

## 3.6 URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

### 3.6.1 Introduction

This Section describes the methodology used to analyze the proposed project's effects on urban design and visual resources. The *CEQR Technical Manual* defines the following elements as collectively forming an area's urban design: block form and street pattern; building arrangement; building bulk, use, and type; streetscape elements; street hierarchy; and topography and natural features. Visual resources are defined as unique or important public view corridors, vistas, or natural or built features. Visual resources can include views of the waterfront, public parks, landmark structures or districts, or natural resources.

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, an assessment of urban design is warranted when a project would result in a building or structure substantially different in height, bulk, form, setback, size, scale, use or arrangement than exists; or if the project would change the block form, street hierarchy, affect street walls, curb cuts, pedestrian activity or other streetscape elements, or if an existing street would be demapped or a new street mapped. An analysis of visual resources is appropriate when new above-ground development would occur or when changes in the bulk of above-ground development are proposed in an area that includes significant visual resources.

At the preferred and alternative Shaft Sites, Shaft 33B is anticipated to result in changes to the streetscape during construction and once completed (i.e., a temporary construction enclosure during construction; up to two permanent hydrants and an air vent once Shaft 33B is completed and operational). Therefore, an analysis of urban design and visual resources was conducted for these sites. The technical analysis follows the guidance of the *CEQR Technical Manual*. The analysis focuses on the streetscape and views to surrounding visual resources, as these are the elements that could be affected by the project.

Construction of the water main connections would occur completely in the street and sidewalk areas. This construction could temporarily affect streetscape elements and the visual quality of the surrounding area, although construction would only occur for short periods of time (i.e., 1 to 5 months) in any one location. An analysis of the effects of water main construction on urban design and visual resources was therefore conducted. During operation, the water main connections would have no above-ground features or other associated above-ground operational activities. Therefore, no impacts to urban design or visual resources are expected to occur as a result of the operation of the water main connections, and a detailed urban design and visual resources analysis was not conducted.

The Study Areas for the analyses of urban design and visual resources were the areas within a 400-foot radius of each of the construction areas, including the preferred and alternative Shaft Sites and the water main connections routes.

### **3.6.2 Existing Conditions Methodology**

For each Study Area, data were collected on existing urban design and visual resources, focusing on those elements closest to the preferred and alternative Shaft Sites. Views toward the Shaft Sites from the surrounding area were particularly noted. The data for the analysis were collected through field surveys and in coordination with other EIS analyses.

### **3.6.3 Future Conditions Without the Project Methodology**

Information obtained in the analyses of land use and community facilities was used to assess any potential changes to the urban design and visual resources of Study Areas in the Future Without the Project.

### **3.6.4 Future Conditions With the Project Methodology**

Using the Future Without the Project as a baseline, the project's effects on urban design and visual resources were then evaluated. This included consideration of changes to the streetscape at the Shaft Sites and water main connection routes, possible effects to the visual quality of the surrounding area, and impacts to views of surrounding visual resources.

