

Access to Opportunity:

A Transportation and Housing Study
in the Eastern Rockaways

Final Report

March 2019

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Executive Summary

This final report for Access to Opportunity: A Transportation & Housing Study in the Eastern Rockaways, summarizes the work of nearly three years of community outreach, existing conditions analysis, interagency coordination, and street design development in order to improve access to jobs, education, health care, and other services for Eastern Rockaways residents.

Knowing that other agencies, including the Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency, the Economic Development Corporation, the Department of City Planning, and the US Army Corps of Engineers, were in the midst of separate, long-term studies and projects to address the impacts of climate change on this coastal region, the New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT) – and its co-applicant, the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) – won a US DOT Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) planning grant to align transportation projects with long-term land-use investments and improve multimodal access to goods, jobs, and services for Eastern Rockaways residents in the interim.

NYC DOT worked with residents, community representatives, interagency partners, and elected officials through a variety of meetings, workshops, and on-street engagements to have local knowledge inform the Access to Opportunity study at its every stage.

Building from that public input process, the study team generated seven short-term street improvement plans to be implemented by the agency through its Street Improvement Project program within five years or less.

In addition, this report presents nine visions for long-term improvements within the Eastern Rockaways to guide interagency collaboration and future investments in the region. Conceptual designs developed as part of the community's long term vision are likely to require significant investment in infrastructure, so the study team estimated order-of-magnitude costs for capital work to assist future planning efforts.

Both short-term and long-term plans are not final, but are refined recommendations that can be adapted to address additional public input and any changing roadway conditions. NYC DOT will return to community stakeholders, including the Community Board, before implementing any of the plans within this report.



Rockaway Beach Blvd & Beach 96 St prior to SBS implementation (June 2016)

Introduction

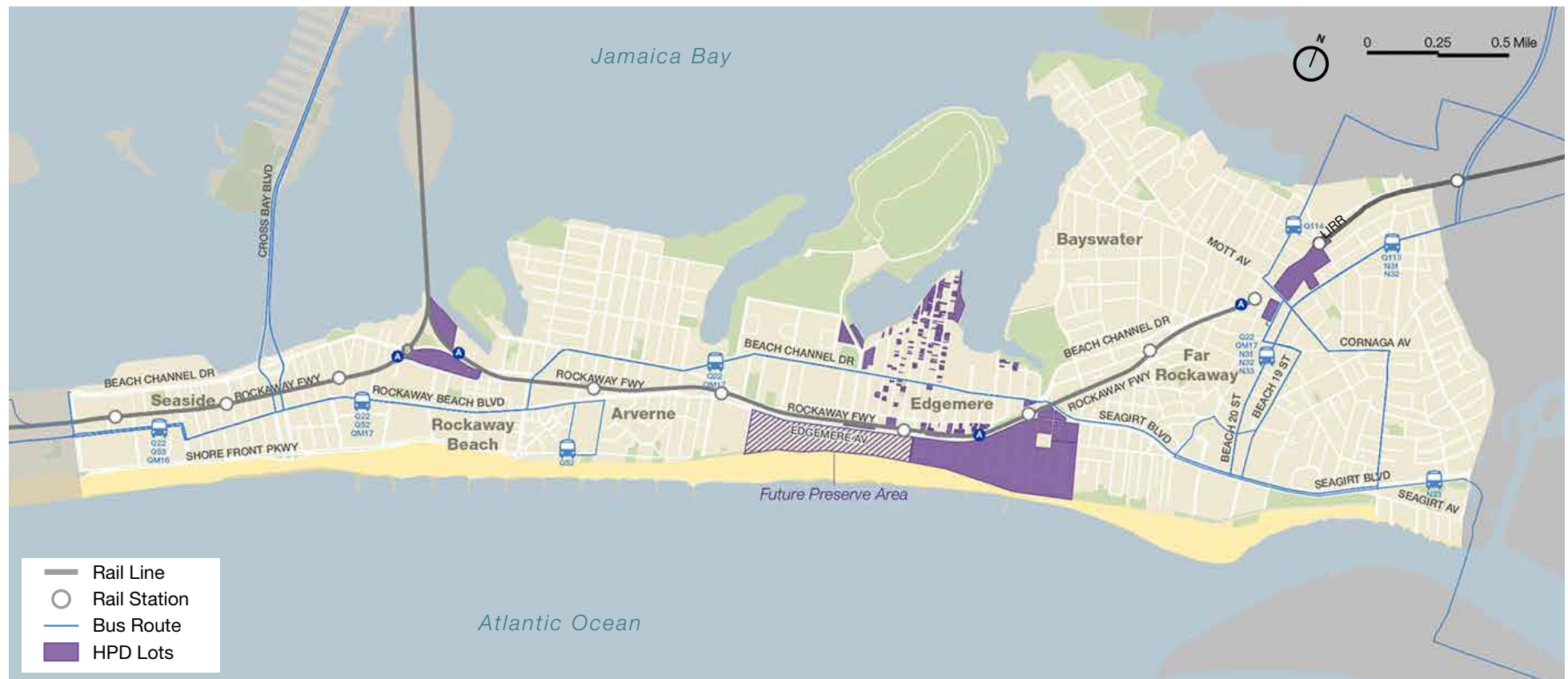
In the early twentieth century, the Rockaway Peninsula was a summer beach resort. Urban renewal efforts in the 1960s and 1970s, however, razed much of the bungalow-style housing stock. Since then, large areas of the Eastern Rockaways have remained vacant. During Superstorm Sandy, Rockaways residents experienced power outages, interruptions in food and transportation networks, hospital evacuations, and fires, laying bare the need for additional resources in the area.

Recognizing that need, the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), as the city's lead land-development agency, is initiating projects such as Arverne East and the Edgemere community plan – and coordinating with the private development of the Peninsula Hospital site – to bring new housing,

commercial, and recreational options to the Rockaways. Building on Mayor Bill de Blasio's OneNYC Plan, other city agencies have also launched projects in the study area, including:

- Post-Sandy street reconstruction
- Rockaway Beach Boardwalk reconstruction
- Q52/ Q53 Select Bus Service
- Downtown Far Rockaway rezoning
- Rockaway Parks Conceptual Plan

In the interim, Eastern Rockaways residents struggle with inconsistent street infrastructure and some of the longest commutes in the city: 41 percent of all Eastern Rockaways workers commute more than an hour each way, as do 72 percent of those traveling by transit.



Major transit routes, streets, and HPD-owned property in the Eastern Rockaways (Sources: NYC DOT, NYC HPD, MapPLUTO 16V1)

Introduction

The New York City Department of Transportation, together with HPD as its co-applicant, won a US DOT Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) planning grant to conduct Access to Opportunity: A Transportation & Housing Study in the Eastern Rockaways, in order to improve access to jobs, education, health care, and other services for Eastern Rockaways residents, as well as align transportation improvements with land use investments in the study area.

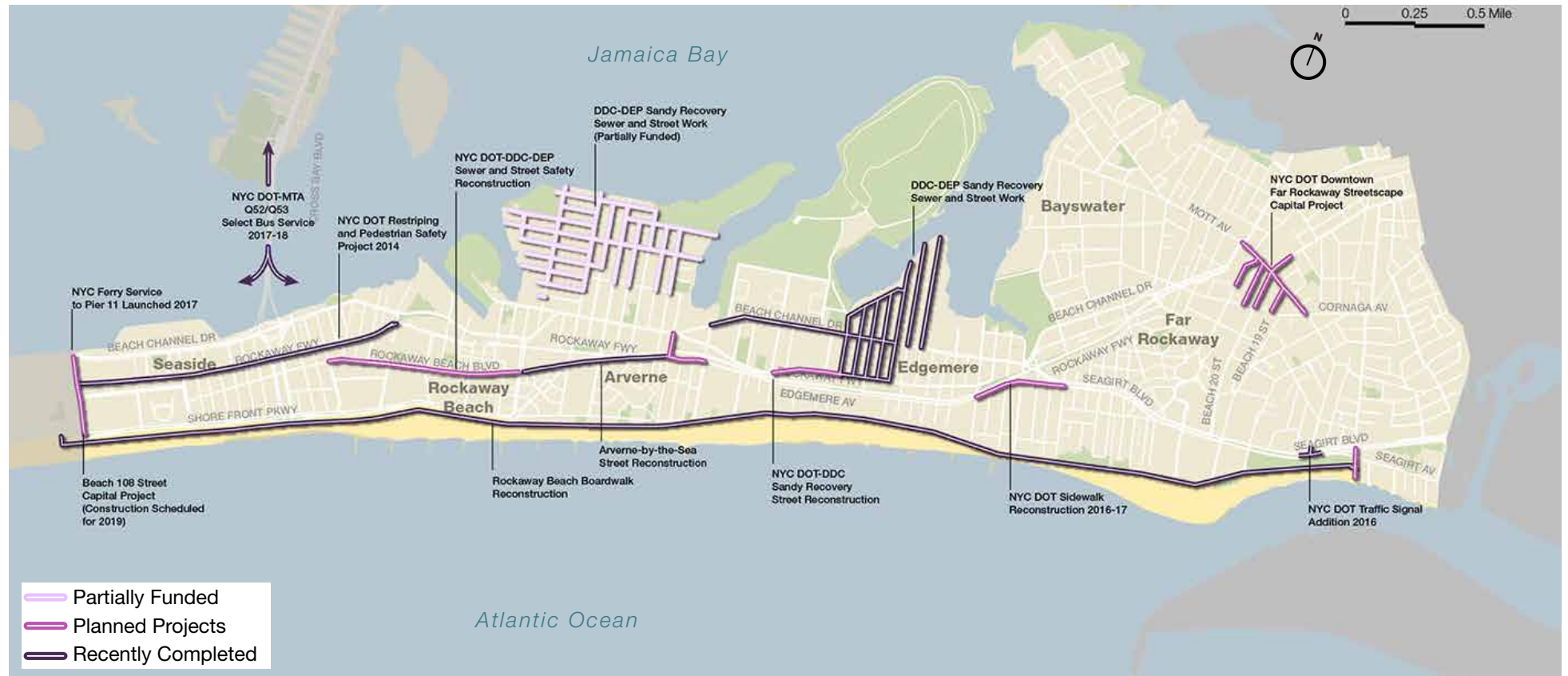
program to analyze, design, and channel short-term improvement plans into future construction schedules.

Through regular interagency coordination, NYC DOT has worked to ensure that the short- and long-term street improvements developed through the Access to Opportunity: A Transportation & Housing Study in the Eastern Rockaways complement and enhance the impact of land use, housing, and infrastructure investments throughout the Rockaways.

The study team – composed of Arup and its sub-consultants Stump Hausman and Traffic Databank, as well as the NYC DOT Special Projects unit – worked iteratively with NYC DOT's Street Improvement Project



Rockaway Beach Blvd street reconstruction, 2016



Map of planned and recently constructed projects in the Eastern Rockaways

Community Outreach: Problem Identification (Fall 2015)

In November 2015, NYC DOT engaged with community stakeholders and residents through a variety of meetings, on-street interactions and activities to better understand the transportation needs in the Eastern Rockaways. NYC DOT also worked closely with public officials, Community Board 14, and a technical advisory committee.

Highlights from the outreach process include:

- 300+ residents reached and 275+ comments
- 4+ public City-agency-organized meetings, including an *Access to Opportunity* workshop

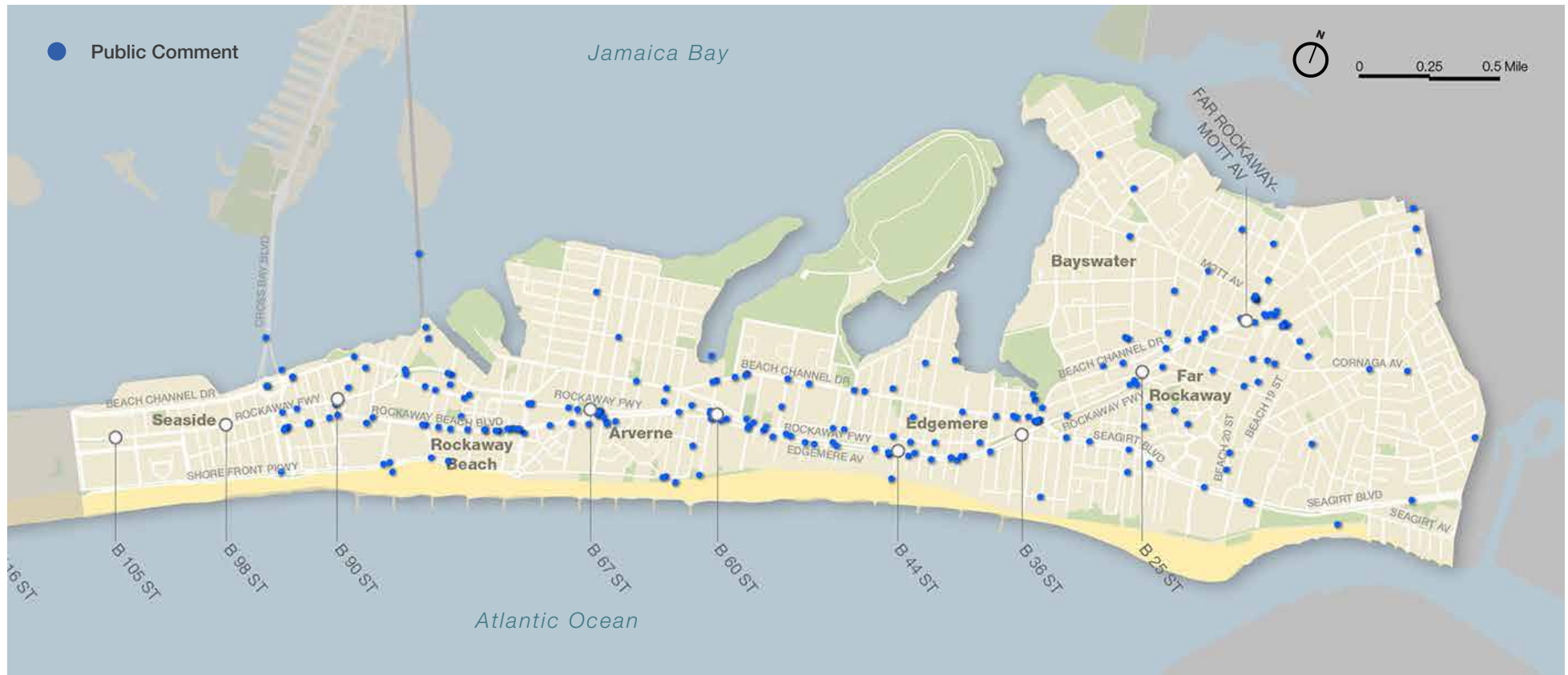
- NYC DOT Street Ambassador visits to libraries, churches, grocery stores and recreation centers
- Briefings with elected officials, CB 14 Transportation Committee, and advisory committees

Through this outreach, the team heard requests for:

- More consistent east-west vehicular circulation
- Safer north-south pedestrian and bicycle connections
- Faster and more reliable transit service to, from, and within the Rockaways
- Better roadway infrastructure in general



Winter 2015 *Access to Opportunity* workshop



Public-identified problems with existing conditions in the Eastern Rockaways

Community Outreach: Input on Short-Term Improvements (Summer 2016)

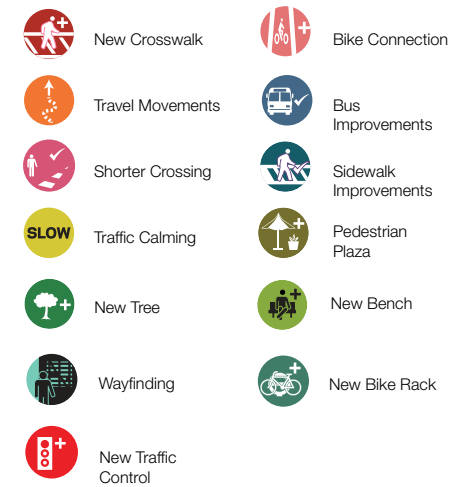
Based on public comments and an analysis of existing conditions in the study area, NYC DOT identified focus areas for potential improvement projects.

In the summer of 2016, NYC DOT reviewed short-term improvements with local residents. Highlights from this second phase of outreach include:

- 300+ residents reached and 200+ comments
- An *Access to Opportunity* workshop
- NYC DOT Street Ambassador visits to local libraries, the Rockaway Beach Boardwalk, and community events

Through this phase of outreach, these were the top 5 most requested street improvements across all focus areas, in order:

- Sidewalk improvements
- Bicycle connections
- Traffic calming measures
- Shorter, safer pedestrian crossings
- New trees



Community-requested improvements at key locations

Community Outreach: Long-Term Visioning (Fall 2016)

In November 2017, NYC DOT worked with the community to develop long-term visions for focus areas needing significant construction using a build-your-own streetscape engagement tool. Highlights from this third phase of outreach include:

- 100+ residents reached and 390+ comments
- An *Access to Opportunity* workshop
- NYC DOT Street Ambassador visits to local libraries

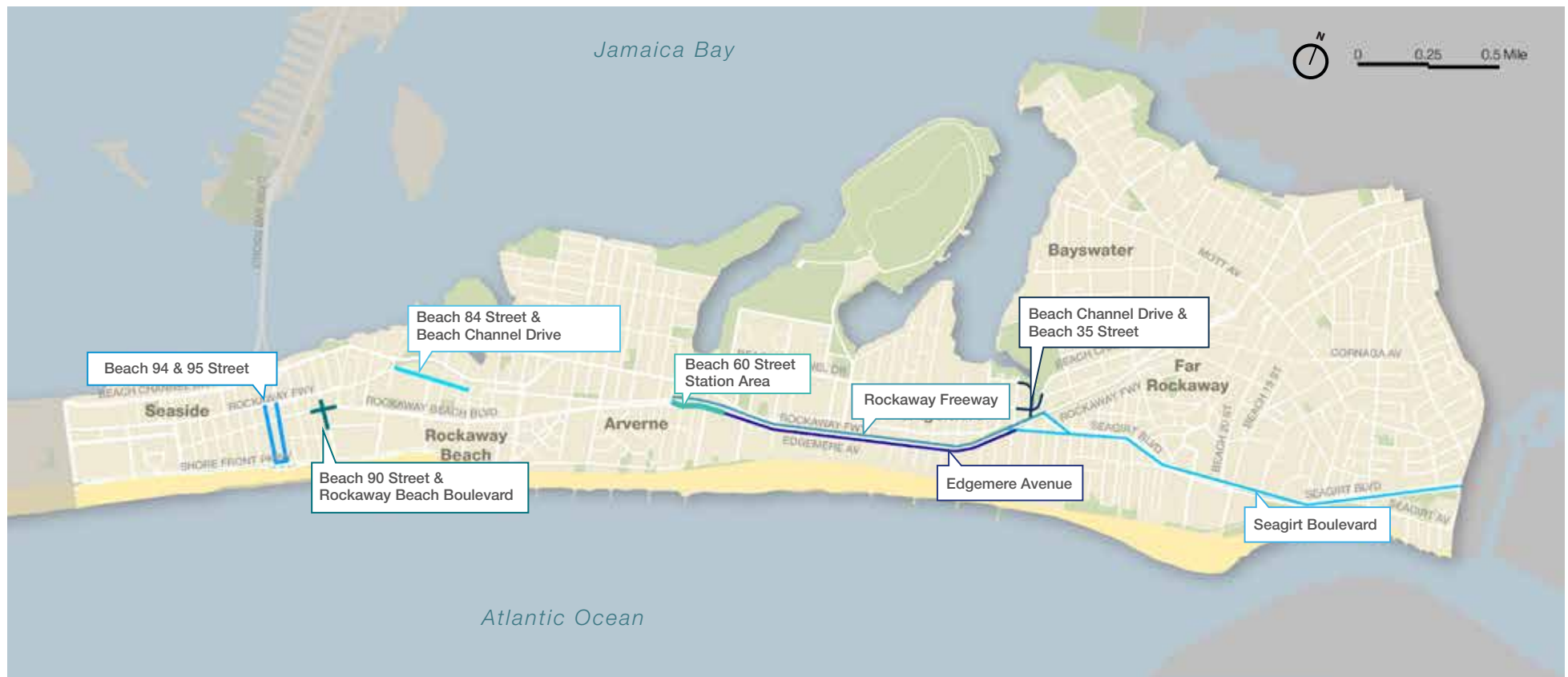
During these outreach events, Rockaways residents selected individual roadway elements to create ideal streetscapes for the identified focus areas in their

neighborhood. Based on this interactive visualization activities, we heard residents wanted to see the following streetscape elements at these specific locations:

- **Edgemere Avenue:** Expanded sidewalks, street trees, bioswales
- **Rockaway Beach Blvd at B60 Station:** Pedestrian space, street lighting, bioswales, angled parking, expanded sidewalk
- **Rockaway Freeway:** Bike lane, expanded sidewalk, street lighting



Fall 2016 Access to Opportunity workshop



Focus areas identified for long-term improvements

Community Outreach: Feedback on Potential Projects and Concepts (Summer 2017)

In July 2017, NYC DOT reached out to Rockaways residents to solicit their opinions about the short-term projects and long-term visions developed through the *Access to Opportunity* transportation study. This public feedback and prioritization of improvements and/or design concepts has been incorporated into the *Access to Opportunity* final report wherever feasible.

Highlights from this fourth phase of outreach include:

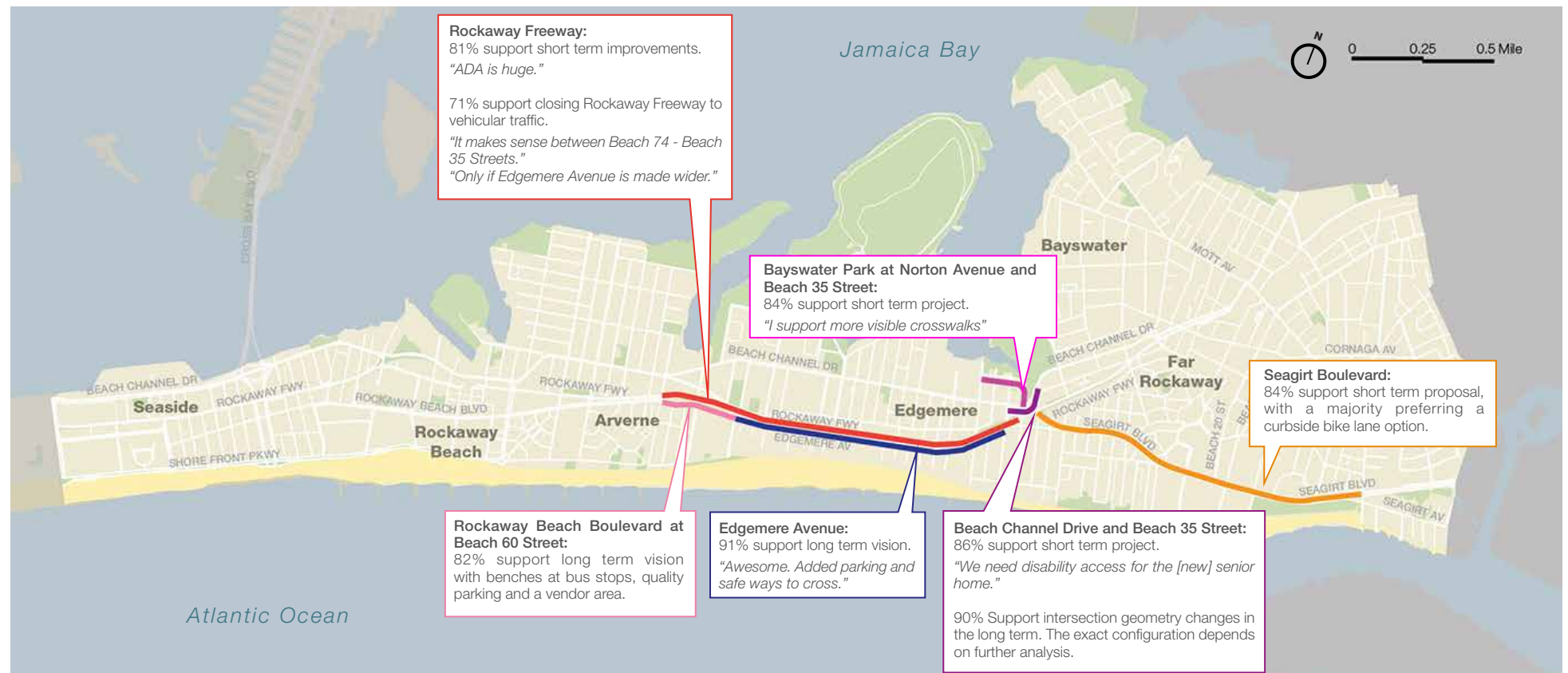
- 150+ residents reached and 670+ comments
- An *Access to Opportunity* workshop
- NYC DOT Street Ambassador visits to the Rockaway Beach Boardwalk, and local libraries



Street Ambassador outreach on the Rockaway Beach Boardwalk & Beach 59 Street



Access to Opportunity Open House, July 2017



Feedback on short- and long-term proposals heard during the July 2017 workshop

Short-Term Improvement Plans

The following section presents short-term improvement plans to address existing conditions and publicly identified problems. These recommended plans incorporate five main categories of improvement elements (listed at right) and can be implemented within five years or less. It is important to emphasize that these designs are not final, but are refined recommendations that can be adapted to address additional public input and any changing roadway conditions.



Pedestrian Improvements

Improve conditions for pedestrians by accommodating desired crossing lines, constructing new sidewalks, and adding ADA accessibility features.



Signal Improvements

Signal timing changes to improve east-west traffic flow and address pedestrian and safety concerns.



Bicycle Improvements

New and/or improved bicycle lanes to bridge gaps in the existing bicycle network.



Transit Improvements

Improve bus service with faster travel speeds and better bus stops; redesign intersections to improve pedestrian access to subway and bus stops.



Striping and Traffic Calming

Use street markings and roadway materials to clarify travel movements, create safer intersections, and reduce speeding in residential areas.



Focus areas with proposed short-term improvement plans with corresponding page number for details plans

Seagirt Boulevard

Context

Seagirt Boulevard is a six-lane roadway with a wide center median running along the southern edge of the Eastern Rockaways and connecting to the Nassau Expressway. It contains several bus routes (Q22, Q113/114, QM17, and Nassau County buses) and is lined by residential developments and schools. Seagirt Boulevard has more travel lanes than are needed for current and future traffic volumes. This excess roadway capacity creates speeding conditions and long crossing distances for pedestrians, many of whom are seniors.



Existing Conditions: Seagirt Blvd & Beach 20 St



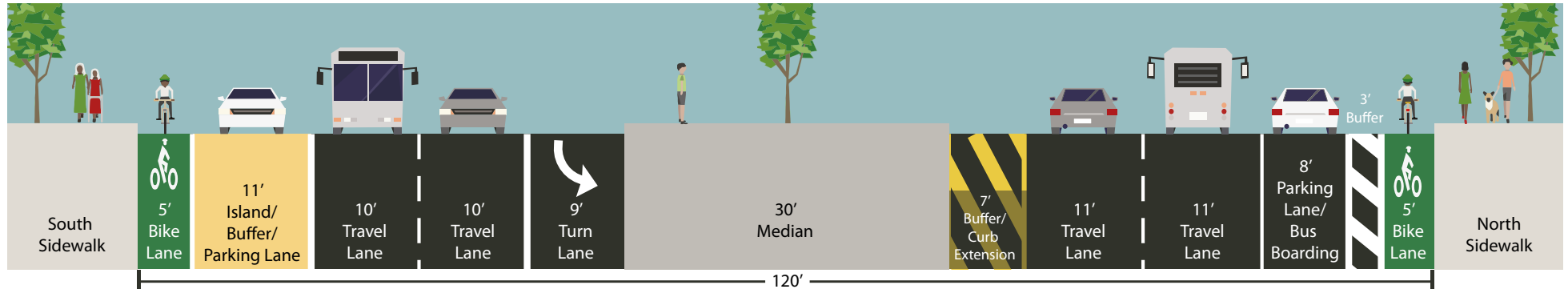
1	2	3	4	5	6+	Years
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Potential Project Time Frame: 3 Years

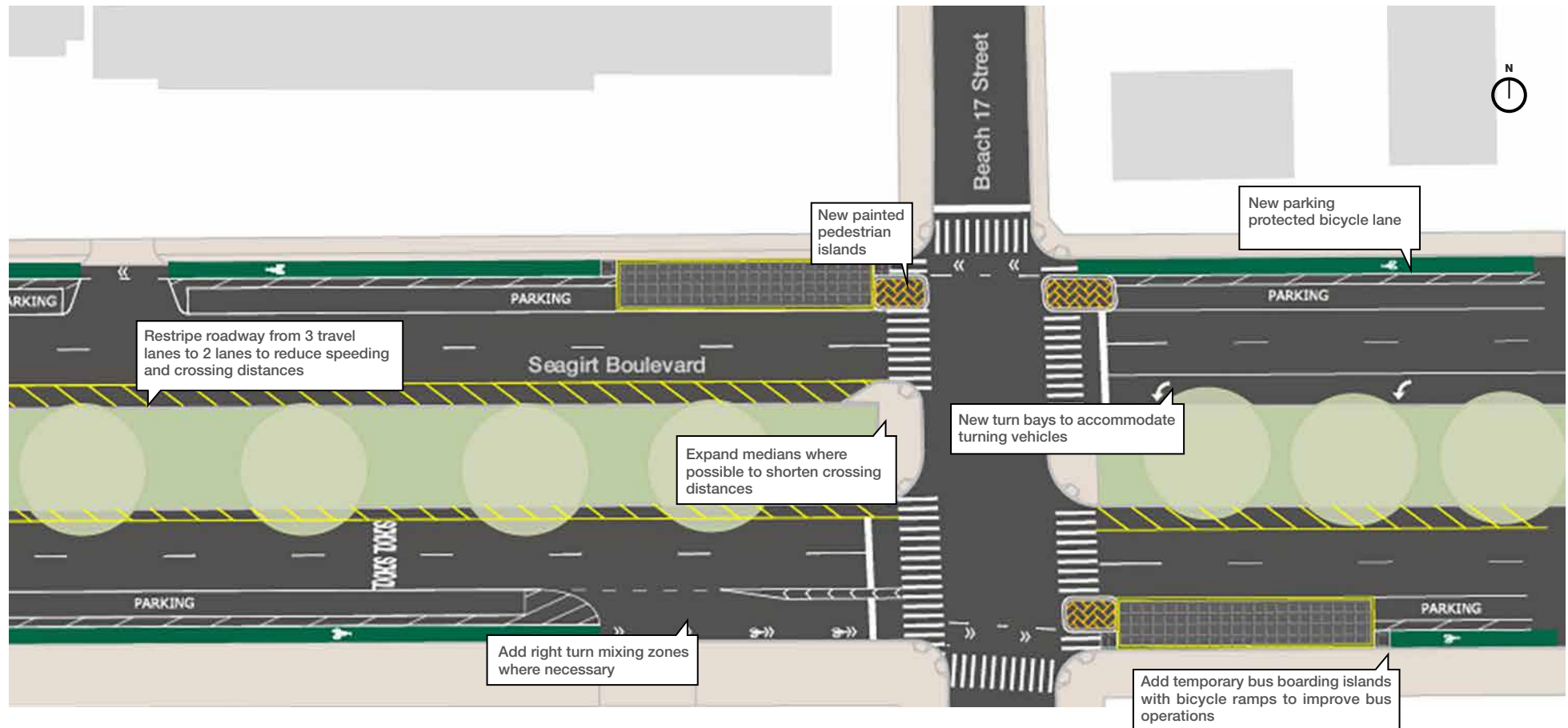


Existing Conditions: Seagirt Blvd & Beach 28 St

Seagirt Boulevard (continued)



Section View: Seagirt Blvd (Typical)



Corridor Plan: Seagirt Blvd & Beach 17 St

Seagirt Boulevard (continued)

Plan Description

After analyzing several alternatives, the study team chose a road diet configuration that removes one travel lane in each direction to reduce vehicular speeds and weaving. The design also adds bus boarding islands, parking-protected curbside bicycle lanes, and adjacent painted pedestrian islands to shorten crossing distances. Additional traffic signal timing changes will provide more crossing time for pedestrians.

Potential Improvements



Existing Conditions: Seagirt Blvd & Crest Rd



Rendering: Seagirt Blvd & Crest Rd

Beach 44 Street & Rockaway Beach Boulevard

Context

Beach 44 Street is a key route to the A train station, but the intersection with Rockaway Beach Boulevard is unmarked and uncontrolled for crossing pedestrians.

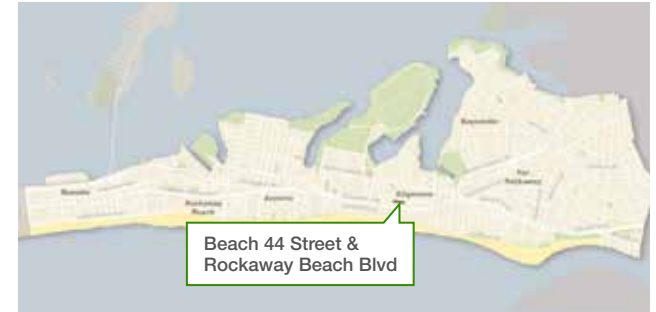
Plan Description

While potential speed bumps were not supported by the community, a modified plan includes a striped median and parking lanes to narrow the travel lane.

Potential Improvements



Existing Conditions: Beach 44 St & Rockaway Beach Blvd



1	2	3	4	5	6+	Years

Potential Project Time Frame: 1 Year



Intersection Plan: Rockaway Beach Blvd & Beach 44 St

Intersection of Beach Channel Drive, Beach 35 Street, Seagirt Boulevard, and Rockaway Freeway

Context

Nearly every major corridor in the Eastern Rockaways intersects around Beach 35 Street: Beach Channel Drive, Seagirt Boulevard, Rockaway Freeway, and Far Rockaway Boulevard. The site is also a major pedestrian hub, bordering Bayswater Park, an A train station, a shopping center, and a new senior residence. Residents report that this complex intersection is confusing and unsafe for both drivers and pedestrians.

Plan Description

The complex intersection has been subdivided into separate redesign proposals, the first of which is Far Rockaway Boulevard at Beach Channel Drive, timed

to senior housing opening in 2018. Other legs of the intersection will be studied for potential improvements to be implemented by 2021. Redesign elements include pedestrian ramps and cut throughs for ADA access, expanded curbs and medians to shorten crossing distances, refurbished markings to clarify travel movements, and new pedestrian space.

Potential Improvements



1	2	3	4	5	6+	Years
						Potential Project Time Frame: 1-2 Years



Intersection Plan: Beach Channel Dr & Far Rockaway Blvd

Bayswater Park at Norton Avenue & Beach 35 Street

Context

Currently, residents of Edgemere and the Beach 41st Street Houses have to cross an uncontrolled intersection at Norton Avenue and climb over a guiderail at Bayswater Park to walk directly to their nearest grocery store.

Plan Description

This phased plan will add a speed bump, crosswalks, pedestrian signage, and remove the guiderail to improve pedestrian access and safety.

Potential Improvements

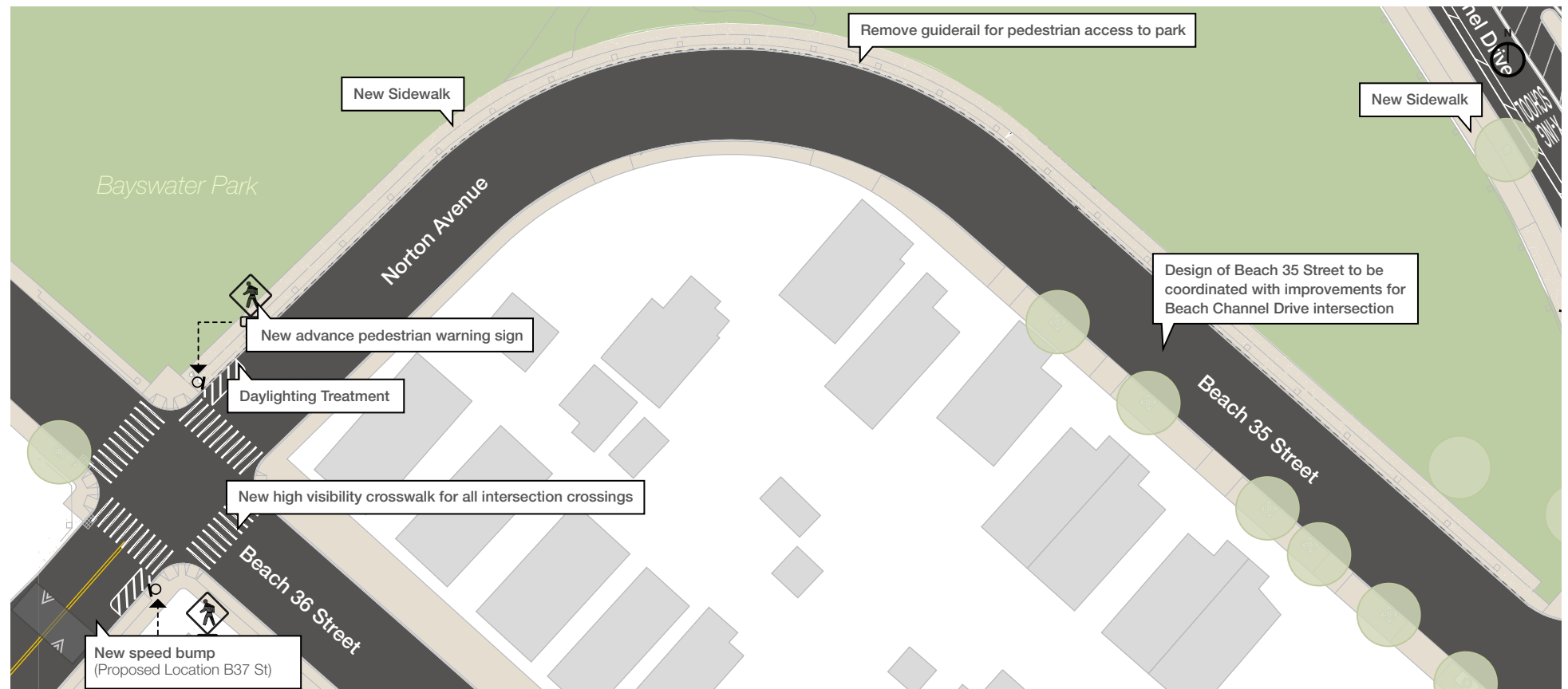


Existing Conditions: Norton Ave & Beach 35 St



1	2	3	4	5	6+	Years

Potential Project Time Frame: 1-2 Years



Intersection Plan: Norton Ave & Beach 35 St

Beach 19 Street - Beach 20 Street

Context

Bicyclists lack a designated north-south route from Far Rockaway to the beach or Nassau County.

Plan Description

Upcoming capital work in Downtown Far Rockaway will include a raised, two-way protected bike lane on Beach 20 Street between Mott Avenue and Cornaga Avenue. This plan will connect that segment to the larger bicycle network with striped bicycle lanes and sharrows.

Potential Improvements



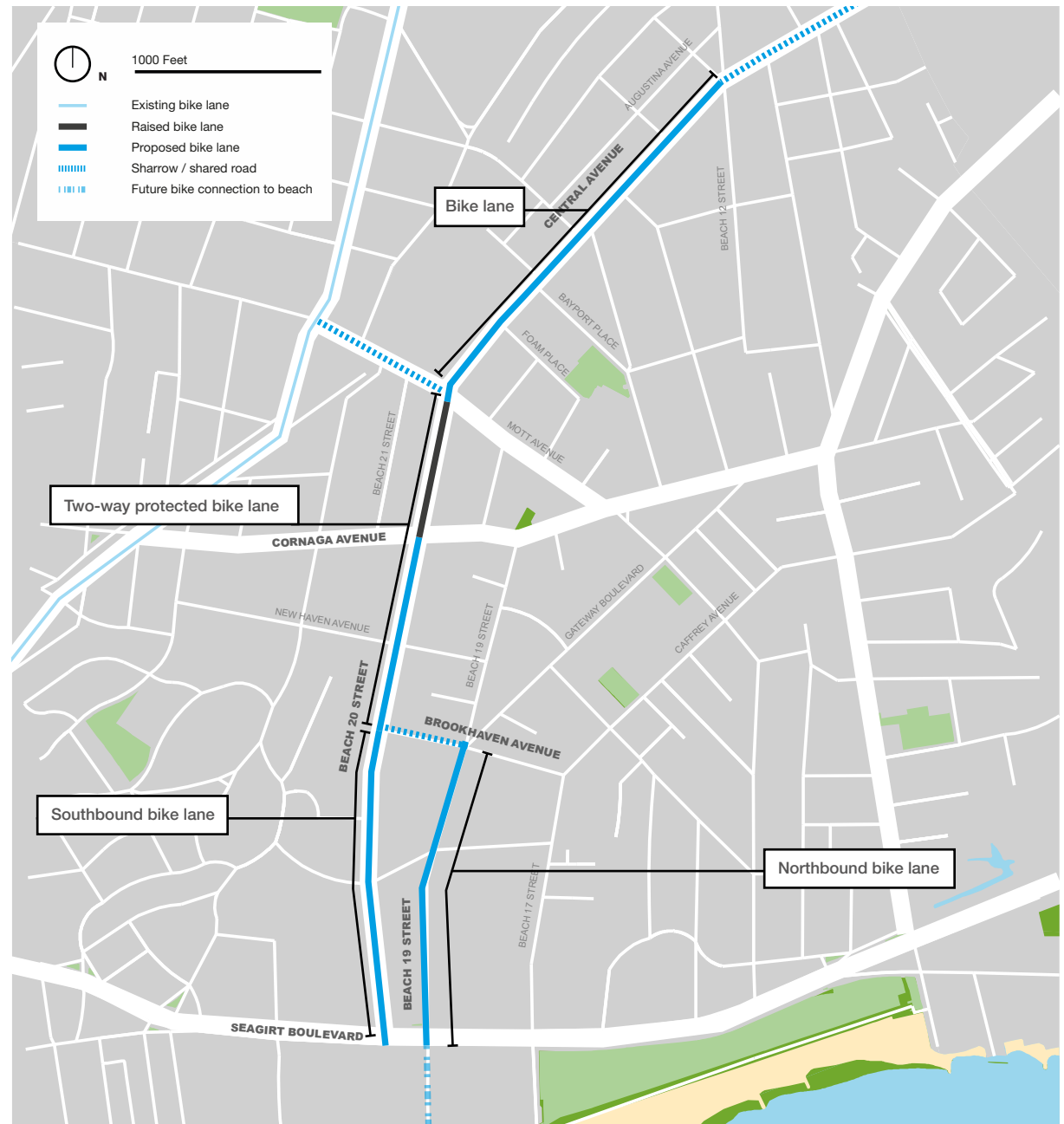
Existing Conditions: Beach 20 St & Brookhaven Ave



Existing Conditions: Beach 19 St & New Haven Ave

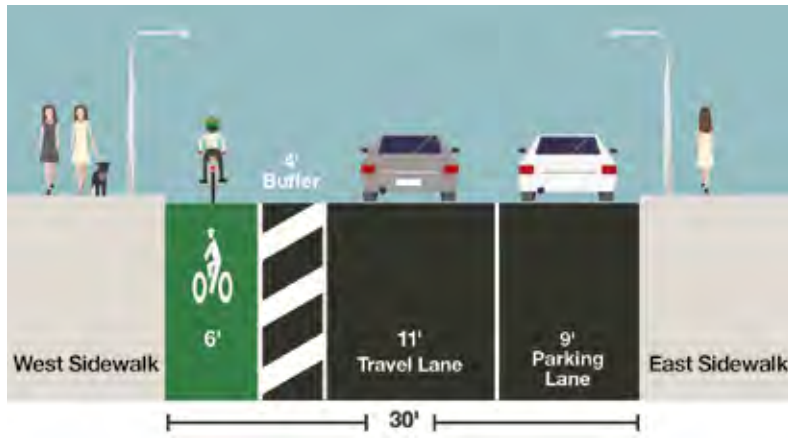
1	2	3	4	5	6+	Years
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Potential Project Time Frame: 4-5 Years

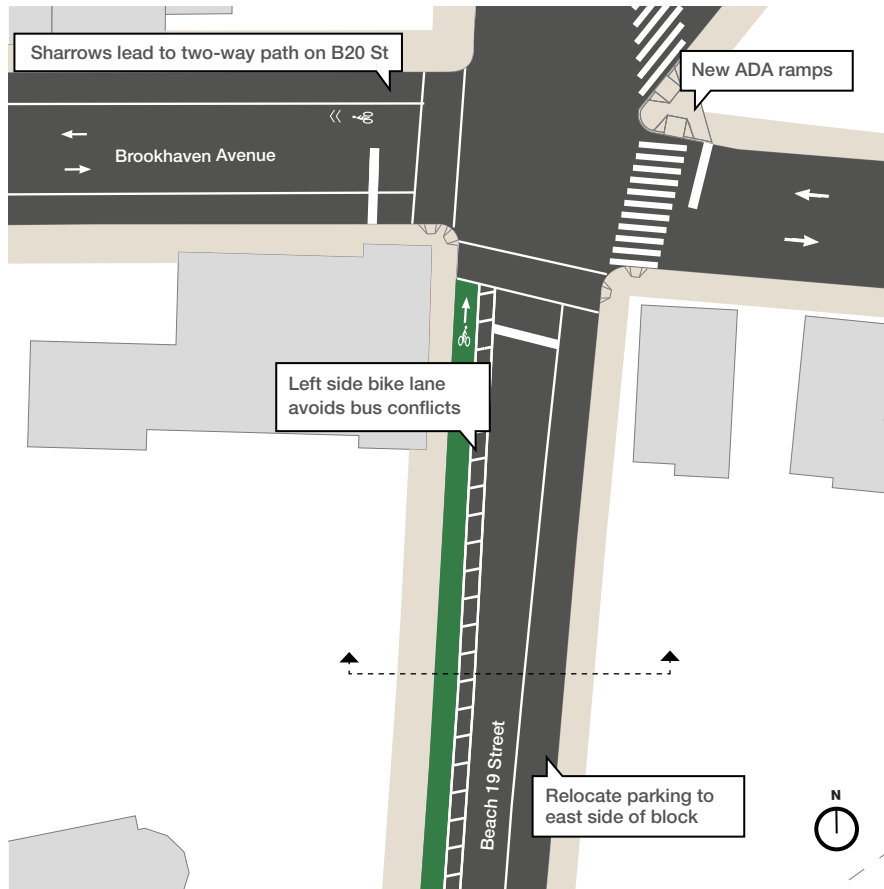


Conceptual Plan: bicycle connections along Beach 19 St, Beach 20 St, and Central Ave

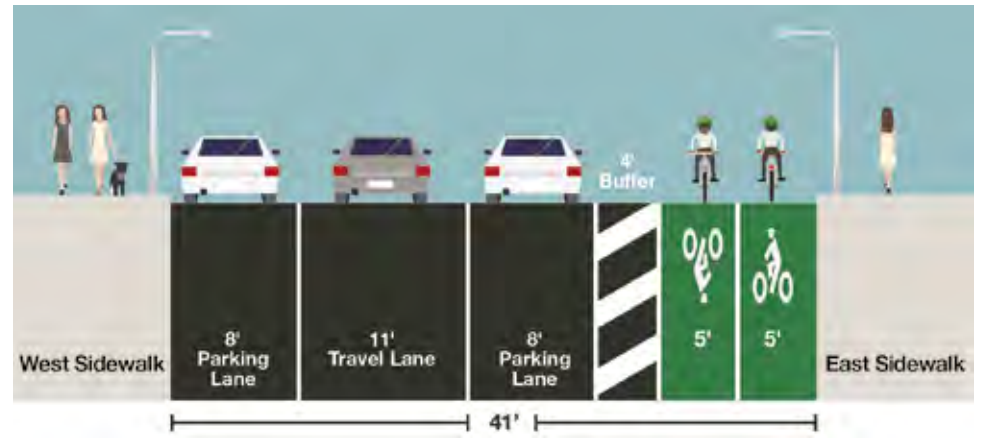
Beach 19 Street - Beach 20 Street (continued)



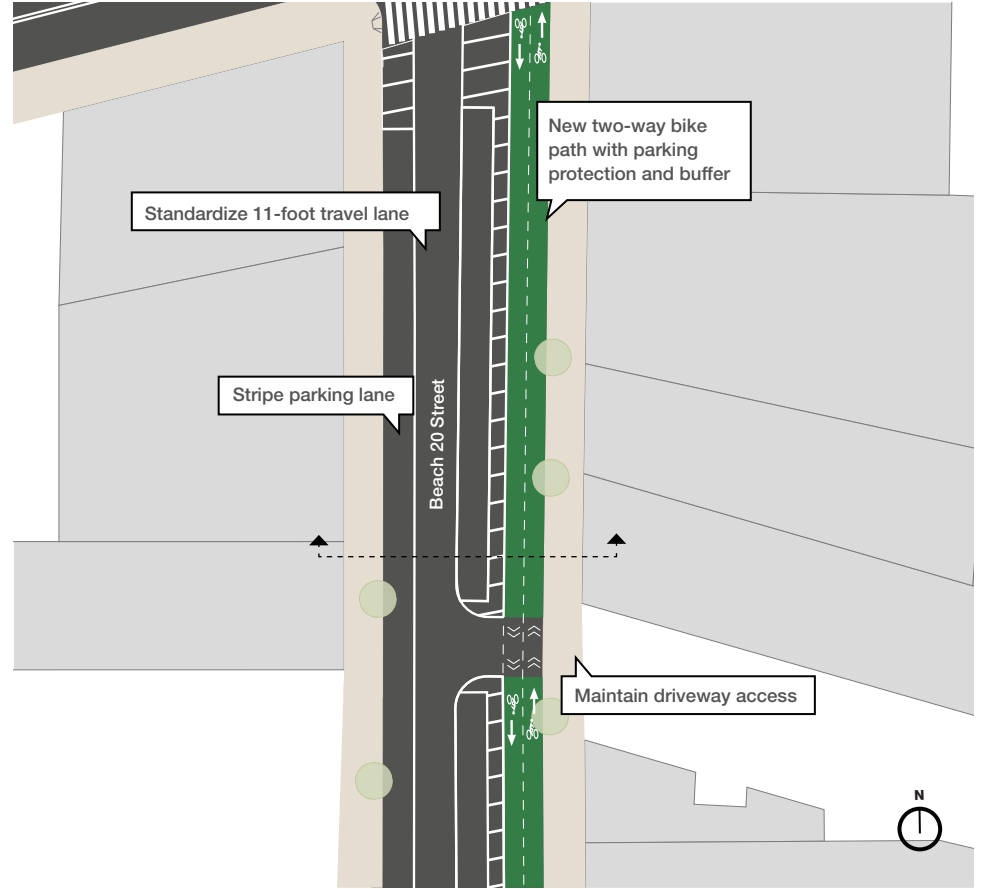
Section View: Beach 19 St at Brookhaven Ave



Corridor Plan: Beach 19 St & Brookhaven Ave



Section View: Beach 20 St at Cornaga Ave



Corridor Plan: Beach 20 St & Cornaga Ave

Signal Timing on Beach Channel Drive & Rockaway Beach Boulevard

Context

Two main corridors provide east-west access for Eastern Rockaways residents: Beach Channel Drive and Rockaways Beach Boulevard. Currently, uncoordinated traffic signal timings create some congestion on these corridors during peak periods.

Plan Description

This study developed alternative timing plans to improve traffic flow on these corridors while accommodating pedestrian and vehicular crossings.

Potential Improvements



Existing Conditions: Beach Channel Drive & Beach 89 St



Edgemere Ave & Beach 54 St

1	2	3	4	5	6+	Years
						Potential Project Time Frame: 1 Year



Location map for signal timing analysis of east-west corridors in the Eastern Rockaways

Q52 / Q53 Select Bus Service & Q22 Bus Stop Analysis

Context

The *Access to Opportunity* study team, along with subconsultant firm VHB, collaborated with MTA Bus Company to address community concerns about bus service speed and reliability within and connecting to the Rockaways.

Plan Description

The study team prepared traffic analyses, street redesigns, and bus stop drawings to support the Fall 2017 implementation of Q52 / Q53 Select Bus Service. The team also reviewed bus stops on the Q22 local bus route and recommended relocating specific stops to improve service reliability.

Potential Improvements



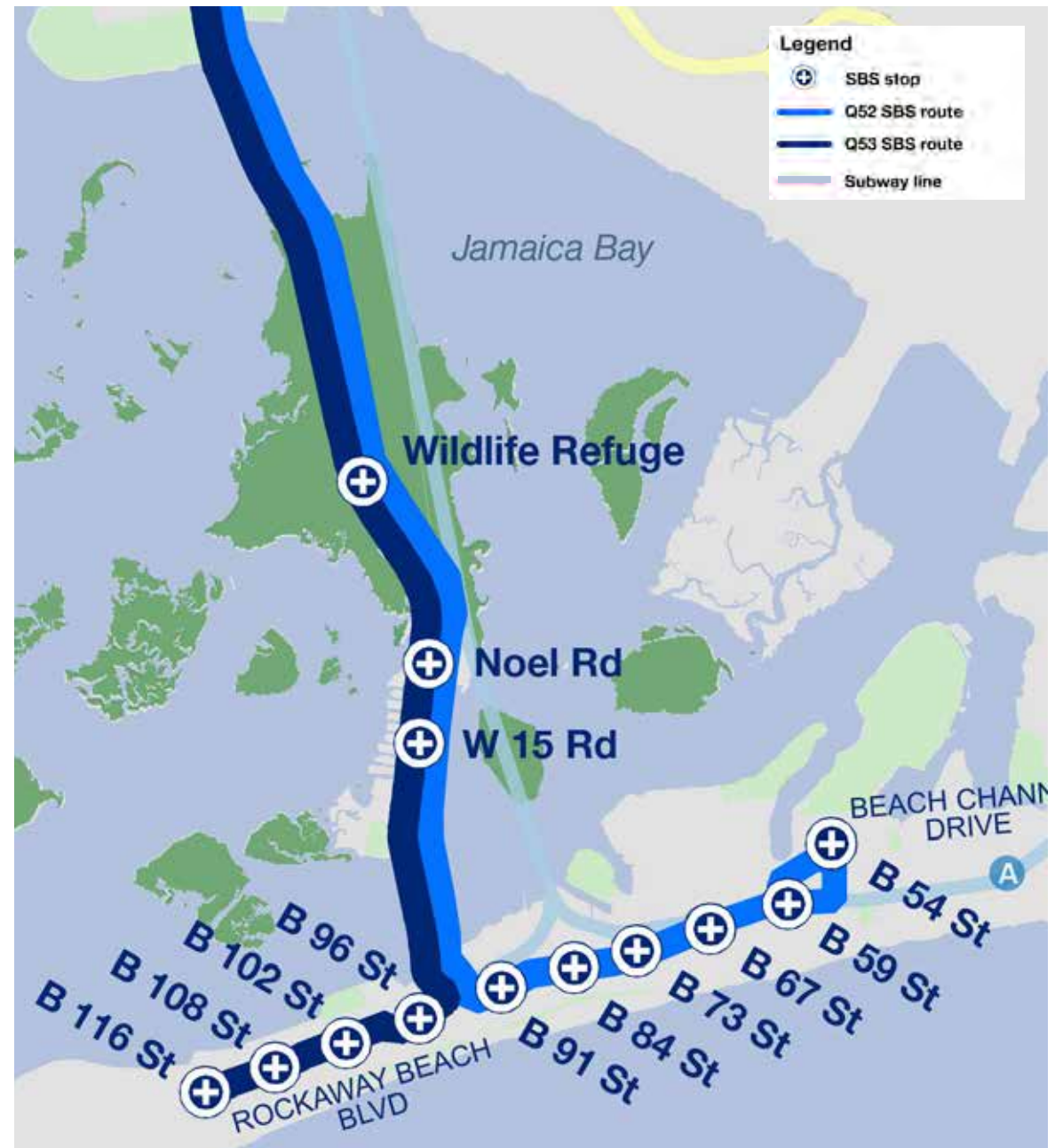
Existing Conditions: Q22 Bus on Beach Channel Dr



Q52 Bus on Rockaway Beach Blvd prior to SBS implementation

1	2	3	4	5	6+	Years
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Potential Project Time Frame: 1 Year



Transit Plans: Q52 and Q53 Select Bus Service Routes in the Rockaways

Long-Term Improvement Plans

The following section presents long-term improvement concepts created through community visioning sessions, study team analysis, and public input.

These potential long-term plans incorporate five main categories of improvement elements (listed at right), which are often constructed in concrete. While these conceptual improvements take into account expected developments and future traffic volume projections, they are not final and can be adapted to address additional public input and analysis, as well as changing roadway conditions.



Pedestrian Infrastructure

Improve pedestrian conditions by constructing new sidewalks and adding ADA elements.



Streetscape Infrastructure

Constructing landscaping elements in and around streets to bring in trees and plantings, lighting, and amenities such as signage, benches, and trash cans.



Bicycle Infrastructure

New and/or improved bicycle lanes to bridge gaps in the existing bicycle network.



Transit Infrastructure

Improve bus service with street geometry changes, such as bus boarding islands and bus lanes.



Vehicular Infrastructure

Clarify travel movements with street geometry changes such as shifting curb lines and expanding medians.



Focus areas identified for long-term improvements with corresponding page numbers for detailed plans

Beach 60 Street Station Area/Edgemere Avenue Corridor

Context

Where the recently reconstructed four-lane Rockaway Beach Boulevard connects with the pre-existing two-lane roadway at Beach 62 Street, drivers have to curve around irregular lots of land surrounding the Beach 60 Street A train station. The land west of Beach 59 Street is a grassy lot while the section between Beach 59 and Beach 56 Streets is used for informal parking. This section of Rockaway Beach Boulevard forms the western end of the Edgemere Avenue corridor extending to Beach 35 Street, whose potential reconstruction is detailed later in this report.

Plan Description (Western Section)

In its long-term vision for the land west of Beach 59 Street, the community requested a landscaped area that could accommodate small-scale retail and include footpaths leading to the A train station.

Potential Improvements



1	2	3	4	5	6+	Years
						Potential Project Time Frame: More than 6 Years



Existing Conditions: Rockaway Beach Blvd & Beach 56 St



Existing Conditions: Rockaway Beach Blvd & Beach 59 St



Rendering: Landscaped pedestrian area on Rockaway Beach Blvd & Beach 59 St

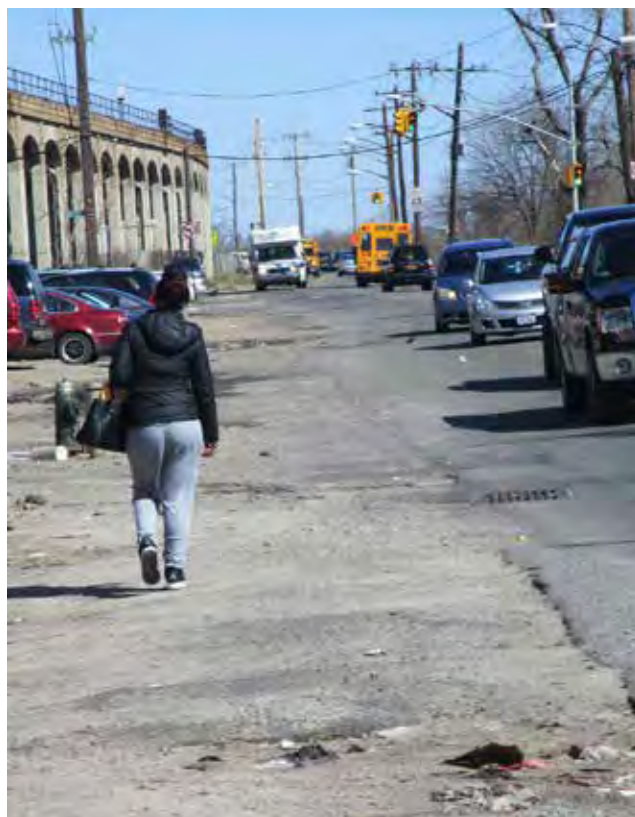
Beach 60 Street Station Area/Edgemere Avenue Corridor (continued)

Plan Description (Eastern Section)

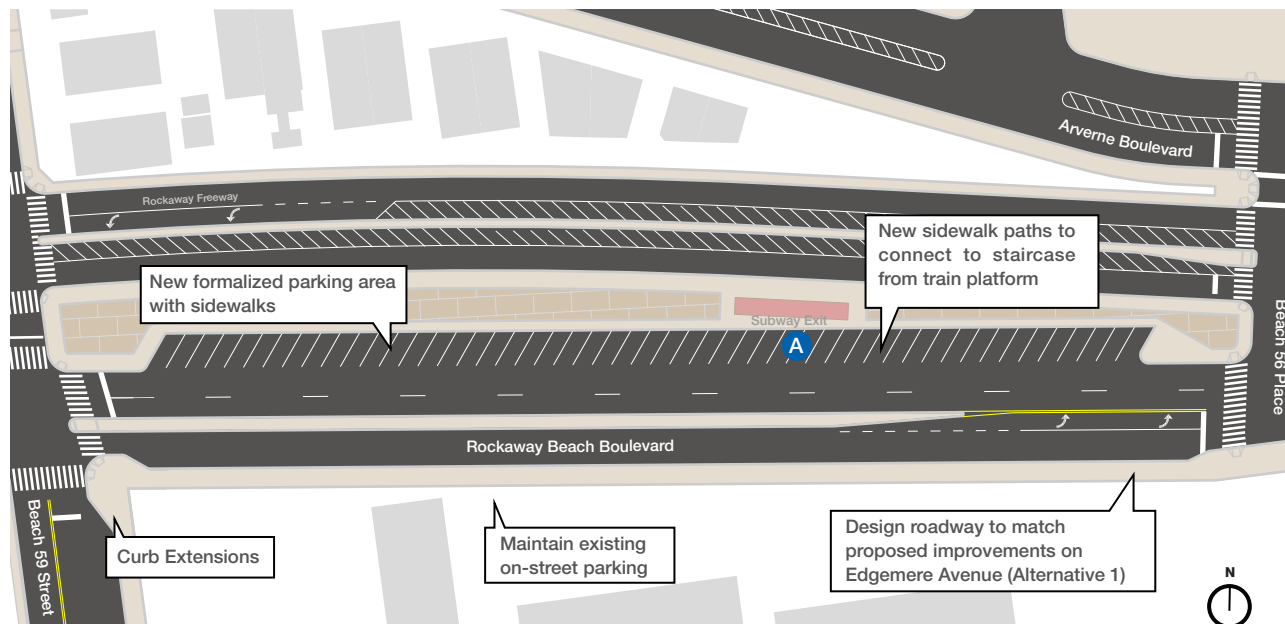
For the land between Beach 59 Street and Beach 56 Place, the community requested a formalized parking area with improved drainage and sidewalks to and from the train platform's eastern exit.

The study team created two versions of the formalized parking area to accommodate the two proposed alternative designs for Edgemere Avenue to the east (see Edgemere Avenue for more details).

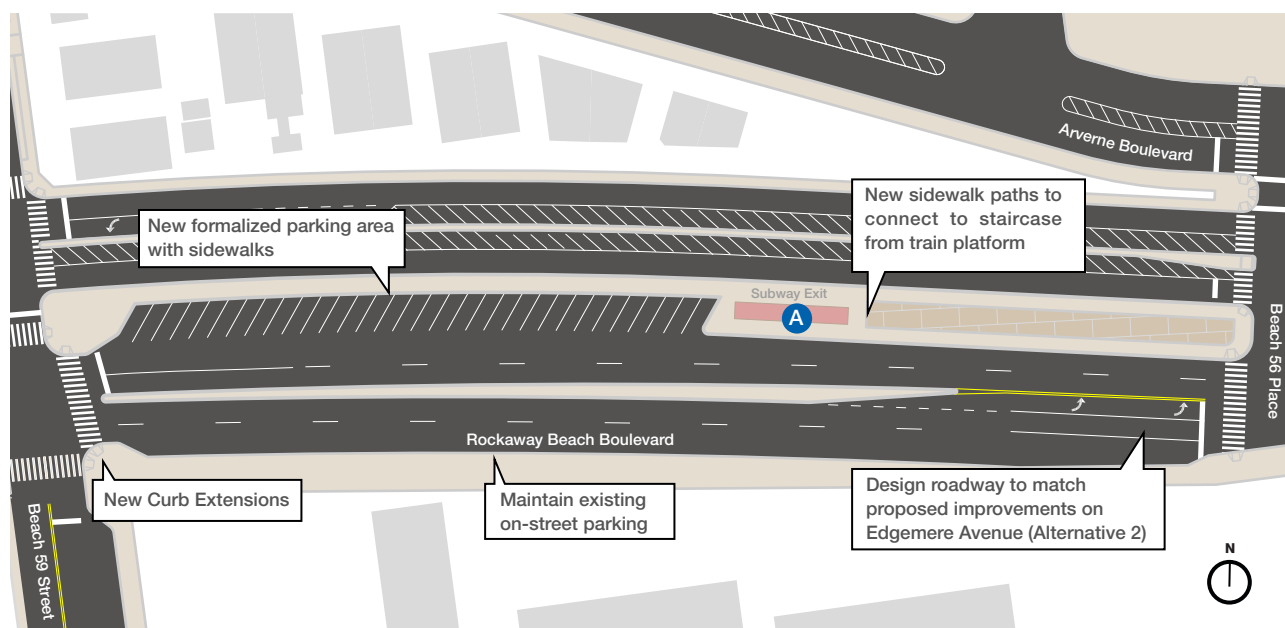
Potential Improvements



Existing Conditions: Rockaway Beach Blvd & Beach 56 Pl



Alternative 1: Rockaway Beach Blvd, Beach 59 St - Beach 56 Pl



Alternative 2: Rockaway Beach Blvd, Beach 59 St - Beach 56 Pl

Edgemere Avenue

Context

At Beach 56 Street, Rockaway Beach Boulevard changes names to Edgemere Avenue. This roadway is a key east-west corridor connecting Rockaways residents to Seagirt Boulevard and the Nassau County Expressway. The road, however, has only one travel lane in each direction and lacks drainage, curbs, and continuous sidewalks. In addition, Rockaway Freeway runs parallel to Edgemere Avenue, creating complicated intersections that impede turning vehicles and cause congestion during peak periods.



Existing Conditions: Edgemere Ave & Beach 44 St



Context Map

1	2	3	4	5	6+	Years
						Potential Project Time Frame: More than 6 Years



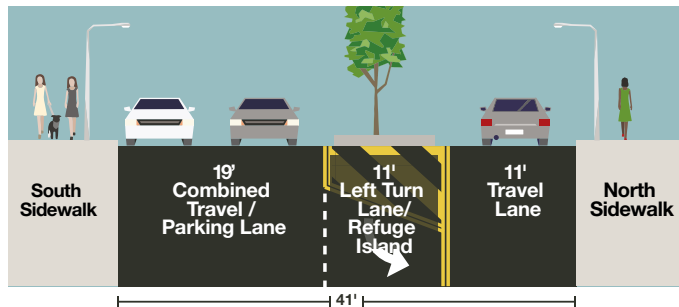
Existing Conditions: Edgemere Ave & Beach 41 St

Edgemere Avenue (continued)

Plan Description – Alternative One

The study team analyzed two long-term visions for Edgemere Avenue to improve pedestrian and traffic circulation and streetscape conditions. While both alternatives call for reconstructing the roadway to include sidewalks, curb extensions, and parking on the southern side of the street, raising the height of the street was not within the scope of this study. Alternative One maintains one lane per direction, but adds a center turn lane.

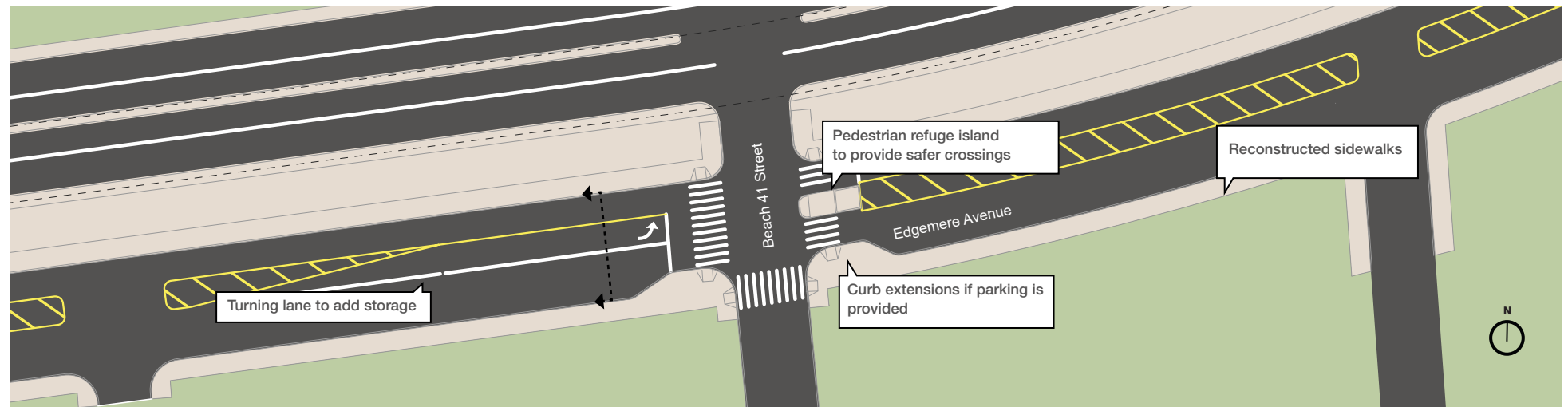
Potential Improvements



Section View: Edgemere Ave & Beach 41 St, Alternative 1



Alternative 1: Edgemere Ave & Beach 41 St



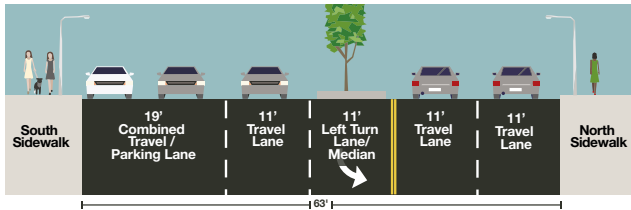
Plan View: Edgemere Ave & Beach 41 St, Alternative 1

Edgemere Avenue (continued)

Plan Description – Alternative Two

The Alternative Two design includes two travel lanes per direction with center medians and turning bays. The study team prefers Alternative Two, as the additional travel lane on Edgemere Avenue could accommodate traffic currently on Rockaway Freeway between Beach 59 and Beach 35 Streets, allowing Rockaway Freeway to be used for other purposes and simplifying the road network. The ultimate vision for Edgemere Avenue would be refined in coordination with the community and relevant city agencies.

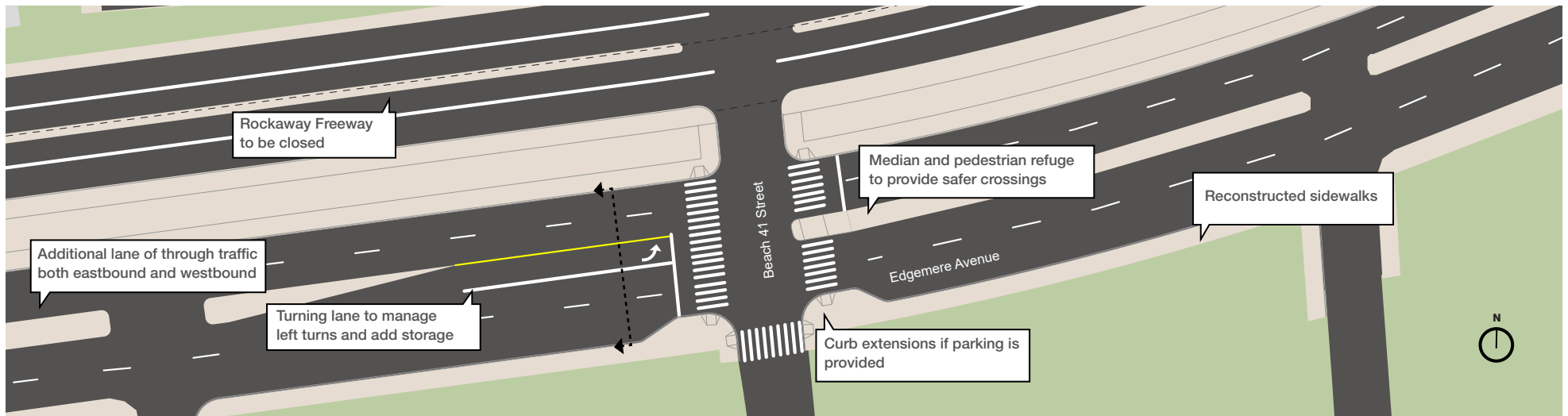
Potential Improvements



Section View: Edgemere Ave & Beach 41 St, Alternative 2



Alternative 2: Edgemere Ave & Beach 41 St



Plan View: Edgemere Ave & Beach 41 St, Alternative 2

Rockaway Freeway (Phase 1)

Context

Rockaway Freeway runs under the elevated A train from Beach 116 Street to Downtown Far Rockaway. Pillars obscure drivers' sight lines, while obstructed sidewalks force pedestrians into the roadway.

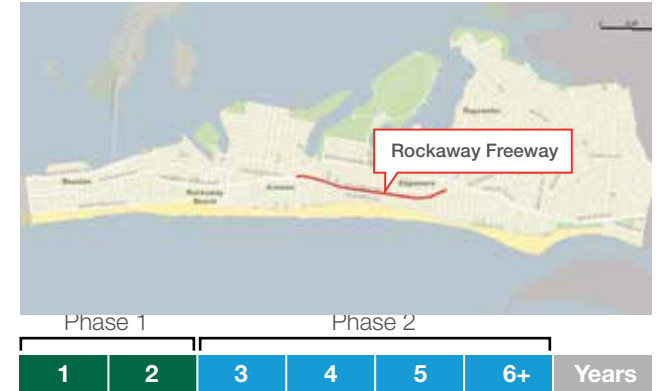
Plan Description

These interim plans target intersections around A train stations and key north-south routes improve residents' access to transit.

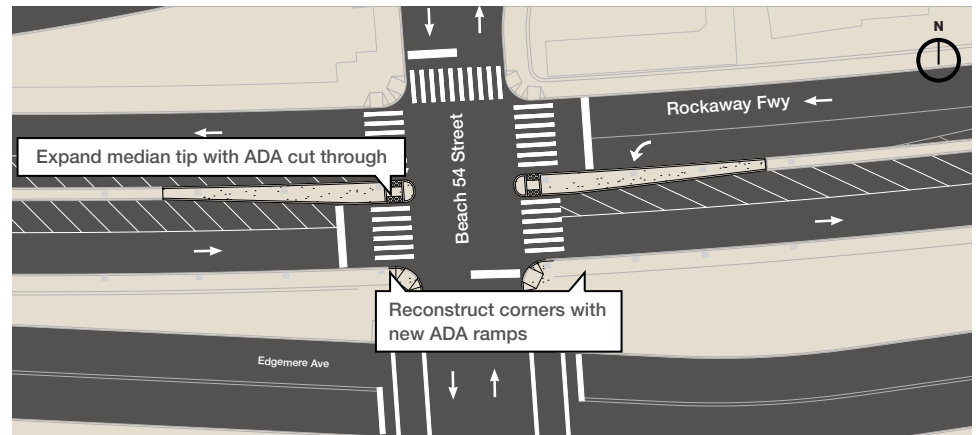
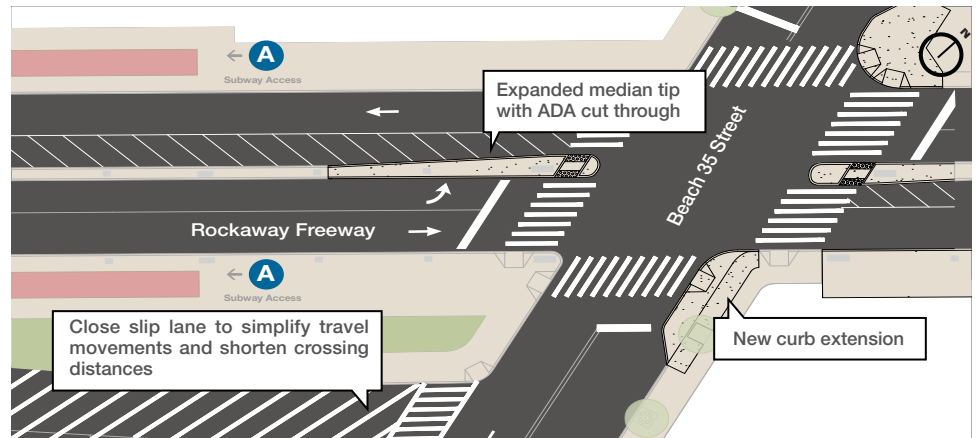
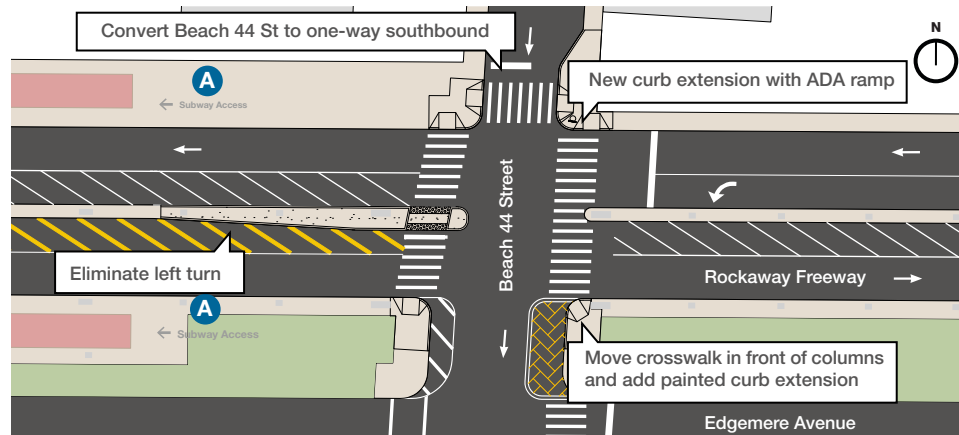
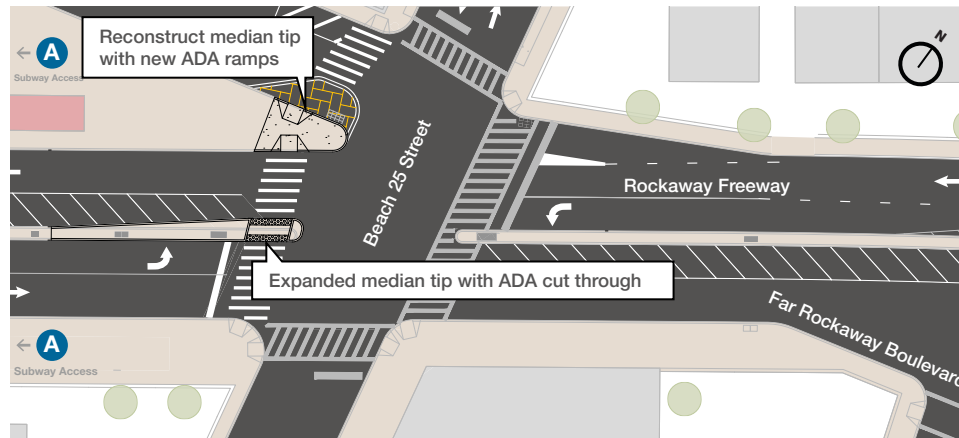
Potential Improvements



Existing Conditions: Rockaway Fwy & Beach 54 St



Potential Project Time Frame:
Phase 1 (1–2 Years), Phase 2 (More than 6 Years)



Intersection Plans, Rockaway Freeway Phase 1 (clockwise from top left): Beach 25 St, Beach 35 St, Beach 54 St, Beach 44 St

Rockaway Freeway (Phase 2)

Context

Drivers cannot travel the full length of Rockaway Freeway, as it is closed to cars between Beach 84 and Beach 62 Streets. Meanwhile, residents walk and bike on the street despite a lack of bicycle lanes and accessible sidewalks.

Plan Description

This vision for Rockaway Freeway extends the existing vehicular closure to Beach 35 Street and adds street lighting to provide a weather-protected bike and pedestrian path, create new public space, and improve residents' access to the A train. The study's traffic analysis determined that Edgemere Avenue and

Rockaway Freeway are interchangeable routes between Beach 62 and Beach 35 Streets due to their close proximity, and that Rockaway Freeway could be closed up to Beach 35 Street as long as Edgemere Avenue is reconstructed with additional capacity. The analysis concluded that Rockaway Freeway should remain open east of Beach 35 Street to help traffic flow on Beach Channel Drive in Downtown Far Rockaway.

Potential Improvements



Existing Conditions: Rockaway Fwy & Beach 44 St



Rendering: Rockaway Fwy & Beach 44 St

Beach 94 Street-Beach 95 Street Bus Transfer

Context

There are three separate bus stops for local and Select Bus Service at this intersection, forcing riders to miss buses or rush to catch their transfer to cross the bridge.

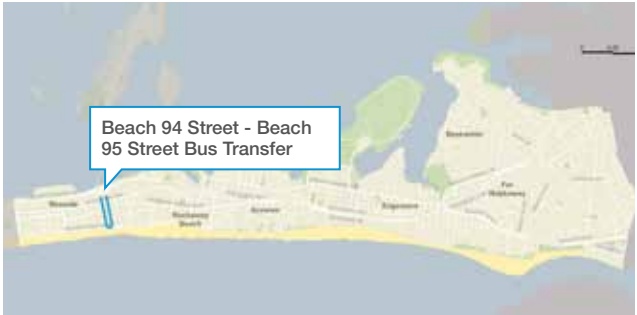
Plan Description

Widening the median on Beach 94 Street allows MTA Bus to consolidate stops for all buses heading over the Cross Bay Bridge. The plan includes a two-way bike path, crosswalks, and curb extensions.

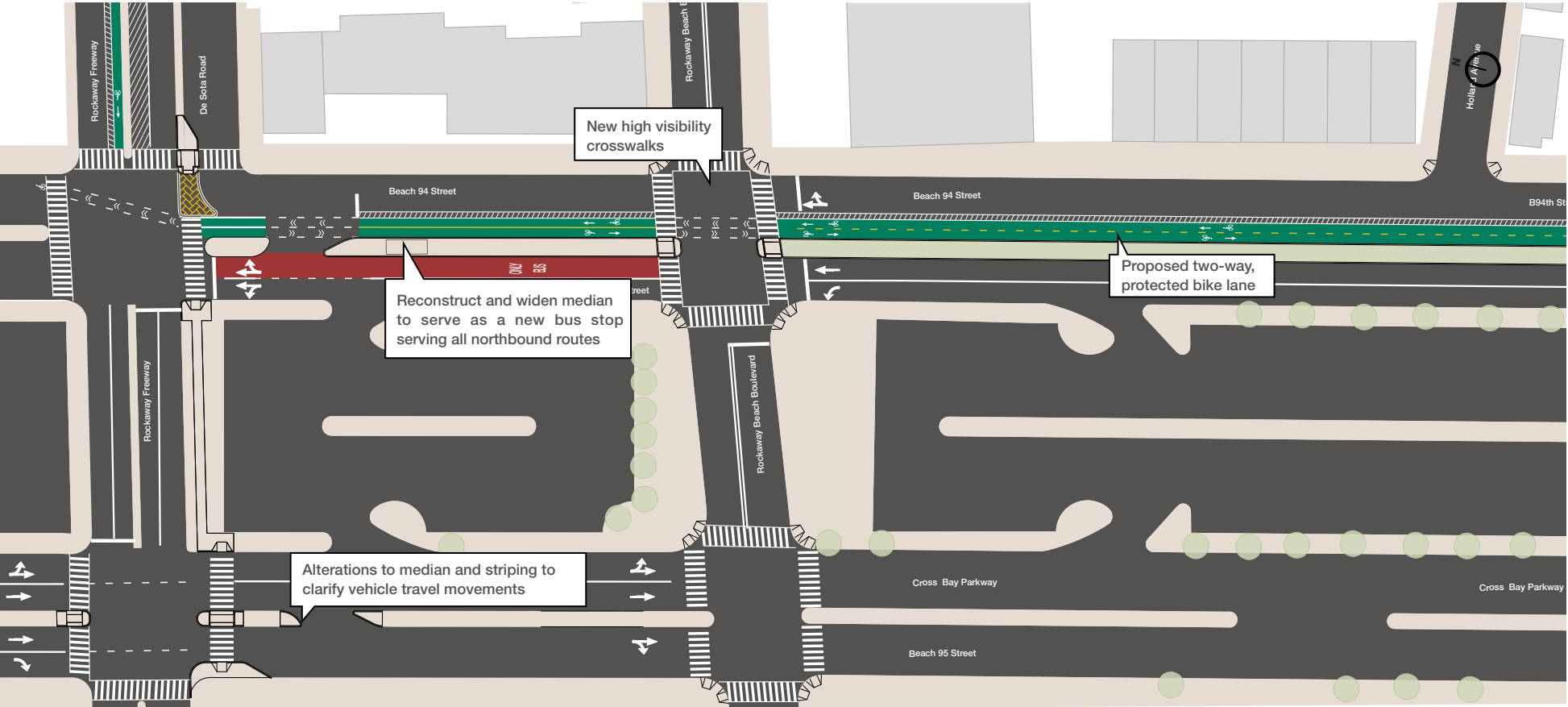
Potential Improvements



Existing Conditions: Beach 94 St / Cross Bay Pkwy



1	2	3	4	5	6+	Years
						Potential Project Time Frame: More than 6 Years



Corridor Plan: Beach 94 St - Beach 95 St / Cross Bay Pkwy & Rockaway Beach Blvd

Beach Channel Drive & Beach 96 Street

Context

There are portions of Beach Channel Drive up to 2,500 feet long without any signalized crossings as the street leads up to the Cross Bay Bridge, deterring pedestrians from bayside destinations.

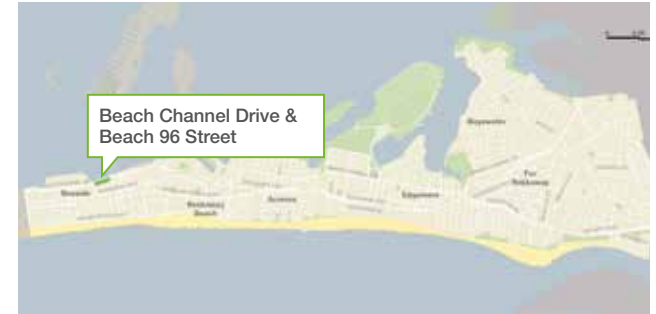
Plan Description

This plan adds lane markings, an actuated pedestrian signal, and a high visibility crosswalk at Beach 96 Street to improve access.

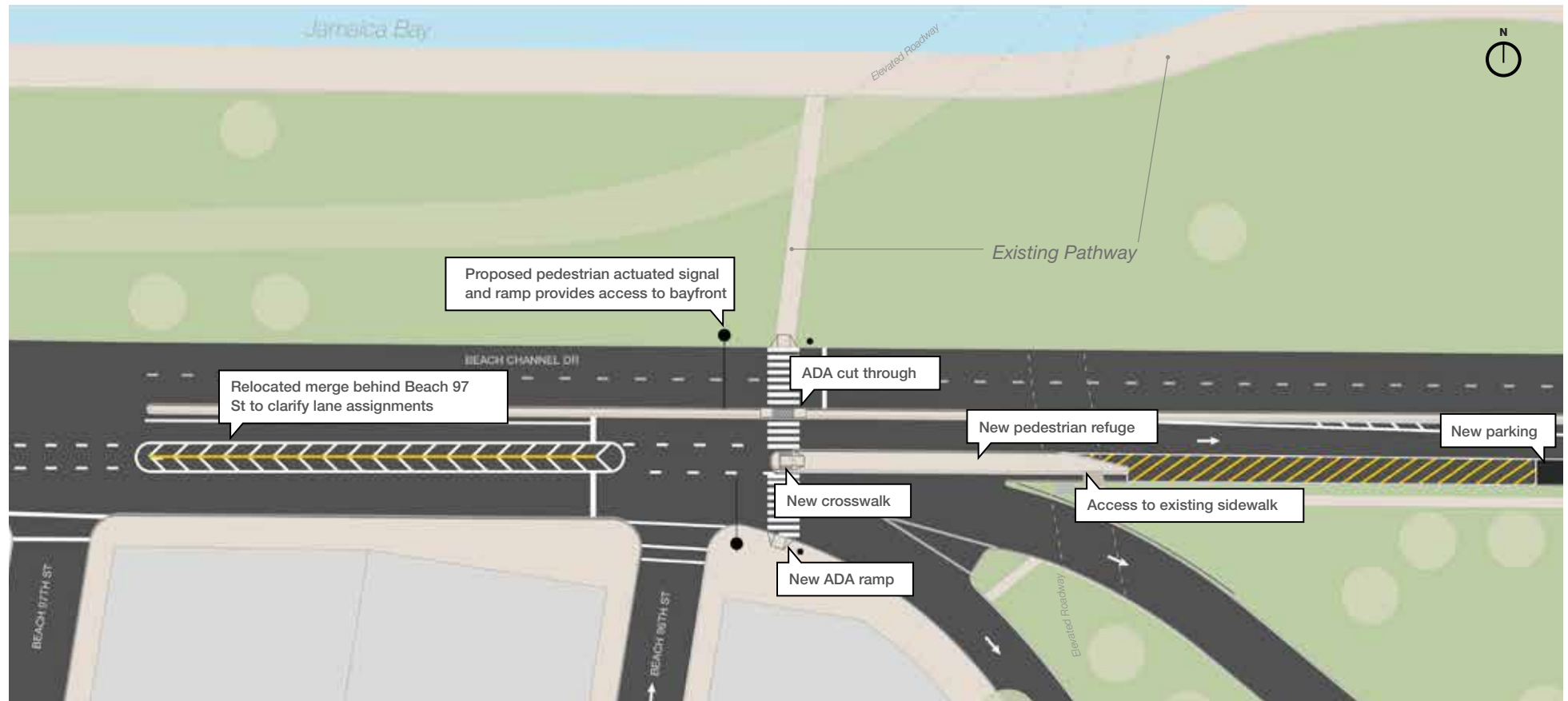
Potential Improvements



Existing Conditions: Beach Channel Dr & Beach 96 St



1	2	3	4	5	6+	Years
						Potential Project Time Frame: 5 Years



Intersection Plan: Beach Channel Dr & Beach 96 St

Beach 90 Street and Rockaway Beach Boulevard

Context

Beach 90 Street is a key pedestrian route to and from the A train, but its intersection with Rockaway Beach Boulevard is very wide, creating unpredictable travel movements and long crossings.

Plan Description

The study generated two alternative designs to align Rockaway Beach Boulevard to create a consistent roadway width and shorten crossing distances.

Potential Improvements

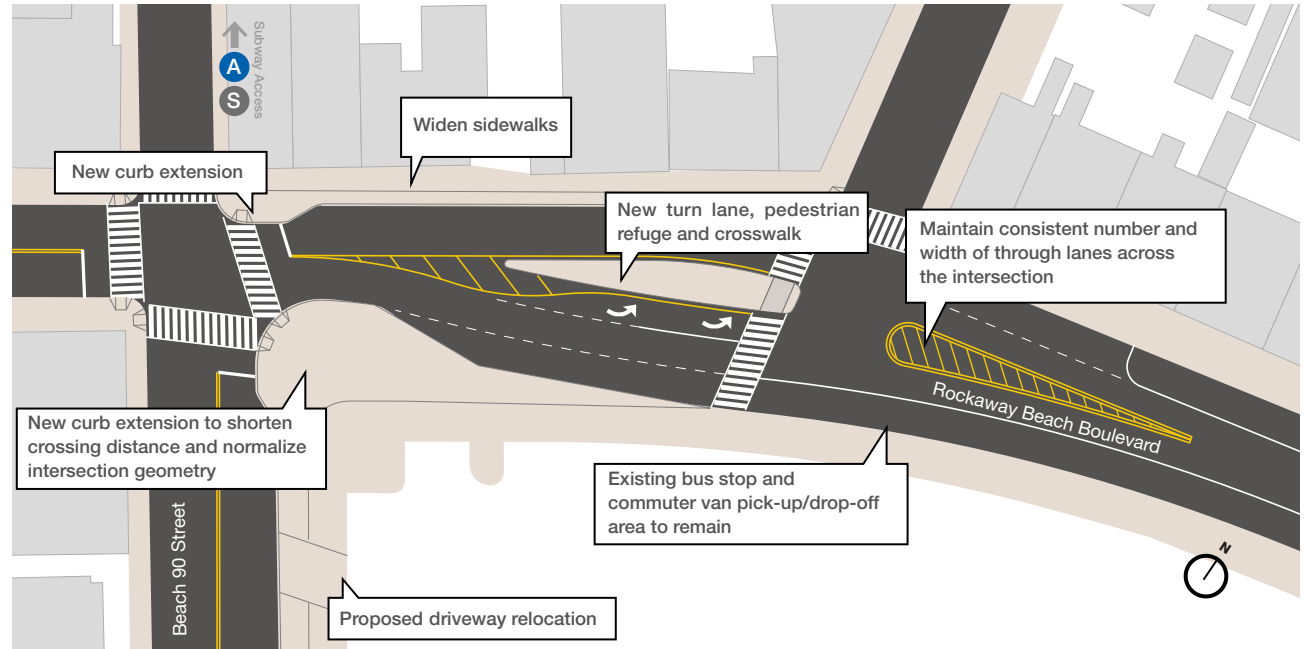


1	2	3	4	5	6+	Years
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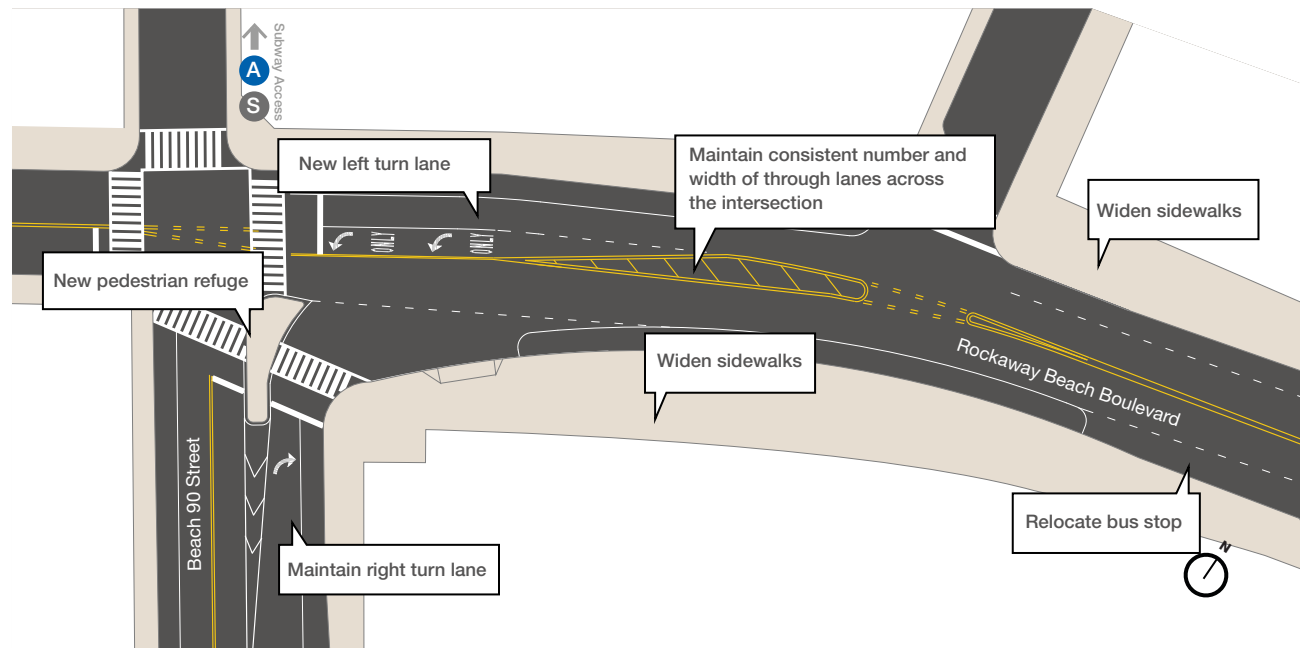
Potential Project Time Frame: More than 6 Years



Existing Conditions: Rockaway Beach Blvd & Beach 90 St



Intersection Plan Alternative 1: Rockaway Beach Blvd & Beach 90 St



Intersection Plan Alternative 2: Rockaway Beach Blvd & Beach 90 St

Beach Channel Drive between Regina & Cornaga Avenues

Context

Beach Channel Drive is a major east-west corridor in the Rockaways with bike lanes and a truck route. Irregular intersections at Regina Avenue and Cornaga Avenue have long crossing distances and poor sight lines.

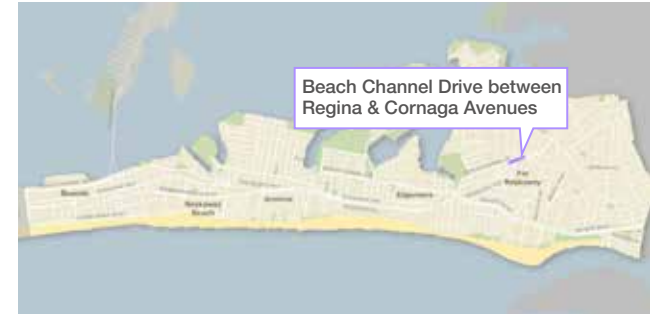
Plan Description

Potential redesigns include ADA ramps and expanded sidewalks and medians as well as signal timing changes and new road markings.

Potential Improvements



Existing Conditions: Beach Channel Dr & Regina Ave

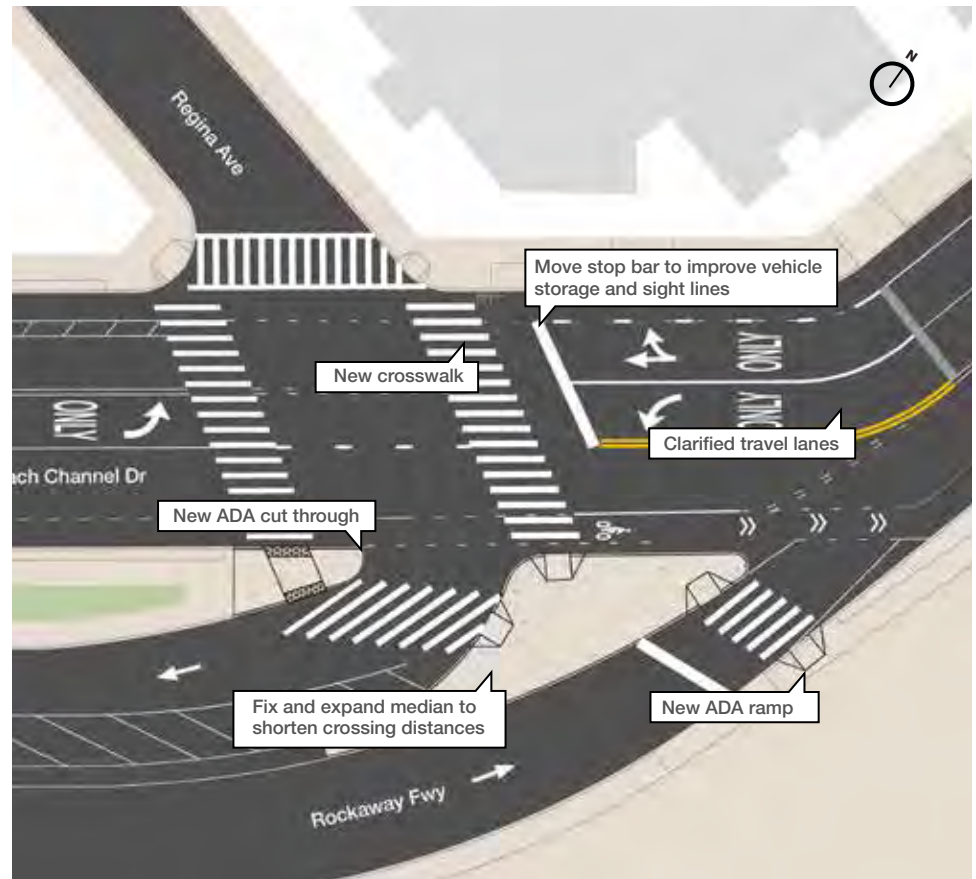


1	2	3	4	5	6+	Years
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Potential Project Time Frame: 5 Years



Intersection Plan: Beach Channel Dr & Cornaga Ave



Intersection Plan: Beach Channel Dr & Regina Ave

Beach 84 Street & Beach Channel Drive

Context

Beach 84 Street and Java Place between Rockaway Freeway and Beach Channel Drive lie next to vacant City-owned land, and under a split in the elevated train tracks, which impede sightlines and the street network.

Plan Description

This plan includes expanding the island between Beach 84 Street and Java Place, as well as constructing new sidewalks, crosswalks, and a landscaped median on Beach Channel Drive to improve pedestrian conditions to the NYCHA Hammel Houses and any future development.

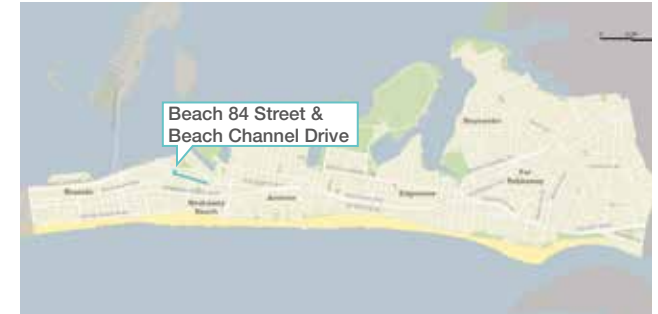
Potential Improvements



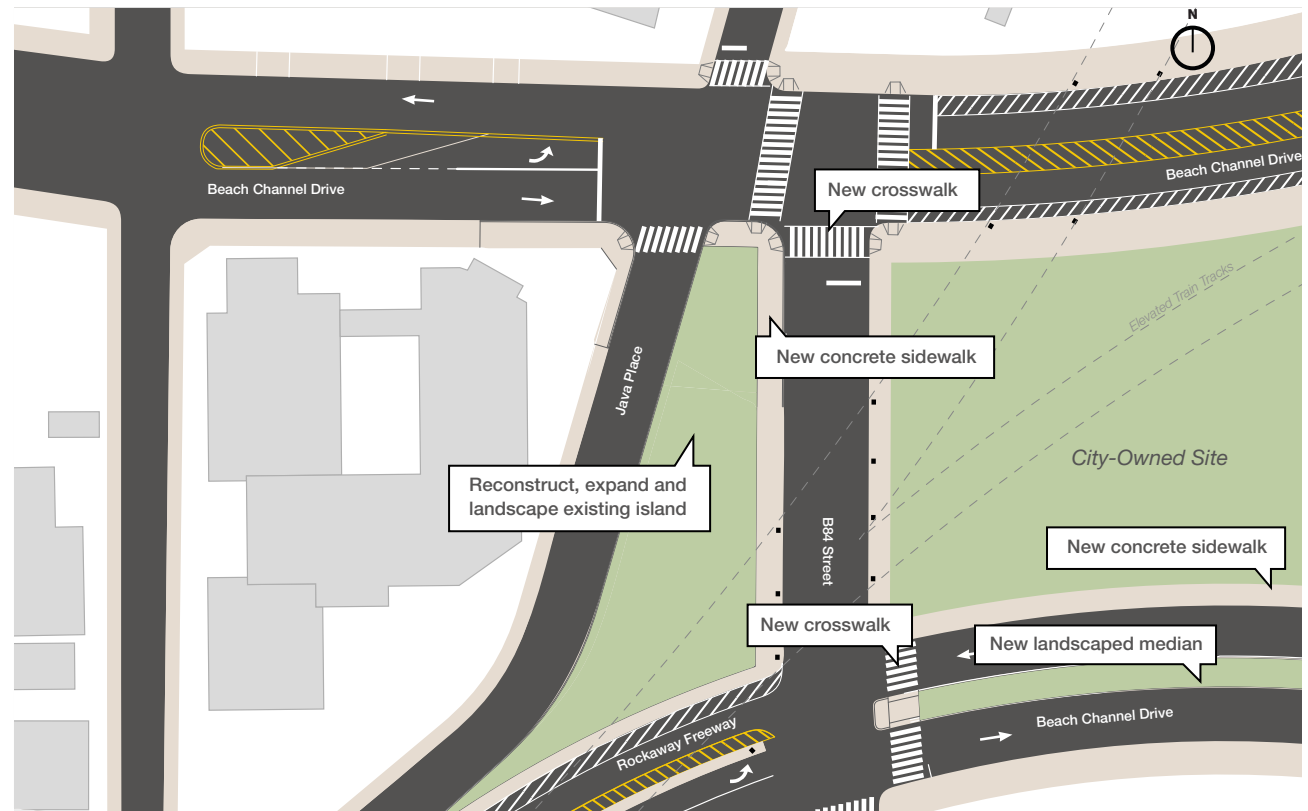
Existing Conditions: Beach Channel Drive



Existing Conditions: Java Pl & Beach Channel Dr



1	2	3	4	5	6+	Years
						Potential Project Time Frame: More than 6 Years



Plan View: Beach Channel Dr, Beach 84 St, Rockaway Fwy

Beach Channel Drive & Beach 35 Street/ Seagirt Boulevard Capital Construction

Context

The short-term improvement plans for Seagirt Boulevard and the complex intersection of Beach Channel Drive and Beach 35 Street use temporary materials, such as paint, to avoid drainage impacts. In the long-term, these designs would require larger-scale construction in order to relocate utilities, adjust curb lines and drainage, and replace temporary materials with concrete.

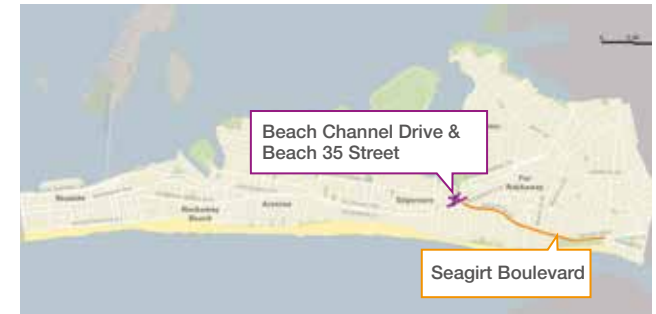
The complex intersection at Beach 35 Street could be further simplified and the median along Beach Channel Drive could be eliminated to clarify vehicle movements and reduce crossing distances.

Before capital designs are finalized, NYC DOT will evaluate the short-term projects at these two locations and determine whether changes to the conceptual plans are needed.

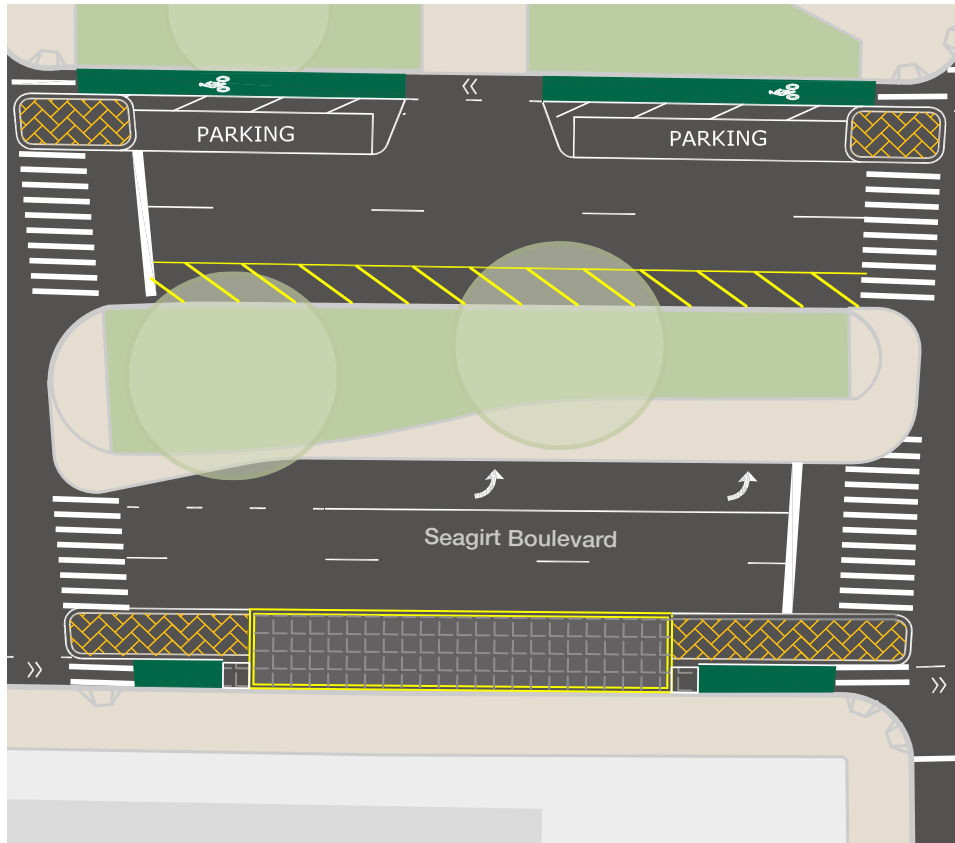
Plan Description

If feasible, temporary bus boarders along Seagirt Boulevard would be replaced with concrete bulb outs or islands.

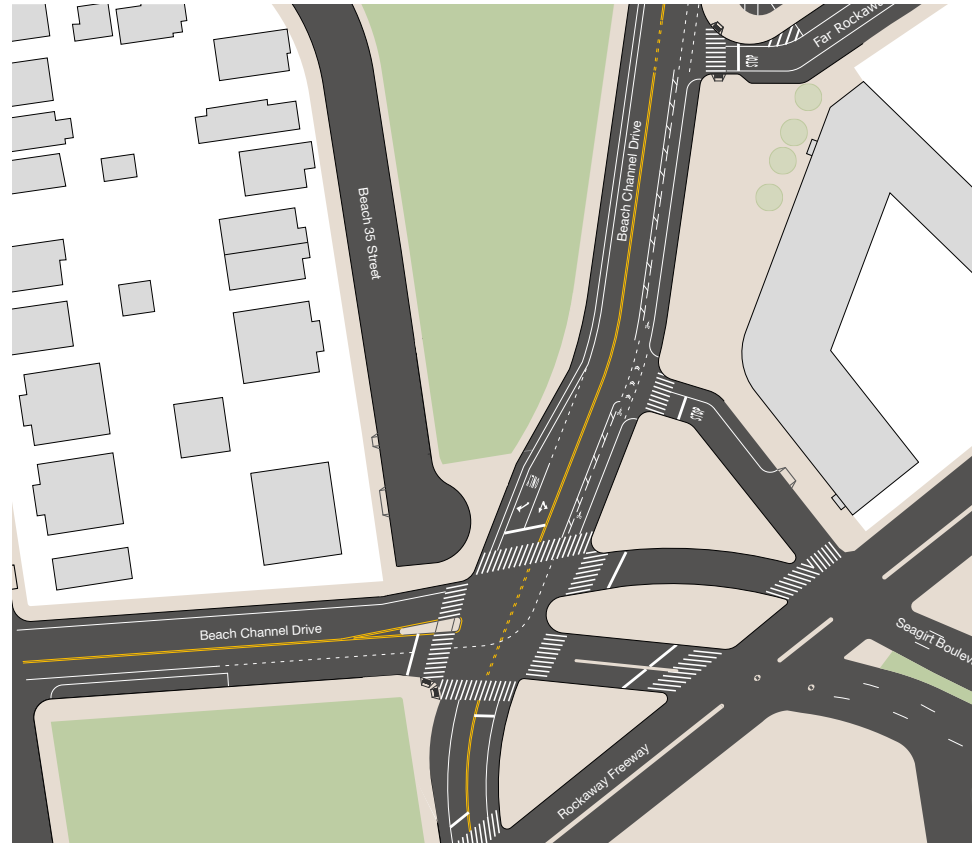
Potential Improvements



1	2	3	4	5	6+	Years
						Potential Project Time Frame: More than 6 Years



Plan View: Paint and temporary materials on Seagirt Blvd could be upgraded to concrete



Plan View: Beach Channel Dr & Beach 35 Street capital concept

Challenges and Opportunities

Through the *Access to Opportunity* study, NYC DOT has advanced a number of short-term street improvement plans and long-term improvement concepts to address connectivity and accessibility, as well as streetscape and safety issues throughout the Eastern Rockaways. The agency also acknowledges the complex interagency and contextual challenges facing this neighborhood.

As detailed in the below chart, NYC DOT will continue to seek opportunities to improve transit service, manage coastal impacts, and promote multi-modal connectivity for Eastern Rockaways residents.

Category	Challenge	Opportunity	Related Projects / Studies
Street Network	The Eastern Rockaways street network features multimodal connectivity challenges: Pedestrians face limited places to cross wide streets with speeding cars, cyclists lack north-south bike routes, and drivers contend with east-west corridors that are often congested during peak periods.	NYC DOT will continue to work with city agencies and private developers to construct and expand multi-modal, accessible streets to increase mobility and accessibility for all modes within and through the Peninsula. The agency supports pedestrian-scale, ADA-compliant, multi-modal street networks in future development projects, including Arverne East, the Downtown Far Rockaway Roadmap for Action, and the former Peninsula Hospital site.	Downtown Far Rockaway Roadmap for Action , https://www.nycedc.com/project/downtown-far-rockaway Peninsula Hospital Site Redevelopment Scoping Documents , https://www1.nyc.gov/site/planning/applicants/scoping-documents.page
Transit & Transportation	There are several challenges to providing reliable service on the A train in the Rockaways. The opening of the South Channel Bridge across Jamaica Bay for marine traffic is a major cause of service disruption, so MTA has been working with the US Coast Guard to expand the time periods in which the South Channel Bridge is not opened for boats to cross. The elevated train line along the Peninsula also creates an accessibility challenge for Rockaways residents, as there are only two stations with elevators in the Rockaways.	NYC DOT supports MTA's efforts to expand the South Channel Bridge opening moratorium, as well as install new countdown clocks at transit stops. NYC DOT collaborated with MTA on Q52/Q53 Select Bus Service implementation in 2017. The agency has also included Eastern Rockaways in its two-year carshare pilot to improve Rockaways residents' access to carshare service.	Review of the A & C Lines , http://web.mta.info/nyct/service/AC_LineReview.htm Woodhaven/Cross Bay Boulevards Select Bus Service , http://www.nyc.gov/html/brt/html/routes/woodhaven.shtml NYC DOT Carshare Pilot , nycdotcarshare.info
Climate Change	The Rockaway Peninsula, as a low-lying coastal area, is vulnerable to extreme weather events and rising sea levels. During Superstorm Sandy, Rockaways residents experienced power outages, interruptions in food and transportation networks, gas shortages, hospital evacuations, and fires.	NYC DOT will continue to work with city, county, state and federal agencies to resurface and reconstruct streets as well as upgrade storm and sanitary sewers in the Rockaways. The agency will also incorporate any lessons, recommendations, or infrastructure plans developed by the EDC Raise Shorelines Citywide project, which will assess drainage and rising sea level interventions in Edgemere, and work to coordinate street improvement projects.	OneNYC: The Plan for a Strong and Just City , https://onenyc.cityofnewyork.us/
Land Use	In the early twentieth century, the Rockaway Peninsula was a summer beach resort. Major urban renewal efforts in the 1960s and 1970s, however, razed most of the bungalow-style housing stock. Since then, large swaths of land have remained vacant. Superstorm Sandy laid bare the need for additional resources in the Eastern Rockaways.	NYC DOT will continue to work with city agencies to align transportation improvements with land use investments in the Rockaways. Major investments include the Downtown Far Rockaway Roadmap for Action, HPD-coordinated developments in Edgemere and Arverne East, the former Peninsula Hospital site, and capital improvements to Rockaways Parks, including Bayswater Park and Bay Breeze Park. These future investments aim to bring new amenities, services, and commercial options to the Rockaways.	Resilient Edgemere Community Plan , http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdf/community/resilient-edgemere-report.pdf Rockaway Parks Conceptual Plan , https://www.nycgovparks.org/facility/beaches/beach-recovery/rockaway-parks-master-plan New York City Parks Capital Project Tracker , https://www.nycgovparks.org/planning-and-building/capital-project-tracker

Summary of Potential Projects

The below table summarizes potential plans presented in this report.

Plans identified as short-term can be constructed by NYC DOT through its Street Improvement Project program. Long-term visions are likely to require significant investment in infrastructure. The study team estimated order-of-magnitude costs for those projects to further future planning efforts. Some of these plans will require coordination with other public agencies in regard to land ownership.

The agency will return to community stakeholders, including the Community Board, before implementing any potential projects.



Access to Opportunity long-term visioning session, Fall 2016.

Potential Project Locations	Estimated Implementation Time Frame (Years)	Long-Term Plan Cost Estimates ¹	Description	Coordinating Agencies ²
Seagirt Boulevard	3 (Short-Term) 6 + (Long-Term)	\$\$	Road diet, bicycle lanes, pedestrian improvements, bus boarding islands. Temporary materials to be used in short term, with full capital build-out subject to evaluation.	DOT, MTA
Beach 44 Street and Rockaway Beach Boulevard	1	N/A	Traffic calming. DOT will continue to explore traffic control and pedestrian safety opportunities as conditions allow.	DOT
Intersection of Beach Channel Drive, Beach 35 Street, Seagirt Boulevard, and Rockaway Freeway	1–2 (Short-Term) 6 + (Long-Term)	\$	Intersection realignment, pedestrian crossing improvements, new pedestrian space. In-house concrete work and temporary materials to be used in short term, with full capital build out subject to evaluation.	DOT, HPD, DPR
Bayswater Park at Norton Avenue and Beach 35 Street	1–2	N/A	Install an enhanced crossing and remove part of a guiderail to provide western pedestrian access to Bayswater Park.	DOT, DPR

Summary of Potential Projects

Potential Project Locations	Estimated Implementation Time Frame (Years)	Long-Term Plan Cost Estimates ¹	Description	Coordinating Agencies ²
Beach 19 Street - Beach 20 Street	3–5	N/A	Stripe bicycle facilities and design multi-modal intersection treatments between Nassau County, Downtown Far Rockaway, and Seagirt Boulevard.	DOT, DEP, DDC
Rockaway Beach Boulevard Signal Timing	1	N/A	Implement signal progression improvements.	DOT
Beach Channel Drive Signal Timing	1	N/A	Implement signal progression improvements.	DOT
Q52 / Q53 Select Bus Service, Q52 Extension	Complete	N/A	Implemented SBS in the Rockaways as part of the Q52 / Q53 SBS Project. Extended the Q52 to Beach 54 Street.	DOT, MTA
Q22 Bus Stop Relocation	1	N/A	Analyzed Q22 ridership and bus stop locations as part of MTA efforts to improve local bus service.	DOT, MTA
Beach 60 Street Station Area	6 +	\$\$	Construct landscaped pedestrian space by the Beach 60 Street A train station and a formalized parking area between Beach 59 Street and Beach 56 Street.	DOT, HPD, MTA, DCAS, NYSDOT, DCP
Edgemere Avenue	6 +	\$\$\$	Reconstruct Edgemere Avenue with sidewalks, curbs, and either three or five lanes to accommodate future traffic volumes. Final design will be coordinated with relevant city agencies to align with future developments, including Arverne Central Park Preserve Area, Arverne East, and the former Peninsula Hospital site.	DOT, HPD, MTA, DCAS, NYSDOT, DCP, DPR

Summary of Potential Projects

Potential Project Locations	Estimated Implementation Time Frame (Years)	Long-Term Plan Cost Estimates ¹	Description	Coordinating Agencies ²
Rockaway Freeway (Phase 1)	1-2	N/A	Upgrade medians to create ADA-compliant crossings at four intersections.	DOT, MTA
Rockaway Freeway (Phase 2)	6+	N/A	Extend the existing closure of Rockaway Freeway to motor vehicles. Redesignate this section as a multi-use path and public space, providing lighting and other bicycle and pedestrian amenities. May require capacity improvements on Edgemere Avenue.	DOT, MTA, HPD, DCAS, DCP
Beach 94 Street - Beach 95 Street Bus Transfer	6+	\$	Reconstruct medians and sidewalks to consolidate bus stops and enhance pedestrian safety. Construct a two-way protected bike path.	DOT, MTA
Beach Channel Drive and Beach 96 Street	5	N/A	Design new pedestrian crossing on Beach Channel Drive with actuated traffic signal and lane markings for review and implementation by MTA Bridges & Tunnels.	DOT, MTA
Beach 90 Street and Rockaway Beach Boulevard	6+	\$	Realign intersection and expand sidewalks to improve pedestrian safety. Any changes to parking lot driveways require coordination with the private landowner and the Department of Buildings.	DOT, MTA, DOB, private parties
Beach Channel Drive between Regina Avenue and Cornaga Avenue	5	N/A	Pedestrian crossing improvements, signal adjustments.	DOT
Beach 84 Street and Beach Channel Drive	6+	\$	Reconstruct Beach Channel Drive south of Hammels Wye with new sidewalks and landscaped medians. Expand the island between Java Place and Beach 84 Street.	DOT, HPD, DCAS, DCP, NYSDOT

All projects pending community input and further analysis

Notes:

1. Cost estimates are rough-order-of-magnitude, based on both hard costs and soft costs, and are symbolized as follows: \$ (\$1-\$10 million), \$\$ (\$11-\$20 million), \$\$\$ (\$21-\$30 million). Hard costs are based on itemized breakdown of construction related work. Soft costs include construction related items such as mobilization and protection of traffic. Symbolized costs in the above table include hard costs, soft costs, plus 20% for contingency, professional services, and estimated water and sewer work.

2. Agency Abbreviations: DCAS - New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services; DCP - New York City Department of City Planning; DDC - New York City Department of Design and Construction; DEP - New York City Department of Environmental Protection; DOB - New York City Department of Buildings; DOT - New York City Department of Transportation; DPR - New York City Department of Parks and Recreation; NYSDOT - New York State Department of Transportation; MTA - Metropolitan Transportation Authority; HPD - New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

Credits

New York City Department of Transportation

Polly Trottenberg: Commissioner

Eric Beaton: Deputy Commissioner, Transportation Planning and Management

Charles Ukegbu: Assistant Commissioner, Regional and Strategic Planning

The New York City Department of Transportation, together with the Department of Housing Preservation and Development as its co-applicant, won a US DOT Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) planning grant to conduct Access to Opportunity: A Transportation & Housing Study in the Eastern Rockaways. This final report was developed by the study team, which consisted of Arup and its subconsultants Stump Hausman and Traffic Databank, as well as the NYC DOT Special Projects Unit. The following NYC DOT units guided the Access to Opportunity Study and its final report: the Queens Borough Commissioner's Office, DOT Street Ambassador Team, Pedestrian Projects Group, Bike Program, Transit Development, Capital Planning & Project Initiation, Urban Design, Traffic Engineering & Planning, Federal and State Aid, and Land Use Review.

The following agencies also provided input into the Access to Opportunity Study: Department of Housing Preservation and Development, Department of City Planning, Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Environmental Protection, NYC Economic Development Corporation, MTA New York City Transit, MTA Bus Company, MTA Bridges and Tunnels, MTA Long Island Rail Road, NICE Bus, Department of Design and Construction, NYC Emergency Management, New York City Department of Sanitation, Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency, New York City Housing Authority, City of New York Police Department, New York City Fire Department, New York State Department of Transportation, and the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery.

This study could not have been possible without the support of Eastern Rockaways residents, elected officials, and community groups, including, but not limited to: Community Board 14, Rockaway Waterfront Alliance, Rockaway Development and Revitalization Corporation, Rockaway Youth Task Force, The Queens Library, Bayswater Civic Association, Arverne Civic Association, Councilmember Donovan Richards, State Senator James Sanders Jr., State Senator Joseph Addabbo Jr., State Assemblymember Stacey Pheffer Amato, State Assemblymember Michele Titus, US Representative Gregory W. Meeks, and Borough President Melinda Katz.

This material is based upon work supported by the FHWA under Grant Agreement No. P-3. Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the Author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the FHWA.

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