

Figure 8-2
Urban Design Subareas



Legend:



-  Analysis Subareas within Primary Study Area (Proposed Action Area)
-  Analysis Subareas within Secondary Study Area

Figure prepared by Philip Habib & Associates

The urban form of the proposed action area varies widely, exhibiting several types of building stock from single-story automobile shops to mid-rise industrial loft buildings and tall high-density residential towers. As discussed in Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy,” the land use trends in the area indicate a steady decline of industrial use, and an increase in commercial uses.

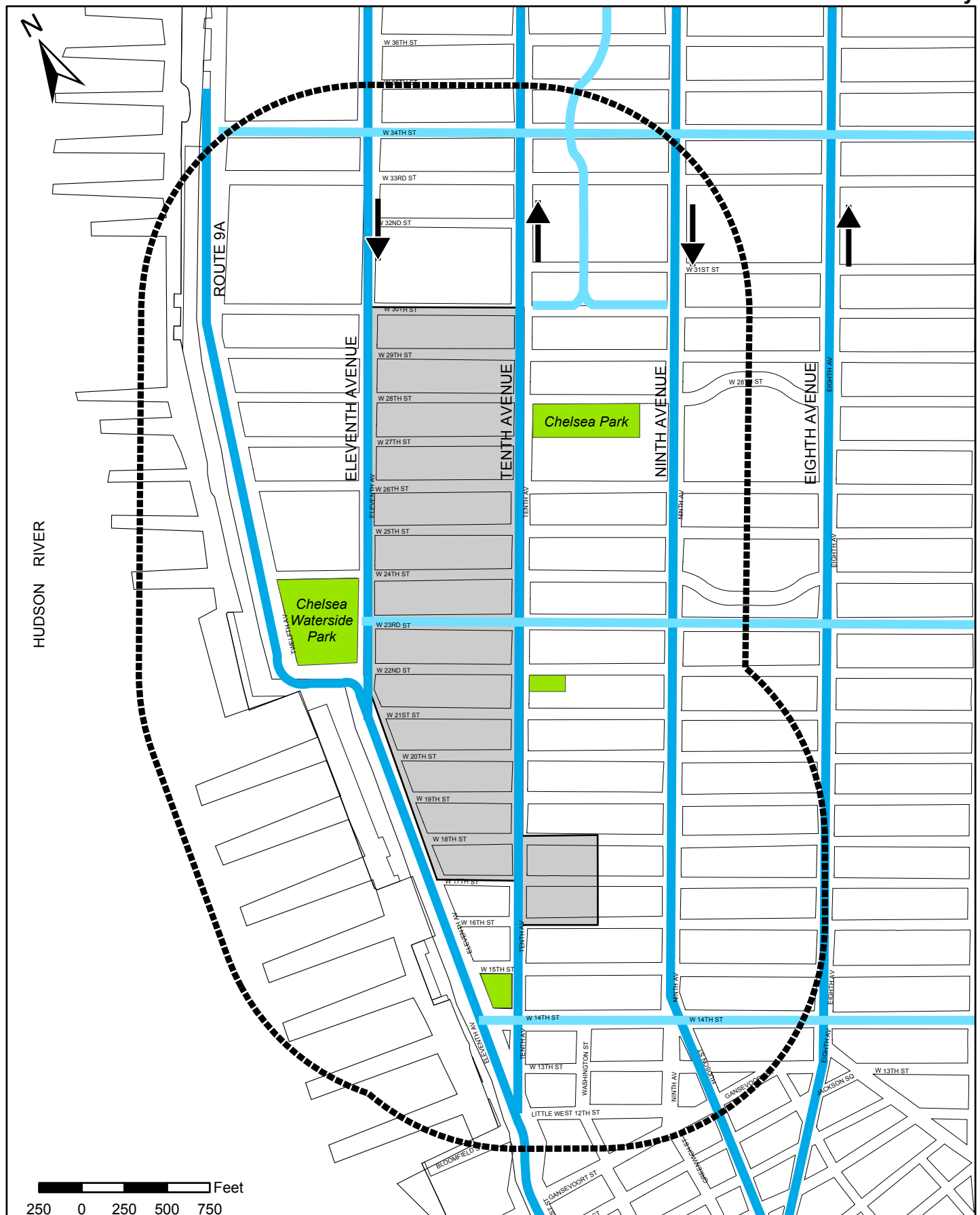
Given that the primary and secondary study areas occupy an approximately 0.74 square mile area within Manhattan, the required discussion of several urban design elements as stipulated by *CEQR* (Street Hierarchy, Street Pattern, Block Form, Building Arrangement, Natural Features and Topography), provided below for both study areas collectively. These elements, in addition to building bulk, use, and type and streetscape elements are discussed in greater detail for each subarea within the primary study area.

Street Hierarchy: The street hierarchy in the study area, as illustrated in Figure 8-3, is composed of several major arterials running east-west and north-south, which cater to the heaviest pedestrian and vehicular traffic and serve as truck and crosstown bus routes for NYC Transit (NYCT) bus routes. The major east-west arterials are W. 34th, W. 23rd, and W. 14th Streets. The major north-south arterials are Eighth, Ninth, Tenth, and Eleventh Avenues, of which the latter two have their termini at Route 9A. The narrower, east-west streets are considered local routes. Route 9A (which is also known as Twelfth Avenue north of W. 22nd Street and Eleventh Avenue from W. 12th to W. 22nd Streets) is an at-grade expressway which runs along the west side of Manhattan and features a combined walkway/bikeway, provided as part of Hudson River Park, situated along its west side. W. 30th Street serves as a two-way connector between Ninth and Tenth Avenue, providing vehicular access to the Lincoln Tunnel.

Street Pattern: The street pattern in the urban design study area is generally rectilinear, aligned with the pattern that is characteristic of the Manhattan street grid and containing uniform east-west and north-south corridors for both travel and views. In the few instances where the street pattern deviates from the grid, east-west streets, such as W. 25th, W. 27th, and W. 32nd Streets, exhibit discontinuity in the vicinity of superblocks. In addition, streets are sometimes curved within the boundaries of large housing developments, as found in the region just to the east of Ninth Avenue between W. 23rd and W. 29th Streets. Lastly, Hudson River Park, a thoroughfare for pedestrians and bicyclists along Route 9A, is periodically interrupted by intersecting roadways that offer entrance to piers and other waterfront facilities. It should also be noted that this Manhattan street grid terminates at W. 14th Street at extreme south edge of the study as this grid intersects the older West Village street pattern.

Block Form: The prevalent block form in this area is a rectangular 200- by 800-foot block, aligned with the street pattern. Smaller, non-rectilinear blocks are found along Route 9A to the south of W. 22nd Street, as the roadway traces the western coast of the island. In addition, several superblocks are present in the urban design study area, generally featuring large housing developments or transit infrastructure. To the south of W. 14th Street, the street grid is reoriented in the West Village to the west of Greenwich Village, where the major north-south thoroughfares

Figure 8-3
Street Hierarchy



Legend:

- Primary Study Area (Proposed Action Area)
- Secondary Study Area (1/4-Mile Radius)
- Arterial
- Collector

Figure prepared by Philip Habib & Associates

Note: Directions of unidirectional arterials are indicated with arrows, otherwise, the remaining arterials and collectors are two-way. Other public streets in the study areas are local roads.

are oriented with true north, and smaller blocks, sized at approximately 150 by 400 feet, comprise the grid.

Building Arrangement: Building arrangement varies throughout the primary and secondary study areas. The majority of buildings in this subarea are coterminous with lots that are aligned perpendicularly to the surrounding street grid. With the exception of public housing developments, which are further detailed in the discussion of the Chelsea subarea of the secondary study area, buildings generally have their edges aligned with their lot boundaries, leaving little room for variation in the placement of buildings upon lots. More variation in building arrangement is found along the west side of Tenth Avenue, where four- to five- story mixed retail/residential buildings have varied rear yard sizes and placements, and in the Southeastern Rezoning Area, where several low-bulk buildings feature setbacks of several feet from their property lines to accommodate vehicle loading. The remaining lot space left closest to or under the High Line is sometimes used for vehicles, small accessory buildings, or is left unused.

Natural Features: The principal natural feature of the urban design study area is the Hudson River, a body of water situated to the west of the island of Manhattan that forms an aquatic border between Manhattan and the state of New Jersey. The Hudson River provides a passive recreational area for residents and visitors, a contextual backdrop for views westward from upland points, as well as a visual feature for waterfront properties. The Hudson River is described further in the discussion of the West Chelsea Waterfront section of the secondary study area, as well as in the visual resources discussion.

Topography: The topography of the urban design study area is generally flat, with a gentle downward slope westward from Eleventh Avenue to the Hudson River. No further topographical features are found in the study area.

Primary Study Area

Northern Rezoning Area

The Northern Rezoning Area includes the six blocks from W. 24th Street to W. 30th Street, bounded by Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. The area is generally characterized by industrial loft buildings and the presence of the High Line elevated rail, running north-south approximately 100 feet west of Tenth Avenue. Pedestrian activity is more prevalent along Tenth Avenue. Figure 8-4 provides views of this area.

Building Bulk, Use, and Type: The buildings found in the Northern Rezoning Area are predominantly comprised of one- to six-story buildings, with taller loft buildings (10-story and above) located along the east side of Eleventh Avenue and along the W. 26th Street corridor. The majority of the structures in this subarea have FARs within the range of 1.0 to 3.0, with several sites featuring FARs in the 10.0 - 12.0 range.

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**Figure 8-4
Urban Design: Northern Rezoning Area**



Views along Eleventh Avenue: (l.) Eleventh Avenue, facing south from W. 30th Street, (r.) a view facing northeast at the corner of W. 28th Street and Eleventh Avenue.



A view facing northwest along the west side of Tenth Avenue between W. 28th and W. 29th Streets.



A view along the north side of W. 26th Street from Eleventh Avenue.

Loft buildings, generally from three- to six-stories in height, but also including many single story buildings and several buildings 10 to 12 stories in height, are the dominant urban form in this subarea. These loft buildings feature full or nearly full lot coverage and building frontages that span the full height of their buildings, creating a boxy, massive form. Loft buildings in this area generally contain commercial and some light industrial uses, including a large number of galleries, studios, glass and other light industrial shops, and small businesses. Single-story buildings are interspersed throughout the area and are generally used for light industrial uses, including vehicle storage, as well as commercial use.

Three- to five-story walkup buildings line the west side of Tenth Avenue, featuring a mixture of retail, multifamily residential, and commercial use. These buildings are mainly of brick construction and feature the tenement form characteristic of early 1900s housing. The buildings along this corridor are of lower bulk than loft buildings, with moderate to high lot coverage, providing rear setbacks that allow for small, informal yards or small buffer spaces between buildings and the High Line elevated rail. Retail uses at street level tend to consist of locally-oriented businesses, such as restaurants and convenience stores. Residential uses can generally be localized to this corridor, although a handful of mid-rise loft buildings to the west contain some mixed residential and commercial use. Automotive repair and other transportation facilities are concentrated along the west side of Tenth Avenue, and are interspersed among the residential buildings.

Lower-intensity uses, such as vacant lots, parking lots, and other types of vehicle storage, are located along the east side of Eleventh Avenue and intermittently along the west side of Tenth Avenue and along the east-west thoroughfares to the north of W. 26th Street.

Building Arrangement: Most buildings in the Northern Rezoning Area are regular with respect to their placement upon lots and are attached to one another. The buildings were built incrementally over time and do not present a cohesive urban form. At-grade parking areas and vehicle storage areas interrupt the building arrangement on blocks.

Block Form and Street Pattern: The block forms are regular blocks and typical of the Manhattan street grid.

Streetscape Elements: The streetscapes along the Tenth Avenue edge of the Northern Rezoning Area, given the presence of residents and more pedestrian activity, is better maintained than the center and western edge of the subarea. The Tenth Avenue corridor contains a modest number of street trees that are generally located in front of buildings occupied by mixed residential and ground-floor retail. Along building frontages, bright signage indicates the presence of retail establishments, and the bare walls of building frontages that abut vacant lots or shorter buildings are often used for advertisements. The High Line elevated rail is quite visible along the Tenth Avenue streetscape, providing signage and some visual greenery from the overgrowth that exists atop the rail. The High Line's signature steel railing is visible as it crosses the city streets.

West of Tenth Avenue, within the Northern Rezoning Area, street trees are rare, and curb cuts and elevated loading docks can often be found along the frontages of buildings, connecting buildings to small commercial trucks or vans that are parked curbside or upon the sidewalks. Elevated loading docks and ramps serve as informal seating for workers and passerby. The High Line dramatically punctuates the east-west streetwalls, essentially dividing these blocks, visually, into two separate stretches. The streetwalls along the east-west thoroughfares are mostly continuous, at times interrupted by vacant lots, and are highly variegated in height. Entryways into loft buildings, garage-door entrances and signs adorn building frontages. Although many of the buildings feature brick and concrete construction, the growth of galleries in this subarea has led to newer, more minimalist facades, often featuring glass surfaces to attract passerby and display works.

Weeds and wild plant growth are commonly seen at the edges where buildings interface with their adjacent sidewalks and within vacant lots. Refuse is commonly found strewn near and within vacant lots, the sidewalks and the streets. Moss and ivy growth is common along the sides of the High Line rail. Drippings of engine oil, antifreeze, and other vehicular fluids are occasionally seen along the streets near auto-related establishments within the subarea, especially along Tenth Avenue.

Street Hierarchy: The Northern Rezoning Area is comprised of regular blocks bounded by north-south avenues, and east-west local streets.

Natural Features and Topography: There are no significant natural or topographic features within the Northern Rezoning Area.

West 23rd Street Corridor

The West 23rd Street Corridor includes, in its entirety, the block bounded by W. 23rd and W. 24th Streets, Tenth and Eleventh Avenues; and the northern half and the westernmost 100 feet of the block directly to the south, which is bounded by W. 22nd and W. 23rd Streets, Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. This area is best characterized as a central core of tall, high bulk structures surrounded by low- and mid-rise structures, fronting on a wide, two-way crosstown street. Pedestrian activity is concentrated along W. 23rd Street and along Tenth Avenue. Views of the West 23rd Street Corridor are provided in Figure 8-5.

Building Bulk, Use, and Type: The West 23rd Street Corridor contains various building forms and a wide range of uses adjacent to one another. The five tallest buildings in this subarea stand 10- to 15-stories in height, at the center of the two blocks that comprise the area. Filling in the remainder of the subarea is a mixture of one- to five-story buildings, and several vacant lots. Lot coverage in this subarea is high, with the exception of gas stations and similar automotive facilities that have low lot coverage in order to accommodate vehicles. The majority of the FARs in this subarea range from 0.6 to 2.7, with higher FARs of 7.5-10.0 associated with the five tall structures at the center of the subarea.

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**Figure 8-5
Urban Design: West 23rd Street Corridor**



A view facing west at the intersection of W. 23rd Street and Tenth Avenue.



A view facing southwest from the intersection of W. 24th Street and Tenth Avenue.



A view facing east along the north side of W. 23rd Street, from Eleventh Avenue.



A view facing east along the south side of W. 23rd Street, from Eleventh Avenue.



A view facing east along the south side of W. 24th Street from Eleventh Avenue.



A view facing south along the east side of Eleventh Avenue, from W. 24th Street.

The single-story structures in the West 23rd Street Corridor are clustered along Eleventh Avenue between W. 23rd and W. 24th Streets and along the south side of W. 24th Street, with several more scattered throughout the subarea. These structures are generally occupied by automotive, parking, and light industrial use and feature high lot coverage. Low- to mid-rise structures in the area include residential and mixed residential/retail uses along Tenth Avenue north of 23rd Street, including a building that contains an outdoor café. Commercial uses in buildings of similar bulk include a gallery at the corner of Tenth Avenue and W. 23rd Street, a mixed adult entertainment club at the northeast corner of Eleventh Avenue and W. 23rd Street, and two buildings at the corner of Eleventh Avenue and W. 22nd Street. Transportation/utility uses of this form include the bulky U-Haul facility at the southeast corner of Tenth Avenue and W. 23rd Street, which varies from one to three stories in height, fully occupying the lots on which it stands.

The tallest structures in the West 23rd Street Corridor are comprised of four residential buildings of 10 to 15 stories in height, one of which (an 14-story building) is currently nearing completion. A 10-story loft building occupied by warehouse use is located along the south side of W. 23rd Street. The two residential buildings situated centrally along the north side of W. 23rd Street have footprints that extend northward to W. 24th Street.

Building Arrangement: Most buildings in the W. 23rd Street Corridor are regular with respect to their placement upon lots and are attached to one another, except where parking areas and auto-related uses interrupt the building arrangement on blocks.

Block Form and Street Pattern: The block forms are regular blocks and typical of the Manhattan street grid.

Streetscape Elements: The West 23rd Street Corridor features non-uniform, discontinuous streetwalls due to the variety in building use and scale, frequently with 10-story frontages standing adjacent to three-story frontages. Street trees are few in number and generally limited to the curbside edges facing residential properties. Modest canopies are placed above the entrances of the residential buildings and several of the commercial buildings.

Bright, varied signage adorns the bare facades of the 10-story loft building along the south side of W. 23rd Street and the facades of the U-Haul facility. The High Line continues its procession through this area, with advertisements attached to its base. Curb cuts at the storage and automotive facilities are abundant, and loading berths punctuate the sidewalks. Small and mid-sized vehicles belonging to the U-Haul facility are frequently seen along W. 23rd Street, parked on the curb and the surrounding sidewalks

The contrasting appearance of adjacent buildings is dramatic in this two-block span, including modern galleries with glazed glass facades in new residential buildings abutting older, loft and low-rise buildings.

Street Hierarchy: The W. 23rd Street corridor is centered on W. 23rd Street, an east-west collector bounded by Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. W. 24th Street is an east-west local street.

Natural Features and Topography: There are no significant natural or topographic features within the Northern Rezoning Area.

Southern Rezoning Area

The Southern Rezoning Area includes the five blocks from W. 17th to W. 22nd Streets between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues in addition to the majority of the southern half of the block bounded by W. 22nd and W. 23rd Streets, Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. The area is characterized by low- and mid-rise structures surrounding a core of higher, six- to 11- story structures, with an abundance of parking facilities concentrated in the southern tip of the area. Pedestrian activity is more common along Tenth Avenue. Views of this area are provided in Figure 8-6.

Building Bulk, Use, and Type: The buildings found in the Southern Rezoning Area are predominantly comprised of one- to five-story buildings, with the tallest buildings of this Area located on the mid-blocks from W. 20th to W. 22nd Streets. The majority of the buildings in this area have FARs ranging from 1.0 to 4.7, with several sites featuring FARs from 5.6 - 12.1.

Large loft buildings are found in the core of this subarea, with 7-11 story buildings along W. 21st and 20th Streets that feature high lot coverage and streetwalls that extend to the building's full height. These buildings typically contain warehouse and commercial uses, including galleries. The eight-story building at the south corner of Eleventh Avenue and W. 20th Street is home to the Bayview Correctional Facility, an institutional use.

Many mid-rise walkup residential, industrial, and commercial buildings are found along W. 22nd Street, Tenth Avenue to the north of W. 21st Street, and are scattered along W. 19th through W. 21st Streets. The residential buildings feature high lot coverage and bulk. Multifamily residential loft conversions of bulky, early 1900s brick construction are found along both sides of W. 22nd Streets. The 4- and 5-story residential buildings along Tenth Avenue at W. 22nd Street feature locally-oriented retail at street level.

Several institutional uses are present in the Southern Rezoning Area. In addition to the Bayview Correctional Facility described above, the Roman Catholic Church of the Guardian Angel is located at the corner of Tenth Avenue and W. 21st Street, and the DIA Foundation for the Arts, a non-profit arts organization, and the Chelsea Art Museum are located on W. 22nd Street.

Low-bulk, low-intensity uses, including parking lots, vehicle storage, and vacant lots, are concentrated in the southern tip of the area, on the blocks bounded by W. 17th and W. 19th Streets, as well as along Tenth Avenue. The bulks and sizes of buildings on open lots, if any, are minimal to maximize the amount of vehicle space. These lots also accentuate the visual presence of the High Line, which serves as the only built structure on the block bounded by W. 17th and

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**Figure 8-6
Urban Design: Southern Rezoning Area**



A view facing southwest along the west side of Tenth Avenue from W. 22nd Street.



A view facing northwest along the west side of Tenth Avenue from W. 18th Street.



A view facing south on Tenth Avenue from W. 23rd Street.



A view facing north along Eleventh Avenue from W. 16th Street.



A view facing west along W. 20th Street from Tenth Avenue.



A view facing east along W. 18th Street from Eleventh Avenue.

W. 18th Streets. Automobiles are also found on underbuilt lots that abut or exist underneath the High Line, as shown in Figure 8-7.

Building Arrangement: Most buildings in the Southern Rezoning Area are regular with respect to their placement upon lots and are attached to one another. The buildings were built incrementally over time and do not present a cohesive urban form. At-grade parking areas and vehicle storage areas interrupt the building arrangement on blocks.

Block Form and Street Pattern: The block forms are generally regular blocks and typical of the Manhattan street grid, although Eleventh Avenue, which follows the Hudson River shoreline and is contiguous with Route 9A in this area, is angled, reducing the length of the east-west block dimensions.

Streetscape Elements: The streetwalls along W. 21st and W. 22nd Streets are fairly continuous, ranging from one to eight stories in height. Street trees are found in abundance along W. 22nd Street and frequently along the northern segments of Tenth and Eleventh Avenues, near residential uses. The street trees along W. 17th through W. 21st Streets are sparse in number, small, and often unkempt, especially near the High Line, where overgrown trees and weeds blend in with mosses and other overgrowth present on the elevated rail. In general, the environment in the Southern Rezoning Area becomes less inviting southward, as residential uses are concentrated just below W. 23rd Street. Curb cuts and vehicles parked on sidewalks and within lots are frequently observed on Tenth Avenue south of W. 21st Street.

Large, bright, signage is often found along the frontages of buildings, exposed by the lower heights of adjacent buildings, advertising to motorists along Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. As in the other areas, signage and graffiti are found along the sides of the High Line as it passes over streets and lots. The High Line also emerges from the midblocks at approximately W. 17th Street as it extends to the southeast, bridging over Tenth Avenue and shading some intersections.

Street Hierarchy: The Southern Rezoning Area is comprised of regular blocks bounded by north-south avenues, and east-west local streets.

Natural Features and Topography: There are no significant natural or topographic features within the Southern Rezoning Area.

Southeastern Rezoning Area

The Southeastern Rezoning Area consists of the western halves of the two blocks bounded by W. 16th and W. 18th Streets and Ninth and Tenth Avenues. Bulky, low- and mid-rise buildings characterize this area. Views of the Southeastern Rezoning Area are provided in Figure 8-7.

Building Bulk, Use and Type: The buildings in the Southeastern Rezoning Area are predominantly low-rise, boxy structures, with varying lot coverage, exhibiting a range of FARs between 0.25 and 5.28, with most FARs in the 1.0-2.5 range, as shown in Figure 8-7. The land

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Figure 8-7

Urban Design: Automotive Uses Adjacent to the High Line, Southeastern Rezoning Area



A view facing southeast at parking stackers at Tenth Avenue and W. 21st Street.*



A view of parking uses that extend to the west side of the High Line, at W. 20th Street.*



A view facing west along the south side of W. 18th Street from Tenth Avenue.



A view facing west along W. 17th Street from Tenth Avenue.



A view facing west along the north side of W. 16th Street from Tenth Avenue.



A view facing north along Tenth Avenue from its intersection with W. 16th Street.

* Pictures of automotive uses at the High Line courtesy of Field Operations and Diller + Scofidio + Renfro.

uses found in this subarea are diverse, including retail and commercial uses such as catering, engineering offices, and a commercial garden center. These uses are low-intensity in the amount of foot-traffic that they bring to the area, and are adaptable to the low-bulk loft buildings in which they are located. Several street-level retail restaurant/bars are found along the east side of Tenth Avenue, located in single-story structures, the ground-floor levels of three- to five-story residential buildings, and within outdoor cafes in formerly vacant lots. Automotive and vehicle storage uses in low-rise structures are also found in this area, midblock along the southern edge of W. 18th Street and at the northeast corner of W. 16th Street and Eleventh Avenue.

The buildings of highest bulk in this area (4.0 and above), located along the northern edge of W. 16th Street and at the northeast and southeast corners of the intersection of W. 17th Street and Tenth Avenue, are four to five story tenement buildings on narrow lots that contain commercial and multifamily residential use. The boxy loft buildings in the area are generally of brick and concrete construction, while those buildings featuring mixed retail and residential use are predominantly of brick construction.

Building Arrangement: Most buildings in the Southeastern Rezoning Area are regular with respect to their placement upon lots and are attached to one another. The buildings were built incrementally over time and do not present a cohesive urban form. At-grade parking areas and vehicle storage areas interrupt the building arrangement on blocks.

Block Form and Street Pattern: The block forms are regular blocks and typical of the Manhattan street grid.

Streetscape Elements: The sidewalks of the Southeastern Rezoning Area contain few street trees and many accessories for vehicular loading, such as curb cuts, protective bollards, and garage doors. Commercial vehicles are frequently seen parked on sidewalks or within curb cuts perpendicular to buildings. Signage of retail establishments is visible from the streets, and establishments that cater to visiting customers and to passerby, such as restaurants and retail shops, contain semi-enclosed outdoor seating and product displays.

The High Line also emerges from within the midblocks in the space above Tenth Avenue between the Southern and Southeastern Rezoning Areas. Structural spurs of the rail traverse the wide street and shade the intersections of W. 16th and W. 17th Streets with Tenth Avenue.

Street Hierarchy: The Southeastern Rezoning Area is comprised the western portion of two blocks regular blocks bounded by Tenth Avenue, running north-south, and W. 16th and W. 18th Streets, which are east-west local streets.

Natural Features and Topography: There are no significant natural or topographic features within the Southeastern Rezoning Area.

Secondary Study Area (Quarter-Mile Study Area)

Hudson Yards

The portion of the Hudson Yards area included in the secondary study area is bounded roughly by W. 30th and W. 35th Streets, Ninth Avenue, and the Hudson River. Figure 8-8 depicts the Hudson Yards subarea. Hudson Yards is dominated by the presence above- and below-grade transportation infrastructure. This portion of the area includes the MTA Rail Yards, which cover a 26-acre stretch of land from W. 30th to W. 33rd Streets between Tenth and Twelfth Avenues below grade. Eleventh Avenue bridges over these yards, dividing them into two pieces referred to as the “Eastern” and “Western” yards, essentially creating two superblocks with the streets that surround these yards above grade.

The blocks comprising the Hudson Yards area within the secondary study area contain varied land uses and building forms. Open lots used for vehicle parking and bus storage are common throughout this area. A full-block truck marshaling facility for the Jacob Javits Convention Center exists to the north of the Western Yards and to the south of the Jacob Javits Convention Center, between W. 33rd and W. 34th Streets from Eleventh to Twelfth Avenues. The Jacob Javits Convention Center is a 1,800,000 sf convention facility located at W. 34th Street spanning the five blocks to the north. North of the Eastern Yard and eastward, one to five-story warehouse structures are prevalent, containing commercial, light industrial, and transportation uses. Several taller, commercial, residential, and light industrial buildings, 10- to 17-stories in height are interspersed among these buildings.

The few street trees around the Hudson Yards subarea are generally limited to the W. 34th Street corridor, the eastern portion of which contains decorative planters, lampposts, and distinctive street signage unique to the corridor and generally concentrated at the locations of residential buildings. The streetwalls of the area are fairly continuous but lack uniformity in height. The lack of streetscape elements and active uses in the Hudson Yards subarea contribute to its barren character.

West Chelsea Waterfront

The West Chelsea waterfront in the secondary study area includes the waterfront blocks bounded roughly by Tenth Avenue from W. 14th and W. 30th Streets, Eleventh Avenue, and the Hudson River, the sole significant natural feature of the urban design study area. The West Chelsea waterfront features several full-block buildings between Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues and shorter developments throughout the rest of the subarea as well as along the piers. Figure 8-9 presents views of the West Chelsea waterfront area.

Industrial and transportation/utility warehousing structures are the signature of the West Chelsea waterfront, with the landmarked Starrett-Lehigh Building, a full-block, 19-story loft building between W. 26th and W. 27th Streets (discussed further in Visual Resources). Immediately to the north stands ~~two~~ one more full-block loft buildings, ~~four and~~ nine stories in height and further north a mix of industrial/commercial buildings and parking/vehicle storage lots, and to

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**Figure 8-8
Urban Design: Hudson Yards**



A view of W. 34th Street facing east from Ninth Avenue.



A view of W. 34th Street facing west from Ninth Avenue.



A view facing north along Eleventh Avenue at the Jacob Javitz Convention Center.



A view facing south along Eleventh Avenue from W. 34th Street.



A view facing south along Tenth Avenue from W. 31st Street.

SPECIAL WEST CHELSEA DISTRICT REZONING AND HIGH LINE OPEN SPACE EIS

Figure 8-9

Urban Design: West Chelsea Waterfront



A view of Pier 57 facing southwest from the intersection of W. 13th Street and Route 9A.



A view of Chelsea Piers facing northwest from the intersection of W. 13th Street and Route 9A.



A view of a US Postal Service Facility facing northwest from the intersection of W. 24th Street and Eleventh Avenue.



A view of the northwest corner of the intersection of W. 27th Street and Eleventh Avenue.



A view facing west from the intersection of W. 30th Street and Eleventh Avenue.



A view facing south along Twelfth Avenue from the west side of its intersection with W. 29th Street.

the south a United States Postal Service distribution and truck storage facility, Department of Sanitation facility, and the former Central Terminal Stores Warehouse, encompassing consisting of three buildings, standing at two-, six-, and nine-stories; takes up a superblock from W. 24th to W. 26th Streets.

Between W. 22nd and W. 24th Streets stands Chelsea Waterside Park, a 2.5-acre park containing a dog run, children's play areas, and a multi-use sporting field. Between W. 28th and W. 29th Streets is a full-block Con Edison storage and workout facility. Between W. 29th and W. 30th Streets, light industrial, commercial, and parking buildings ranging from one to four stories in height and full lot coverage fill the block. Pedestrian and bicycle paths associated with Hudson River Park, a 550-acre waterfront park that extends from Lower Manhattan to 59th Street, course through this area just to the west of Route 9A.

Built structures at the piers along the western edge of the West Chelsea waterfront generally contain commercial uses, with one- to four-story bulky structures with footprints that span varying portions of the piers, sometimes spanning entire piers. Pier 57, situated near W. 14th Street, currently contains a vacant four-story former bus depot building. Notable waterfront facilities include Chelsea Piers and Basketball City, enclosed waterfront recreation and entertainment centers, extending between W. 17th Street to W. 23rd Streets. Other uses include a heliport at W. 30th Street, which contains little visual bulk save a small, single-story administrative building and several landing pads. Those piers that lack structures are either closed off from public use or are used as public viewing spaces.

The waterfront parcels of the West Chelsea waterfront create a pleasing streetscape along the Hudson River. Shrubbery, flowers, trees, and distinctive lighting fixtures line Hudson River Park's waterfront pedestrian and bicycle paths and the entry plaza into the Chelsea Piers complex. In addition, the large, bulky waterfront structures containing active recreation do little themselves to add to the waterfront streetscape, as activities are enclosed and little pedestrian activity is fostered around them. The blocks between Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues contain few streetscaping elements of merit and further the bare, industrial character of the area.

Chelsea

The Chelsea subarea of the secondary study area is bounded roughly by W. 23rd and W. 30th Streets, Tenth Avenue, and the midblock line between Eighth and Ninth Avenues. Views of this area are shown in Figure 8-10. Chelsea is the largest subarea of the secondary study area and hosts to a wide array of building forms and uses.

The tallest buildings of the Chelsea subarea vary in bulk. The London Terrace Apartments, a private apartment complex of 14 joined buildings, occupies the entire block bounded by W. 23rd and W. 24th Streets and Ninth and Tenth Avenues. London Terrace ranges from 17 to 19 stories in height and features streetwalls that stand nearly at full building height, in line with other buildings found in the West 23rd Street corridor. Several full-block industrial loft structures exist

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**Figure 8-10
Urban Design: Chelsea**



A southward view along Eighth Avenue from W. 23rd Street.



A view facing west along W. 14th Street from Eighth Avenue.



A view facing north along Ninth Avenue from W. 17th Street.



A view facing west along W. 25th Street from Ninth Avenue.



An eastward view of the south side of W. 23rd Street from Tenth Avenue, of buildings included in the Chelsea Historic District.



A westward view along W. 20th Street from Eighth Avenue.

in Chelsea, found in the north, northeast, and southeastern portions of the subarea, catering to commercial and office use.

Public and subsidized housing developments are also common in the area, including the Robert Fulton Houses, comprised of 25- and 7-story buildings with low lot coverage located between W. 16th and W. 19th Streets and Ninth and Tenth Avenues; Penn Station South, a 20-acre complex of 22-story buildings; the Chelsea Houses, a complex of two 21-story buildings on Ninth Avenue between W. 25th and W. 26th Streets; and the Elliott Houses, a complex of four 11- and 12-story buildings on W. 25th Street between Ninth and Tenth Avenues. Public and subsidized housing developments generally take up entire blocks, or halves of blocks, in the case of Robert Fulton Houses; with tall, slender high-density residential structures of brick construction surrounded by open recreational areas, trees, and plaza space. Buildings of similarly slender bulk and residential use, ranging from eight to 13 stories in height, are interspersed among other buildings throughout the rest of the study area, from W. 19th to W. 23rd Streets.

Mid-rise, four- to six-story buildings dictate the majority of Chelsea's urban form. Primarily residential in use, these buildings often contain street-level commercial retail uses, especially along Eighth and Ninth Avenues and W. 23rd Street. The buildings are generally of early 1900s brick construction, featuring frontages with decorative concrete ornamentation around windows and at roofs; stoops with decorative rails, and sometimes basement dwellings accessible from the street. The landmarked Chelsea Historic District comprises a large section of the subarea, generally from W. 19th to W. 23rd Streets between Ninth and Tenth Avenues. These stretches of multifamily residential dwellings are lined with street trees and retain a quiet ambience, in contrast to the surrounding streets.

The rare one- and two- story low-rise structures found in this subarea generally cater to light automotive, vehicle storage, and small commercial uses. Public and religious institutions are also found scattered throughout the area, but blend in with the general form of the subarea.

The streetscapes of the Chelsea subarea are among the most attractive and well-maintained of the subareas included in the primary and secondary study areas, given the dominance of residential uses, and uniform, continuous streetwalls.

Gansevoort/Meat Market District

The Gansevoort/Meat Market District subarea of the secondary study area is bounded roughly by W. 14th Street, Tenth Avenue, and Gansevoort Street. Views of this subarea are presented in Figure 8-11. The area was once home to a mercantile and distribution hub for food, namely meat, and has taken on a new life as a center for high-end retail, galleries, restaurants, and nightlife while maintaining some of its original food distribution establishments.

The urban form in this area is dominated by low- and mid-rise industrial loft buildings, two to five stories in height, which continually feature street-level retail, especially along W. 14th, Washington, Gansevoort, and Hudson Streets. The area is framed around its southern and

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Figure 8-11

Urban Design: Gansevoort/Meat Market District



A southwest view along Hudson Street from Jane Street.



A northwest view along Gansevoort Street from Hudson Street. The Hotel Gansevoort is on the left.



A westward view of W. 13th Street from Ninth Avenue.



A southward view of Ninth Avenue from 13th Street.



A westward view along 13th Street from Washington Street.



A view along the north side of W. 14th Street from Washington Street.

southeastern edges by low-rise residential uses, characteristic of the Greenwich Village Historic District that extends to the south and southeast. Several buildings in the western portion of the subarea still feature active industrial use, including meat packing and food distribution. The Gansevoort Historic District extends roughly from Gansevoort to W. 14th Streets between Washington and Hudson Streets.

Due to the growing popularity of the area, new mid-rise structures have been constructed, which contain boutique hotels, offices and restaurants. As such, they are typically the newest structures in the area, such as the 13-story Hotel Gansevoort along Ninth Avenue.

The streetscape of the Gansevoort/Meat Market District is noticeably framed by its cobblestone streets to the south of W. 14th Street, indicative of its historic character. The sleek and modern storefronts constructed at street level contrast sharply with the upper facades of the buildings . Since the arrival of nightlife and newer retail uses, activity in the area is generally seen 24-hours a day. Trees are common around retail areas and less common around active industrial uses, and modern, sculpted trees are commonplace around the newer boutique hotels and eateries. These areas contrast with the blocks to the west that contain more industrial uses that are marked by the view of varying types of waste (animal parts, containers) set out on the sidewalks for collection, and the small trucks and vans curbside at their loading docks and curb cuts.

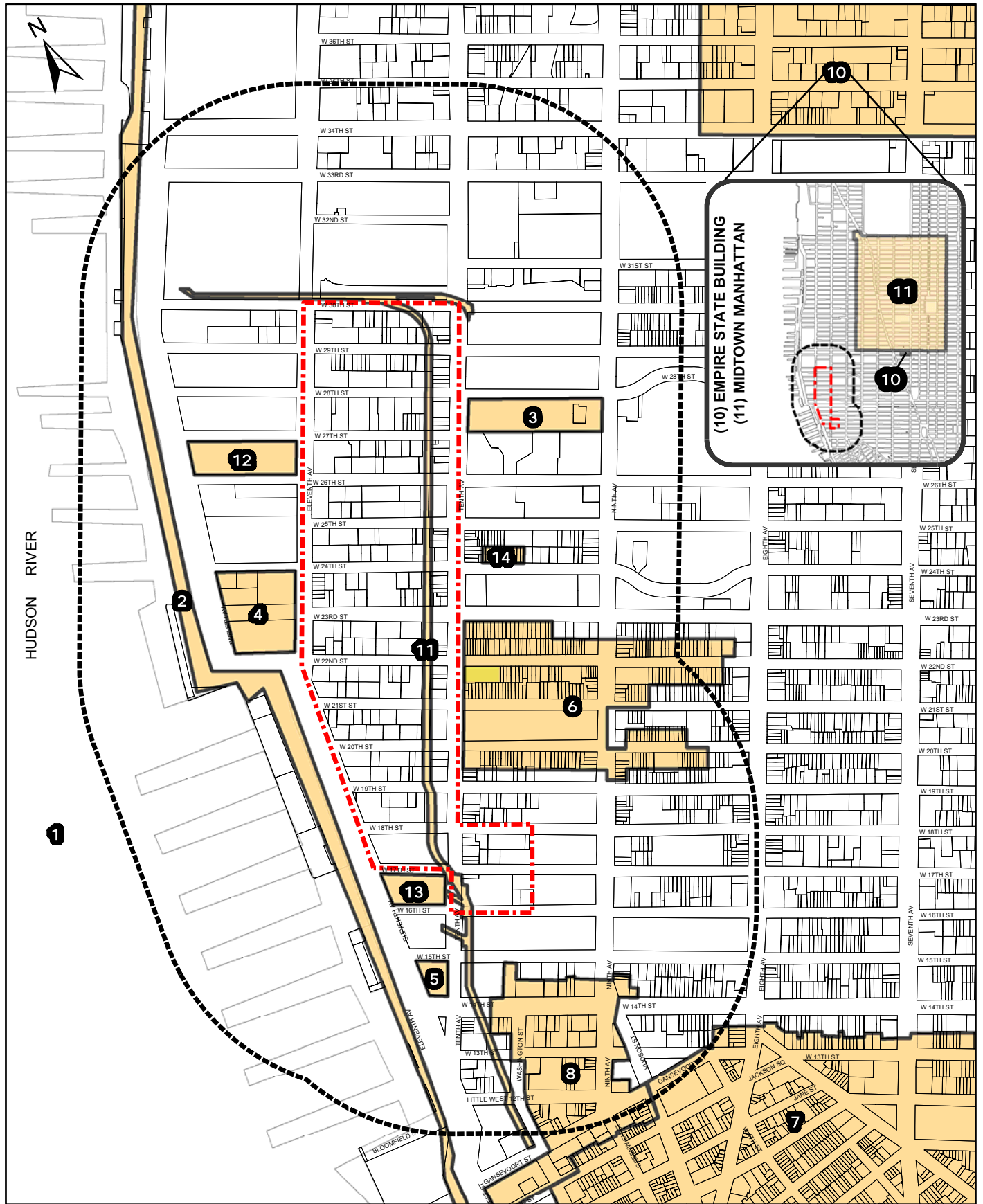
Visual Resources

Based on criteria outlined by the *CEQR Technical Manual*, 14 resources have been defined as having visual significance in the quarter-mile study area. These resources include historic districts, views of significant historic and architectural landmarks, open spaces, and views of the Hudson River. Table 8-1 outlines these resources. Figure 8-12 illustrates the location of these resources, which are numbered according to the key provided in Table 8-1. Figures 8-13 through 8-17 provide photographs of each resource. Further details about the open spaces listed in Table 8-1 are available in Chapter 5, “Open Space” while further information on the historic and architectural resources can be found in Chapter 7, “Historic Resources.”

View corridors to the Hudson River are not available along the full length of the east-west streets. Street closures, fencing, and pier structures are common obstructions to views to the river from W. 28th through W. 35th Streets. The High Line elevated rail also has an increasingly limiting effect on views of the Hudson River, especially from points to the east of Tenth Avenue.

Views to visual resources within the study area are generally short and are often limited to the resource’s immediate surroundings. Views to larger structures, such as the High Line, Midtown Manhattan, and the Empire State Building generally do not extend across the study area due to visual barriers created by buildings. These structures are periodically visible looking eastward from the waterfront and from points throughout the study area where views are possible due to the variation of building heights.

Locations of Visual Resources



Legend:

- Primary Study Area (Proposed Action Area)
- Secondary Study Area (1/4-Mile Radius)
- Visual Resources (Keyed into Table 8-1)

Figure prepared by Philip Habib & Associates

SPECIAL WEST CHELSEA DISTRICT REZONING AND HIGH LINE OPEN SPACE EIS

**Figure 8-13
Visual Resources 1-3**

(1)
The Hudson River



(1)
The Hudson River

(2) Hudson River Park



(3) Chelsea Park



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**Figure 8-14
Visual Resources 4-7**



(4) Chelsea Waterside Park



(5) 14th Street Park



(6) Chelsea Historic District



(7) Greenwich Village
Historic District

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**Figure 8-15
Visual Resources 8-10**



(8) Gansevoort / Meat Market Historic District



(9) Empire State Building, typical view from street level.

(10) Midtown Manhattan, typical view from Route 9A.



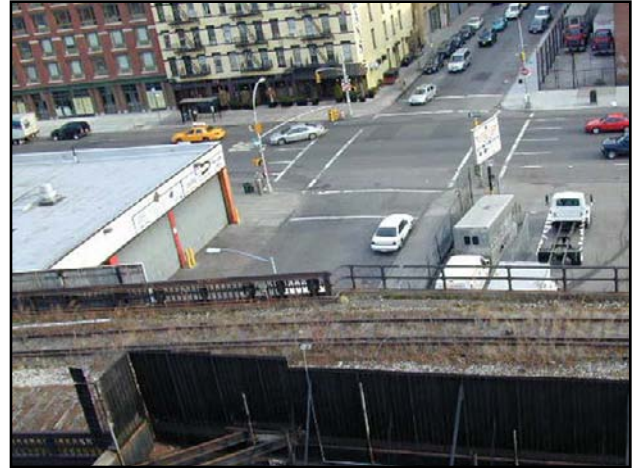
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Figure 8-16

Visual Resource 11: The High Line



The High Line penetrates the Chelsea Market building underneath an elevated pedestrian connection, (northeast view, Tenth Avenue at W. 15th Street)



A view from a building adjacent to the High Line (facing eastward onto the intersection of Tenth Avenue and W. 19th Street.)



A view of the High Line as stands above a two-story building (facing northeast at W. 30th Street just to the west of Eleventh Avenue.)



A view from a building adjacent to the High Line (facing southeast from the north side of W. 25th Street to the west of Tenth Avenue.)



A northward view of the High Line as it traverses W. 26th Street (from just south of W. 26th Street.)

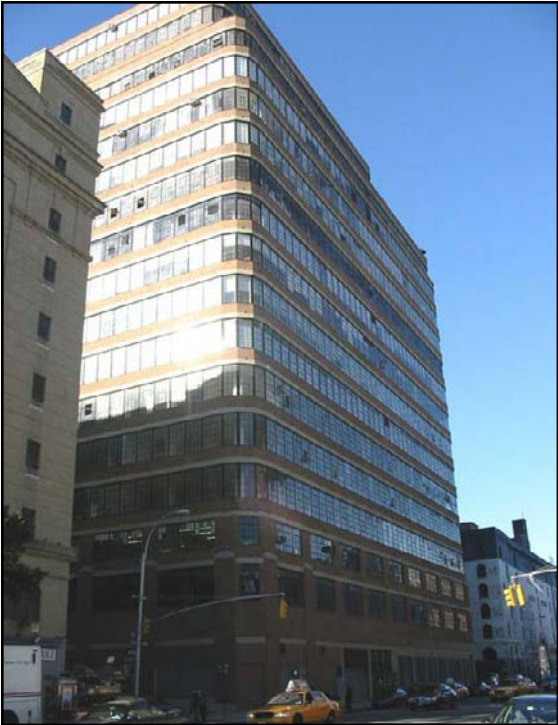


A southward view of the High Line as it traverses W. 24th Street to the west of Tenth Avenue.

Images courtesy of Field Operations and Diller + Scofidio + Renfro

SPECIAL WEST CHELSEA DISTRICT REZONING AND HIGH LINE OPEN SPACE EIS

**Figure 8-17
Visual Resources 12-14**



(12) The Starrett-Lehigh Building, facing northwest from W. 26th Street and 11th Avenue.



(13) The Merchants Refrigerating Company Warehouse, facing southwest from W. 18th Street and 10th Avenue.



(14) The Houses at 437-459 West 24th Street, facing north from West 24th Street.

Table 8-1, Visual Resources in the West Chelsea Study Area

Key #	Resource Name	Location	Resource Description ⁽¹⁾	Description of Views
1	Hudson River	Situated along the west side of Manhattan	River situated along the west side of Manhattan, that divides it from the eastern coast of New Jersey	Visible from most points along the waterfront; generally from along east-west streets that reach the waterfront, from Tenth Avenue and points westward.
2	Hudson River Park	Bounded by Bank St., W. 38th St., Hudson River, and Route 9A (Twelfth Avenue), inclusive of piers	Bikeway, walkway, benches, lawns, performance space (HRPT)	Visible from immediate surroundings; plantings and lawns visible from east-west streets that reach the waterfront, from Tenth Avenue and points westward.
3	Chelsea Park	Bounded by W. 28th St., Ninth and Tenth Avenues	Park containing ball fields, basketball courts, benches, and playground equipment (NYCDPR)	Visible from immediate surroundings.
4	Chelsea Waterside Park/ Thomas F. Smith Park	Bounded by W. 23rd St. and Route 9A (Twelfth Avenue)	Park containing soccer field, basketball courts, paved walkways, benches, sprinkler area, picnic tables, fences, rock landscaping, trees, planters, lighting, and a dog run (HRPT)	Visible from immediate surroundings; long views available along W. 23rd Street from Ninth Avenue westward; and long northwest views from along Route 9A from W. 14th Street northward; offers views of the Hudson River and Hudson River Park.
5	14th Street Park	Bounded by W. 14th and W. 15th Sts., 10th Avenue, and Route 9A (Twelfth Avenue)	Benches, trees, lawn (HRPT)	Visible from its immediate surroundings; offers views of the Hudson River and Hudson River Park.
6	Chelsea Historic District	Area generally bounded by W. 19th and W. 23rd Sts., Eighth and Tenth Avenues	All or part of eight blocks featuring Greek Revival and Italianate row house buildings, as well as other building styles, that were built in the 1830-1870s (NYCL, S/NR listed)	Visible from immediate surroundings.

* Denotes that resource is visible from, but is not located within, the West Chelsea study area.

⁽¹⁾ NYCL - Resource is a designated NYC Landmark, S/NR - Resource appears on the State/National Register of Historic Places, S/NR eligible - Resource declared eligible for S/NR designation, NYCDPR - Resource is under the jurisdiction of the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation, HRPT - Resource is under the jurisdiction of the Hudson River Park Trust.

Table 8-1, Visual Resources in the West Chelsea Study Area (Continued)

Key #	Resource Name	Location	Resource Description ⁽¹⁾	Description of Views
7	Greenwich Village Historic District	Area generally bounded by W. 13th and Washington Streets, University Place, and St. Luke's Place.	Approximately 100 blocks containing rowhouses, townhouses, and apartments built in the 19th century onward, representative of the growth of Greenwich Village (NYCL, S/NR listed)	Visible from immediate surroundings.
8	Gansevoort Market Historic District	Area generally bounded by W. 15th, Hudson, Horatio, and Washington Streets.	Approximately 150 buildings where building architecture and adaptive use reflect the growth of the meat market in NYC history; also features Belgian block paving on streets (NYCL)	Visible from immediate surroundings.
9*	Empire State Building	350 Fifth Avenue at 34th Street	Art deco skyscraper constructed 1929-1931; features a popular observation deck with aluminum reliefs, a German marble lobby; exemplary of the popularity of skyscraper construction during the 1920s and 1930s; widely regarded as a signature symbol of New York City (NYCL, S/NR Listed)	Building base visible from immediate surroundings; short and long views of the upper portions of the building are generally available from wherever building heights allow street-level public views, approximately a mile away in all directions, especially along wider thoroughfares.
10*	Midtown Manhattan	Bounded roughly by 59th and 34th Sts., Third and Eighth Avenues	Area characterized by clusters of tall commercial buildings; commonly regarded a trademark of the Manhattan skyline	Buildings visible from immediate surroundings; short and long views are available from wherever building heights allow street-level public views, approximately a mile away in all directions, especially along wider thoroughfares.
11	The High Line	Bounded roughly by Gansevoort St., W. 30th St., Tenth and Eleventh Avenues	Elevated rail line, once used for freight but currently not in use (S/NR eligible), that is approximately 1.5 miles in length	Visible from east-west thoroughfares from Gansevoort Street to W. 30th St., generally in the vicinity of Ninth Avenue and westward.

* Denotes that resource is visible from, but is not located within, the West Chelsea study area.

⁽¹⁾ NYCL - Resource is a designated NYC Landmark, S/NR - Resource appears on the State/National Register of Historic Places, S/NR eligible - Resource declared eligible for S/NR designation, NYCDPR - Resource is under the jurisdiction of the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation, HRPT - Resource is under the jurisdiction of the Hudson River Park Trust.

Table 8-1, Visual Resources in the West Chelsea Study Area (Continued)

Key #	Resource Name	Location	Resource Description ⁽¹⁾	Description of Views
12	Starrett-Lehigh Building	Building encompassing entire block bounded by W. 26th and W. 27th Sts., Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues	19-story freight terminal, office, and warehouse building built in 1930-1931, featuring horizontal steel ribbon windows that alternate with brick spandrels and concrete floorplates (NYCL, S/NR eligible)	Visible from immediate surroundings; long views available along W. 26th and W. 27th Streets from approximately Seventh Avenue and westward; long views from many upland intersections within a half-mile radius of the building (building heights permitting), and long views available along Route 9A (Twelfth Avenue) approximately 1-2 miles to the north and south.
13	Merchants Refrigerating Company Warehouse	Building encompassing entire block bounded by W. 16th and W. 17th Sts., Tenth and Eleventh Avenues	11-story, trapezoidal-shaped warehouse building constructed in 1916-1918, featuring a reinforced concrete interior and a buff-colored brick, terra cotta, granite, and cast stone Renaissance revival style exterior (S/NR listed)	Visible from immediate surroundings; long views available along W. 16th, W. 17th Streets from Ninth Avenue westward; long views available for a half mile to the north and south along Tenth and Eleventh Avenues.
14	Houses at 437-459 West 24th Street	437-459 W. 24th St. between Ninth and Tenth Avenues	A row of 12 paired, 3-story Greek Revival/ Italianate brick residences constructed in 1849-1850, featuring landscaped front yards (NYCL, S/NR listed)	Visible from immediate surroundings.

* Denotes that resource is visible from, but is not located within, the West Chelsea study area.

⁽¹⁾ NYCL - Resource is a designated NYC Landmark, S/NR - Resource appears on the State/National Register of Historic Places, S/NR eligible - Resource declared eligible for S/NR designation, NYCDPR - Resource is under the jurisdiction of the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation, HRPT - Resource is under the jurisdiction of the Hudson River Park Trust.

C. FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTION (NO-ACTION)

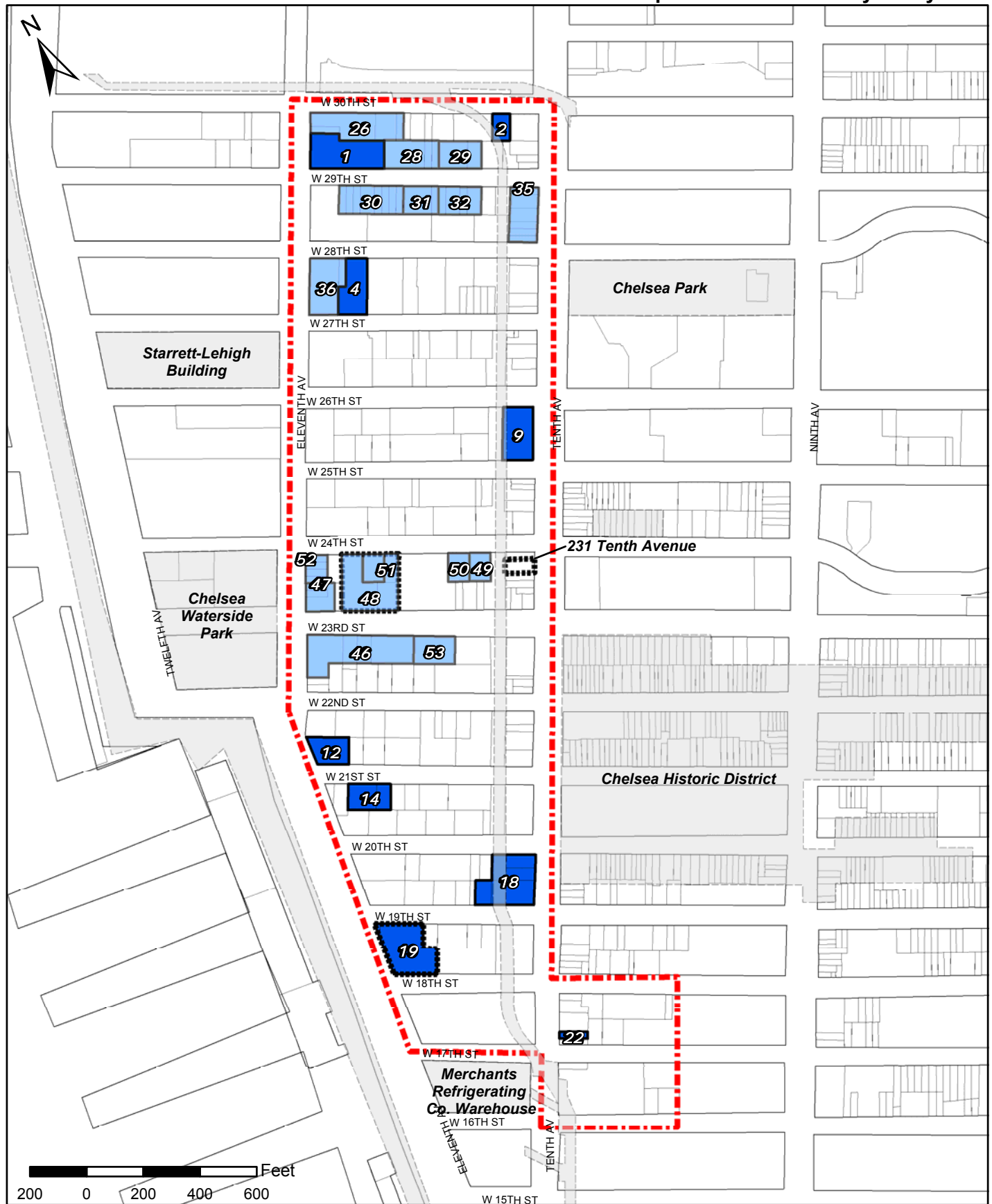
In the future without the proposed action, it is anticipated that the zoning controls in the study area that exist presently would remain in place. As discussed in Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy,” nominal growth is expected for light manufacturing uses in the primary study area. Hotel development and commercial conversions, including the creation of gallery and office space, are anticipated to comprise the majority of development in the future without the proposed action. As a result, there would be no substantial change in urban design conditions or views of visual resources in the future without the proposed action in the primary study area. As discussed in this section, some as-of-right and Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA)-approved conversions and developments are expected to occur within the primary and secondary study area, including development on some of the projected development sites included in the Reasonable Worst Case Development Scenario (RWCDS) furnished by the NYC Department of City Planning (DCP).

Of the 25 projected No-Action development sites in the RWCDS, DCP has identified 9 sites which are expected to be developed, converted, or reactivated in the future without the proposed action. Of these 9 sites, 1 site is expected to undergo reactivation of existing vacant buildings, 5 would feature conversion of existing buildings to new uses, and 3 would feature new construction compliant with existing zoning in the future without the proposed action. For analysis of urban design and visual resources in the future without the proposed action, only those sites that would accommodate new above-ground construction would be analyzed in depth.

Of the 28 potential No-Action development sites in the RWCDS, DCP has identified ~~16~~ 11 sites which are expected to undergo conversion to retail, office, and residential use. Of the ~~16~~ 11, ~~seven~~ eight (plus a portion of a ninth site) sites are expected to convert to residential and retail use and would undergo expansion and above-ground construction compliant with existing FAR. These ~~seven~~ sites are located within the W. 23rd Street Corridor subarea of the primary study area, and are discussed below. The locations of both the projected and the potential development sites are illustrated in Figure 8-18.

Developments in the secondary study area, including those resulting from the recently adopted Hudson Yards Rezoning, are also analyzed below for impacts on urban design and visual resources. In the following section, those No-Action developments denoted with numbers are done so in consistency with the RWCDS table provided in Chapter 1. No-Action developments denoted with letters are consistent with their discussion in Table 2-3 of Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy.”

No-Action Developments in the Primary Study Area



Legend:

- Primary Study Area (Proposed Action Area)
- No-Action Developments Already Under Construction
- RWCDs No-Action Projected Sites
- RWCDs No-Action- Potential Sites
- Visual Resources (See Figure 8-12)

Figure prepared by
Philip Habib &
Associates

Urban Design

Overview

In the future without the proposed action, With-Action-projected developments and No-Action development sites are expected to include site-specific improvements in the visual quality of the primary and secondary study areas. Overall conditions within the primary study area are expected to remain essentially unchanged given the modest number and distribution of these developments throughout the study area. However, within the secondary study area, the Hudson Yards subarea and a nearby portion of the West Chelsea waterfront are expected to undergo significant changes to urban form, ultimately creating a different context that frames the northern edge of the proposed action area. No changes to street hierarchy, street pattern, block form, building arrangement, natural features, nor topography are anticipated within the primary and secondary study areas in the future without the proposed action.

Primary Study Area (Proposed Action Area)

Northern Rezoning Area

In the 2013 future without the proposed action, several conversions and renovations of vacant buildings would occur within the Northern Rezoning Area. Sites 1, 4, and 9, the locations of which are depicted in Figure 8-18, would undergo conversion from storage/manufacturing and community facility uses to retail and office uses. Site 2 would involve the renovation of a vacant building at 502-504 W. 30th Street to create retail and office use. In addition, two new commercial buildings, each containing gallery/retail, office, and art studio space, are expected on other sites. At 520 W. 27th Street, a new approximately 135-foot tall development is planned to replace the existing 4-story building. At 543 W. 25th Street, a 20-story building currently under construction is replacing a parking lot.

The urban design of the Northern Rezoning Area is expected to improve slightly due to site-specific improvements, such as the occupancy of vacant buildings and conversion to more active uses from storage use, but overall would remain similar to existing conditions.

West 23rd Street Corridor

There are no projected developments in the W. 23rd Street Corridor in the 2013 future without the proposed action. However, there are seven eight whole and one partial potential sites, of which one is currently under construction, that could be developed in the future without the proposed action. In general, these developments would be as of right in the existing mixed M1-5/R8A and M1-5/R9A zoning designations that exist in this area.

Sites 46 currently contains the U-Haul facility along the south side of W. 23rd Street, and it could potentially be developed up to an FAR of 7.5 for combined retail and residential uses. Site 47, which currently contains one 3-story and two single-story buildings, could also be developed up to an FAR of 7.5 with combined retail and residential use.

The buildings slated for Sites 48 and 51, located on the northernmost block of the subarea, are under construction and, when complete, would have high lot coverage and high streetwalls, creating visual continuity with the large, 15-story residential building directly to the east.

Potential sites 49, 50, and 52, located along the south side of W. 24th Street, currently contain one- to three-story buildings used for light industrial and automotive-related uses. In the future without the proposed action, these sites could potentially be developed with maximum FARs of 6.0, creating significantly larger structures on these sites.

On Site 53 the existing 127,573 sf of storage/manufacturing floor area could potentially be redeveloped into 75 DUs and 12,886 sf of ground floor retail.

A portion of Site 42 at the corner of W. 23rd Street and Tenth Avenue, presently occupied by 3,285 sf of auto-related uses, could contain 104 DUs and 9,000 sf of retail under No-Action conditions.

Currently under construction at 231 Tenth Avenue is a 14-story residential building with a high streetwall. The location of this No-Action development is also depicted in Figure 8-18.

Two smaller developments on the north side of W. 23rd Street, at 519 W. 23rd Street and 559 W. 23rd Street, are planned for the primary study area and together would provide 17 DUs. These buildings will infill the area's development pattern providing a more unified streetwall.

The urban design of the W. 23rd Street Corridor, in the future without the proposed action, has the potential for significant change at the sites that presently contain low-rise uses. However, the potential developments slated for these sites, as well as the planned developments on other sites, have bulk and form similar to the recently constructed residential buildings along the W. 23rd Street Corridor, and as such, would grant the area a more consistent character.

Southern Rezoning Area

Within the Southern Rezoning Area, new above-ground construction is expected at Sites 14, 18, and 19, the locations of which are depicted in Figure 8-18. Site 14, located at 540-542 W. 21st Street, currently contains two single-story buildings used for commercial and automotive use. In the future without the proposed action, it is anticipated that the buildings would be expanded in accordance with existing zoning to expand the buildings to create a larger, taller structure pursuant to the existing M1-5 zoning. The site would then contain approximately 67,500 sf of commercial space, for use as the expanded Eyebeam Atelier Gallery. At this site, the existing zoning would yield a bulky, high-streetwall loft building, with no streetwall or setback regulations.

Site 18, located at the eastern terminus of the block bounded by W. 19th and 20th Streets and Tenth and Eleventh Avenues, would involve new construction of 131,100 sf of hotel use and 29,498 sf of retail use compliant with the allowable 5.0 FAR allotted by the existing M1-5

zoning. Given that the site currently contains a single-story 9,200 sf building surrounded by vehicle parking and storage, this projected development is anticipated to dramatically alter this site with the creation of a hotel. The bulk regulations of the existing M1-5 district would also allow a taller building that is setback from the street line.

A ten-story, approximately ~~147,000 sf of office~~ building with 160,000 sf of office and 5,000 sf of retail space at Site 19 is currently under construction along the east side of Twelfth Avenue between W. 18th and W. 19th Streets. The building, designed by Frank O. Gehry Partners, would feature nearly-full lot coverage, with a modest setback mid-height. The building is of a unique, curving shape and would contain facades of translucent sculpted glass. Completion of the building, which would serve as the headquarters of InterActiveCorp, is expected in ~~late 2006~~ 2007.

Southeastern Rezoning Area

One of the seven lots included within Projected Site 22, located at 116 Tenth Avenue, is anticipated to undergo a conversion from community facility use to retail use in the future without the proposed action. As no above-grade construction would be performed at the site, and the conversion is in line with current trends of retail growth in the area, the urban form of the Southeastern Rezoning Area is anticipated to remain similar to existing conditions.

Secondary Study Area (Quarter-Mile Study Area)

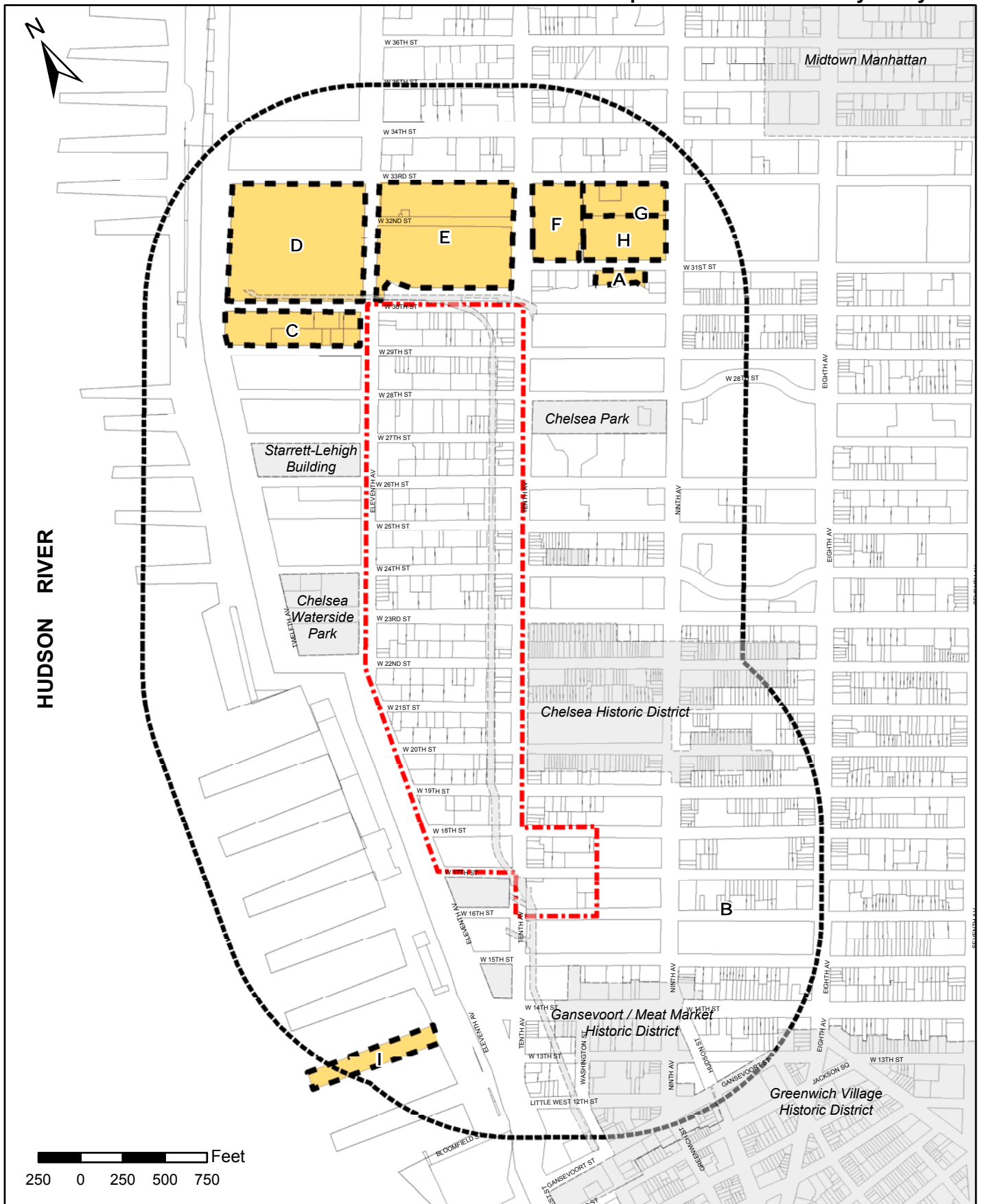
In the secondary study area, DCP has identified ~~11~~ 13 sites that would be developed in the future without the proposed action. These sites are illustrated in Figure 8-19 and are labeled in a manner consistent with their previous discussion in Table 2-3 in Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy.”

Hudson Yards

~~In January 2005 the City DCP is currently proposing~~ adopted a rezoning of the Hudson Yards area, which extends from approximately W. 30th Street to W. 43rd Streets to the west of Seventh and Eighth Avenues. The ~~proposal~~ action seeks to transform the area into a dynamic, transit-oriented urban center, which would create a mix of commercial, residential, open space, cultural, and entertainment uses in medium- to high-density development. ~~The Hudson Yards rezoning proposal is currently under public review, and if the rezoning of Hudson Yards does not occur, little to no development is expected to occur in the area by the 2013 analysis year.~~ Figure 8-20 contains an illustrative bulk rendering of the development to occur in the Hudson Yards area.

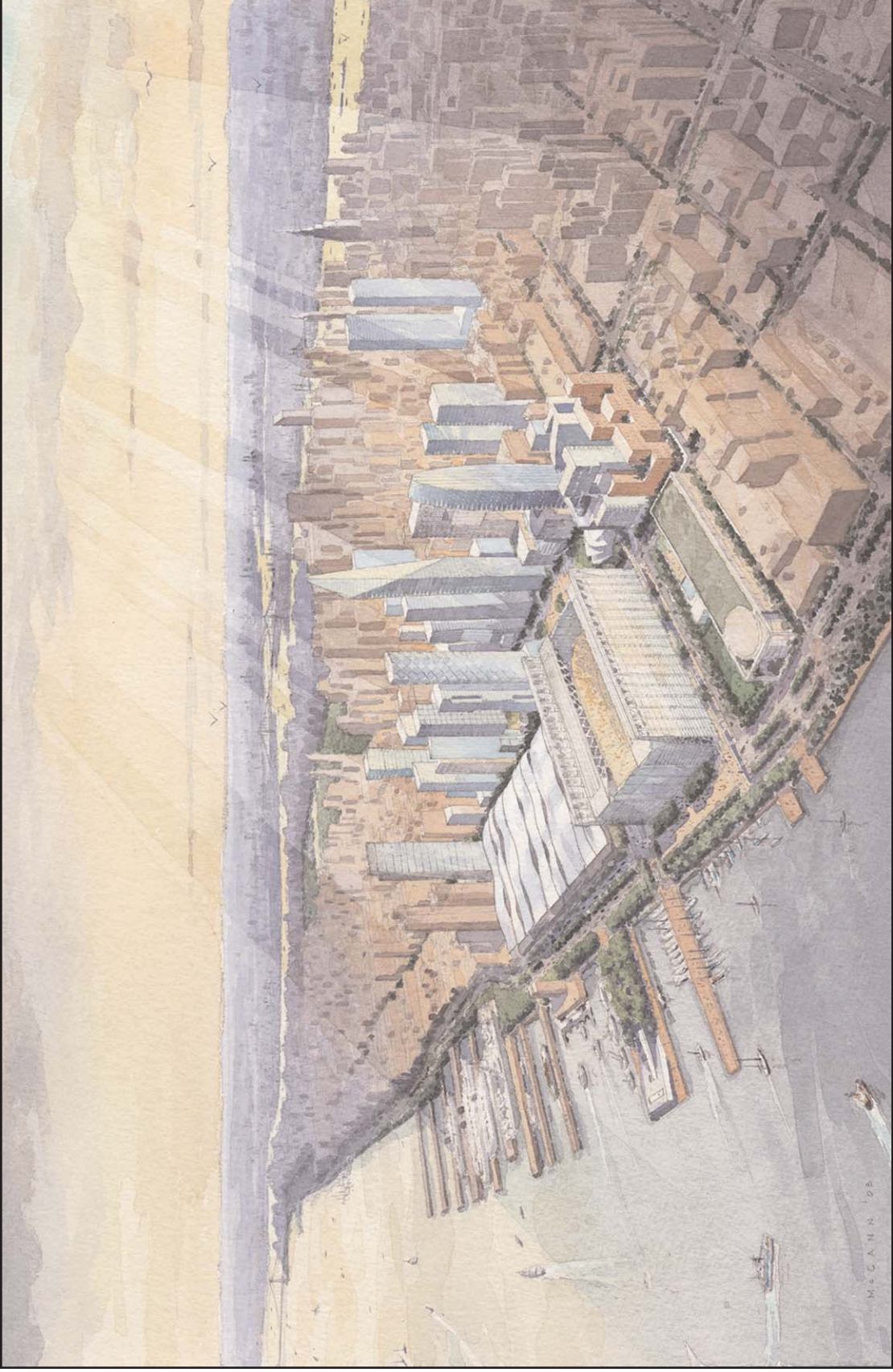
Six sites are anticipated in the Hudson Yards area of the secondary study area in the future without the proposed action. The locations of these sites are shown in Figure 8-19. Site D (the Western Yard), bounded by W. 30th and W. 33rd Streets and Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues, would feature a new multi-use facility with approximately 18,000 sf of permanent meeting room space and the capability to convert into a number of different uses and configurations, including

No-Action Developments in the Secondary Study Area



Legend:

- Primary Study Area (Proposed Action Area)
- Secondary Study Area (1/4-Mile Radius)
- Secondary Study Area No-Build Developments
- Visual Resources (See Figure 8-12)



Source: NYC Department of City Planning

SPECIAL WEST CHELSEA DISTRICT REZONING AND HIGH LINE OPEN SPACE EIS

Figure 8-20
Illustrative Rendering of Hudson Yards Development to the North of West Chelsea

a stadium configuration with a seating capacity of approximately 75,000, an exposition configuration including 180,000 sf of exhibition space, or a plenary hall configuration that provides a maximum seating capacity of approximately 40,000. The site currently contains below-grade rail yards for the MTA Long Island Railroad operations, comprised of a cut and single-story concrete barriers that surround the site at street level. Governed by M2-3 zoning, the future multi-use facility would stand approximately 250 feet high, which significantly increases the bulk and form from that which exists presently.

Site E (the Eastern Yard) is located within what is known as the Large Scale Plan, or Special Hudson Yards Subdistrict A. This area would be rezoned with a maximum allowable FAR of 19.0 for office, residential, hotel, retail, and community facility uses. This sites would feature buildings in the form of skyscraper towers. Site E encompasses the block bounded by W. 30th and W. 33rd Streets and Tenth and Eleventh Avenues, a parcel that currently contains 570,000 sf of open rail yard. By 2013, it is slated to contain a 1,732,650 sf building comprised of approximately 25,000 sf of retail use, 1,507,650 sf of office use, 200,000 sf of community facility use, a 7.5 acre open space, and the existing rail yard would remain active below-grade. The 7.5 acre open space would be developed in line with the Midblock Park and Boulevard System, planned as part of the Hudson Yards rezoning, that would span the mid-block regions from W. 33rd to W. 42nd Street between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues.

Sites A, F, G, and H are located within the Farley Corridor, or Special Hudson Yards Subdistrict B. Site A, located at 406 W. 31st Street, currently contains a 16-story, approximately 325,000 sf industrial building. In the future without the proposed action, the site would be redeveloped or converted to 319,356 sf of community facility/institutional use by 2005, subject to an FAR of 9.0. As such, Site A would not undergo significant change in scale, but would undergo changes in bulk and form. Site F, located at 450 W. 33rd Street, currently contains the Westyard Distribution Building, an approximately 12-story building with subtly concave frontages that stands adjacent to Sites G and H. Sites G and H, located between W. 31st and W. 33rd Streets from Ninth Avenue to the Lincoln Tunnel approach road, currently contain parking lots and open rail cuts. These sites would have a maximum commercial FAR of 19.0 and residential FAR of 4.0, and would contain approximately 3,538,707 sf of office space, 62,799 sf of retail space, and 837 residential DUs. Any new development on these sites would require a platform over the open rail cuts, which would allow active below-grade use of the rail cut. Site F, located at 368 Tenth Avenue, would have a maximum commercial FAR of 18.0 and limited residential FAR. Site F would contain approximately 1,681,314 sf comprised of 827 residential DUs, hotel and office space. The building would be approximately 600 to 800 feet in height. Site G, located at 424 W. 33rd Street, would feature 323 residential DUs, 24,219 sf of retail space and 1,364,724 sf of office space. Site H, located at 361 Ninth Avenue, would contain 514 residential DUs, 38,580 sf of retail space and 2,173,983 sf of office space. Sites F, G, and H would contain similar building bulk and scale.

The Hudson Yards area of the secondary study area is expected to undergo dramatic changes in bulk, scale, use, and form in the 2013 future without the proposed action. Overall, it is

anticipated that these changes would redefine the Manhattan skyline by extending the line of tall buildings westward to the waterfront.

West Chelsea Waterfront

Three developments are anticipated in the West Chelsea waterfront of the secondary study area in the future without the proposed action. The locations of these two sites, Sites C and I, are illustrated in Figure 8-19.

Site C, which encompasses the entire block bounded by W. 29th and W. 30th Streets and Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues, is anticipated to be developed as a 468,000 sf combined facility comprised of a New York Police Department (NYPD) tow pound and a NYC Department of Sanitation (DSNY) garage. The building would be approximately three stories below-grade, and would feature a rooftop open space featuring space for active recreation, such as ballfields. The rooftop open space would be at-grade with Eleventh Avenue and approximately one-story high at Twelfth Avenue. The development at Site C would replace several buildings, ranging from one to three stories in height, that are used for transportation, vehicular storage, and warehouse/storage, maintaining consistency with existing use. The form of the building, however, would differ, given that the proposed facility would exhibit fuller bulk as the entire block would serve as its floorplate. The open space atop Site C would bring new views for its users while tree plantings along the edges of the facility would bring improvements to the surrounding streetscape.

Site I, located at Pier 57 at approximately W. 15th Street and the waterfront, would be developed into an ~~approximately 325,000-350,000-sf mixed-use facility.~~ The preliminary program for “the Leonardo at Pier 57,” as selected includes plans for 26,674 sf of restaurant space; 80,338 sf of retail floor area; 98,703 sf of ballroom floor area; 25,000 sf of office space; 50,783 sf of health club facilities; 43,885 sf of cultural facilities; and a 24-slip marina. ~~containing a mixture of commercial, retail, entertainment, and community facility use, including restaurants, ballrooms, and convention space, as well as 24 slips for marina use.~~ It is also expected to provide approximately 1.06 acres of publicly accessible open space. The structure would be approximately two stories in height, would contain promenade-like features for waterfront views, and would draw pedestrian activity with uses that attract both day- and night-time users. The form of the development at Pier 57 would be in line with the large, bulky form of Chelsea Piers to the north, with different uses that would likely add liveliness to the streetscape as well as allow for waterfront views for visiting pedestrians.

By 2013, the completion of Hudson River Park is expected, inclusive of changes to existing conditions along the Hudson River waterfront in the study area. Renovations to piers would be made and the completion of the western portion of Chelsea Waterside Park (which spans from Pier 62 to Pier 64) which would feature great lawns, groves of trees, and gardens. The plans for the renovations to Hudson River Park are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5, “Open Space.”

By 2013, the full-block Con Edison storage and workout facility between W. 28th and W. 29th Streets may be reconfigured to contain other Con Edison uses, such as an area substation to serve the energy needs of both the West Chelsea and Hudson Yards areas. The exact use of this full-block property is still undetermined at this time.

The overall built character of the West Chelsea waterfront is expected to remain the same as under existing conditions, with site-specific open space and streetscape improvements associated with the three developments adding more appealing elements to the streetscape. In addition, the offerings of Pier 57 are likely to further popularize the waterfront as a pedestrian destination to complement Hudson River Park.

Chelsea

In the Chelsea subarea of the secondary study area, there is one development anticipated in the future without the proposed action. A development at 343 W. 16th Street, identified as Site B in Figure 8-19, is anticipated to yield 19,369 sf of residential floor area by 2005, resulting in a structure larger than the six-story building that exists currently.

Given the interspersed use and wide range of building heights throughout the Chelsea area, this singular development is not anticipated to significantly change the urban design of the Chelsea subarea in the future without the proposed action.

Gansevoort/Meat Market District

A new hotel development is proposed for the west side of Washington Street between Little W. 12th Street and W. 13th Street in the Gansevoort/Meat Market District subarea of the secondary study area in the future without the proposed action. While not yet designed, this structure would likely introduce a different built form and significantly improve the surrounding streetscape with increased pedestrian activity. In addition, two new commercial developments are anticipated on the south side of W. 14th Street between Washington Street and Ninth Avenue. At 440 W. 14th Street (Site K), a vacant industrial building is to be converted to retail and commercial/design studio uses. Nearby, at 450 W. 14th Street (Site J), an existing approximately 30,000 sf vacant industrial building is to be converted and expanded, with 50,000 sf of office and retail space. These reuses of existing vacant buildings would likely enhance the block's visual character and add enliven street activity. Other than ~~the hotel development~~ these developments, the urban design of the area is expected to remain similar to existing conditions, and it is expected that ongoing trends of increasing retail and commercial uses in the area would continue.

Visual Resources

In the future without the proposed action, existing views of visual resources are not expected to undergo substantial change. No views of the visual resources listed in Table 8-1 would be significantly affected in the future without the proposed action.

Primary Study Area (Proposed Action Area)

The development projected to occur in the primary study area is not expected to have substantial effects on views of significant visual resources. Individual developments in the future without the proposed action, such as the development of the InterActiveCorp building, would create site-specific improvements but would not improve overall views of the Hudson River, or the New Jersey skyline.

New developments adjacent to the High Line corridor (Sites 2, 9 and 18) would conform to existing zoning and would not be designed in a manner complementary to the elevated rail. However, given that in the future without the proposed action, the High Line would presumably remain the property of CSX, it would not be publicly accessible, and as such, the form of development around it would be of less consequence.

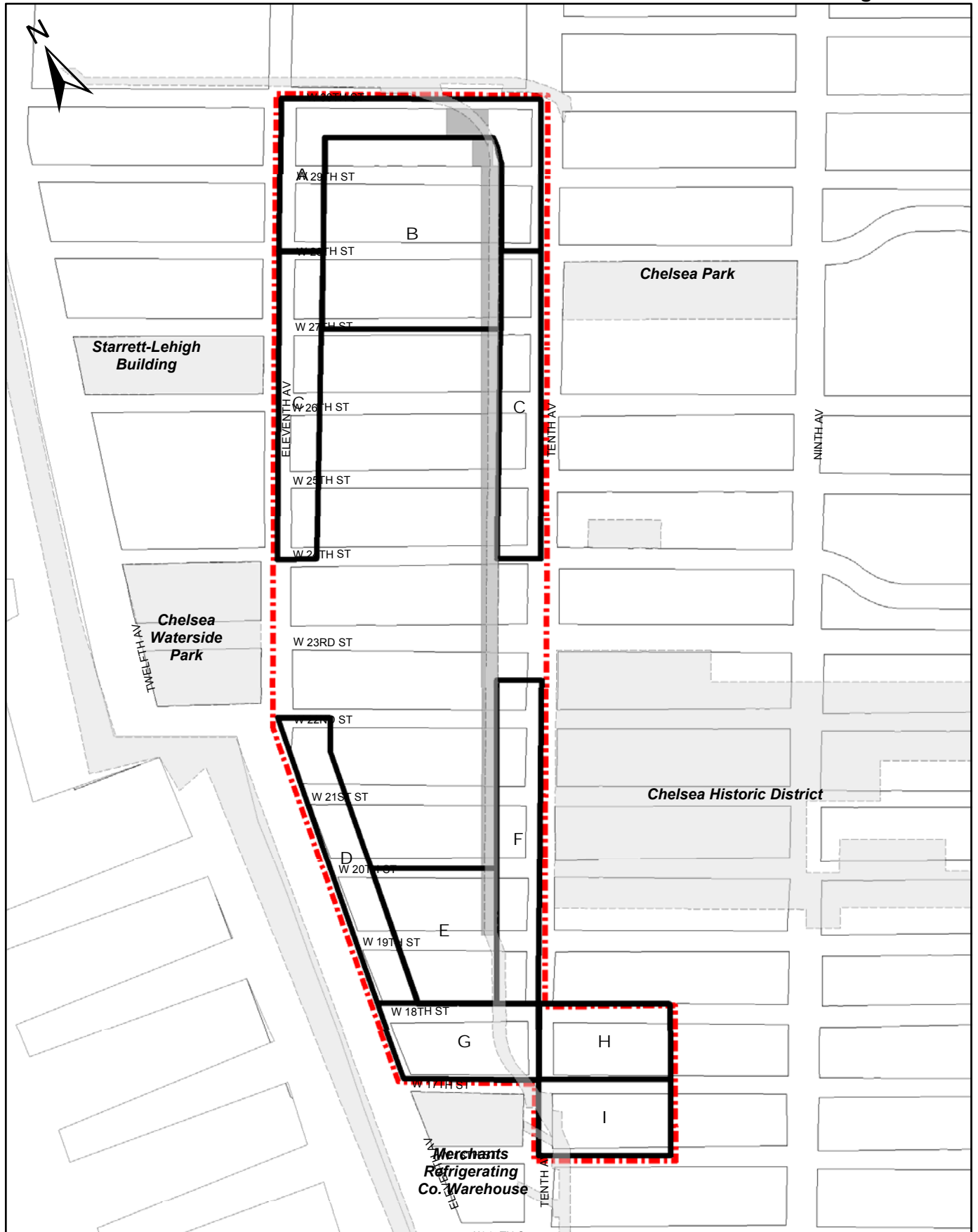
Secondary Study Area

The secondary study area developments would provide site-specific visual improvements, but are not anticipated to have substantial effects on views of visual resources. The development projected to result from the Hudson Yards rezoning to the north would redefine the western boundaries of Midtown Manhattan and also add to the number of buildings that are visible from within both the primary and secondary study areas. The redevelopment of Pier 57 and the Hudson River Park open space and pier improvements are anticipated to improve the visual quality of their surroundings and are not anticipated to impact views of the Hudson River. The new programming at the waterfront piers would also increase the number of publicly accessible areas from which users can enjoy vistas of the river and the Midtown Manhattan skyline.

D. FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED ACTION (WITH-ACTION)

In the future with the proposed action, as described in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the Special West Chelsea District would permit the development of residential buildings with ground floor retail along Tenth and Eleventh avenues and the midblocks to the north and south of the rezoning area. The existing M1-5 district would be retained in some of the midblocks, allowing for the further development of arts-related uses without the threat of displacement from new residential development. Bulk regulations would be applied to specific subareas within the West Chelsea Special District, which are illustrated in Figure 8-21 and used for discussion of the primary study area. These regulations would ensure that new development is consistent with the existing built character of West Chelsea and the surrounding neighborhoods.

The proposed action also includes site selection and acquisition actions that would transfer control of the High Line to the City and facilitate the implementation of an open space master plan. The zoning text would allow flexibility in the location of residential and commercial uses within buildings to encourage complimentary development adjacent to the High Line. Bulk regulations



Legend:

- Proposed Action Area
- Rezoning Subareas
- High Line Transfer Corridor
- Visual Resources (See Figure 8-12)

would also ensure that new development preserves views, light, and air for the proposed High Line open space, while reflecting the varied built context of Tenth Avenue.

The development expected to occur in the future with the proposed action on the 25 projected development sites in the RWCDs would produce approximately 4,809 residential dwelling units (DUs), 564,254 sf of retail space; 160,000 sf of office floor area; 76,425 sf of accessory parking for an off-site government use; and 227,564 sf of community facility use. (As discussed in Chapter 1, the proposed action would result in net increases of 4,708 DUs, ~~292,676~~ 195,215 sf of retail space and 198,726 sf of museum space, and net decreases of ~~816,847~~ 796,947 sf of office, 131,100 sf of hotel, ~~40,809~~ 74,818 sf storage/manufacturing, ~~318,580~~ 225,940 sf of parking/auto related uses, and ~~25,064~~ 4,080 sf of vacant space on the 25 projected development sites.) The locations of these sites are illustrated in Figure 8-22. In addition to the aforementioned developments, the site selection and acquisition of the High Line elevated rail line would yield approximately ~~6.7~~ 5.9-acres of open space.

An additional 28 development sites, the locations of which are shown in Figure 8-22, are considered to be less likely to be developed within the foreseeable future, and are thus considered potential development sites. However, as the analysis recognizes that a number of potential sites could be developed under the proposed action, the potential sites are addressed in the EIS for site-specific effects.

Urban Design

Overview

There would be significant and positive changes to the urban design of the Project Area in the 2013 future with the proposed action. The new residential and commercial development allowed by the proposed Special West Chelsea District would replace many of the area's underused lots, occupied by auto-related uses, parking lots and garages. The development of ground floor retail would provide retail services to the new residential population, enhance the area's streetscape, and create additional opportunities for the growth of the area's art galleries. The form of new developments would include lower-street wall residential buildings, high streetwall, loft-like forms, and tower-on-a-base buildings. The built form would be responsive to the existing distinctive character of West Chelsea and the surrounding neighborhoods, and planned development in Hudson Yards to the north.

The High Line rail line would also be transformed in the future with the proposed action by 2013. The existing, unused rail viaduct would become a unique, linear, elevated open space. Access would be provided throughout the special district in new developments and along public rights-of-way. Approximately thirteen stairway and/or elevator locations for public access to the High Line open space are likely to be provided along the length of the High Line, from Gansevoort Street to W. 30th Street. These locations, which are illustrated in Figure 8-23 and discussed within each subarea, would provide access to a unique, approximately ~~6.7~~ 5.9 acre open space amenity.

Locations of With-Action RWCDs Projected and Potential Development Sites

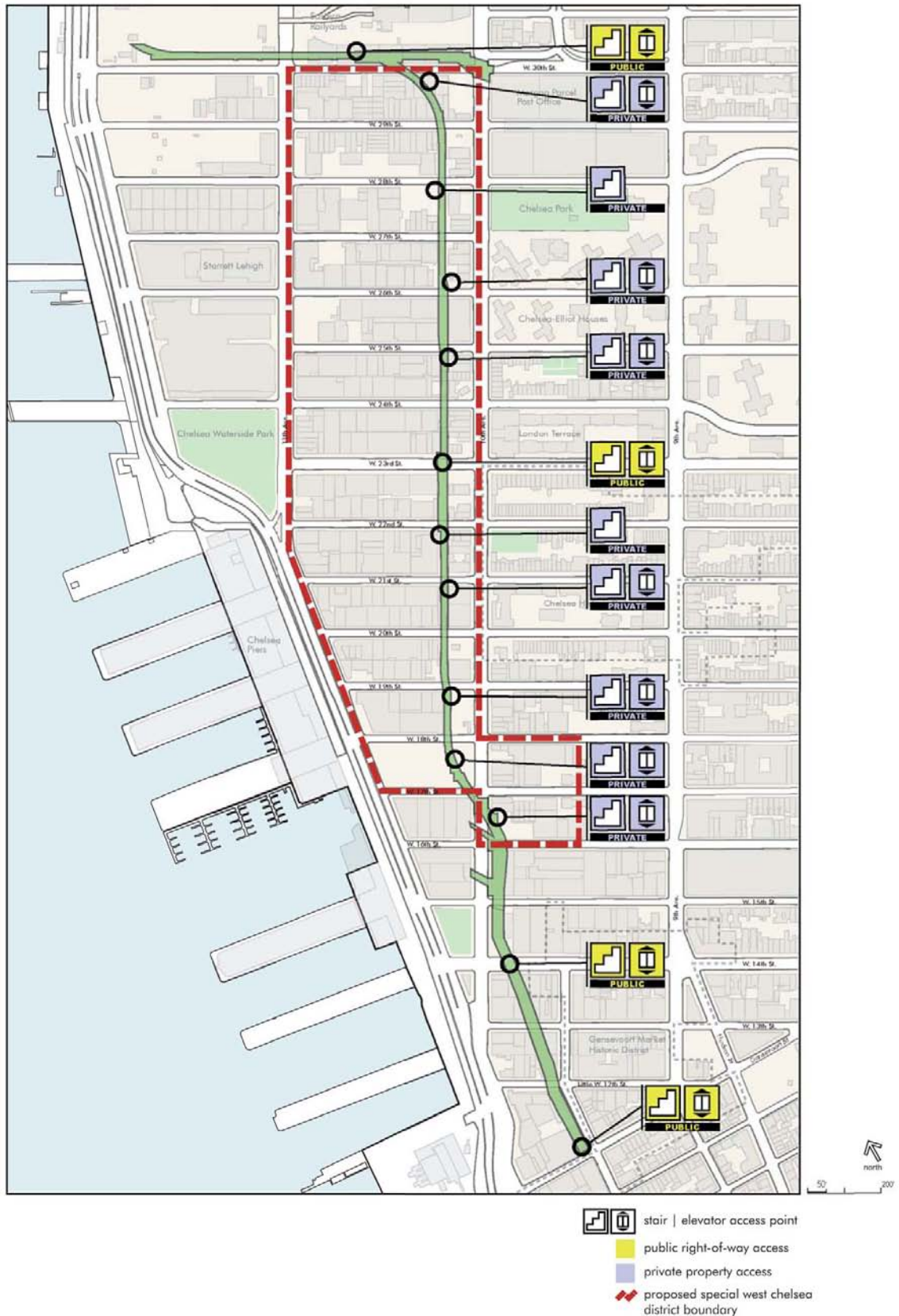


Legend:

- Visual Resources (See Figure 8-12)
- RWCDs With-Action Projected Sites
- Primary Study Area (Proposed Special District)
- RWCDs With-Action Potential Sites

Figure prepared by Philip Habib & Associates

**Figure 8-23
Estimated High Line Access Locations**



Source: NYC Department of City Planning, June 2004

Overall, the proposed action is not anticipated to affect the street hierarchy, street pattern, block form, natural features, nor topography in the primary and secondary study areas. Building arrangement is anticipated to become more homogeneous, given the decrease of automotive uses and lots with small, low-coverage buildings of varied placement and the increase of developments that would feature larger, higher structures.

Below, discussion of the proposed action includes those zoning requirements that would impact urban design. The full zoning text can be found in Chapter 1, “Project Description.”

Primary Study Area (Proposed Action Area)

Northern Rezoning Area

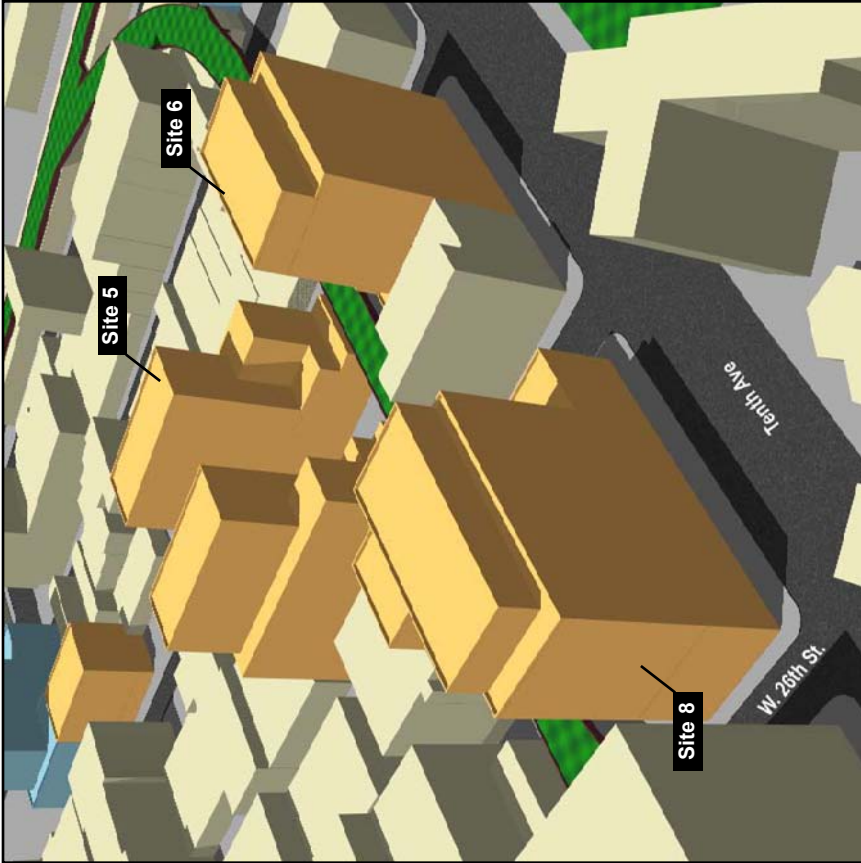
The Northern Rezoning Area, which includes Subareas A, B, and C, and the midblock area to remain M1-5, would contain 11 projected and 16 potential developments in the future with the proposed action. Bulk renderings of projected developments in the Northern Rezoning Area are provided in Figure 8-24.

Subarea A

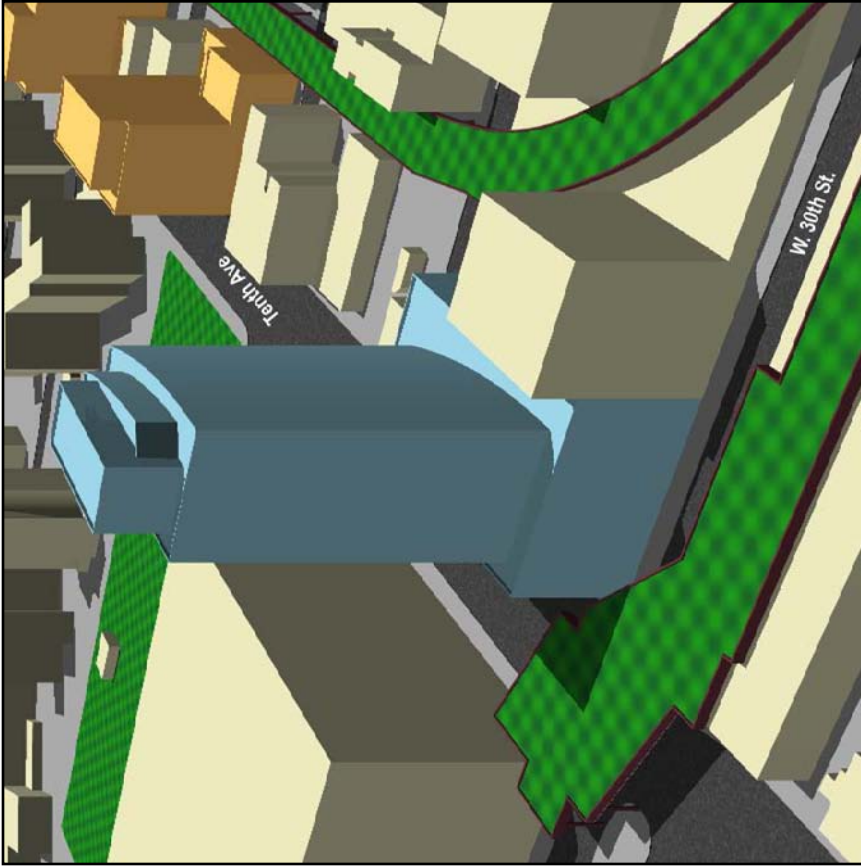
Sites: The existing 10-story loft building on Projected Development Site 1 would be converted from manufacturing and storage use to residential use. One to six-story buildings on Projected Development Site 2 would be replaced with a new residential building. The new development would have a 60 foot streetwall, and a tower, with an overall height of approximately 280 feet. The new building would also be located adjacent to the High Line, and would contain two levels of retail, with the first level fronting on Tenth Avenue, and a portion of the second level fronting directly on the High Line open space. Projected Development Site 3 would involve the replacement of an open parking lot and a one-story building with a new residential building with ground floor retail. The building would contain a tower above a 60-foot high base, and an overall height of approximately 295 feet. Potential Development Sites 26, 27, and 35 would feature residential towers above 60-foot high bases with street-level retail. The overall height of the new buildings would range from 240 to 340 feet in height. Potential Development Site 35, like Projected Development Site 2, would contain retail on the first two floors, with a portion of the retail use fronting directly on the High Line open space.

Subarea B

Sites: The six-story loft building on Projected Development Site 4 would be converted from commercial to residential use with street-level retail. Projected Development Site 5 would be improved with a residential building with ground floor retail. The new building, which would replace a mixture of open storage space and one- to three-story buildings, would contain an 85 foot streetwall and a maximum height of 135 feet. At Potential Development Sites 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, residential buildings with street-level retail, standing at a maximum of 135 feet above a 95 foot streetwall, could be developed. Potential Site 29 could involve the residential conversion of an existing 6-story loft building.



View facing northwest at several of the projected development sites along Tenth Avenue.



View facing southeast at Projected Site 2, which would be located at the northern boundary of the proposed Special West Chelsea District.

Source: NYC Department of City Planning

SPECIAL WEST CHELSEA DISTRICT REZONING AND HIGH LINE OPEN SPACE EIS

Illustrative Bulk Rendering: Northern Subarea in the 2013 Future with the Proposed Action **Figure 8-24**

Subarea C

Sites: The auto-related uses on Projected Development Sites 6, 8, and 11 would be replaced with residential buildings with two levels of retail, high streetwalls and total heights ranging from 125 to 145 feet. Retail would front on both Tenth Avenue on the ground floor, and the High Line open space on the second floor. Development Sites 8 and 11 would occupy the entire Tenth Avenue frontage and would also contain a lower, 45-foot high streetwall for approximately 50 feet in width. The lower streetwall would be located at the corner of Tenth Avenue and a narrow street. A portion of Projected Development Sites 7 and 9 would undergo conversion from commercial and storage use to residential and street-level retail use. Potential Development Sites 36, 39, and 41 could be developed with residential buildings with street level retail, high streetwalls and overall height between 125 to 135 feet. Potential Development Site 40 could involve the conversion of the existing loft building from commercial to residential use, with ground floor retail.

Midblock M1-5 District

Sites: The two-story automotive/parking facility on Projected Development Site 10 would be replaced with a museum (community facility) use, with a streetwall of 95 feet, and an overall height of 135 feet.

Five public access locations, containing a stairway, or a stairway and elevator, are estimated to be provided in the Northern Rezoning Area, as pictured in Figure 8-23. One stairway and elevator would be located in conjunction with new open space and commercial development on the Eastern Rail Yard in the Hudson Yards area, on the north side of W. 30th Street. The four other locations would be provided in conjunction with new construction on Development Sites 2, 5, 8 and 11 at W. 30th, W. 28th, W. 26th, and W. 25th Streets.

Assessment

Building Bulk, Use, and Type: As a result of the new development, the built environment of the Northern Rezoning Area would undergo substantial change and improvement. The replacement of auto-related and parking uses with residential buildings would strengthen the existing residential presence along Tenth Avenue. The ground level and, in some cases, two levels of retail uses in new buildings would provide additional opportunities for the location of art galleries, thereby reinforcing the existing art gallery uses in the midblock. The form of new buildings within Subareas B and C, and in the M1-5 district, would compliment the existing high streetwall loft buildings and walk-up apartment buildings in the area. The taller, tower-on-a-base form in Subarea A would also provide a transition to the high density commercial office towers projected in the Hudson Yards area to the north of W. 30th Street. The new High Line open space would also be complimented by new development through the provision of retail uses at the level of the High Line, bulk controls that ensure light, air and views from the High Line, and landscaped open space at the level of the High Line on adjacent lots.

Building Arrangement: New building arrangements within the Northern Rezoning Area would be regular with respect to their placement on blocks and lots.

Block Form and Street Pattern: No changes to block form or street pattern are expected in the Northern Rezoning Area.

Streetscape Elements: The streetscape would be improved with the addition of active retail uses and the removal of auto-related and parking uses. New street trees would be anticipated in conjunction with new residential development.

Street Hierarchy: There would be no changes to street hierarchy in the Northern Rezoning Area.

Natural Features and Topography: There would be no changes to any natural or topographic feature in the Northern Rezoning Area.

West 23rd Street Corridor

The West 23rd Street Corridor contains nine potential development sites slated for construction by the 2013 analysis year.

Sites: As described under No-Action conditions, Potential Development Sites 48 and 51 have already been built in accordance with existing zoning. Potential Development Sites 46, 47, 48, 52, and 53 were also discussed under No-Action conditions, and are anticipated to be built in the near future through as-of-right zoning and thus pose no incremental change from No-Action conditions. Potential Development Site 42, located at the corner of Tenth Avenue and W. 23rd Street, could contain a residential development with street-level retail, with a streetwall of 95 feet and a maximum height of 145 feet. This could significantly increase the bulk at the site, which is currently occupied by a gas station .

One High Line public access location that includes both stairs and elevators could be provided on the south side of W. 23rd Street, as pictured in Figure 8-23, within the public right-of-way.

Assessment

Building Bulk, Use, and Type: In the future with the proposed action, it is anticipated that the W. 23rd Street corridor would undergo an increase in bulk, use, and scale at Potential Site 42. The programs of other potential developments in the area would not change between No-Action and With-Action conditions, and as such, the built character of the area retains the same potential to create a continuity of residential buildings with retail uses at street level as it did under No-Action conditions. As such, the proposed action would have little impact on this corridor.

Building Arrangement: New building arrangements within the Northern Rezoning Area would be regular with respect to their placement on blocks and lots.

Block Form and Street Pattern: No changes to block form or street pattern are expected in the Northern Rezoning Area.

Streetscape Elements: In the future with the proposed action, it is anticipated that any potential development in the W. 23rd Street corridor would provide ground floor retail, helping to enliven the area's streetscape. Consistent with recent residential development in this corridor, street tree plantings are anticipated. The construction of a new residential building with ground floor retail on Potential Development Site 42 would also strengthen this corridor, helping to remove an underused site at the major intersection of W. 23rd Street and Tenth Avenue. These developments would complement the corridor's position as one of the main connections between the waterfront and upland areas. The addition of a public access point to the High Line at W. 23rd Street would further enhance street-level activity.

Street Hierarchy: There would be no changes to street hierarchy in the Northern Rezoning Area.

Natural Features and Topography: There would be no changes to any natural or topographic feature in the Northern Rezoning Area.

Southern Rezoning Area

The Southern Rezoning Area, which includes Subareas D, E, F and G, and the midblocks to remain M1-5, would contain eleven projected and two potential developments in the future with the proposed action. Bulk renderings of projected developments in the Southern Rezoning Area are provided in Figures 8-25 and 8-26.

Subarea D

Sites: Projected Development Site 12 involves the replacement a three-story vacant building with a residential building with ground floor retail. The new development would contain a tower above a 60 foot high base, with an overall height of 275 feet. The development on Projected Development Site 13 would involve the conversion of an existing four-story industrial loft building into a residential building, and the construction of a new residential building with ground floor retail. The new building, which would replace two low-rise buildings, would contain a tower above a 60 foot high base, with a total height of 265 feet. Projected Development Site 14 would involve the development of the Eyebeam Atelier Museum. This development, which would involve the expansion of the existing Eyebeam Atelier Gallery, would represent approximately 20,000 sf over the No-Action conditions. The new building would have a streetwall of 95 feet, and a total height of 125 feet. Projected Development Site 16 would be improved with a residential building with street-level retail, replacing the existing parking lot. The new building would contain a tower above a 60 foot high base, and a total height of 175 feet. The western portion of Projected Development Site 19 is already being developed as the headquarters of InterActiveCorp pursuant to existing zoning.

Subarea E

Sites: The existing one and four story loft buildings on Projected Development Site 17 would be replaced with a residential building with street-level retail. The new building would have a streetwall of 105 feet and an overall height of 120 feet. The eastern portion of Projected Development Site 19 would involve the replacement of a two-story building occupied by a

Illustrative Bulk Renderings: Southern Subarea in the 2013 Future with the Proposed Action



View facing northwest at the projected development sites along the west side of Tenth Avenue.



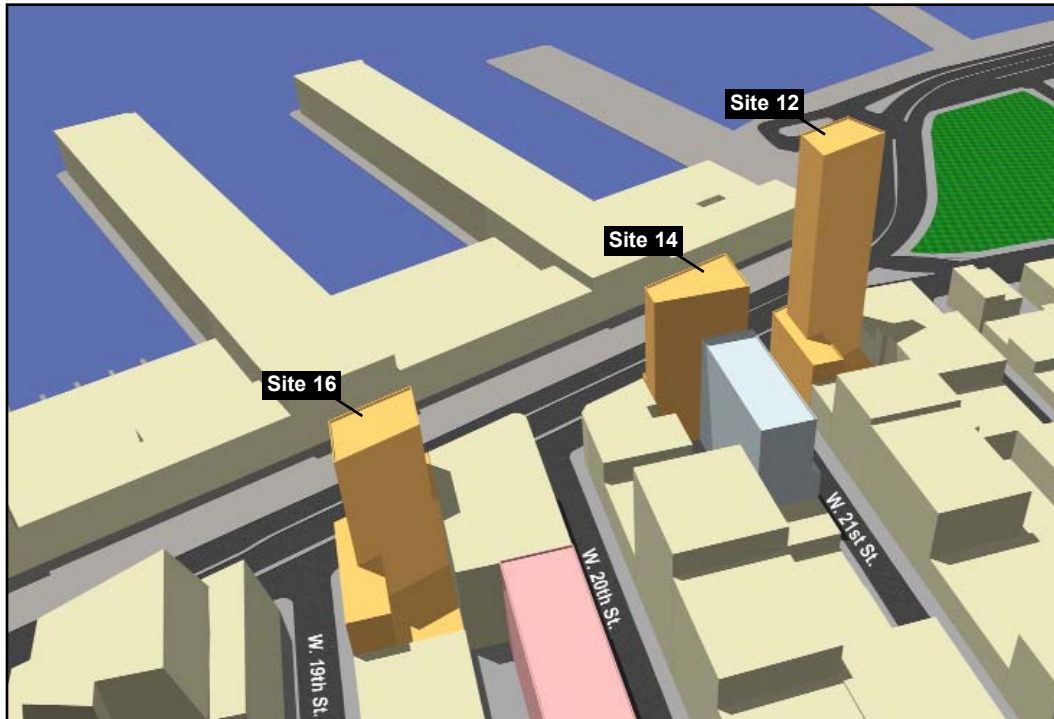
View facing southwest at the southernmost sites within the Southern Rezoning Area.

SPECIAL WEST CHELSEA DISTRICT REZONING AND HIGH LINE OPEN SPACE EIS

Figure 8-26

Illustrative Bulk Renderings:

Southern and Southeastern Subareas in the 2013 Future with the Proposed Action



View facing west at the projected development sites in the Southern Rezoning Area along Eleventh Avenue/Route 9A.



View facing northeast at the projected development sites in the Southeastern Rezoning Area.

Source: NYC Department of City Planning

parking and night club uses with a new residential building with retail uses on the lower floors. The new development would include a 250 foot tower fronting on W. 18th Street, and a four story retail building fronting on W. 19th Street.

Subarea F

Sites: Projected Development Sites 15 and 20 would involve the replacement of single-story buildings and parking lots with new residential buildings with retail located on the first two floors. Projected Development Site 18 would involve a new residential building with ground floor retail. Under the No-Action condition, Site 18 would be improved with an as-of-right hotel development. All three developments would occupy the full block fronts on Tenth Avenue, and would contain full height, 120-foot streetwalls for approximately 75 percent of their frontages. The remaining streetwall frontage on Tenth Avenue would rise no higher than 45 feet. Sites 18 and 20 developments would also contain retail frontage on the High Line.

Subarea G

Sites: The parking use on Projected Site 21, would be redeveloped with a residential development with ground floor retail. The development would contain a streetwall on Eleventh Avenue, W. 17th and W. 18th streets ranging in height between 40 and 85 feet. Two towers would be located above the streetwall base, with one tower totaling 290 feet and the other totaling 390 feet. Off-site parking an adjacent federal agency would also be located in the building's cellar. The High Line is located on the eastern portion of the site, and all development would be located underneath and to the west of the High Line. Public stairs and an elevator would be provided access to the High Line open space, and an at-grade publicly-accessible plaza would be created along the Tenth Avenue frontage, providing a major gateway to the High Line open space.

In addition to the access to the High Line to be provided through the public open space on Projected Development Site 21, as shown on Figure 8-25, three additional High Line access locations, that would be located at private properties, are anticipated to be provided in the Southern Rezoning Area. As shown in Figure 8-23, they are estimated to be located at W. 19th, W. 21st, and W. 22nd Streets.

Assessment

Building Bulk, Use, and Type: As a result of the new development, the built environment of the Southern Rezoning Area would undergo substantial change and improvement. The replacement of auto-related and parking uses on Tenth Avenue with new residential buildings would significantly enhance and strengthen the existing residential uses along Tenth Avenue. The new buildings on Tenth Avenue in Subarea F would contain both high and lower streetwall heights, relating to the varied character along Tenth Avenue of high street loft buildings and lower walk-up apartment buildings and row houses. The lower streetwall would compliment the low-scale buildings in the adjacent Chelsea Historic District. Projected Development Site 18 could represent a significant improvement over the No-Action condition. Under existing zoning regulations, neither a streetwall nor a height limit is mandated. As a result, the hotel

development projected in the No-Action condition could result in a built form that is not consistent with the existing, surrounding built character.

New residential with ground floor retail uses would also replace auto-related and parking uses within Subareas D, E, and G. These developments would allow for the extension of the Chelsea residential community to the west, towards the waterfront. The form of the new buildings would also significantly improve the area and relate to the existing context. The high streetwalls within Subarea E would relate to the many high streetwall loft buildings located on West Chelsea's midblocks, while the slender towers projected for Development Sites 12, 13, 16, 19, and 21 would allow for light and air to reach the midblock areas. The retail provided in the new buildings within Subareas D, E, F and G would create additional opportunities for the location of new art galleries, thereby reinforcing the existing art gallery district in West Chelsea.

The new High Line open space would also be complimented by new development through the provision of retail uses at the level of the High Line, bulk controls that ensure light, air and views from the High Line, and landscaped open space at the level of the High Line on adjacent lots.

Building Arrangement: New building arrangements within the Northern Rezoning Area would be regular with respect to their placement on blocks and lots.

Block Form and Street Pattern: No changes to block form or street pattern are expected in the Northern Rezoning Area.

Streetscape Elements: The streetscape would be improved with the addition of active retail uses and the removal of auto-related and parking uses. New street trees would be anticipated in conjunction with new residential development.

Street Hierarchy: There would be no changes to street hierarchy in the Northern Rezoning Area.

Natural Features and Topography: There would be no changes to any natural or topographic feature in the Northern Rezoning Area.

Southeastern Rezoning Area

The Southeastern Rezoning Area, which would include Subareas H and I, would contain four Projected Development Sites and one Potential Development Site in the future with the proposed action. Bulk renderings of projected and potential developments in the Southeastern Rezoning Area are provided in Figure 8-26.

Subarea H

Sites: Projected Development Site 22 would be developed with a residential building with ground floor retail, replacing the six, one- and two-story commercial buildings on the site. The new building would have a streetwall of 60 feet, and a total height of 120 feet. Projected Site 23 would be developed with a residential building with a streetwall of 85 feet, and an overall

height of 120 feet. This new development would replace the existing three-story and a four-story buildings on the site. Potential Site 45 could be developed with a residential building with a height of 120 feet, an increase of bulk from the 2- and 3-story buildings on the site.

Subarea I

Sites: Projected Development Site 24 would be improved with a residential building with retail on two levels on the western end of the site. The new development would have a streetwall of 60 feet on W. 16th and W. 17th Streets, and a tower of above the base on W. 17th Street. The building's overall height would be 250 feet. Retail would front on Tenth Avenue, and on the High Line, which is located along the eastern edge of the Tenth Avenue. The new building would replace a commercial garden center, and one- and two-story buildings occupied by auto-related, commercial and non-profit uses. Projected Site 25 would be developed into a residential building with a streetwall of 85 feet and an overall height of 140 feet.

A publicly-accessible stair and elevator, providing access to the High Line, could be provided in the Southeastern Rezoning Area, as pictured in Figure 8-23. The access could be located along the east side of Tenth Avenue between W. 16th and W. 17th Streets, in conjunction with the development of Site 24.

Assessment

Building Bulk, Use, and Type: As a result of the new development, the built environment of the Southeastern Rezoning Area would undergo substantial change and improvement. The replacement of one- and two-story commercial buildings and open lots with residential buildings would compliment the two existing residential buildings at the corner of Tenth Avenue at W. 17th Street, as well as the residential buildings to the north on Tenth Avenue. The 60 foot streetwall in the new buildings would relate to the existing residential buildings along Tenth Avenue, while the taller tower on Development Site 24 would compliment the towers of Fulton Houses to the east. The two levels of retail and stair and elevator access on Development Site 24 would also enhance and enliven the new High Line open space.

Building Arrangement: New building arrangements within the Northern Rezoning Area would be regular with respect to their placement on blocks and lots.

Block Form and Street Pattern: No changes to block form or street pattern are expected in the Northern Rezoning Area.

Streetscape Elements: The streetscape would be improved with the addition of active retail uses. The addition of retail along Tenth Avenue between W. 16th and W. 17th streets would provide welcome activity in an area that is currently shaded by the High Line. New street trees would be anticipated in conjunction with new residential development.

Street Hierarchy: There would be no changes to street hierarchy in the Northern Rezoning Area.

Natural Features and Topography: There would be no changes to any natural or topographic feature in the Northern Rezoning Area.

Secondary Study Area (Quarter-Mile Study Area)

The proposed action is not anticipated to result in significant adverse impacts upon the urban design of the Hudson Yards, Chelsea, West Chelsea Waterfront, and Gansevoort/Meat Market District subareas of the secondary study area. The lower density residential development along the west side of Tenth Avenue would provide a transition of scale from the medium density development along Eleventh Avenue and south of W. 18th Street to the lower-scale Chelsea Historic District to the east of Tenth Avenue. New residential and retail uses along Tenth and Eleventh Avenues and along the east-west corridors would foster street-level activity, complimenting the vibrancy found in Chelsea. In addition, the creation of the proposed High Line open space would also serve as an amenity to the communities in the secondary study area, and the creation of public access points at Gansevoort and W. 14th Streets would compliment the vibrant pedestrian activity in the Gansevoort/Meat Market District. By 2013, the large-scale developments slated for the Hudson Yards subarea, mentioned earlier as No-Action sites, would already be in place. These developments would be of a different urban form than the projected developments within the proposed action area and are not anticipated to be affected by the proposed action.

Visual Resources

Primary Study Area (Proposed Action Area)

In the future with the proposed action, views of visual resources within the proposed action area would undergo significant, but not adverse, changes from the development projected by 2013. The High Line elevated rail, the only visual resource located within the primary study area, and the “Venus” mural by Knox Martin, would be affected in the future with the proposed action. As development in the future with the proposed action would be confined to the existing blocks and would not change block form, east-west view corridors would be maintained as they exist presently.

The proposed action includes the site selection and acquisition of the High Line elevated rail by the City in order to implement an open space master plan. The resource would be approximately ~~6.7~~ 5.9 acres of open space, approximately 1.6 miles long, from Gansevoort Street to the intersection of Eleventh Avenue and W. 30th Street. The portion of the High Line that would be acquired also includes several spurs, most notably the post office spur, as detailed in Chapter 1. The High Line has been an iconic feature of the West Chelsea area, visible from nearly every street and yet closed to public access. The Friends of the High Line, a non-profit group dedicated to the preservation and reuse of the line, and the City of New York issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the planning and design of the open space in 2003. The RFP culminated in the selection of a design team, headed by the firm of Field Operations together with the firm of Diller Scofidio + Renfro, that has begun the preliminary design process.

Initial concepts for open space programming include varied spaces for passive use, distinguished by different plantings, seating, water elements, walkways, access points, and art work. The Special West Chelsea District zoning would require that 20 percent of the lot area contain landscaped open space. This requirement would apply to new development adjacent to the east side of the High Line, in effect allowing visual extension of the new open space. Figure 8-27 provides examples of currently-available views from the High Line that would be available to public users in the future with the proposed action. The decorative rails adorning the exterior of the High Line, a signature characteristic of the elevated rail line as it traverses streets, would be preserved in the future with the proposed action.

The height and location of the High Line would provide users unobstructed views along east-west streets, and the Hudson River. Unique views of Manhattan at a height currently available only to private buildings in the area would also be made available to the public.

Bulk regulations governing new developments in the Special West Chelsea District would ensure that development of complimentary scale is fostered adjacent to the High Line. Views from the street corners along Tenth Avenue, which comprise the majority of publicly-accessible views of the High Line, would be preserved through lower streetwall requirements for larger developments. The lower streetwall would also preserve light, views and air for the High Line open space and for midblocks.

SPECIAL WEST CHELSEA DISTRICT REZONING AND HIGH LINE OPEN SPACE EIS

Figure 8-27

Future Publicly Accessible Views from the High Line Open Space



Images courtesy of Field Operations and Diller + Scofidio + Renfro

The design of the thirteen aforementioned public access points to the High Line open space that are anticipated for development in the future are not yet developed. These access points are anticipated not only as a pragmatic provision of entrance and egress along the rail line, but also to diversify the experiences of users who would be able to enter and exit the High Line in different places. These entrances would further the status of the High Line as a signature feature of the visual character of the West Chelsea area.

Secondary Study Area

Views to the visual resources located in the secondary study area from within the primary study area would not be subject to significant change, nor would localized views of these resources. Those resources that were mainly visible from their immediate public surroundings and also via east-west and north-south streets from within the primary study area included the Hudson River, Hudson River Park, Chelsea Park, Chelsea Waterside Park, 14th Street Park, the Chelsea Historic District, the Greenwich Village Historic District, the Gansevoort Market Historic District, and the Houses at 437-459 W. 24th Street. These resources would remain generally unaffected by the proposed action. Certain long views of the larger and taller visual resources, which include the Empire State Building, Midtown Manhattan, the Starrett-Lehigh Building, and the Merchants Refrigerating Company Warehouse would be eliminated. However, given the existing varied built character of the area and the variety of new development which would arise in the future with the proposed action, many views would continue to be available along public thoroughfares within the study area as well as from the High Line open space, where pedestrians can have newfound opportunities to view these resources.

E. BASE FAR SCENARIO

Under the Base FAR Scenario, which is detailed in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the High Line elevated rail would not be acquired by the City, preventing its transformation into an open space. In addition, zoning bonuses and development rights transfer mechanisms associated with the High Line would not be created.

Should the Base FAR Scenario be implemented in lieu of the proposed action, it is anticipated that its effect on the urban design of the study area would be similar to the proposed action, as height and setback regulations associated with the proposed action would remain applicable to new development. However, the maximum allowable FAR for sites adjacent to the High Line would be lowered slightly due to the removal of the aforementioned zoning bonuses, and thus the bulk of new development adjacent to the High Line elevated rail would be reduced. As with the proposed action, the Base FAR Scenario is not expected to result in significant adverse impacts upon the urban design of the study area.

Similarly, the Base FAR Scenario is not expected to result in significant adverse impacts upon the 14 identified visual resources of the study area, nor would it block views to the identified visual

resources from publicly accessible locations. The uniquely linear and elevated open space atop the High Line rail line, and its associated views of other visual resources in the study area, would not be created under the Base FAR Scenario.

F. CONCLUSION

No significant adverse impacts would result from the proposed action. Rather, it is expected to result in positive changes to urban design conditions in the proposed action area and enhanced views to visual resources.

The most appreciable changes would be seen in the building bulk, use, and type, and streetscape elements. The many open parking lots and auto-related uses in West Chelsea would be replaced with predominantly residential buildings with some commercial uses. This new development would allow for the expansion to the west of the vibrant mixed residential and commercial community of Chelsea, address the City's demand for new housing, and create opportunities for the growth of the West Chelsea art gallery district. The replacement of parking lots and other auto uses with new development would enhance the pedestrian and streetscape environment, including pedestrian routes to the Hudson River waterfront. Ground floor retail uses with transparent storefronts along both Tenth and Eleventh avenues would encourage vibrant pedestrian activity. The bulk and type of new buildings, while significantly different from the many small scale auto buildings, would compliment other existing, dominant building types in West Chelsea, including high street loft buildings, walk-up apartment buildings, and the row houses of the Chelsea Historic District. New tower-on-a-base development would also be permitted along the southern, western and northern edges of the Special District. This built form would provide a transition to the existing high density buildings to the south, the higher density development envisioned for the Hudson Yards area to the north, and provide an appropriate edge to the Hudson River waterfront to the west.

The proposed action would also compliment the urban design of the secondary study area and would not result in significant adverse impacts. The residential development with ground floor retail along the south side of W. 30th Street would enhance and frame the new public open space, cultural facility and commercial development envisioned for the Eastern Rail Yards in Hudson Yards. The High Line open space would connect with the new open space on the Eastern Rail Yards, providing a continuous open space system that links Hudson Yards, West Chelsea, and the Gansevoort/Meat Market District. The High Line open space in the Gansevoort/Meat Market District would also provide a public amenity that compliments the area's vibrant retail activity. The bulk regulations would ensure that the new towers are slender, permitting light and air to reach the areas of lower density and bulk along West Chelsea's midblocks and Tenth Avenue.

New development would also compliment the High Line open space. Retail uses would be located on the second floor of some of the new developments, enhancing the High Line open space with complimentary commercial activity. Portions of buildings would be required to setback from the High Line, ensuring that light and air reach the open space, and that views to the east of Chelsea and

Midtown are preserved. New developments along Tenth Avenue would also be required to provide landscaped open space along the edge of the High Line, serving to visually extend the open space experience.

No significant adverse impacts on visual resources are anticipated as a result of the proposed action. The proposed action would not significantly block views to identified visual resources from publicly accessible locations. The proposed conversion of the High Line to public open space would create new, enhanced views of the Hudson River and Manhattan skyline. The High Line elevated rail line, an existing historic and visual resource, would be significantly improved through its conversion into a unique public open space.