

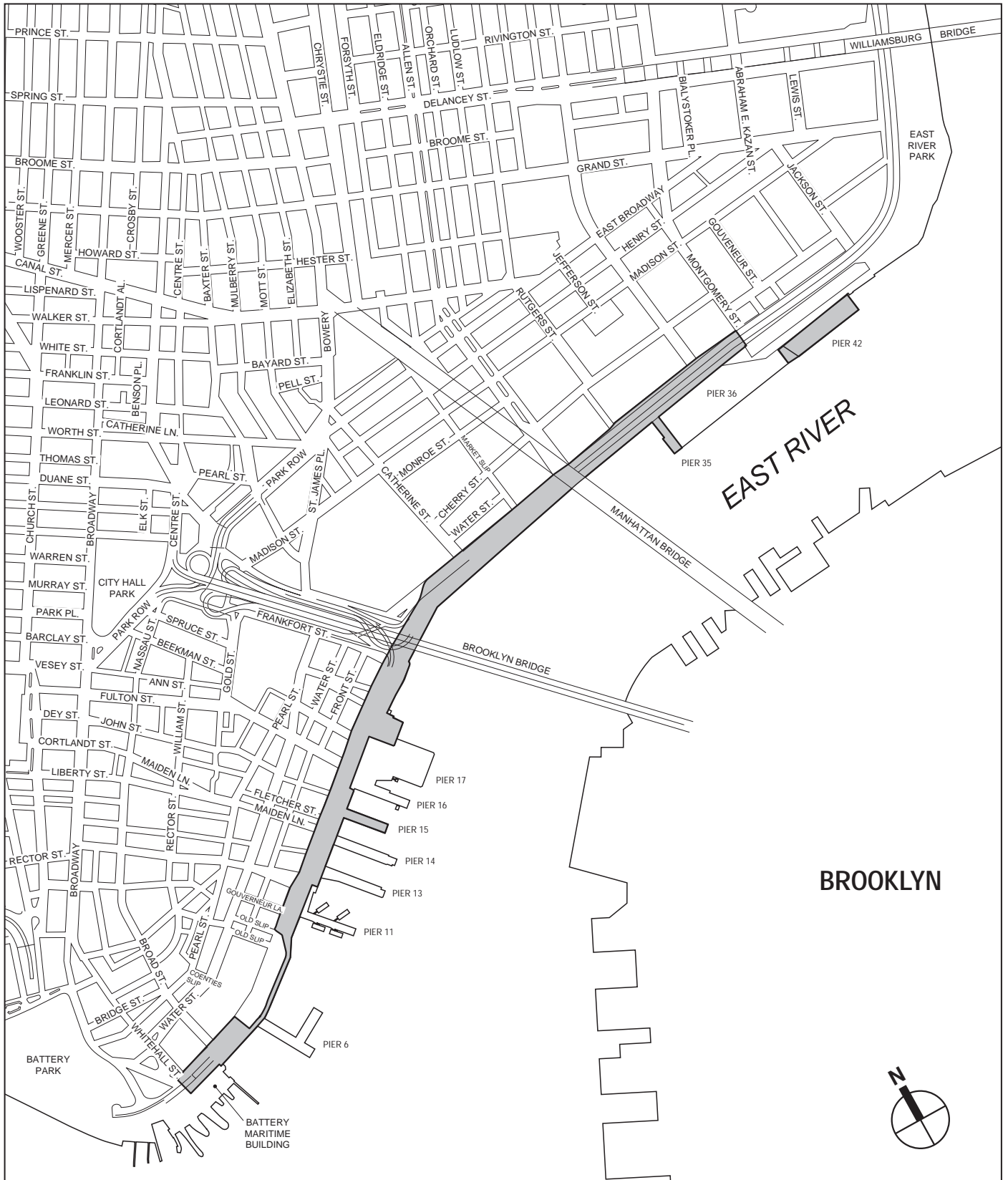
A. INTRODUCTION

The City of New York (the City) has proposed a plan for the revitalization of the East River Waterfront (the Proposed Action) by improving a two-mile-long, City-owned public open space connecting the Whitehall Ferry Terminal and Peter Minuit Plaza to the south to East River Park to the north (see Figure 1-1). The plan seeks to improve access to the waterfront, enhance pedestrian connectivity, and create waterfront amenities for public use and enjoyment. The existing esplanade would be enhanced, some new sections of esplanade would be created, and several piers would be renovated and redeveloped.

The Proposed Action would consist of a Program Zone under the FDR Drive for pavilions and temporary outdoor activities; a Recreation Zone along the edge of the water with seating, play spaces, and plantings; and a uniform bikeway/walkway along South Street. In addition, the Proposed Action analyzed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would include the construction of a new pedestrian plaza in front of the BMB, and improvements to Piers 15, 35, 36, and 42, as well as the New Market Building and pier. Although they are analyzed in the EIS for the Proposed Action, construction of the plaza in front of the BMB, the replacement for the New Market Building and the urban beach on Pier 42 are dependent on additional funding that is currently being sought by the City of New York.

The Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) would provide a portion of the funding for the Proposed Action. Established in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, LMDC coordinates the rebuilding and revitalization efforts in Lower Manhattan. LMDC is a subsidiary of the New York State Urban Development Corporation (UDC) doing business as Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC), a political subdivision and public benefit corporation of the State of New York. The Proposed Action is necessary to the continued revitalization of Lower Manhattan.

LMDC is conducting a coordinated environmental review of the Proposed Action pursuant to federal law as the recipient of United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant program funds (42 USC § 5304(g)) and as lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR), and their implementing regulations are referenced as appropriate. Because the Proposed Action is entirely within New York City and will involve actions by the City Planning Commission (CPC), the *CEQR Technical Manual* generally serves as a guide with respect to methodologies and impact criteria for evaluating the Proposed Action in this Draft EIS. The City is serving as a cooperating agency through relevant departments including the New York City Departments of Parks and Recreation (DPR), City Planning (DCP), and Transportation (DOT). The New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) will continue to work with the City in connection with the Proposed Action.



Project Site



EAST RIVER Waterfront Esplanade and Piers

Project Location
Figure 1-1

B. BACKGROUND AND PLANNING CONTEXT

Prior to the arrival of Europeans in what would become New York City, Lower Manhattan's East River shoreline ran roughly along Pearl Street. The Dutch located their earliest wharves along the East River. In the late 1600s the city began a process of landfilling to extend the shore into the river. By 1730 the eastern edge of Lower Manhattan was Water Street and by 1780 the island extended to Front Street. In 1800 the creation of land to South Street was the last extension of the filling. New York and its East River piers thrived with maritime traffic. In the 1850s over 40 piers occupied the nearly 2-mile stretch of waterfront included in the project site. The Brooklyn Bridge was built in 1867-83 and the Manhattan Bridge was built in 1910-15. The Battery Maritime Building (BMB) was built at the foot of South Street in 1909. The Battery Park Underpass was built in 1950 and in 1954 the elevated Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) Drive structure was built from the Underpass north to Jackson Street. By that time, following a long and steady decline in maritime activity on the East River, the Fulton Fish Market was one of the few major maritime related uses remaining in this area south of the East River Park at Corlears Hook.

Since the 1950s there have been a series of ambitious plans and projects to redevelop and revitalize Lower Manhattan focusing on its East River waterfront, and several have been realized, as noted. A brief summary of these plans follows.

BATTERY PARK URBAN RENEWAL AREA

In 1959, Robert Moses proposed a seven-block Battery Park Urban Renewal Area on the east side of Lower Manhattan from Whitehall Street to Coenties Slip. This plan called for three 24-story residential towers. A later plan called for the area to be the new home of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE). The plan called for the City to use its Urban Renewal Act (URA) powers to acquire the properties, consolidate them by eliminating cross streets, and sell them to NYSE. When NYSE subsequently withdrew, the owner was free to develop the sites. The result was the creation of four large office buildings along Water Street. The first of these was One New York Plaza which stands opposite the BMB. The other three buildings that were developed are Two and Four New York Plaza and 55 Water Street.

WORLD TRADE CENTER

In 1960, the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Association proposed a plan for the development of a mixed use office and hotel complex called the World Trade Center. It was sited on the East River on a site bounded by Fulton, Water, and South Streets and Old Slip. The plan called for an office and hotel structure of 50-70 stories with a six-story international trade mart and exhibition hall and a securities exchange building. The complex was intended to diversify the Lower Manhattan market by creating a center for global commerce which would complement the increasingly global stock exchanges and banks in the area. By 1962, the project had come under the control of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (then the Port of New York Authority) and was relocated to the west side of Lower Manhattan.

THE LOWER MANHATTAN PLAN

In 1965 the CPC released the City's vision for Lower Manhattan looking forward to 2000. The plan envisioned expanding Lower Manhattan by landfill into both the East and the Hudson Rivers and extending streets and plazas to the waterfront. Important civic and waterfront open

spaces were envisioned at the water's edge, including several coves in the tradition of slips. Apartment towers were to stand over bands of low-rise residential development.

MANHATTAN LANDING

In 1972 Mayor Lindsay and David Rockefeller announced Manhattan Landing, a one-mile long, \$1.2 billion dollar development to be built on an 88-acre platform over the East River. As envisioned, it would have provided six million square feet of office space, 9,500 units of housing, a 1,000 car garage, and a 400-room hotel as well as substantial new open space. The complex financing needed never materialized and the project did not go forward.

SOUTH STREET SEAPORT

Also in 1972 the CPC adopted the Special South Street Seaport District as a means of assuring the historic character of the area, including Schermerhorn Row, and regulating the transfer of development rights within the District.

The South Street Seaport Historic District was designated by the Landmarks Preservation Commission in 1977 and expanded in 1989. It was also listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places in 1978. The district contains the largest concentration of early 19th century commercial buildings in New York, including such very early brick buildings as the 4-story, Georgian-Federal-style Schermerhorn block on Fulton Street built in 1811-1812, and the 4- to 5-story, 1830's Greek Revival buildings more commonly found throughout the district. These buildings reflect the development of trade and commerce in the beginning of the 19th century, when New York became the economic and financial capital of the country.

The Seaport is a major tourist destination in the area. It includes a relatively new retail building on Pier 17 and a historic ship museum across South Street.

EAST RIVER LANDING

In 1984 the City again considered development over the East River between the newly opened South Street Seaport and the Downtown Heliport. A scaled-down version of Manhattan Landing, East River Landing involved only 23 acres of platform over the water. The downturn in the financial market and the New York real estate market terminated consideration of this plan.

BATTERY MARITIME BUILDING

Planning for the current restoration the BMB began in the late 1990s, when the building's grand cast-iron façade was reportedly held together by layers of drab green paint over crusts of rust. Work on the structure and its exterior actually began in 2001, and it is now expected to be complete in 2006. At grade the building has three ferry slips, one of which is used for service to Governors Island. EDC issued a Request for Proposals for the rehabilitation and expects to name a developer by spring 2007.

DOWNTOWN EAST RIVER WATERFRONT: CONCEPT PLAN

In October of 2002, the Downtown Alliance, with Community Board 1, released a Concept Plan for the East River Waterfront. The plan knits together the east and west sides of Lower Manhattan to help achieve the goal of revitalization of Lower Manhattan. The plan builds upon transportation initiatives that enhance the pedestrian experience and promote intermodal transit. It acknowledges the history of the site and activates the public spaces on the slips. The plan

envisioned the transformation of the FDR Drive into an integral element of pedestrian and regional vehicular transit way, and allows Lower Manhattan to reengage more forms of water transit.

VISION FOR A 21ST CENTURY LOWER MANHATTAN

On December 12, 2002, Mayor Michael Bloomberg released the *Vision for a 21st Century Lower Manhattan* with the stated purpose of connecting Lower Manhattan to the world around it, building new neighborhoods, and creating public places that make Lower Manhattan one of the most appealing places in the world. The plan describes various initiatives 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 World Trade Center site, the City's *Vision* called for 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. The *Vision* document became a blueprint for a series of planning initiatives undertaken by the City and the State of New York to enhance and improve Lower Manhattan.

CONCEPT PLAN FOR THE EAST RIVER WATERFRONT

In 2004 as a result of the *Vision for a 21st Century Lower Manhattan*, DCP, EDC, DOT, and DPR, with funding from LMDC, undertook a year-long study of the East River Waterfront in Lower Manhattan. The design team, which included architects, urban designers, landscape architects and engineers, working closely with the local community, area elected officials, City and State agencies, and civic associations, developed a waterfront concept plan. The planning was an extraordinary participatory and interactive process comprising over 70 separate meetings with community boards, tenant associations, civic leaders, maritime experts, and local elected officials. In response to input from various groups the plan, as described later in this chapter, consists of a strong and comprehensive vision for a continuous waterfront esplanade well connected to adjacent neighborhoods and replete with waterfront amenities and new community, cultural, and recreational uses. The plan includes bold new architectural and landscape architectural design ideas flexible enough to adjust to local conditions and respond to the diverse neighborhoods and communities adjacent to the East River.

During development of the concept plan, a wide variety of alternatives were carefully considered, including alternative scenarios for development of the esplanade and, the BMB Plaza. All of these as well as other alternatives are examined in Chapter 19, "Alternatives."

C. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

LMDC FUNDING

The attacks on the World Trade Center and the continuing recovery have a profound impact on Lower Manhattan's residents, businesses, and communities. Many residents could not return to their homes for weeks or months following the attacks and, when they did return, endured closings of streets and public spaces, transportation disruptions, and construction projects associated with the restoration of basic infrastructure. Businesses faced uncertainty, diminished workers and tourist populations, and myriad challenges associated with increased security and widespread construction projects. Throughout the recovery, Lower Manhattan residents have

shown remarkable resolve to remain in their communities. There has been progress in restoring a normal quality of life, but the full recovery of Lower Manhattan will take several more years to achieve and will require continued patience, commitment and perseverance of downtown's residents and businesses. LMDC is committed to ensuring Lower Manhattan emerges from this tragedy even better than it was before.

In addition to the planning currently underway on the World Trade Center site, an integral part of LMDC's efforts to revitalize Lower Manhattan is a series of projects that address short-term and long-term solutions to the challenges facing Lower Manhattan's neighborhoods in the wake of September 11, 2001. LMDC provided financial support to the City for the creation of the concept plan which the Proposed Action would implement.

EAST RIVER ESPLANADE AND PIERS PROJECT

The Proposed Action is an essential component of the ongoing revitalization of Lower Manhattan. It represents a bold and ambitious plan for an important stretch of East River waterfront from Peter Minuit Plaza north to East River Park, which suffers from weak connections, a profound lack of amenities, and under-utilization of the waterfront. The purpose of the Proposed Action is to enhance connections, improve the function and appearance of the waterfront, and provide amenities—open space as well as appropriate retail, cultural and community uses—to facilitate access to and use of the waterfront by adjacent communities and neighborhoods.

The Proposed Action also recognizes the rapidly increasing residential population in Lower Manhattan. As shown in the number of office to residential conversions and the number of new buildings constructed or in active planning since September 11, 2001, LMDC's efforts as well as the Liberty Bond program have been successful in revitalizing Lower Manhattan. Those new residents as well as the traditional office population of Lower Manhattan create a heightened demand for open space.

The specific goals of the Proposed Action are as follows:

- Provide open space amenities to Lower Manhattan communities currently underserved by the City's parks. The reconstruction of Pier 15 and the reinforcement of Pier 42, the New Market Building pier, and Pier 35 are essential parts of that effort and will create new recreational space and waterfront access where there are few alternative locations for such space. The piers would provide recreation space that is removed from the traffic and noise of Lower Manhattan,
- Create a vibrant, active and welcoming water's edge,
- Improve public access to the waterfront,
- Find new uses for the waterfront by providing basic infrastructure to support waterfront and community activities,
- Open certain piers to community uses, including reinforcing existing Pier 35, Pier 42 and the New Market Building pier as necessary,
- Provide a place for recreational, community and maritime activities,

East River Waterfront Esplanade and Piers

- Enhance maritime activities along the traditional working waterfront including through the construction of a new marina at the New Market Building pier and historic ships and other maritime educational programming at Pier 15,
- Claim the space under the FDR Drive for community, cultural, and limited commercial development,
- Replace the outmoded New Market Building,
- Improve access to and around the BMB, and
- Expand the existing esplanade between the BMB and Old Slip to provide a larger and safer connection between the BMB and Battery Park to the south and the esplanade improvements and existing East River Park to the north.

D. PROJECT SITE

The area of the Proposed Action generally would encompass the waterfront, the upland area adjacent to and under the elevated FDR Drive and South Street extending from the Whitehall Ferry Terminal and Peter Minuit Plaza on the south to East River Park on the north (see Figures 1-2 to 1-4). Piers 15, 35, and 42 as well as the New Market Building pier and a portion of Pier 36 would be included in the Proposed Action. The total land area would be approximately 17 acres, all of which would be in the 100-year floodplain. The following section describes the project site from south to north. It also specifically identifies adjacent areas excluded from the project site.

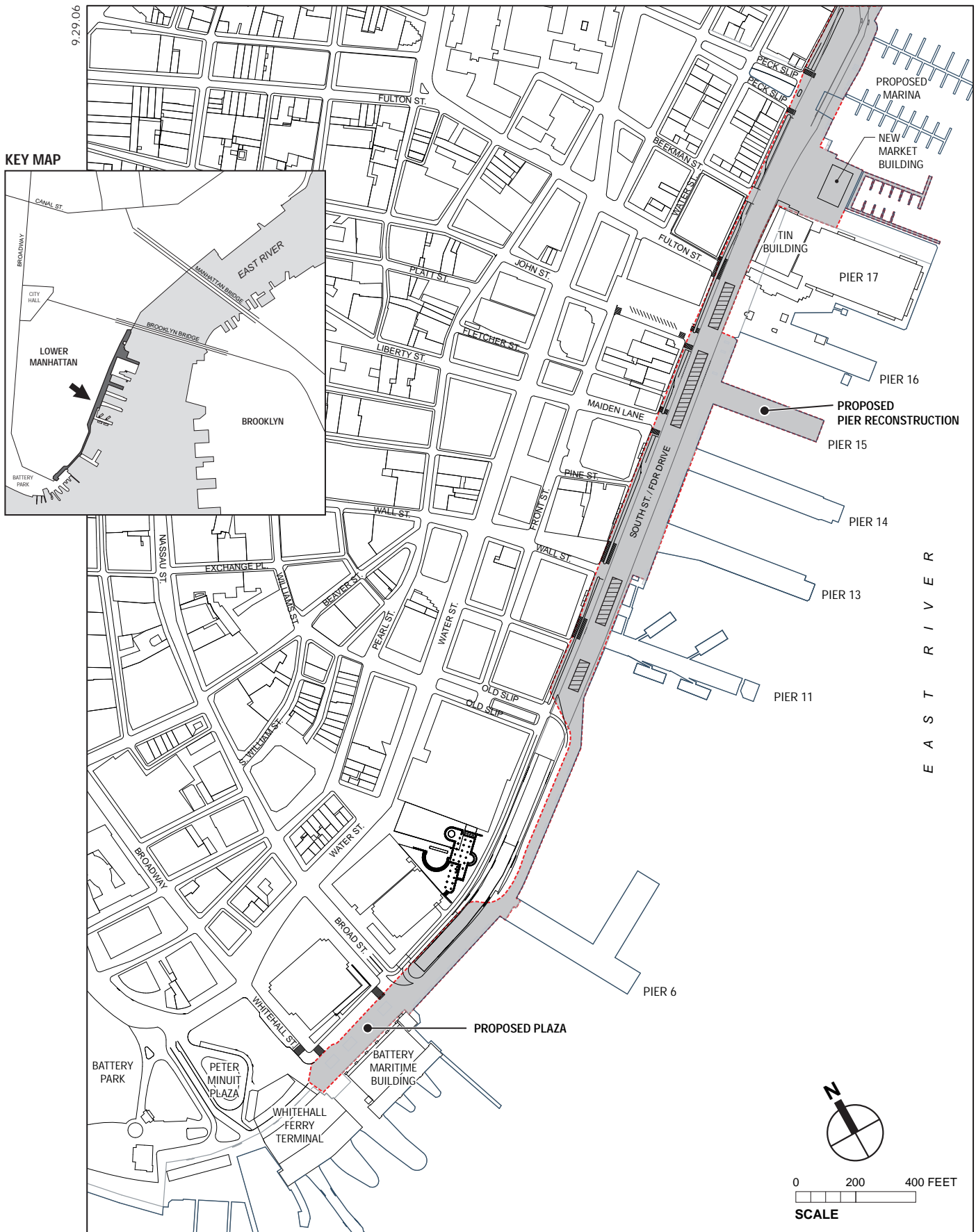
BATTERY MARITIME BUILDING PEDESTRIAN PLAZA

The area that would be developed with the proposed BMB Plaza comprises the ramp to the Battery Park Underpass and the multiple traffic lanes at grade surrounding the ramp on the south, east, and west. Drivers wishing to go to the BMB or travel northbound on the FDR Drive take a semi-circular drive at grade surrounding the depressed tunnel entrance. In the midst of all the traffic, there is small seating area with concrete benches, surrounded by concrete barrier walls. In front of the BMB building itself, a very narrow sidewalk (about five feet wide and protected by jersey barriers placed an additional five feet out in the roadway) separates the ornate 1908 façade of the BMB from the passing northbound traffic.

The project site does not include the BMB itself, and its current restoration is not part of the Proposed Action.

BATTERY MARITIME BUILDING TO PIER 11

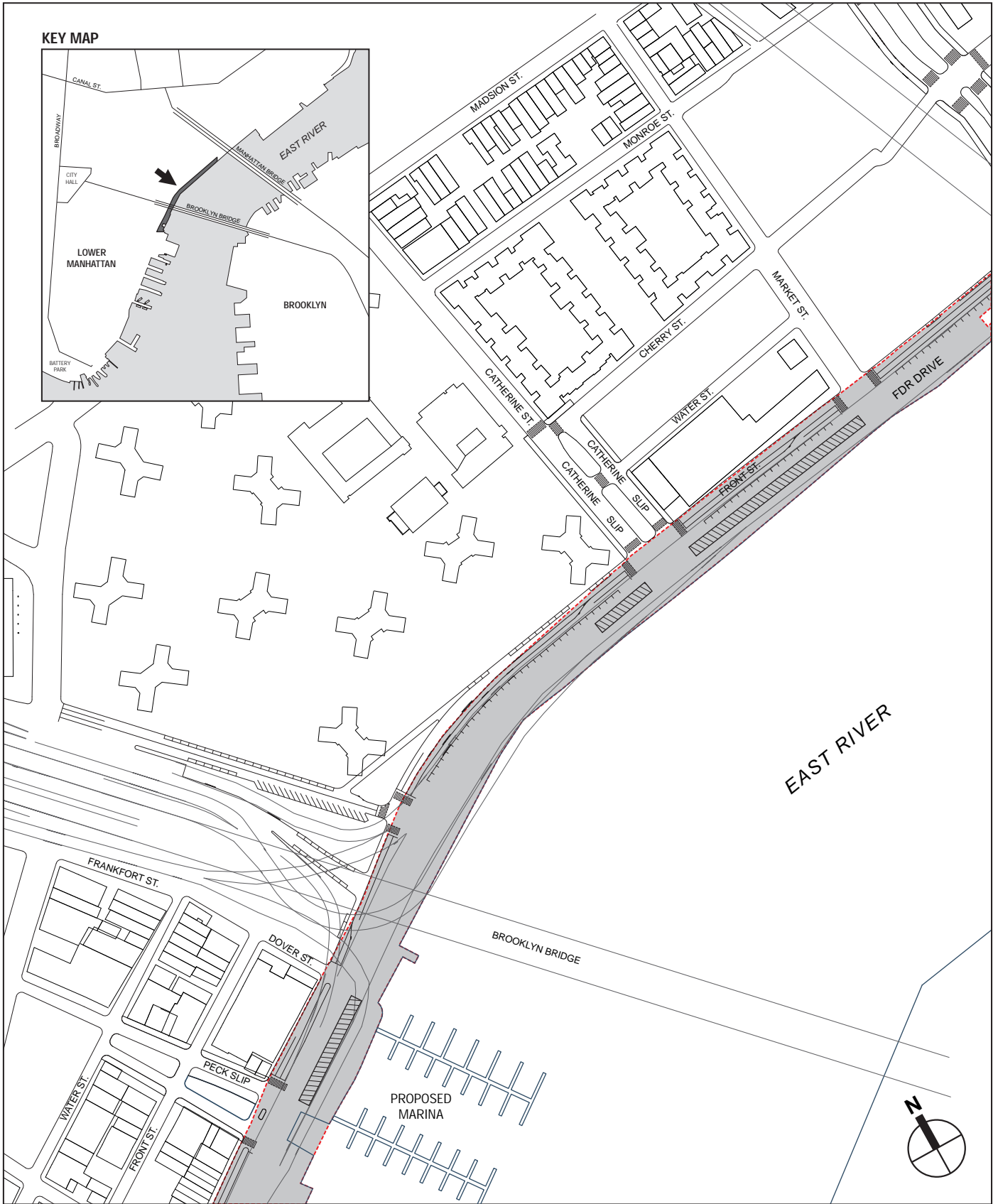
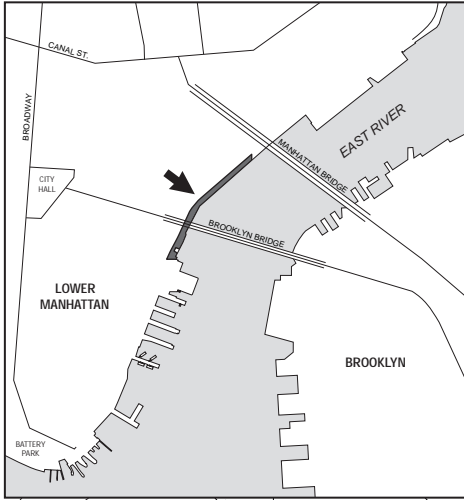
North of the BMB this narrow sidewalk becomes a somewhat wider waterfront walkway. To the heliport pier (Pier 6), the sidewalk is approximately eight feet wide—too narrow for a safe bikeway/walkway. Relatively new, the walkway is in good condition. The bulkhead is made up of regular rows of rectangular blocks of granite. Some concrete patching is visible on the top course of granite. The opening for a storm water outfall (Permitted Wet Weather Discharge Point) is clearly visible at the water line opposite the foot of Broad Street. In this area the at-grade roadway (which would be depressed in order to move the tunnel mouth north and create the BMB plaza) is also part of the project site.



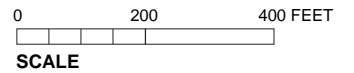
- Project Site
- Potential Locations of Pavilions

Southern Portion of Project Site
Figure 1-2

KEY MAP



-  Project Site
-  Potential Locations of Pavilions



Central Portion of Project Site

Figure 1-3

The heliport pier is an active daytime use outboard of the project site. It has a small parking lot with a fence and two automobile gates adjacent to the walkway. Cars, entering and leaving, cross the walkway but only infrequently.

North of the heliport, the walkway is out over the water outboard of two local traffic lanes along the east side of the ramp to the elevated FDR Drive structure. Buses frequently park in the outside lane, next to the walkway. Below the walkway is a concrete wall in very poor condition. The bulkhead is behind the concrete wall and the round concrete piers which support the roadway and walkway and can be seen from Old Slip. The walkway curves back in to meet the granite bulkhead at the north side of Old Slip where the two local traffic lanes run underneath the FDR to intersect South Street. Near Old Slip, there are approximately 12 parking spaces for FDNY employees. While the Proposed Action would displace these parking spaces, they would not be removed until new parking spaces for these vehicles are found.

North of Old Slip the project site expands upland to include the area under the FDR and South Street becomes its western edge. Automobiles are allowed to park under the FDR from Old Slip to Gouverneur Lane. The edge of the esplanade is the granite bulkhead, which is just outboard of the FDR overhang. Concrete repairs to the top course of granite blocks are visible just north of Old Slip. A bikeway/walkway is delineated in the pavement dividing the benches near the water from the parked vehicles under the FDR Drive. The bikeway ends after a short distance as bikers are directed by a sign to walk their bikes approaching Pier 11 just north of Gouverneur Lane.

PIER 11 TO FULTON STREET

The esplanade provides access to Pier 11, a concrete platform on round concrete piles, outboard of the project site. Five ferry lines arrive and depart from this pier serving Lower Manhattan's workforce who cross the esplanade on their way to and from work. Nautical dock bollards have been placed in the esplanade outside the pier for security and safety measures.

Between Pier 11 and Wall Street the open space is expanded over water by a metal grid walkway. Outside the project site, this platform has two large and three small openings allowing light and views to the water. One opening at the foot of Wall Street reveals a small section of bulkhead where there is concrete on top of wood rather than granite block identifying this as a former pier location. Under the FDR structure, buses are parked perpendicular to South Street from Pier 11 north to Maiden Lane.

At Wall Street the project site widens out over the water on a concrete platform supported on round concrete piles. The platform continues the line of the metal grid platform to the south. However, a fence keeps the public away from the water's edge and Piers 13 and 14. Piers 13 and 14 are not part of the project site. They are in very poor condition structurally and are expected to be demolished in the near future. A service building also blocks the esplanade further separating visitors from the water. Between Piers 13 and 14, the public area is wide enough to have benches.

Under the FDR structure, there are motor bikes parked just north of Wall Street, and from Pine Street to Maiden Lane buses park perpendicular to South Street. There is a short length of bikeway painted on the asphalt between the north side of Wall Street and the south side of Maiden Lane. In good weather street vendors spread out their wares on the esplanade near Pier 14 and the foot of Maiden Lane, offering mostly t-shirts, baseball hats, and purses.

Approximately opposite the north side of Maiden Lane, the concrete platform ends where Pier 15 has been removed. The granite bulkhead is against the water's edge, and the walkway slopes

East River Waterfront Esplanade and Piers

down about three feet to its level. The esplanade is very narrow, and parked cars occupy the area under the FDR Drive. Several concrete block buildings have been erected under the drive.

The location of Pier 15 (just north of Fletcher Street) is marked by four wooden pilings still standing in the water. Another service building separates the esplanade from the water in this area on the south side of John Street.

From John Street north, the project area is limited to the area under the FDR Drive and South Street. On the outboard side the heavy timber platform on round concrete piers is not part of the project site. Historic ships, including *The Peking*, *The Wavertree*, *The Ambrose*, *The Pioneer*, and three tug boats, are berthed along the river and are connected with the South Street Seaport Museum.

FULTON STREET TO THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE

The project area continues north passing inboard of the Tin Building and Pier 17 north of Fulton Street, the major east-west tourist corridor in the Seaport area. The Fulton Fish Market operated here until December 2005. Between Fulton Street and Beekman Street the area is dark and uninviting with decrepit-looking sheds of the former fish stalls close to both sides of the FDR blocking the sun. Market trucks no longer arrive in the night and depart in early morning hours, and there is public parking all day long under the FDR Drive north to the Brooklyn Bridge.

Beyond the Tin Building, the project area expands again to the water and includes the New Market Building site and its pier. A narrow passage leads to the north side of Pier 17 for service vehicles only. The New Market Building is a nondescript two-story, modern, industrial structure clad in corrugated metal siding and painted beige that was part of the Fulton Fish Market. It is set away from the FDR structure on the east by a paved apron where fish market trucks once parked. It blocks views to the river. Next to the refuse containers for Pier 17, its water side is even less attractive.

From the New Market Building to Dover Street the esplanade is on a concrete platform behind a concrete wall overlooking large rocks near the water's edge. The esplanade has been improved with benches and plantings. North of Peck Slip the shrubs have grown large enough to obscure views to and from the waterfront. The number of automobiles parked here varies depending on the season or time of day. Beginning opposite the north side of Peck Slip, bikeway markings are painted on the pavement outboard of the FDR columns. Overhead, the structure of the northbound FDR exit to the Civic Center curves out above the esplanade. From Dover Street almost to the Brooklyn Bridge, a small section of the esplanade outboard of the bulkhead is on wooden planks. At this point, both lanes of the bikeway are outside the FDR columns.

Beneath the Brooklyn Bridge the esplanade overlooks a narrow sand and pebble beach. Heavy timbers and other debris litter the area, and the East River current is strong. Due to safety concerns, there is no beach access from the esplanade, and the beach is not a part of the project site. Under the FDR Drive there is some car parking. This paved area is wide and dark, holds water, and is not well used.

BROOKLYN BRIDGE TO PIER 35

The esplanade is shaded by the access ramp to the northbound FDR Drive as it curves outboard overhead. The ramp footings are outside the bulkhead almost to Market Street. The bulkhead is part granite and part older concrete. There is old concrete down at water level north of the

Brooklyn Bridge and the end of the beach. Near the Governor Alfred E. Smith Houses, the bulkhead curves to the east and the regular courses of granite blocks are more irregular.

Cars are parked under the FDR Drive from south of the Brooklyn Bridge to opposite the Governor Alfred E. Smith Houses. Approximately 15 parking spaces for New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) employees are located in this area.

The esplanade continues east behind the bulkhead intermittently in shadow or sunlight where the structure above permits. By Market Street the piers for the outside lane of the FDR access ramp are no longer outside the bulkhead. In the area of Market Street the esplanade bows out, and a large number of fishermen are often lined up along the water's edge. There are plenty of benches for on-lookers. Along the waterfront the noise of the subway trains passing overhead on the Manhattan Bridge is very loud.

There is bus parking under the west overhang of the FDR structure along the east side of South Street from Catherine Slip under the Manhattan Bridge all the way north to Rutgers Slip. Between Market Street and the Manhattan Bridge there is also bus parking on the west side of South Street adjacent to the large playing fields.

Generally the asphalt paved area under the west side of the FDR is not dedicated to any use, and it holds water after it rains.

PIER 35 TO MONTGOMERY STREET

Near Pier 35 the waterfront is fenced off. Perpendicular to the shoreline, Pier 35 is wide, flat, and unused. It abuts Pier 36, which is used by the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY), Fire Department Rescue Units, and the Police Department. The wide platform between the pier shed and the FDR Service Road is a parking lot for the vehicles of the various services. Pier 36 is not a part of this project except for the location of the proposed cove at its north end. The esplanade is entirely under the FDR Drive, and it becomes a narrow strip at Pier 35 because of the parking areas for Piers 35, 36, and 42. The portion of the esplanade that is part of the project site ends at Montgomery Street where the FDR Drive begins to return to grade. The proposed cove would be north of Montgomery Street along the waterfront where trucks and other types of heavy machinery are currently parked in an area of the pier leased to DOT. This portion of the pier houses equipment used by DOT's Division of Roadway Repair and Maintenance for the resurfacing of streets in Manhattan. Vehicles stored at this site include equipment trailers, milling machines, paving machines, and asphalt rollers. Other equipment stored at the site includes cylinders containing propane, drums of asphalt cement, and various utility hardware adjustment rings and other roadway materials.

PIER 42

The section of walkway connecting to the East River Park upland of Pier 42 exists today and is expected to be improved by the East River Waterfront Access project, a DPR project being undertaken separately from the Proposed Action. This and other independent nearby projects, which are not a part of the Proposed Action, are identified in Chapter 2, "Methodology."

Pier 42 is similar to Pier 36 in comprising a wide paved area and a pier shed near the water. Painted beige, the pier shed is derelict with windows open to the elements and various kinds of construction materials stored on the paved yard. The pier shed would be the location of the urban beach that is being studied as part of this project. A small sign announces the New York Greenway continuing north in East River Park.

E. ELEMENTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

The Proposed Action would consist of a Program Zone under the FDR Drive for pavilions and temporary outdoor activities; a Recreation Zone along the edge of the water with seating, play spaces, and plantings; and a uniform bikeway/walkway along South Street. In addition, the Proposed Action analyzed in this EIS would include the construction of a new pedestrian plaza in front of the BMB, and improvements to Piers 15, 35, 36, and 42, as well as the New Market Building and pier. Although they are analyzed as part of the Proposed Action, construction of the plaza in front of the BMB, the replacement for the New Market Building and the urban beach on Pier 42 are dependent on additional funding that is currently being sought by the City of New York.

The City plans to develop an entity that would be responsible for the maintenance of the open spaces and pavilions that would be constructed under the Proposed Actions or to work through an existing City agency or not-for-profit entity to maintain the open spaces and pavilions.

PROGRAM ZONE

Approximately 14 pavilions totaling up to 150,000 square feet would be built in the Program Zone under the FDR Drive. They would be programmed and built for community, cultural, and commercial uses. Each program would correspond to the unique local needs of its location and surrounding community. Examples of such programs could include a flower market, dance studio, martial arts studio, daycare center, and community center. Although their exact locations have not been determined, the pavilions would be placed between Old Slip and Rutgers Street and positioned to avoid blocking view corridors. As envisioned, the pavilions would have glass skins to promote transparency and openness (see Figure 1-5). However, other materials may be examined in the course of the design process.

In and immediately adjacent to the South Street Seaport Historic District (from approximately Maiden Lane to the area under the Brooklyn Bridge), elements of the design would be developed to be appropriate to the context of the district.

In addition to the pavilions, the open space under the FDR Drive could be programmed for temporary uses, such as farmer's markets, performances, exhibitions, active and passive recreation, and community events. Portions of the underside of the FDR Drive would be improved with cladding intended to reduce noise from the overhead roadway and improve the appearance of the viaduct. The pavilions and cladding would be designed so as not to interfere with the inspection, maintenance, and repair of the FDR Drive viaduct structure.

RECREATION ZONE

Plantings and seating would be provided to enhance passive recreation opportunities in the Recreation Zone. Components would include benches, railings, planters, and arbors. The railing would include enhanced lighting, fishing rod holders, and brackets for attaching historic placards and viewfinders for sights of interest. Arbors along the esplanade would provide shade, swings, and built-in lighting (see Figure 1-6). Different types of planters would be used to address different soil conditions. Elements of the Recreation Zone are described from south to north.

BATTERY MARITIME BUILDING TO PIER 11

Between the BMB and Old Slip, the existing narrow esplanade (approximately 1,140 linear feet) would be widened to approximately 35 feet with a new, approximately 15- to 25-foot-wide structure built out over the water. The expansion area is expected to be an independent structure on pilings rather than a cantilever. The total over-water coverage associated with this expansion is expected to be approximately 25,500 square feet (0.59 acres).

The portion of the project site extending from the BMB to Pier 11 falls within Community District 1.

PIER 11 TO FULTON STREET

Between Pier 11 and the Brooklyn Bridge, the existing esplanade is approximately 58 feet wide, as it has been extended beyond the bulkhead except in the area of Pier 15. To take advantage of the greater width, larger plants and trees in planter boxes would be interspersed between the seating. Within the boundaries of the South Street Seaport Historic District, elements of the esplanade and pier design would be developed to be appropriate to the context of the district.

Pier 15, demolished in 2002/3, would be rebuilt within its original footprint (approximately 559 feet long and 80-82 feet wide) now outlined by four remaining piles. The proposed structure of the pier with wider spacing between piles (30 to 50 feet) is intended to enhance water flow and reduce the deposition of sediment under the pier to improve the under pier habitat as compared to the previous Pier 15 structure. Reconstruction of Pier 15 has already been permitted by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE). It is not considered new over water coverage.

The pier could be a deep truss structure with two levels and enclosed uses. It would be designed to allow vessels to dock along both sides. *The Wavertree* may be moved to this location and, if so, it is anticipated that dredging would be required in this area. Similar to the portion of the esplanade within the boundaries of the South Street Seaport Historic District, the design of this pier would be developed to be appropriate to the context of the historic district.

Bus parking perpendicular to South Street under the FDR Drive structure would be eliminated.

The area between Pier 11 and Fulton Street is within Community District 1.

FULTON STREET TO BROOKLYN BRIDGE

The portion of the project site from Fulton Street to the Brooklyn Bridge is also within Community District 1. Directly north and west of Pier 17, the New Market Building would be demolished as part of the Proposed Action to allow for a new structure of approximately 40,000 square feet. Although it is analyzed in the EIS for the Proposed Action, the design and construction of a new New Market Building is dependent on additional funding that is being sought by the City of New York. If funding is obtained, it would be constructed along with the rest of the Proposed Action. The New Market Building pier would be repaired and reinforced as part of the Proposed Action. A new transient marina using floating platforms and a wave attenuation structure would be created to provide opportunities to temporarily berth small- to mid-sized vessels (see Figure 1-7). The width of the floating platforms would range from 5 to 8 feet for the piers and 8 to 12 feet for the main docks. Approximate overwater coverage associated with the marina would be 34,483 square feet (0.79 acres).

Neither Pier 17 nor the Tin Building is part of the Proposed Action.

BROOKLYN BRIDGE TO PIER 35

This portion of the project site falls within Community District 3. From the Brooklyn Bridge to Pier 35 north of the Manhattan Bridge, the esplanade is approximately 24 feet wide and does not extend beyond the bulkhead. The Proposed Action would enhance the esplanade while keeping it upland of the bulkhead; the esplanade would not be widened north of the Brooklyn Bridge (see Figure 1-8). Benches, planters and new pavement would enhance the existing open space.

PIER 35 TO MONTGOMERY STREET

At Pier 35 the Proposed Action could provide a two-tiered open space (see Figure 1-9). The existing pier structure is sound with the exception of the upland portion, which has sunk due to the failure of the relieving platform and would be replaced. Depending on final design, some reinforcement of piles may be necessary. A portion of the pier may be a floating platform. A multilevel landscape could be created to enhance the open space and block the view of the existing adjacent building on Pier 36, which would continue to be used by DSNY. A gently sloping path could rise to an elevated platform at the southeastern end of the pier. A launch for small boats may also be provided at Pier 35. The entire pier would provide open space opportunities for family gatherings, and include picnic tables and outdoor grills. The addition of the floating platform would increase the over water coverage by 600 square feet.

At the north end of Pier 36, a cove would be created for public enjoyment and temporary mooring of small boats. Steps may lead down to the cove so that visitors could be at the level of the river rather than above it. Other open water areas may also be created at Pier 42. The Proposed Action is being designed so there would be no net change in the amount of over-water coverage, to preserve the extent and quality of marine habitat within its bounds and to minimize any potential impacts to marine ecology. Approximately 25,000 square feet of existing over-water structure would be removed in this area. The Pier 36 cove would require the relocation of the facility used by DOT's Division of Roadway Repair and Maintenance for the storage of equipment used for resurfacing Manhattan's roadways. While a new site has not yet been identified, the facility would not be relocated until a suitable new location for DOT's roadway resurfacing operations is secured.

The portion of the project site from Pier 35 to Montgomery Street falls within Community District 3.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

Designers of the esplanade and piers have envisioned a system of components that would create a consistent yet unique identity signaling a new waterfront environment. These components share material and form and can be placed to best meet community needs and to take advantage of local conditions. Components would include benches, railings, planters, and arbors (see Figure 1-10). A modular reinforced concrete paving system would run the length of the esplanade, providing a continuous material identity from the BMB to Pier 36. The benches would be made from the same concrete paving system as the esplanade and could be configured in numerous ways to create a variety of social interactions: enjoying waterfront views, having intimate conversation, playing a game of chess, or participating in a family picnic. Enhanced lighting, fishing pole holders, brackets for attaching historic placards and viewfinders for sights of interest could be integrated into the stainless steel rail structure. Arbors would provide shade, swings, and built-in lighting that would complement the railing in both material and form. Two different types of planters would be used to address different soil conditions. For the portion of

the project site within the South Street Seaport Historic District, a set of design elements appropriate to the context of the district would be developed. The project elements that would be located within the boundaries of the South Street Seaport Historic District and Extension—including the reconstruction of Pier 15 and the New Market Building pier, the redevelopment of the New Market Building site, and the creation of pavilions between Maiden Lane and Fulton Street and between Peck Slip and Dover Street—are expected to be the subject of a Programmatic Agreement between LMDC and the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). The City will be a consulting party in the Section 106 process.

The Proposed Action, including the various in-water actions, has been designed to address public health and safety considerations as discussed throughout the DEIS. In particular, the marina at the New Market Building pier will provide a safe location for recreational boating and will be designed with input from relevant regulatory agencies.

SOUTH STREET IMPROVEMENTS

The Proposed Action would narrow South Street between Old Slip and Montgomery Street, and create a uniform sidewalk and bikeway along the east side of the street. The street improvements would be designed generally as follows:

- Between Old Slip and Robert F. Wagner Sr. Place (Wagner Place) just north of the Brooklyn Bridge, South Street would accommodate a single through-lane in each direction and a center turn lane. Drop-off and pick-up lanes would be provided at strategic locations.
- Between Wagner Place and Montgomery Street, South Street would consist of a striped median with left-turn bays for northbound traffic, a single through-lane in each direction, and parking on both sides of the street. The City is in the process of securing the funds needed to carry out the planned improvements to South Street north of the Brooklyn Bridge.

The South Street improvements would remove on-street public automobile parking south of the Brooklyn Bridge and would create additional on-street automobile parking spaces north of the Brooklyn Bridge. The East River Waterfront Access Project, an independent project being undertaken by the City, would also add on-street parking north of the Brooklyn Bridge. It should be noted that in the future without the Proposed Action, the portion of South Street south of the Brooklyn Bridge would be reconstructed in its current configuration.

Buses currently permitted to lay-over along South Street and under the elevated FDR Drive between Old Slip and Burling Slip would be displaced as a result of the Proposed Action. The displacement totals approximately up to 45 bus layover spaces. As part of a larger study for Lower Manhattan Street Management, DOT will be conducting a study for Bus Management in Lower Manhattan from Canal Street to the Battery. It will entail conducting a market analysis, possible alternative parking site selection and possible bus management strategies.

The South Street improvements would take place in Community Districts 1 and 3, as the portion of South Street south of the Brooklyn Bridge is in Community District 1 and the portion north of the bridge is in Community District 3. The 45 bus layover spaces that would be displaced are located in Community District 1.

BATTERY MARITIME BUILDING PEDESTRIAN PLAZA

Although it is analyzed in the EIS for the Proposed Action, the construction of a new BMB pedestrian plaza is being analyzed as part of the Proposed Action because the City is dependent on additional funding that is currently being sought by the City for this important improvement, which would be located in Community District 1. If funding is obtained, the BMB Plaza would be built along with the Proposed Action. As the southern gateway to the new esplanade, the current roadway and sidewalk configuration in front of the BMB creates an unpleasant and potentially unsafe pedestrian experience as well as a difficult connection from the East River waterfront to Peter Minuit Plaza and Battery Park. The BMB, which has recently been restored, is currently the gateway to Governors Island. It has suffered for some years with a perilously narrow sidewalk fronting South Street. When funding is available, the entrance to the Battery Park Underpass would be moved approximately 350 feet to the northeast, creating the space for a new three-quarter-acre pedestrian plaza at the entrance of the BMB (see Figure 1-11). The plaza would connect the bikeway/walkway from the esplanade to Peter Minuit Plaza and would use design elements that would be appropriate to the context of the historic BMB. A pedestrian bridge over the tunnel entrance in front of the BMB may be constructed as an interim solution until the BMB Plaza is complete.

The new plaza would also create additional vehicular access to both the BMB and Whitehall Ferry Terminal via a pick-up/drop-off lane. Some reconfiguration of the traffic flow is proposed to minimize pedestrian-vehicular conflicts at the BMB and Whitehall Ferry Terminal and improve traffic flow along Water Street and South Street, such as reconfiguring South Street between Whitehall Street and Broad Street to be one-way in the northeasterly direction with three lanes of northbound traffic and providing a drop-off lane to the west of the plaza. This drop-off lane would create additional access to Whitehall Ferry Terminal. Final design of the BMB Plaza would also consider access needs for Governors Island. The BMB Plaza extension will be designed consistent with existing agreements between the City and the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority. All necessary ventilation, lighting, drainage, and fire suppression systems will be evaluated as part of the design process and incorporated into final design.

The design of the plaza and any interim pedestrian bridge would be submitted to DOT's Division of Bridges for approval prior to construction. The pedestrian bridge, if constructed, would be designed in accordance with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Bridge Manual in order to ensure adequate vertical clearance.

PIER 42 BEACH

Although it is analyzed in the EIS for the Proposed Action, the construction of a new beach at Pier 42 is dependent on additional funding that is currently being sought by the City of New York. If funding is obtained, the Pier 42 beach would be built along with the Proposed Action. The site of the Pier 42 beach is in Community District 3.

The City would remove the Pier 42 pier shed and reinforce the existing pier. The shed would be replaced by a new "urban beach" above the East River, with berms reminiscent of dunes separating the continuing esplanade and the beach (see Figure 1-12).

NEW MARKET BUILDING REPLACEMENT

At approximately the site of the existing New Market Building, located in Community District 1, a new two-story, approximately 40,000-square-foot building housing a mix of uses would be

constructed. The new building would be situated to allow a view corridor through to the water along the north side of Pier 17. It is expected to have an open floor plan for community, cultural, and/or commercial uses. Similar to the beach at Pier 42, the replacement building is being analyzed in the EIS for the Proposed Action, although its design and construction are dependent on additional funding that is currently being sought by the City. It is expected to be built along with the Proposed Action.

The goals of the redevelopment at this site are to create a highly visible and exciting node along the East River Waterfront, to draw people to and encourage them to move along the waterfront, and to create community interest, while complementing the East River Esplanade and Piers Project. DCP has developed physical design parameters to ensure that the New Market Building would be surrounded by open space, allow ample circulation, and provide public access to the waterfront. The height of the building would be limited to 50 feet and a building envelope of roughly 146 by 137 feet has been defined. The building would be required to be at least 40 feet from the northern and southern edges of the pier; 30 feet from the eastern edge of the pier; 53 feet from the Tin Building; and 74 feet from the Pier 17 building. The proposed height and building envelope would require a special permit from the City Planning Commission.

F. ACTIONS AND APPROVALS

The Proposed Action is subject to review under NEPA, SEQRA, CEQR, and the 2001 *CEQR Technical Manual* are referenced as appropriate. LMDC is the lead agency for the environmental review, which is being coordinated with the project reviews required by other federal, state, and local laws as well as the regulations of HUD.

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) will serve as the basis for LMDC's Record of Decision under NEPA and findings under SEQRA. LMDC's review of the Proposed Action under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, Endangered Species Act, HUD regulations and other regulations are incorporated into this DEIS.

The Proposed Action may require or involve, among others, the following regulatory agency actions, permits, and/or approvals:

FEDERAL

- **United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE):** The improvements proposed for the esplanade and piers require permits and are subject to review by ACOE and DEC. The City already possesses DEC and ACOE permits to rebuild Pier 15 for community open space and maritime uses such as those contemplated under the Proposed Action.
- **Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):** Funding action.

STATE

- **New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC):** As described above, permits for in-water actions are required from the ACOE and DEC.
- **Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP):** Review pursuant to National Historic Preservation Act and the State Historic Preservation Act.
- **Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC):** Funding action; Coastal Zone Consistency determination.

East River Waterfront Esplanade and Piers

NEW YORK CITY

The City of New York, as the entity which will carry out the Proposed Action, will seek various approvals for the project. Some elements of the project, specified below, will be subject to approval under the City's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). The City will also make findings under SEQRA and CEQR. Additional local approvals may also apply.

- **New York City Department of City Planning (DCP).** Various elements of the Proposed Action require approvals from DCP, including:
 - Disposition for the lease of marginal streets for pavilions and possible dispositions or concessions related to other program elements of the Proposed Action.
 - Special Permit for bulk and use changes on New Market Building pier and Pier 15.
 - Changes to the City Map related to the creation of the BMB Plaza.
 - Site selection for new uses created by the Proposed Action.
 - Waterfront Zoning certification pursuant to ZR 62-711.
 - Determination of consistency with Waterfront Revitalization Program.
- **New York City Department of Transportation (DOT):** Review of proposed traffic and roadway changes.

This environmental review takes into consideration the plaza in front of the BMB, the replacement for the New Market Building and the urban beach on Pier 42 as part of the Proposed Action although their implementation is dependent on additional funding that is currently being sought by the City of New York.

UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW PROCEDURE

The City's ULURP, mandated by Sections 197-c and 197-d of the City Charter, is a process specifically designed to allow public review of proposed projects at four levels: Community Board, Borough President, CPC, and City Council. The procedure sets time limits for review at each stage to ensure a maximum total review period of approximately seven months. The process begins with certification by CPC that the ULURP application is complete.

The application is then referred to the relevant Community Board(s). In this case, there will be separate applications for Manhattan Community Boards No. 1 and 3 for the elements of the Proposed Action that fall within each of those districts. The Community Boards have up to 60 days to review and discuss the proposal, hold a public hearing, and adopt an advisory resolution regarding the actions. Once this is complete, the Borough President and Borough Board have up to 30 days to review the actions if they choose. CPC then has up to 60 days to review the application, during which time a public hearing is held. Following the hearing, CPC may approve or reject the application. If a DEIS is circulating, its required public hearing may be held with the CPC ULURP hearing. Comments made at the Draft EIS public hearing are incorporated into a Final EIS.

If CPC approves the project, it forwards the application to the City Council, which has 50 days to consider the proposed project. The City Council vote is final, unless the Mayor chooses to veto the Council's decision. The City Council can override the mayoral veto by a two-thirds vote.

G. SCHEDULE

For analysis purposes it has been assumed that the Proposed Action would be completed by 2009. The reconstruction of South Street between Whitehall and Dover Streets would be timed to correspond with the esplanade improvements. While funding for the BMB Plaza, the New Market Building replacement, and the beach on Pier 42 has not yet been identified, the City is seeking funding for those elements and would pursue them concurrently with the Proposed Action, if possible. It has been conservatively assumed that construction of the Proposed Action, the South Street improvements, and the independent nearby projects would take place concurrently. *