Chapter 4: Land Use, Public Policy, and Neighborhood Character

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the effects of the proposed reconstruction of an approximately 2/3-mile segment of Route 9A between West Thames and Chambers Streets (the proposed project) within the context of existing and future land use and development trends, public policy, and neighborhood character. Prior to September 11, 2001, the reconstruction of Route 9A as a heavily landscaped boulevard, as approved under the 1994 Route 9A Reconstruction Project Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), was nearly complete. A number of significant changes have occurred in Lower Manhattan since the 1994 FEIS was published that have altered land use, public policy, and neighborhood character in the areas surrounding Route 9A. The most critical change resulted from the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center (WTC). The attacks had catastrophic impacts on land use and neighborhood character on and around the WTC Site, as defined below, resulting in numerous public and private efforts aimed at reconstruction and revitalization. Battery Park City (BPC) has been further developed in both the north and south neighborhoods with a number of residential and institutional developments. Lastly, the conversion of older commercial office buildings to residential use has continued and intensified, as anticipated at the time of the 1994 FEIS. Overall, Lower Manhattan has become more of a mixed-use community with a larger presence of cultural, institutional, and residential uses while still remaining a major center of business activity.

This chapter describes the conditions that existed both prior to September 11, 2001 and today, with respect to land use, public policy, and neighborhood character. Next, it describes the anticipated changes expected to occur independently of the proposed project in each of the analysis years and assesses the potential impacts of each of the proposed projects. Although the proposed project is not expected to affect development trends, it could have localized effects on the character of the land uses and neighborhoods nearby. This chapter addresses the ability of the proposed project to support the development that once more anchors Lower Manhattan as a world renowned central business district and vital mixed-use community. Finally, this chapter establishes the context for the other analyses which follow.

B. METHODOLOGY

As described more fully in Chapter 2, “Project Alternatives,” three alternatives—No Action, At-Grade, and Short Bypass—and three analysis periods—(Construction Period), 2009 (Estimated Time of Completion), and 2025 (Design Year)—are considered. While the analysis is primarily based upon conditions that exist today at the project site and in the surrounding study area, as defined below, a discussion of the environment prior to the attacks of September 11, 2001 is included to provide an overall context for the analysis which follows. Anticipated changes in land use, public policy, and neighborhood character that are expected to occur independent of the proposed project by each analysis year are identified and potential impacts to land use, public policy, and neighborhood character associated with each of the project alternatives are assessed.
Various sources were used to prepare this chapter, including field surveys, data supplied by the NYSDOT, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ), the New York City Department of City Planning (DCP), Manhattan Community Board 1, the Battery Park City Authority (BPCA), the Alliance for Downtown New York (Downtown Alliance), articles from newspapers and other publications, and previously published environmental studies.

STUDY AREAS

The analysis of land use, public policy, and neighborhood character is addressed in three main areas: the project site, the primary study area, and the secondary study area. The study area used in the 1994 FEIS for this segment of Route 9A included the areas bounded by BPC and the Hudson River to the west, Broadway to the east, and South Ferry to the south. Because of the complexity and historic circumstances surrounding the proposed project as well as the potential cumulative effects which could result from the proposed project in conjunction with other major projects in the area, the study area has been expanded to include roughly all of Lower Manhattan south of Canal Street and west of Pike Street.

PROJECT SITE/ROUTE 9A

The project site comprises the segment of Route 9A (also known as West Street) between Chambers and West Thames Street (see Figure 4-1). The project site includes the roadway itself as well as the Class I bikeway and walkway which run along the western edge of Route 9A.

PRIMARY STUDY AREA

The primary study area includes roughly the area south of Chambers and N. Moore Streets between the Hudson River in the west and Broadway in the east. The primary study area has been divided into five subareas established based on geographic boundaries as well as commonly accepted neighborhood boundaries (see Figure 4-1). This division is intended to facilitate the discussion and analysis of the potential impacts of the proposed action. These subareas are defined as follows:

- **WTC Redevelopment Sites.** Includes (1) the WTC Site, bounded by Vesey, Church, Liberty, and Route 9A; and (2) the Southern Site, which consist of two city blocks south of the WTC Site, one bounded by Liberty, Greenwich, Albany, and Washington Streets; and the other bounded by Liberty, Washington, and Cedar Streets, and Route 9A; plus portions of Liberty and Washington Streets (collectively, the Southern Site).

- **North of WTC Site.** Bounded by N. Moore Street between Route 9A and Greenwich Street and Chambers Street between Greenwich Street and Broadway in the north, Broadway in the east, Vesey Street in the south, and Route 9A in the west.

- **Greenwich South Corridor.** Bounded generally by Liberty and Albany Streets in the north, Trinity Place in the east, and Route 9A in the west, extending to the southern edge of Battery Park.

- **Battery Park City.** Between Route 9A and the Hudson River from approximately Battery Place to Chambers Street.

- **Broadway Corridor.** Extends from Vesey Street in the north to Battery Place in the south between Trinity Place/Church Street and Broadway.
SECONDARY STUDY AREA

The larger secondary study area encompasses the remainder of Lower Manhattan south of Canal Street and west of Pike Street from river to river. Like the primary study area, the secondary study area has been divided into subareas to aid the discussion of the proposed project’s potential impacts, as follows:

- **Tribeca**, bounded by Canal Street to the north, Broadway to the east, N. Moore and Chambers Streets to the south, and the Hudson River to the west.

- **Chinatown below Canal Street**, bounded by Canal Street to the north, Pike Street and the East River to the east, the Brooklyn Bridge to the south, and Pearl Street to the west, plus the blocks between Broadway and Pearl Street from Canal Street in the north to Worth Street and Clavin Place in the south.

- **Civic Center**, bounded generally by Pearl Street to the east, the Brooklyn Bridge and Pace Plaza to the south, and Broadway to the west, extending north to Worth Street and Clavin Place between Lafayette and Pearl Streets.

- **Brooklyn Bridge to Battery Park**, bounded by the bridge to the north, the East River to the east, and Broadway and State Street to the west.

C. DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

PRE-SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, BASELINE CONDITIONS

Since the proposed project would restore and/or improve Route 9A at the WTC Site from its pre-September 11, 2001 condition, an understanding of the environment at the project site and in the surrounding area currently and prior to September 11, 2001 is necessary to help provide the context for the analysis which follows. Those land uses, neighborhood characteristics, and public policies which were substantially different then as compared to today are discussed in this section. These differences are largely concentrated at the WTC Site, and on the blocks immediately surrounding Route 9A.

LAND USE AND NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Before the September 11, 2001 attacks on the WTC, the project study area was characterized by a mixed land use pattern which prevails today. Dominated by the scale of the WTC buildings and their populations, Lower Manhattan was a thriving central business district with a number of institutional uses and a strong and growing residential community in Tribeca, BPC, and the Financial District.

Route 9A is a major urban arterial roadway which runs between Battery Place and 59th Street along Manhattan’s west side. Prior to the September 11, 2001 attacks on the WTC, the reconstruction of Route 9A as a heavily landscaped boulevard was nearly complete. The project site included eight vehicular traffic lanes for cars, trucks, and buses, and a separate continuous Class I bikeway and walkway for bicycles, pedestrians, and recreational users. The heavily traveled roadway served 240,000 people daily, including approximately 80,000 vehicles and 110,000 pedestrians. Two pedestrian bridges connected the WTC complex with the World Financial Center (WFC) in BPC to the west. Another pedestrian bridge at Chambers Street connected with Stuyvesant High School in BPC.
Primary Study Area

WTC Redevelopment Sites. Prior to September 11, 2001, the WTC Site contained over 10 million square feet of office space in five buildings, approximately 500,000 square feet of retail space, a 22-story, 820-room hotel, and a public plaza. The most prominent features of the WTC complex were the Twin Towers, two extraordinary, aluminum-clad, 110-story skyscrapers, each with 4.1 million square feet of rentable Class A office space. Rising over 1,350 feet, they were the tallest buildings in New York and had a dominating presence on the Lower Manhattan skyline. They also served as the symbolic centerpiece of Lower Manhattan’s reputation as the economic core of the world. Tourists from around the world came to see and photograph the Twin Towers, to visit the observation deck, and to dine at Windows on the World.

The five office buildings and the hotel surrounded Austin J. Tobin Plaza. The Plaza was the home of several outdoor cafes and was also used from time to time for performances and other public events. Along Church Street, there was more plaza area expanded into the bed of Church Street. The south end of the closed lanes was the home of the popular and successful Greenmarket. Despite its amenities, the superblock configuration of the WTC complex created a disconnect among the neighborhoods surrounding the WTC Site, cutting off streets and blocking view corridors in all directions.

Directly below the Plaza was the Concourse, consisting of retail stores, the PATH station, and a transportation hub that provided pedestrian connections to seven subway lines and the PATH trains to New Jersey. The PATH tracks ran underneath Route 9A and connected to the Hudson Tubes which extended west under the Hudson River to New Jersey, as they do today. Although the shopping area was initially unsuccessful, by 2001 it had become an extremely lucrative retail hub. A pedestrian bridge over Route 9A connected the northern part of the WTC complex with the commercial core of BPC at the WFC. The WTC bustled with activity on weekdays, with approximately 34,000 workers employed at the Twin Towers and over 200,000 commuters pouring through each day and into the evening hours. Although weekends were less active, the Twin Towers and retail concourse attracted a steady flow of tourists and shoppers.

On the Southern Site, the block at Liberty Street and Route 9A was an active parking lot and the site of the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church. To its east, the building at 130 Liberty Street, directly across Liberty Street from 2 WTC, was a fully occupied office tower with ground-floor retail and a public plaza. Liberty Street was open to two-way traffic with traffic medians and driveways along its north side to serve the WTC Site.

North of WTC Site. With the approximately 2 million-square-foot 7 WTC still standing and occupied and the Federal Office Building/U.S. Post Office and the Barclay-Vesey Building (Verizon Building) both open and fully functioning, the blocks immediately north of the WTC Site were far more active prior to September 11, 2001 than they are today. The area was a vital part of the dense commercial core of Lower Manhattan instead of the somewhat desolate construction zone it resembles today. Vesey Street west of Church Street, currently closed to vehicular traffic because of ongoing construction activity at the WTC Site, operated as a two-way roadway. The renovation of the Borough of Manhattan Community College’s (BMCC) Fiterman Hall on West Broadway and Barclay Street, damaged and vacant since September 11, 2001 was near completion and was actively used.

Greenwich South Corridor. Prior to September 11, 2001, the Greenwich South Corridor did not appear quite as isolated and empty as it does currently. Interior streets, though dark and narrow, were open to traffic. The subarea had fewer retail and building vacancies. The office buildings at
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90 West Street and 130 Cedar Street and the large office tower at 130 Liberty Street were all active and occupied. In addition, the building at 19 West Street was occupied by the Downtown Athletic Club, a private health club with hotel rooms and the home of the Heisman Trophy. Several buildings between Route 9A and Greenwich Street were being or had already been converted from office to residential use following the trend in Lower Manhattan that had begun well before September 11, 2001.

Battery Park City. BPC was primarily the same as it is today, with minor exceptions. The north neighborhood was slightly less active, with several parcels under construction or vacant which are now occupied or under construction. In the northern part of BPC, the residential building at 22 River Terrace was under construction, and the adjacent Teardrop Park was planned but not yet in construction. In the southern neighborhood, the Ritz-Carlton Hotel at Route 9A and Battery Place was approaching its scheduled opening. In addition, the buildings of the WFC were more visually connected to the Lower Manhattan business core, having been designed to harmonize with the size and design of the Twin Towers.

Broadway Corridor. Land use and neighborhood character in the Broadway Corridor was the same as today, as described below. The buildings on Church Street immediately across from the WTC Site that suffered damage on September 11, 2001 have since reopened with the same uses after undergoing repairs and renovations.

Secondary Study Area

Prior to September 11, 2001, land use and neighborhood character throughout the secondary study area were substantially the same as they are today, as described below, with several projects under construction that are now complete.

PUBLIC POLICY

Many of the public policies in effect today to support Lower Manhattan as a vibrant, attractive residential community and center of business and tourism were in place prior to September 11, 2001. Exceptions are the policies and agencies created specifically in response to the terrorist attacks. The only policy in effect prior to September 11, 2001 which is not in effect today is the Washington Street Urban Renewal Area (WSURA), which expired on January 25, 2002. Each of these policies is described below.

CONDITIONS IN THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT SINCE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

As a result of September 11, 2001, the Lower Manhattan office market was traumatized from the loss of approximately 13.3 million square feet of commercial office space, including over 10 million square feet on the WTC Site itself, and the WTC PATH Terminal, along with major damage to Route 9A and the Nos. 1/9 subway lines. A large number of residents and businesses were temporarily or permanently displaced by the attacks. The attacks resulted in the loss, reduction, or relocation of hundreds of corporations and small businesses, and large amounts of retail and office space remain vacant. However, in spite of all of this, Lower Manhattan has continued to function as an important center of business, learning, culture, and residential living. Except for the WTC Redevelopment Sites and the immediately surrounding blocks, the land uses and overall neighborhood character of the study area remain much the same today as they were prior to September 11, 2001.
LAND USE AND NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Project Site/Route 9A

Route 9A continues to be used as the major arterial roadway along Manhattan’s west side. The segment of Route 9A adjacent to the WTC Site suffered extensive damage on September 11, 2001 and during the aftermath and recovery period. The attacks destroyed the roadway in the vicinity of the WTC, including two northbound lanes which were located within the bounds of the WTC bathtub. On March 29, 2002, 6 months after the attacks, a six-lane temporary roadway between Liberty and Vesey Streets was opened. This temporary road restored vehicular access and mobility on Route 9A and allowed the reopening of the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel to the south. North of Barclay Street and south of Cedar Street the roadway resumes its eight-lane configuration, as it was prior to September 11, 2001. The greenway running along the west side of Route 9A continues to accommodate bicycles, pedestrians, and recreational users. One permanent pedestrian bridge across Route 9A at Liberty Street, damaged on September 11, 2001, and two temporary pedestrian bridges, one at Rector Street and the other at Vesey Street, help connect BPC to the rest of Lower Manhattan across the highway, which is otherwise difficult to cross in the vicinity of the WTC Site. The north bridge, a pedestrian bridge which connected the WFC and Winter Garden to the WTC concourse, was destroyed by the September 11, 2001 attacks.

Primary Study Area

The primary study area, traditionally dominated by office buildings, has seen a diversity of uses expand in recent years, including residences, institutions, and cultural facilities (see Figure 4-2). As discussed above, the primary study area has been divided into five subareas to facilitate the land use analysis.

WTC Redevelopment Sites. The WTC Site is vacant except for the temporary WTC PATH station and the Nos. 1/9 subway lines. The temporary WTC PATH station entry plaza and canopy occupy the west side of Church Street at Fulton Street on the eastern portion of the WTC Site. The Nos. 1/9 subway lines also cross through the eastern portion of the site. The temporary WTC PATH station’s mezzanine level, station platforms, and rail tracks, are located on the western portion of the site.

Sidewalk viewing areas with fencing are located along Church and Liberty Streets. The fence is far more attractive than typical construction fences and allows people to see through it. PANYNJ has posted informational boards telling the history of the site and high-rise buildings in Lower Manhattan. Aside from the viewing areas and the temporary WTC PATH station, the site is fenced-off and not accessible to the public. Entrances for construction vehicles are located at the four corners of the WTC Site with trucks entering and leaving on both Route 9A and Church Street. The area between the WTC Site and Route 9A is also inaccessible. Only the northern portion of Vesey Street is accessible via a narrow walkway connecting Church Street with Route 9A and the recently constructed pedestrian bridge across the roadway.

On the Southern Site, the vacant lot at Liberty Street and Route 9A and the large vacant office building at 130 Liberty Street that was severely damaged in the attacks of September 11, 2001, both add to the substandard character of the area. The building itself is covered in protective black netting and is a forlorn reminder of September 11, 2001. The large size of its lot, as well as the damaged and abandoned condition of the building, creates a strong presence on the adjoining streets. These two blocks are surrounded by fencing and are inaccessible, with limited pedestrian.
passageways along the streets. After September 11, 2001, Liberty Street and Vesey Street were closed to vehicular traffic between West and Church Streets.

In their current state, the WTC and Southern Site have a blighting effect on the surrounding neighborhood. With the exception of commuters traveling to and from the temporary WTC PATH station at the beginning and end of the workday, the site remains substandard and barren. Whereas the Twin Towers were the defining element of the area prior to September 11, 2001, the vast open space where the towers once stood defines the area today. It also acts as a physical barrier between the financial district and BPC to the east and west, and Tribeca and the Greenwich South neighborhood to the north and south, respectively. The vast emptiness of the WTC Site allows visual resources located in the study area to be seen from and across the site. The WTC Redevelopment Sites will be developed in accordance with the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation’s (LMDC) WTC Memorial and Redevelopment Plan, as discussed below in the “Public Policy” section.

North of WTC Site. The North of WTC Site subarea contains a variety of land uses, including office, residential, institutional, light industrial/utilities, and open space, as well as vacant land. It is a transition zone between the mainly commercial office buildings to the south and the more residential and institutional development in Tribeca to the north. Land uses along Route 9A include office, educational, and open space uses as well as two large, underutilized parcels. No retail stores or other street level services front Route 9A in the North of WTC Site subarea, creating a “back door” feeling along this section of the roadway.

Immediately north of the WTC Site at Route 9A is the Verizon (140 West Street) Building which houses telephone equipment and offices. The building, which is historic, sustained considerable damage on September 11, 2001, is undergoing extensive repairs, and will reopen. To its east, 7 WTC is being rebuilt on the block bounded by Vesey, Barclay, and Washington Streets and West Broadway. It will replace the two Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. (Con Edison) electrical substations and most of the Class A office space that formerly occupied the site. The new building is being constructed on the west end of its former footprint to preserve the Greenwich Street corridor for pedestrians and possibly vehicles.

North of the Barclay-Vesey Building are two active office buildings, 125 Barclay Street and the Bank of New York Building at 101 Barclay Street, located between Route 9A and Greenwich Street. St. John’s University School of Risk Management, Insurance and Actuarial Science is located at the corner of Route 9A and Murray Street. To its north are two large parcels formerly known as Sites 5B and 5C under the recently expired WSURA Plan (discussed in the “Public Policy” section of this chapter). Each parcel is used as a surface parking lot and for construction vehicles and equipment storage. P.S. 234 is located east of Site 5C on Greenwich Street between Warren and Chambers Streets.

The northwest corner of the subarea is dominated by the large buildings of the BMCC main campus along Route 9A and Independence Plaza, a large housing complex along Greenwich Street. These uses create a barrier between the traffic along Route 9A and the smaller scale buildings and quieter streets of Tribeca to the east of Greenwich Street. South of Independence Plaza and adjacent to BMCC is Washington Market Park. This attractive, 1.65-acre landscaped park is highly utilized and includes active recreation areas for small children.

Other buildings in the subarea that sustained damage on September 11, 2001 and have yet to reopen include the Federal Office Building/U.S. Post Office, a massive office building at 90
Church Street east of the 7 WTC Site, and Fiterman Hall, located immediately north of the 7 WTC Site.

The blocks to the east of Greenwich Street and north of Park Place have a greater mix of uses more typical of the TriBeCa community. They are characterized by smaller commercial buildings, some of which have been converted to residential use with a variety of ground-floor retail uses, including banks, restaurants, dry cleaners, and convenience-goods stores. The retail uses are more heavily concentrated along the north-south streets and Chambers Street, with smaller businesses along the east-west streets. Retailers reported a dramatic drop in sales after September 11, 2001, resulting both from a decline in office and tourist populations and from the temporary decline in the residential population (see Chapter 5, “Socioeconomic Conditions”). While retail activity improved as people and businesses returned to Lower Manhattan, a number of retail and commercial vacancies can be seen along the sidewalks. Residential uses are concentrated on Greenwich Street between Murray and Chambers Street, on Murray Street east from Greenwich Street, and on Park Place from West Broadway to the east.

**Greenwich South Corridor**. The Greenwich South Corridor contains a hodgepodge of land uses, building types, and block sizes. Residential, commercial, institutional, open space and transportation-related uses can all be found here. The area is somewhat isolated and noticeably less active than the Broadway Corridor to the east or BPC across Route 9A to the west.

Just south of the Southern Site along Route 9A is 90 West Street. Formerly a commercial building, the structure was damaged on September 11, 2001 and the building is now being converted to residential use. To its south is the New York Marriott Financial Center, a 38-story, 500-room hotel with meeting space.

While home to the fewest number of people compared to the other subareas in the primary study area, this neighborhood has experienced tremendous growth in its residential population in recent years, mainly due to a number of conversions of older office buildings to residential use, a trend expected to continue in the future. Several of these buildings are located along Route 9A between Carlisle Street and Battery Place, including 110 Washington Street; 47-50 West Street; 17 Battery Place, which also contains office space; and the recently completed 90 Washington Street. Located among these residences is the large office building at 40 Rector Street. Most of these buildings have retail shops or other services at street level. However, foot traffic along Route 9A is light and several of these spaces are vacant. The temporary pedestrian bridge constructed just north of Rector Street provides access across Route 9A to BPC.

The entrance and exit ramps to the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel are also located along the east side of Route 9A north of Morris Street. Above the ramps is the Battery Garage. This massive, multi-level parking structure can accommodate more than 2,000 vehicles. Pedestrians often use the driveways to the garage as a right of way to travel between Greenwich Street and Route 9A.

Encompassing 23 acres along the waterfront at the southern end of Route 9A is Battery Park, the largest public open space in the land use study area. The park contains expansive lawns and landscaping, a waterfront promenade, playgrounds, several monuments and memorials, and cultural programs. The Sphere, a sculpture that originally stood in Austin J. Tobin Plaza on the WTC Site and was damaged on September 11, 2001, stands in Battery Park as an interim memorial. Battery Park is also home to Castle Clinton National Monument and provides ferry access to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island Immigration Museum.

The rest of the subarea contains a similar mix of uses, with additional residential conversions located along Greenwich, Cedar, and Liberty Street, and several commercial buildings located...
between Washington Street and Trinity Place. The office building at 130 Cedar Street has been vacant since September 11, 2001. Immediately south of the WTC Site along Liberty Street, the recent reopening of the redesigned firehouse housing Engine Co. 10 and Ladder Co. 10 and the active ground floor businesses facing the WTC Site have brought back activity and with it, some sense of normalcy to these blocks which remained inactive for many months, and in some cases years, after September 11, 2001.

Traffic on interior streets is light, with no street extending for more than a few blocks in any direction with a number of segments closed for recovery activities. Additional multilevel public parking structures along Washington Street and the narrow east-west streets create a quiet, isolated atmosphere. Activity is slow but steady during the day with office workers, students, hotel guests, and residents present throughout the area at different times of the day and night.

**Battery Park City.** West of Route 9A is BPC, one of New York City’s newest neighborhoods. Built partially on landfill from the large volume of soil excavated for the original WTC complex, BPC is a mixed-use community with a commercial center, two residential neighborhoods, schools, cultural facilities, hotels, and neighborhood amenities such as dry cleaners and grocery stores, shopping opportunities, movie theatres, and restaurants, as well as the most extensive open space network in Lower Manhattan. BPC is generally divided into three sections: the North neighborhood (north of Vesey Street), the WFC, and the South neighborhood (south of Albany Street).

Land uses along Route 9A in BPC are commercial, residential, institutional, hotel, parking and open space. The northernmost parcel in BPC contains Stuyvesant High School on the north side of Chambers Street at Route 9A. A pedestrian bridge passes over Route 9A to connect Stuyvesant High School with the Tribeca neighborhood to the east. Another school, P.S./I.S. 89, is housed on the lower floors of a residential tower on the south side of Chambers Street. The ball fields along Route 9A between Warren and Murray Streets opened for use in the summer of 2003. South of the ball fields is the underdeveloped Site 26, used as a surface parking lot and construction staging area. The rest of the North neighborhood contains several recently constructed residential towers, the Irish Hunger Memorial, and several parcels which are either under construction or slated for residential development in accordance with the BPC Master Plan of 1979. In addition, the Embassy Suites Hotel building, located immediately west of Site 26, also houses a multi-screen movie complex and several restaurants.

The large commercial buildings of the WFC are located in the center of BPC, strategically positioned to tie into the WTC complex. The WFC consists of four large office towers, three of which border Route 9A, with retail shops and restaurants, and the recently reconstructed Winter Garden, a large, glass-enclosed public atrium. The WFC functions as the central business district of BPC, flanked by the residential neighborhoods to the north and south. Today, the WFC, with buildings ranging from 33 to 51 stories high, are visually prominent from all directions, standing isolated from the rest of the commercial business core to the north, east, and south of the WTC Site. During weekday work hours, employees are the predominant presence in this area. At other times, visitors to the public sitting areas and shopping opportunities centered around the Winter Garden or those using recreational facilities contribute to the ongoing presence in the area and a high level of activity.

The south neighborhood contains mostly low- and mid-rise residential buildings in addition to cultural and hotel uses. The south neighborhood is fully developed. With the exception of the two large, vacant parcels along Route 9A temporarily used to park BPC Authority vehicles and other staging equipment. Several residential buildings are located along Route 9A between
Albany Street and 3rd Place. These buildings are set back from the highway, separated by privately owned open space or parking areas. The Ritz-Carlton stands prominently at the southern end of Route 9A. This high rise structure includes both luxury hotel and residential uses, as well as the newly opened Skyscraper Museum.

None of the buildings in BPC which face Route 9A have street-level retail or other uses which are directly accessible from the roadway. The residential buildings are situated such that they face toward BPC and away from Route 9A. Similarly, the WFC can be accessed only from Vesey Street or the esplanade facing the Hudson River. There is little pedestrian traffic along the highway with the exception of recreational users.

One of the principle components of BPC is its extensive open space. The western section of BPC comprises a network of open spaces with both active and passive use, from Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Park in the north to Robert F. Wagner Jr. Park in the south, with the BPC Esplanade in between. Overall, BPC contains approximately 32 acres of parkland operated by the BPC Parks Conservancy. In addition, a narrow strip of land located between the Route 9A bikeway/walkway and BPC contains a number of temporary active and passive recreation uses. This area, currently under lease to BPC by the city, includes parking areas, open lawns, landscaping, and West Thames Park which offers a children’s playground, basketball courts, community garden plots, and a dog run. Some of this land is to be made available for incorporation in Hudson River Park, as discussed in the “Public Policy” section below.

**Broadway Corridor.** Office and other commercial buildings and uses dominate the Broadway Corridor. It contains a very dense office center and is part of the historic financial district, the traditional home of financial institutions and corporate headquarters and the smaller businesses and industries which serve them. Broadway and Church Street are lined with large office buildings. Older structures constructed in the first half of this century exist in juxtaposition with modern skyscrapers. The buildings directly across Church Street from the WTC Site that suffered damage on September 11, 2001 have reopened and are active with a range of uses including office, retail, hotel, and open space.

This busy area attracts large numbers of workers and visitors throughout the day and evening traveling to and from work, shopping, or viewing the WTC Site across the street. Liberty Plaza is a full-block open space at Church and Liberty Streets, a rare find within the dense business district. The wrought iron fence surrounding St. Paul’s grounds, particularly the Broadway section, has been the location of many informal memorials. In addition to St. Paul’s Chapel, the Broadway Corridor contains another of New York’s oldest churches, Trinity Church. Trinity Church and the adjacent churchyard are located on Broadway at Wall Street. A greater mix of uses characterizes the blocks generally north of Cortlandt Street, with a number of older, small scale buildings along Broadway and Cortlandt, John, and Fulton Streets.

**Secondary Study Area**

**Tribeca.** Residential and commercial uses dominate the Tribeca neighborhood, with institutional and industrial uses and open space located throughout the subarea (see Figure 4-3). Late 19th century corniced loft buildings are interspersed with new mid-rise apartment buildings with terraces and bay windows that seek to evoke the style of the older buildings. High-rise buildings are primarily located along the wider north-south streets with smaller buildings occupying the midblocks. Many of the smaller commercial buildings have been converted to residential use with loft-style apartments and a variety of ground-floor retail uses. These include basic
neighborhood amenities, such as banks, dry cleaners, and convenience goods stores, as well as large concentrations of art galleries, boutique shops, bars, and restaurants.

Office buildings are concentrated along Broadway and Worth Street, and a large office complex is situated along Route 9A between N. Moore and Hubert Streets. Notable institutional uses include New York Law School and the Tribeca Film Center. Some of the industrial uses that characterized the neighborhood before the residential conversions began are still present in the northwestern portion of the secondary study area, mainly in the area bounded by Route 9A and Greenwich, Laight, and Canal Streets. St. John’s Rotary, the large block bounded by Hudson, Laight, and Varick Streets, and Ericsson Place, provides access to the Holland Tunnel and carries heavy traffic volumes.

The segment of the Hudson River Park within Tribeca includes the permanent greenway along Route 9A, and interim uses on the piers and waterfront including volleyball, mini golf, basketball courts, batting cages, concessions, a boathouse, and fishing and passive use areas.

**Chinatown Below Canal Street.** The Chinatown below Canal Street subarea, located approximately between the Manhattan and Brooklyn Bridges, includes mainly commercial and residential uses in small, older buildings, and large residential towers. High concentrations of commercial and mixed-use buildings exist throughout the subarea, concentrated along Canal Street, between Broadway and Pearl Street, and along the north-south streets throughout the subarea. Restaurants, fresh food markets, tea and rice shops, and garment factories are the main businesses in Chinatown. The eastern and southern sections of the subarea include large-scale residential developments, such as Chatham Towers, the Governor Alfred E. Smith Houses, and Confucius Plaza, a large, middle-income residential building at the Bowery and Division Street. Additional uses located throughout the subarea include educational, cultural, transportation, office, and open space. There is little new development in Chinatown, with large numbers of commercial vacancies and several dilapidated buildings throughout the subarea.

**Civic Center.** This area is characterized by a high concentration of institutional and office uses mainly related to federal and city government. The Mayor’s offices and chambers of the New York City Council are housed in City Hall, which is surrounded by City Hall Park at the southwest corner of the subarea. On the same parcel is the Tweed Courthouse on Chambers Street, now the headquarters of the New York City Department of Education. Several municipal office buildings in the subarea house various city, state, and federal agencies, and a cluster of courthouses lines Centre Street. The New York Police Department headquarters is located at Police Plaza, across from the Municipal Building. Additional uses include several small parks located near the courthouses, a small portion of the African burial ground along Duane Street, and the Murray Bergtraum High School for Business on Rose Street and Wagner Place.

**Brooklyn Bridge to Battery Park.** The Brooklyn Bridge to Battery Park subarea comprises the eastern portion of the Financial District and is largely commercial, with pockets of residential, institutional, entertainment, and open space uses. Large office towers housing financial service institutions, law firms, and insurance companies occupy the southern and western portions of the subarea. Commercial buildings dating from the early 1930s exist in juxtaposition with modern office buildings. The area between Wall, Pearl, and Whitehall Streets is where New York City began and where Lower Manhattan’s reputation as the economic hub of the world was born. Huge skyscrapers tower over narrow, sloping, and winding streets, making it easy to become disoriented. A greater mix of uses is present in the northern portion of the subarea, including several residential buildings and institutional uses. In recent years, there has been a trend toward residential use in the subarea, including conversions and, more recently, new buildings.
The South Street Seaport is a dominant use along the East River waterfront, attracting large numbers of visitors to shops, restaurants, boat rides, and boardwalk entertainment. The eastern edge of the study area features Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) Drive and Water Street, two roadways that carry heavy volumes of local and through traffic. At the southern tip of Manhattan, renovations to the Whitehall Ferry Terminal have recently been completed. The large number of cultural institutions in the subarea combined with its historic significance makes this area a major tourist destination. Streets are crowded during the workday with large numbers of office workers, as well as tourists and a growing number of residents. The area is substantially less active during evening hours and on weekends.

PUBLIC POLICY

The project site is located adjacent to areas zoned C6-4 (see Figure 4-4). While the New York City Zoning Resolution does not affect transportation projects such as the proposed project, zoning regulations and policy apply throughout the land use study area. Therefore, a brief discussion is included to further establish the context in which the proposed project is set.

Primary Study Area

The WTC Redevelopment Sites, North of WTC Site, Broadway Corridor, and Greenwich South Corridor subareas are largely zoned for medium- and high-density commercial office development, including General Central Commercial (C6) districts and Restricted Central Commercial (C5). The C6 districts are zoned for a wide range of retail, office, amusement, service, custom manufacturing, and related uses normally found in the central business district. These districts typically contain corporate headquarters, large hotels, entertainment facilities, and some residential development, with ground-floor retail uses in some buildings. The C5 districts are designed to provide for office buildings and a great variety of retail stores. BPC is governed under the Special BPC District, described below.

Although the WTC Site is zoned C6-4 and C5-3, it is owned by PANYNJ. The 1962 legislation authorizing the development of the WTC provides that, so long as the WTC is owned by PANYNJ, no agency, commission, or municipality shall have jurisdiction over the WTC. The New York City Zoning Resolution, Building Code, and Fire Code do not therefore apply to the WTC Site. However, it is PANYNJ policy to voluntarily conform to the maximum extent practicable to local building and fire codes. This policy is evidenced by the various Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) that PANYNJ has entered into with the New York City Department of Buildings and Fire Department. These MOUs memorialize the policy of PANYNJ to ensure that its facilities meet code requirements to the maximum extent practicable and, where appropriate, exceed them.

Special Battery Park City District

The Special BPC District was established by the city and the BPCA in 1973 to guide development in accordance with the BPC Master Plan. Elements of the Master Plan include a central office complex flanked by residential neighborhoods to the north and south, and a continuous, publicly accessible esplanade along the Hudson River waterfront. The district contains special design controls with respect to floor area ratio (FAR), required building walls, and permissible building height.

The Special BPC District is divided into three subdivisions—Zone A, Zone B, and Zone C. Zone A provides for residential development with ancillary retail and service uses and hotels. Zone B, which encompasses the WFC and the New York Mercantile Exchange Building, provides for
commercial and mixed-use development with ancillary retail and service uses. Zone C provides for commercial and mixed-use development, parking, and ancillary retail and service uses.

**Special Lower Manhattan (LM) District.** Most of the primary study area as well as the Brooklyn Bridge to Battery Park subarea of the secondary study area also lie within the Special LM District. Established in 1998, it covers the country’s third-largest central business district which includes all of Lower Manhattan generally south of Murray Street and the Brooklyn Bridge. It was created to simplify and consolidate the overlapping complex regulations previously governing Lower Manhattan, to allow the area to grow while reinforcing its historic character and built fabric, and to facilitate the change to a mixed-use community. The zoning change relaxed strict use controls that had inhibited the retail, entertainment, and service establishments generally needed to support a 24-hour community. New height and setback controls also allow considerable design flexibility and, at the same time, are intended to encourage new development that would be consistent with the historic character of Lower Manhattan.

**Special Tribeca Mixed-Use (TMU) District.** The Special TMU District covers the area from Greenwich Street to the west of West Broadway and from north of Harrison Street to Murray Street and includes portions of the primary and secondary study areas. It is intended to retain stable industries within the Tribeca neighborhood that provide jobs and adequate wages and to encourage stability and growth by permitting controlled residential uses and light manufacturing to coexist. In addition, the district aims to facilitate the change to a mixed-use community and permit the area to grow while protecting its historic character.

**Secondary Study Area**

Tribeca is primarily zoned with medium-density commercial districts (C6), with manufacturing districts (M1 and M2) mapped in the north and west sections of the subarea near Canal Street and along the Hudson River waterfront. Tribeca is also regulated under the Special TMU District as described above. The Chinatown below Canal Street subarea contains commercial (C6 and C8), manufacturing (M1), and residential (R7) zoning districts. The C6-4 zoning district encompasses nearly the entire Civic Center subarea allowing for medium- to high-bulk office buildings. The Brooklyn Bridge to Battery Park subarea is primarily zoned with medium- and high-density commercial districts (C5 and C6) similar to those in the primary study area, with low- to medium-density districts (C2-8 and C4-6) mapped along the East River waterfront. In addition, the R8 residential district is mapped specifically for the Southbridge Towers residential development just south of the Brooklyn Bridge.

**Additional Public Policies**

In addition to zoning-based planning, several other platforms for planning in New York City are available. Since office vacancy rates began to increase in Lower Manhattan in the early part of the 1990s, public policy has been used to influence land use and has begun to bring about the transformation of the Financial District into a more diverse, 24-hour community. Policy initiatives were developed beginning in 1995 to offer economic and financial incentives intended to increase office occupancy as well as promote reinvestment and adaptive reuse of the more obsolete buildings in Lower Manhattan. The policies were designed to lower the area’s commercial vacancy rates, convert targeted commercial office buildings into residential space, help build a 24-hour, mixed-use neighborhood, invest in and upgrade Class B office space, and attract new retailers to the area.
Federal, state, and city agencies as well as community organizations often develop locally specific or neighborhood plans for various areas of New York City. In particular, since September 11, 2001, several public policy initiatives have been created to continue the revitalization of Lower Manhattan. The major policies and plans addressing the study area are discussed below.

**Lower Manhattan Development Corporation.** LMDC was created in November 2001 as a subsidiary of the Empire State Development Corporation to help plan and coordinate the rebuilding and revitalization of Lower Manhattan south of Houston Street so that it will re-emerge as a stronger and more vibrant community. LMDC is charged with assisting New York to recover from the terrorist attacks on the WTC, and with its WTC Site Memorial Competition creating a permanent Memorial to those who perished. Through consultation with its many advisory councils representing a cross-section of affected communities and direct communication with government officials, elected representatives, community organizations, affected individuals, and members of the public, LMDC has gathered information on issues critical to New York’s recovery, including transportation and infrastructure, residential and commuter concerns, economic development, education, and tourism and the arts.

LMDC has sponsored several initiatives and studies relating to short- and long-term solutions to the challenges facing Lower Manhattan neighborhoods in the wake of September 11, 2001. Among these efforts are open space and streetscape improvements and studies of affordable housing, Chinatown traffic and transportation, the Fulton Street corridor, and Greenwich Street south of the WTC Site. LMDC is also focused on studying transportation in Lower Manhattan to determine the short-term transportation priorities critical to the revitalization of Lower Manhattan and the potential long-term transportation projects that will better connect Lower Manhattan to the rest of the region. LMDC has also worked closely with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in developing its plans and has consulted where appropriate with other federal agencies, including the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), all of which are assisting in the recovery effort.

**New York City’s Vision for a 21st Century Lower Manhattan.** On December 12, 2002, Mayor Michael Bloomberg released a Vision for a 21st Century Lower Manhattan (New York City’s Vision) with the stated purpose to connect Lower Manhattan to the world around it, build new neighborhoods, and create public places that make Lower Manhattan one of the most appealing places in the world. The plan describes various recommendations to help revitalize and improve Lower Manhattan as a global center of business by creating new regional transportation links. To attract new investment in the neighborhoods south and east of the project site, the city calls for the creation of Fulton Market Square and Greenwich Square. Other goals include improvements to streetscapes, the expansion and creation of public plazas and parks, and the continued revitalization of the waterfront. The Vision aims to spark private market reactions from these public investments to increase the number of businesses and residents in Lower Manhattan.

**New York Liberty Bond Program.** As part of the efforts toward rebuilding and revitalizing New York City in the wake of September 11, 2001, the New York Liberty Bond Program was introduced as a cooperative program between New York Liberty Development Corporation, New York City Industrial Development Agency (IDA), New York State Housing Finance Agency (HFA), and New York City Housing Development Corporation (HDC). These agencies offer tax-exempt financing for the construction and renovation of commercial and residential properties that lie primarily within the Liberty Zone, which is the area of Manhattan south of
Canal Street, East Broadway, and Grand Street. The primary goal of the program is to create a seven-day-a-week, 24-hour mixed-use, diversified community in Lower Manhattan by repairing and replacing damaged and destroyed commercial space; creating additional multifamily residential and neighborhood retail development; providing modern office space for displaced and decentralized businesses; attracting new residents and employers to New York City; and encouraging environmentally responsible design and construction. Both 90 Washington Street (recently completed) and 90 West Street (under construction) along Route 9A are being partially financed through the program.

The Alliance for Downtown New York. The Downtown Alliance, the city’s largest business improvement district (BID), was established in 1995. The Downtown Alliance’s mission is to transform Lower Manhattan into a 24-hour neighborhood and to create a safe, clean, live-work, wired community for the 21st century. The BID covers the area from City Hall to the Battery and from the East River to Route 9A, and includes approximately 100 million square feet of office space and over 100 city blocks.

Battery Park City Authority. The BPCA is a public benefit corporation created in 1968 by Governor Nelson Rockefeller and the New York State Legislature to develop and operate the 92-acre landfill at the southwestern tip of Manhattan known as BPC. Parcels of land are leased to private developers who build in accordance with BPCA guidelines, as described above (see “Special BPC District”).

Battery Park City Parks Conservancy. The BPC Parks Conservancy is a private, nonprofit organization which operates nearly 32 acres of open space in BPC, including parks and gardens, playing fields, playgrounds, plazas, and walkways. Created in 1988, the BPC Parks Conservancy has a mandate to maintain and operate the parks in a first class manner through its horticultural, maintenance, programming, and administration departments.

Hudson River Park and Hudson River Park Trust. For almost two decades, NYSDOT has worked to create an urban boulevard on the west side of Manhattan along the Hudson River and BPC. In addition, NYSDOT has worked with the Hudson River Park Trust (HRPT), and its predecessors, to jointly plan the development of land west of the Route 9A bikeway/walkway as future park land. The Hudson River Park Act of 1998 created the HRPT and established the boundaries for the park as the area west of the Route 9A construction to the U.S. Bulkhead Line and/or the BPC property line. The park was developed from the residual land that was made available west of the roadway based on the selected alternative in the 1994 Record of Decision.

HRPT is a public benefit corporation under the jurisdiction of both the city and the state that is responsible for developing and operating the Hudson River Park, which extends from Battery Park to West 59th Street, where it connects with Riverside Park. The 5-mile, 550-acre park follows the west side of Route 9A and will be built in six segments, several of which are now in construction. When complete, the park will consist of 13 park piers, a continuous waterfront esplanade, active and passive recreation space, boating, and three commercial development nodes.

The Hudson River Park legislation indicated that the park limits would be established after construction of Route 9A was complete and certified by the NYSDOT Commissioner. Prior to September 11, 2001, construction of Route 9A in the BPC area was not complete, and therefore, no limits were established for the park. Throughout the design and construction of the Route 9A project, the joint development mandate required close coordination and cooperation with HRPT to effectively address and resolve access, land use, and design issues. Since this process was not
complete prior to September 11, 2001, in the BPC area, the coordination between NYSDOT and HRPT is continuing with respect to the segment of the park from Chambers to West Thames Street, the subject of this FSEIS.

Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. The project site is located within the boundaries of the coastal zone. Pursuant to federal legislation, in 1999 and 2002, New York City and State, respectively, adopted policies aimed at protecting resources in the coastal zone. New York City’s Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP) contains 10 major policies, each with several objectives focused on improving public access to the waterfront; reducing damage from flooding and other water-related disasters; protecting water quality, sensitive habitats, such as wetlands, and the aquatic ecosystem; reusing abandoned waterfront structures; and promoting development with appropriate land uses. The principles of the WRP formed the basis for a DCP study and the resulting adoption of new waterfront zoning. For city actions, CPC certifies whether a proposed action is in compliance with the city’s WRP. The New York State Department of State (NYSDOS) or the applicable state agency has this responsibility on the state level. Chapter 12, “Coastal Zone Management,” provides a detailed analysis of the compatibility of the proposed project with the 10 WRP policies.

Washington Street Urban Renewal Area (WSURA). The city established WSURA in 1961; it expired on January 25, 2002. The WSURA Plan’s stated objective was to promote diversified and economically sound development in the area from Barclay to Hubert Streets, between Greenwich Street and Route 9A. Originally, the plan called for development of commercial, light manufacturing, or warehouse uses, but after being amended nine times, the plan called for community space and residential or office development. Sites 5B and 5C between Route 9A and Chambers, Greenwich, and Murray Streets are the only two WSURA sites that remain undeveloped.

D. PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

CONSTRUCTION PERIOD

FUTURE CONDITIONS COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES

Land Use and Neighborhood Character

Land use will intensify during the construction period as a result of a number of major projects throughout the land use study area. Overall, an additional 3.4 million square feet of office space (including 1.7 million square feet of office space to be rehabilitated after damage sustained from the attacks of September 11, 2001), 90,000 square feet of additional commercial space, more than 600,000 square feet of institutional space, and up to 6,000 new residential units, through conversion and new construction, are expected for completion by 2006 throughout the land use study area. These developments are consistent with existing trends to create more of a mixed-used community throughout Lower Manhattan while maintaining a strong commercial presence. The major projects are discussed briefly below. A complete list of projects expected to be complete by 2006 in the primary and secondary study areas can be found in Attachment A, Table A-1. While these developments may result in some changes to neighborhood character in the immediate vicinity of the development sites, most of the neighborhoods throughout the study area are expected to retain their most prominent characteristics, and overall neighborhood character would be minimally affected.
Primary Study Area

WTC Redevelopment Sites. During the construction period major construction will be in progress at the WTC Site on the Memorial, related cultural uses, Freedom Tower, the retail bases of the planned office towers, and below-grade concourse levels for retail use and pedestrian connections. The permanent WTC PATH Terminal will also be under construction at the WTC Site, with phased completion of the station expected between 2007 and 2009. Much of the temporary WTC PATH station will continue to operate as it does today in conjunction with the completed portions of the permanent facility. The Southern Site, which will eventually be developed for office and open space uses, will be vacant, and possibly used as construction staging areas.

North of WTC Site. The Barclay-Vesey Building and the Federal Office Building/U.S. Post Office will be restored, repaired, renovated, and reopened. Between these buildings, the new 1.6 million-square-foot 7 WTC office tower (and two Con Edison substations) will be completed and occupied. In addition, several residential and mixed-use developments are expected to be built. The largest of these will be on the former WSURA Site 5C at the corner of Route 9A and Chambers Street. The residential conversion of the landmark Woolworth Building was recently completed.

Greenwich South Corridor. Consistent with existing trends, restoration and conversion of 90 West Street, adjacent to the project site, from commercial to residential use will add over 400 residences and ground-floor retail space to the neighborhood.

Battery Park City. Most of the vacant parcels remaining in BPC are expected to be complete by 2006. Four residential and mixed-use buildings will have produced almost 1,500 new dwelling units. Some of these buildings will include street-level retail or institutional space to be used by the BPC Parks Conservancy. The planned development at BPC Site 16/17, the large parcel bounded by Murray Street, North End Avenue, Vesey Place, and River Terrace, will contain over 500 housing units, a New York Public Library branch, not-for-profit space, a café, and new public open space. On Site 26, a 2.3 million square foot office tower for Goldman Sachs may be under construction. The Museum of Jewish Heritage (Site 14C, BPC South), Teardrop Park, (22 River Terrace), and the redevelopment of Pier A between BPC and Battery Park for retail and tourism uses have recently been completed.

Broadway Corridor. Approximately half of Liberty Plaza may be inaccessible during this period due to construction of an underground passageway and street level access point to the permanent WTC PATH Terminal. These construction activities would temporarily disrupt the plaza’s designated public use.

Secondary Study Area

No planned or proposed land use development projects in the Chinatown below Canal Street or Civic Center subareas are expected by 2006.

Tribeca. Consistent with existing trends, small- to medium-sized buildings throughout Tribeca are expected to continue to be converted from office or industrial to residential use and new residential buildings will be constructed by 2006. These buildings will each contain between 20 and 120 units of various sizes. An expansion is also planned for the New York Law School on Church Street between Leonard and Worth Streets.

Brooklyn Bridge to Battery Park. A number of developments are planned for the Brooklyn Bridge to Battery Park subarea. Several sites have been identified for large, mixed-use
developments with a combination of residential with either institutional, office, retail, and/or parking uses. These include the NYU Downtown Hospital parking lot on Gold and Beekman Streets, 15 William Street, also a parking lot, and 80 South Street. Several large-scale mixed-use developments have been recently completed, including 2 Gold Street, 10 Liberty Street/William Street, and 63 Wall Street. In total, over 2,700 residential units will be added to the Brooklyn Bridge to Battery Park subarea by 2009.

Millennium High School will have expanded to its full capacity at 75 Broad Street. The reconstructed Whitehall Ferry Terminal re-opened at the southern tip of Manhattan in December 2004, and the Peter Minuit Plaza (under construction) will be rebuilt and serve as an open space that ushers pedestrians to and from the ferry terminal.

**NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Under the No Action Alternative, the existing roadway at the project site would undergo minor reconstruction. The six-lane temporary roadway between Liberty and Vesey Streets would remain open while major construction activity continues at the WTC Redevelopment Sites to the immediate east. The pedestrian bridges at Chambers and Liberty Streets now in place would continue to provide pedestrian access across Route 9A between BPC and the rest of Lower Manhattan. The temporary bridges at Rector and Vesey Streets would be removed. Land use at the project site would not change and no changes to neighborhood character would result.

**AT-GRADE ALTERNATIVE**

Under the At-Grade Alternative, Route 9A would be in construction to convert the existing six-lane temporary roadway to the pre-September 11, 2001, eight lanes in front of the WTC Site—four northbound and four southbound with left-turn lanes. The roadway would continue to operate during the construction period, and no change in land use would occur. This alternative would allow public transportation services on or near Route 9A to maintain current routes and stop locations. Pedestrian crossing patterns may change during the construction period, but diversions from existing crossing areas would be minor and would not have impacts on neighborhood character.

The simultaneous construction of development and transportation projects in Lower Manhattan, including this project alternative, may have temporary impacts on neighborhood character in the immediate vicinity of the construction sites. Trucking activities and noise associated with construction activities may temporarily affect the quality of life for employees, residents, and visitors in the vicinity of the project site. Given that construction would be occurring in the immediate vicinity of the project site independent of the Route 9A reconstruction, as well as beneath Route 9A for elements of the permanent WTC PATH Terminal and WTC Redevelopment Projects, the At-Grade Alternative would not by itself create significant changes to neighborhood character compared to conditions expected under the No Action Alternative. Overall, land use and neighborhood character would not change substantially, and no adverse impacts would result. Such activities are necessary to ensure the long-term vitality of Lower Manhattan and, thus, are likely to lead to long-term benefits on the community and overall character of the area. The project would be consistent with existing public policies which aim to rebuild and improve Lower Manhattan for workers, residents, and visitors. Therefore, no significant adverse impacts to land use, neighborhood character, or public policy would result from the At-Grade Alternative during the construction period.
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SHORT BYPASS ALTERNATIVE

Route 9A would be under construction to build the Short Bypass Alternative which would ultimately consist of four lanes below ground in a covered roadway and four lanes at the surface adjacent to the WTC Site. Construction activities for the Short Bypass Alternative would be similar, 15 months longer in duration, to construction under the No Action or At-Grade Alternatives (especially considering that extensive excavation is required in the roadway for other projects). Construction activities would be confined to the existing right of way and are not anticipated to require road or lane closures during peak travel periods. The roadway would continue to operate during the construction period, and no change in land use would be expected. Changes to pedestrian and vehicle patterns would be similar to those under the No Action and At-Grade Alternatives but would last for a longer period of time. Given that the construction associated with Route 9A would occur concurrently with and adjacent to the major ongoing construction at the WTC Site, the Short Bypass Alternative would not by itself create significant changes to neighborhood character compared to conditions expected under the No Action or At-Grade Alternatives discussed above. Like the At-Grade Alternative, this alternative would be consistent with existing public policies throughout Lower Manhattan. Therefore, no significant adverse impacts to land use, neighborhood character, or public policy are expected to result from the Short Bypass Alternative during the construction period.

OPENING YEAR

FUTURE CONDITIONS COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES

Land Use and Neighborhood Character

Considering the modest amount of growth anticipated in the study area by the opening year, land use and neighborhood character would be similar in the opening year to those at the start of construction.

Primary Study Area

Three projects are planned for completion by 2007 in the primary study area (see Attachment A, Table A-2). The last two remaining undeveloped parcels in the BPC north neighborhood will be developed for residential use. Site 23, at Warren Street and North End Avenue, will include 246 dwelling units and space for the BPC Parks Conservancy. To its immediate south, Site 24 will contain an additional 345 units, as well as a new indoor community recreation center. Site 26 may be in construction to develop a major commercial office tower. In addition, Castle Clinton National Monument in Battery Park, the historic fort currently used for the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island Ferry ticket office, will be upgraded into a multipurpose facility. The facility will include a museum, ferry terminal with improved ticketing operations, and performance venue with up to 1,400 seats, or, alternatively, enhanced as a historic fort, with the ticket office relocated to another site. In addition, major construction will continue at the WTC Redevelopment Sites, as described above.

The current project alternatives have been planned and designed in coordination with the other Lower Manhattan Recovery Projects, especially LMDC’s WTC Memorial and Redevelopment Plan. One of the key features of LMDC’s plan has been to incorporate the western wall of the bathtub as a key element for the memorial. To be consistent with this feature of the WTC’s master plan, all of the proposed Route 9A Alternatives would need to shift west from their original pre-September 11, 2001 alignment. This results in a small loss of residual land that
would be available for the subsequent incorporation into the future Hudson River Park. However, all of the proposed alternatives would, to a varying degree, provide for a landscaped boulevard, bikeway/walkway, and a coordinated design which would benefit both projects.

Similar to the 1994 FEIS, the joint highway/parkland development does not require a Section 4(f) evaluation per 23 CFR, Part 771. Further support for the Route 9A/Hudson River Park joint development is the past Route 9A support of the park facilities adjacent to Route 9A, the Route 9A bikeway/walkway construction, and the existing NYSDOT maintenance agreement with HRPT with respect to the bikeway/walkway and median/buffer areas.

**Secondary Study Area**

Four large development projects are expected to be completed in the secondary study area in 2007. The expanded South Ferry Subway Terminal will be opened at the southern tip of Manhattan. The completely redesigned subway station will accommodate the full length of a typical 10-car subway train (rather than the five cars it accommodates in 2004) and provide new connections to the ferry and to the Whitehall Street subway station. In addition, three mixed-use developments will be complete. The building at 23 Wall Street will be converted to 428 new residential units with an additional 850,000 square feet of space available for other uses. The old New York Post building on Water Street in the Chinatown below Canal Street subarea will be converted into 650 residential units, with its current mini-storage use retained. Lastly, 300 new dwelling units will be added to the housing stock in the Brooklyn Bridge to Battery Park subarea at 250 Water Street. This development will also include a major institutional use.

**Public Policy**

Implementation of the projects described above by the opening year would be consistent with public policies in effect for the area. The city and state policies that support the recovery and growth of Lower Manhattan as both a thriving central business district and an evolving 24-hour community are expected to continue. Overall, these developments and infrastructure improvements will provide new and expanded uses that will continue to represent a demonstration of the city, state, and federal policy to rebuild Lower Manhattan.

**NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

**Land Use and Neighborhood Character**

In the opening year, the No Action Alternative would make permanent the six-lane roadway that was opened in March 2002 adjacent to the WTC Site. This alternative would provide some minor modifications to the existing roadway, such as replacement of the temporary pavement, and the addition of left-turn lanes and a median area. However, major changes would not be included, and no change in land use would result at the project site.

Prior to September 11, 2001, approximately 2.9 acres of residual land was available for the future Hudson River Park between West Thames and Chambers Streets from the Route 9A curb to the edge of the right-of-way. Due to the westward shift of the roadway alignment, the No Action Alternative would result in a reduction of residual land for the future Hudson River Park of 0.6 acres between West Thames and Chambers Street. This reduction from 2.9 to 2.3 acres would occur almost entirely between Albany and Vesey Streets. Currently, this area includes part of the Route 9A bikeway/walkway, open grass lawns, landscaping, and stairways in front of the WFC. While this results in a small loss of residual land to be incorporated into the future Hudson River Park, the No Action Alternative would still provide for a landscaped boulevard,
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continuous bikeway/walkway, and coordinated design. Therefore, no significant adverse impacts to land use are expected under the No Action Alternative.

Route 9A and its immediately surrounding area are expected to be much the same as today. While developments at the adjacent WTC Site may begin to take form by 2007, the area will still be dominated and defined by the ongoing construction activities at the WTC Redevelopment Sites. The No Action Alternative would not result in any substantial changes to neighborhood character, and no significant adverse impacts to neighborhood character are expected.

However, traffic was diverted to inland streets and other roadways in the surrounding study area when the capacity of Route 9A was reduced due to the September 11, 2001 attacks. The No Action Alternative would fail to restore the roadway to its intended pre-September 11, 2001, condition and this high volume of traffic would remain on inland streets rather than returning to Route 9A. This alternative would result in long vehicle queues, increases in vehicle-hours of travel, and decreases in average travel speeds in both the AM and PM peak periods. A number of intersections would be blocked, adversely affecting cross-traffic. As a result, the potential benefits of reducing traffic on inland streets, lowering volumes and congestion, and improving air quality would not be realized under the No Action Alternative (see Chapter 8A, “Traffic,” and Chapter 9, “Air Quality”).

Public Policy

The No Action Alternative would not be consistent with existing policies which aim to restore and improve upon the Lower Manhattan transportation and infrastructure network which existed prior to September 11, 2001. The conversion of the existing temporary roadway into a permanent roadway would not serve to further these goals. The construction of a permanent six-lane segment of Route 9A where an eight-lane roadway had previously existed, combined with the anticipated increase in vehicular and pedestrian traffic upon the completion of a major portion of the WTC Memorial and Redevelopment Plan by the opening year could exacerbate traffic flow in Lower Manhattan, hindering the very connections between neighborhoods which are sought.

AT-GRADE ALTERNATIVE

Land Use and Neighborhood Character

The completion of the At-Grade Alternative would restore eight lanes—four northbound and four southbound—in front of the WTC Site, as approved in the 1994 FEIS. The roadway alignment that existed prior to September 11, 2001 would be shifted slightly to the west to avoid the now-exposed slurry wall at the WTC Site and to provide pedestrian access as well as turning lanes where required. In addition, pedestrian overpasses would be provided to facilitate movement of pedestrians across the highway. A planted median would be included to improve aesthetics and provide pedestrian refuge areas between the northbound and southbound traffic lanes.

This alternative would result in 1.9 acres of residual land for the future Hudson River Park between West Thames and Chambers Streets—0.4 acres less than the No Action Alternative. This reduction would occur between West Thames and Vesey Streets. As discussed previously, this land currently includes a portion of the Route 9A bikeway/walkway and open grass lawns and landscaping. The At-Grade Alternative would still provide for a continuous bikeway/walkway, landscaped boulevard, and coordinated design, and land use would not be adversely affected.
The restored road capacity would improve current traffic flow through the area (see Chapter 8A, “Traffic”). Traffic which was diverted to inland streets and other roadways in the surrounding study area when the capacity of Route 9A was reduced due to the September 11, 2001 attacks would return to the newly constructed roadway. To the extent that this alternative would accommodate greater volumes of traffic compared to the No Action Alternative, traffic volumes on the inland area streets would be reduced, improving neighborhood character. Safer, more aesthetically pleasing pedestrian crossings would facilitate connections between BPC and the WFC and the rest of Lower Manhattan on the eastern side of the Route 9A corridor, enhancing the overall character of the area (see Chapter 8C, “Pedestrians”). These amenities are likely to have substantial neighborhood character benefits, serving to better connect the WFC and all of BPC with Lower Manhattan neighborhoods to the east. No substantial change to land use would result from the At-Grade Alternative since it would replace the existing temporary roadway with the same use in a larger and slightly altered configuration. Therefore, no significant adverse impacts to land use or neighborhood character would result from the At-Grade Alternative.

**Public Policy**

The restoration of the highway to accommodate eight lanes of traffic would be consistent with the goals of city, state and federal agencies to restore the transportation network of Lower Manhattan and improve upon what existed prior to the attacks of September 11, 2001. Overall, this project alternative would be an important demonstration of public policy in the wake of September 11, 2001, and would support other public policies that previously existed in Lower Manhattan with the intention of creating a 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week community. As a result, no adverse impacts to land use or public policy would result. No significant adverse impacts to public policy would result from the At-Grade Alternative.

**SHORT BYPASS ALTERNATIVE**

This alternative would result in 1.9 acres of residual land for the future HRP between West Thames and Chambers Street—0.4 less than the No Action Alternative. While the At-Grade and No Action Alternatives would result in the greatest reduction in residual land between Vesey and Liberty Streets, the Short Bypass Alternative requires additional land in the vicinity of the portals. While only 0.21 acres is required between Vesey and Liberty Streets, the reduction in residual land between Albany and Liberty Streets is 0.24 acres, while 0.25 acres are needed between Vesey and Murray Streets. Currently, this space is occupied by the Route 9A bikeway/walkway, landscaping, and sidewalks. As with the other alternatives discussed above, the Short Bypass Alternative would provide for a reconfigured continuous bikeway/walkway and landscaped boulevard, and land use would not be adversely affected.

The Short Bypass Alternative would result in substantial benefits to neighborhood character, providing better and more fluid connections across Route 9A, and improving the overall aesthetic character of the highway. These beneficial impacts decrease delay throughout the network, improving traffic conditions. As discussed in Chapter 8A, “Traffic,” unlike the No Action Alternative, this alternative results in no intersection blockages in the AM peak period and only one mitigatable blockage in the PM peak period. The traffic that was diverted to inland streets and other roadways in the surrounding study area when the capacity of Route 9A was reduced due to the September 11, 2001 attacks would return to the newly constructed roadway. To the extent that this alternative would accommodate greater volumes of traffic compared to the No Action Alternative, traffic volumes on the inland area streets would be reduced, improving
neighborhood character. The reduction in traffic on inland streets would reduce congestion and the lower volumes and related increase in speeds would improve air quality.

The Short Bypass Alternative would allow for a more favorable pedestrian environment, making trips in and between the WTC Site and BPC easier and more pleasant, improving overall neighborhood character. The residential and business communities would benefit from improved vehicle and pedestrian flows along and across the roadway. Overall, no significant adverse impacts to land use or neighborhood character would result from the Short Bypass Alternative.

**Public Policy**

Completion of the Short Bypass Alternative would be consistent with the policies throughout Lower Manhattan aimed at improving and strengthening transportation infrastructure and better connecting the neighborhoods throughout Lower Manhattan. Therefore, no significant adverse impacts to public policy would result from the Short Bypass Alternative.

**DESIGN YEAR**

**FUTURE CONDITIONS COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES**

**Land Use and Neighborhood Character**

Land use will intensify between the opening and design years because of a number of major projects planned or proposed throughout the land use study area. Overall, an additional 13.6 million square feet of office space (including approximately 10 million square feet at the WTC Redevelopment Sites), over 1.2 million square feet of retail space, approximately 850,000 square feet of cultural and educational space, approximately 1,000 hotel rooms, and over 3,500 new residential units, through conversion and new construction, are expected for completion between 2008 and 2025 in the land use study area. These developments are consistent with existing trends to create more of a mixed-used community throughout Lower Manhattan while maintaining a strong commercial presence.

Major developments, potential or proposed, that are expected for completion between the opening and design years are described briefly below. A full list of developments throughout the land use study area is provided in Attachment A, Table A-3.

**Primary Study Area**

Overall, land use in the primary study area is expected to follow existing trends toward increasing residential, cultural, and other uses while restoring the office space lost at the WTC Site and maintaining a strong commercial presence. The distribution of uses is expected to remain much the same as it is today, with commercial development clustered at the WTC Site, the blocks immediately north of the WTC Site, the Broadway Corridor, the WFC in BPC, and residential development concentrated in the Greenwich South Corridor, BPC, and the northernmost sections of the primary study area. Development of soft sites (i.e., sites not built out to the maximum allowable FAR) may lead to a greater intensity of land uses, with higher-density office and residential uses in the future.

**WTC Redevelopment Sites.** By the design year, the developments for the WTC Memorial and Redevelopment Plan will be complete, resulting in substantial changes to land use and neighborhood character at the WTC Redevelopment Sites. The WTC Site will change from being a large construction site in 2007 to a mixed-use development consisting of the Memorial
and museum (Memorial Center), with office, cultural, retail, hotel, and open space uses. Construction of the permanent WTC PATH Terminal will also be complete. These developments will strengthen and be a key element in the revitalization of Lower Manhattan by introducing a range of active and attractive uses.

Full development will include the Memorial, Memorial Center and other cultural uses, 10 million square feet of office space, 1 million square feet of retail, an 800-room hotel with conference facilities, and open space.

A number of new open spaces will be created, totaling approximately 5.6 acres. All of these open spaces, including the Memorial plaza, will be at grade and immediately accessible from the sidewalks. The Wedge of Light and PATH Plaza will be part of the east-west circulation system along with Greenwich Street. South of Liberty Street, Liberty Park will stretch from Greenwich Street to Route 9A with more than ¾ of an acre situated along an important east-west circulation route.

Together, the diverse components of the WTC redevelopment plan will contribute to the creation of a more active and attractive WTC Site, improving the character of the immediate neighborhood. The overall character of the area will change from an essentially blighted state into a major destination for workers, tourists, and other visitors.

North of WTC Site. In keeping with the trend of increasing residential use in Lower Manhattan, a large residential project is expected to be complete at 270 Greenwich Street, formerly known as WSURA Site 5B, adding 730 new residential units and major retail uses to the area. BMCC’s Fiterman Hall will be demolished and the site redeveloped for its original educational use. It is likely that residential conversions will continue in this area.

Greenwich South Corridor. New York City’s Vision will create a public open space, Greenwich Square, over the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel ramps with the intention of spurring new residential development or residential conversions in the area. The building formerly used by the Downtown Athletic Club is expected to be redeveloped for residential or hotel use.

Battery Park City. Site 26 will be developed possibly with an approximately 2.3 million-square-foot commercial office tower with ground-floor retail and accessory parking uses. In the southern neighborhood, the planned development at Site 2, on 1st Place between Route 9A and Battery Place, will include 282 residential units and be home to the new Women’s Museum. Segment 2 of the Hudson River Park between Battery Place and Chambers Street will be complete, with active and passive recreation uses continuing north beyond the study area boundaries.

Broadway Corridor. A major transportation project and several residential developments are expected to be complete in the Broadway Corridor. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in cooperation with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) and New York City Transit (NYCT) is planning the Fulton Street Transit Center. The project’s goal is to improve access to and from Lower Manhattan. It will consist of the construction and operation of a rehabilitated, reconfigured, enhanced multi-level underground transit hub that will incorporate four subway stations serving 12 subway lines. It will provide underground connections to WTC Site developments, and the potential for future connections to two additional subway lines and the permanent WTC PATH Terminal located. This project is scheduled for completion in 2008 or 2009.

Secondary Study Area

Major projects expected to be complete by the design year in the secondary study area include transportation, residential, cultural, and open space uses.
Three major transportation projects are anticipated. The expanded South Ferry Subway Terminal will be opened at the southern tip of Manhattan. The completely redesigned subway station will accommodate the full length of a typical 10-car subway train (rather than the five cars it accommodates in 2004) and provide new connections to the ferry and to the Whitehall Street subway station.

Under consideration for decades, the FTA and MTA, in cooperation with NYCT, are moving forward with plans for the Second Avenue Subway. The project is proposed to provide much needed transit access to residents, workers, and visitors on the east side to reduce excess crowding on the Lexington Avenue subway and to improve overall mobility. The project consists of a new, two-track, 8.5-mile subway extending from Lexington Avenue at 125th Street in Harlem to Water Street at Hanover Square in the secondary study area.

Lastly, the city proposes to provide direct, one-seat airport access to JFK and Newark International Airports, as outlined in New York City’s Vision. The project involves extending the AirTrain system from JFK through a new tunnel to Lower Manhattan and by extending the PATH train from Newark's Penn Station to Newark Liberty Airport. If built, the new tunnel between downtown and JFK will also connect the area to any Long Island Railroad train at Jamaica Station.

Commercial and residential development is expected to continue in the secondary study area. Residential projects, both conversions and new construction, are proposed throughout the secondary study area with the majority concentrated in the Tribeca and Brooklyn Bridge to Battery Park subareas. In addition, Segment 3 of the Hudson River Park, which runs from Chambers Street to Houston Street adjacent to Route 9A, is expected to be operating before 2009. Currently in design development, this segment will feature two of the park’s longest piers—25 and 26 near N. Moore Street in Tribeca—and an “eco-pier” at Canal Street. Segment 2 of the park, located adjacent to the project site, is discussed above in the “Opening Year” section.

Public Policy

Developments independent of the No Action Alternative and which are expected throughout the land use study area are consistent with these policies. Infrastructure improvements and developments providing new commercial, residential, and open space uses planned by the state and city will represent a demonstration of the city, state, and federal policy to rebuild Lower Manhattan. The WTC Redevelopment Sites will be fully developed and occupied. A number of transportation related projects will be complete, including the permanent WTC PATH Terminal, the Fulton Street Transit Center, and South Ferry subway station, as described above. These projects, together with the numerous commercial and residential developments subsidized through the New York Liberty Bond Program demonstrate ongoing governmental interest in actively promoting new developments and infrastructure improvements throughout Lower Manhattan.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Land Use and Neighborhood Character

By the design year, it is assumed that the existing six-lane temporary roadway that was made permanent in 2009 would continue to accommodate vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic as it did in 2009. No significant adverse impacts to land use would result from the No Action Alternative. At the same time, developments planned as part of the WTC Memorial and
Redevelopment Plan will be complete and fully occupied, as described below. As discussed above and in Chapter 1, “Project Purpose and Need,” the attacks of September 11, 2001 had devastating effects on Lower Manhattan. As the area is rebuilt, and residential, worker, and visitor populations surpass their pre-September 11, 2001 levels, facilitating access to and movement within the study area will be critical, particularly in the area surrounding the redeveloped WTC Site. Under the No Action Alternative, vehicle trips in the Route 9A corridor would be approximately 17 percent higher compared to existing 2003 conditions. These volumes would worsen congestion, resulting in lower average speeds and longer delays. Increased congestion could impede business operations, increase commute times, and negatively impact the business and residential communities, resulting in adverse impacts on overall neighborhood character. The desirability of Lower Manhattan as a place to live, work, and visit would be negatively affected.

Public Policy

Public policy impacts from the No Action Alternative by the design year would be similar to impacts discussed above for the opening year.

The No Action Alternative would result in the effective downgrade of Route 9A, one of Lower Manhattan’s most critical roadways, from its pre-September 11, 2001 condition. This alternative would be inconsistent with existing city, state, and federal policies that support the recovery and growth of Lower Manhattan as both a central business district and an evolving 24-hour community. Existing policies that support the revitalization of the Lower Manhattan central business district will continue through the design year and beyond. The failure to restore and improve upon the roadway which existed prior to September 11, 2001 would hinder and directly conflict with these policies.

For example, as discussed above, LMDC was created to help plan and coordinate the rebuilding and revitalization of Lower Manhattan so that it will re-emerge as a stronger and more vibrant community. A comprehensive local and regional transportation infrastructure system is a vital pat of meeting that objective. One of the stated purposes of New York City’s Vision is to connect Lower Manhattan to the world around it. The policy includes recommendations to improve transportation links to help revitalize and improve Lower Manhattan. The existing configuration of Route 9A could prevent these policies from meeting their stated goals and objectives. Therefore, the No Action Alternative would have an adverse effect on public policy.

AT-GRADE ALTERNATIVE

Land Use and Neighborhood Character

Similar to the Opening Year, the At-Grade Alternative would have no significant adverse impacts on land use, neighborhood character, or public policy. The At-Grade Alternative would continue to maintain the same land use at the project site which has existed prior to September 11, 2001, and no significant adverse impacts to land use would result. Once the WTC Site is redeveloped, the Memorial is built, and Lower Manhattan redevelopment is complete, vehicular and pedestrian traffic is expected to increase. The At-Grade Alternative would safely accommodate these vehicular and pedestrian needs in the context of Lower Manhattan redevelopment (see Chapter 1, “Project Purpose and Need”).

The increased road capacity would continue to provide increased capacity for traffic compared to the existing condition and No Action Alternative. While traffic volumes would be higher than that of the No Action Alternative, the At-Grade Alternative would accommodate greater
volumes of traffic, resulting in a reduction of volumes on the inland area streets in both the AM and PM peak hours (see Chapter 8A, “Traffic”). Compared to the No Action Alternative, the At-Grade Alternative would decrease Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD), or the time in which traffic is stopped or slowed at a traffic signal, by 16 percent in the AM peak hour and 40 percent in the PM peak hour in the design year. Employees, customers, and suppliers to businesses in the immediate area would be able to reach their destinations more quickly, and local area residents would be faced with fewer delays on Route 9A than under the No Action Alternative. Safer, more aesthetically pleasing pedestrian crossings would continue to facilitate connections between BPC and the WFC and the rest of Lower Manhattan on the eastern side of the Route 9A corridor, enhancing the overall character of the area. Pedestrian overpasses would continue to facilitate movement of pedestrians across the highway. A landscaped median would improve aesthetics and provide pedestrian refuge areas between the northbound and southbound traffic lanes. Therefore, the At-Grade Alternative would have beneficial effects on neighborhood character, and no significant adverse impacts to neighborhood character would result.

Public Policy
The at-grade reconstruction of Route 9A would be consistent with plans and efforts to maintain Lower Manhattan as a prosperous business district and to make the area more attractive to retain existing and attract new businesses. This alternative would demonstrate the city and state’s long-term interests in both rebuilding and promoting the continuous success of Lower Manhattan. Therefore, no significant adverse impacts to public policy would result from the At-Grade Alternative.

SHORT BYPASS ALTERNATIVE
As described in the opening year analysis, positive impacts could be magnified by the Short Bypass Alternative under the Short Bypass Alternative as compared to the At-Grade Alternative. It is expected that any long-term effects of the Short Bypass Alternative would be positive as compared to existing conditions or the No Action Alternative. While traffic volumes would be higher than that of the No Action Alternative, the Short Bypass Alternative would accommodate greater volumes of traffic, reducing volumes on the inland area streets in both the AM and PM peak hours (see Chapter 8A, “Traffic”). Compared with the No Action Alternative, VHD would be reduced by 32 percent in the AM peak hour and 37 percent in the PM peak hour. Routing through traffic below grade would minimize traffic and noise at the WTC Memorial and the rest of the WTC Site, allowing for an improved pedestrian experience and creating a more favorable neighborhood environment for residents, businesses, and visitors. The overall neighborhood character is likely to improve as a result of the Short Bypass Alternative, and no significant adverse impacts to land use, neighborhood character, or public policy at the project site or throughout Lower Manhattan would result.