

7.3 OPEN SPACE

7.3.1 Introduction

This Section evaluates the potential effects of construction and operation of Shaft 33B at the E. 61st Street Shaft Site on open space resources. The Study Area is the same as for land use, described above in Section 7.2, “Land Use and Community Facilities, Zoning, and Public Policy,” and consists of the area within 400 feet of the alternative Shaft Site and the potential water main connection route from the alternative Shaft Site along E. 61st Street between First and Second Avenues to First Avenue at E. 59th Street.

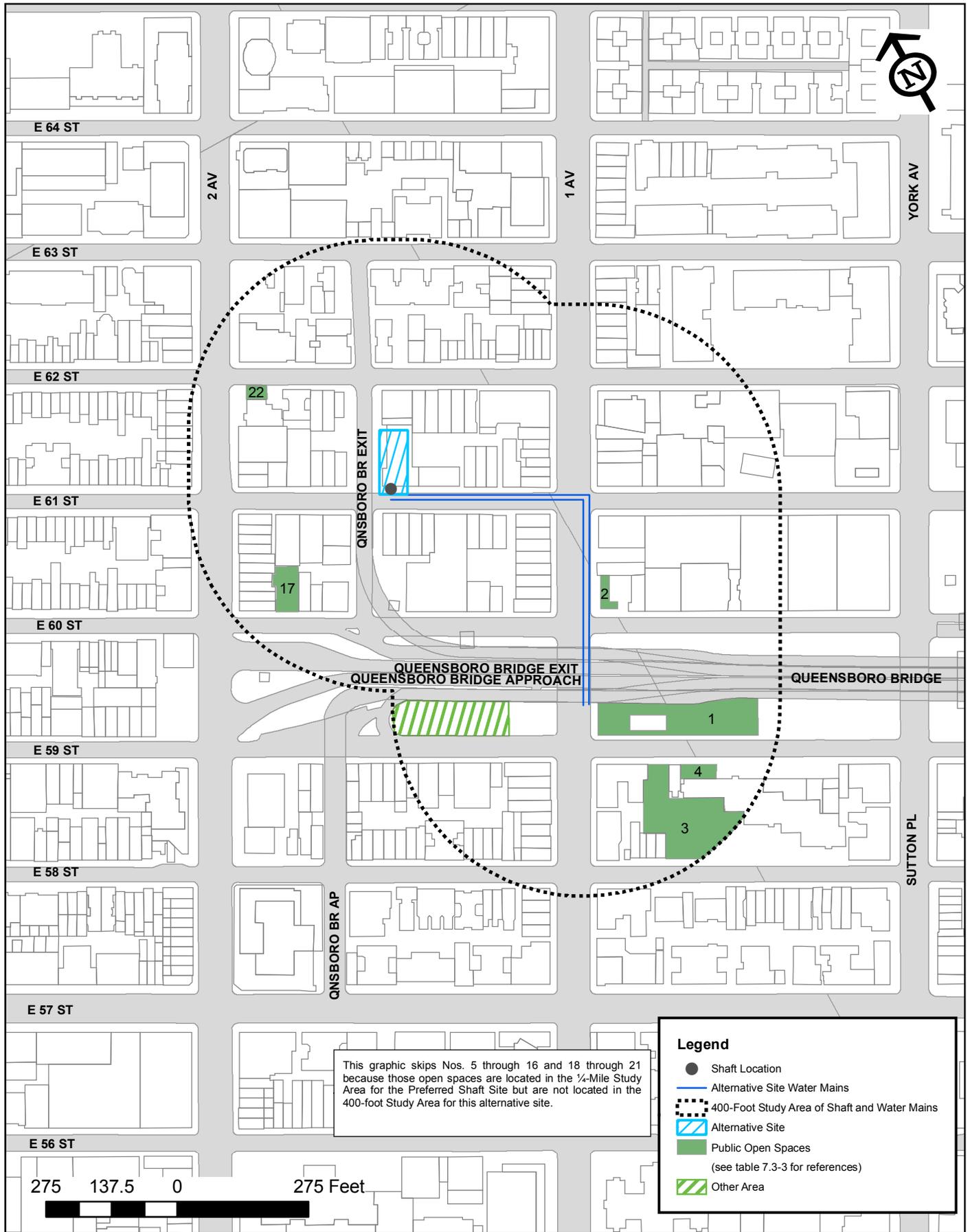
7.3.2 Existing Conditions

The 400-foot Study Area for the E. 61st Street Shaft Site includes six publicly accessible open spaces and one shared space. Those are listed in Table 7.3-1 and shown in Figure 7.3-1.

**Table 7.3-1
Open Spaces in the 400-Foot Study Area**

Map No*	Name (if any)	Owner	Description/Amenities	Total Open Space Acres	Active Open Space Acres	Passive Open Space Acres
	Multi-use area	Public	Shared space used jointly by NYCDOT and as an open space; nine trees but no open space amenities	0.27	0.14	0.14
1	Bridgemarket	Public	Plaza with seating and landscaping	0.49	0.00	0.49
2	BridgeTower Place	Private	Plaza with bike parking, plantings, seating, trees	0.15	0.00	0.15
3	Sovereign	Private	Plaza with plantings, trees, benches and steps	0.65	0.00	0.65
4	Grand Sutton	Private	Plaza with sculpture, bike parking, plantings, seating, trees	0.06	0.00	0.06
17	Evansview	Private	Plaza with seating and landscaping	0.10	0.00	0.10
22	Paladin	Private	Plaza with sculpture, bike parking, seating, planting, trees	0.07	0.00	0.07
<p>Note: * The open spaces listed in the this table include only those located in the 400-foot Study Area for the E. 61st Street Shaft Site and are therefore not consecutively numbered.</p>						

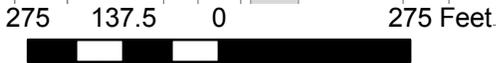
All of the open spaces within the Study Area are separated from the E. 61st Street Shaft Site by either the Queensboro Bridge (Bridge) structure or a major thoroughfare. As shown in the table, most of these open spaces are plazas associated with residential buildings. One publicly owned plaza, Bridgemarket (No. 1), is located on the south side of the Queensboro Bridge, east of First Avenue. Two additional plazas, at the Sovereign (No. 3) and Grand Sutton (No. 4) apartment buildings, are located south of the Bridge between First Avenue and Sutton Place. The plazas at



This graphic skips Nos. 5 through 16 and 18 through 21 because those open spaces are located in the 1/4-Mile Study Area for the Preferred Shaft Site but are not located in the 400-foot Study Area for this alternative site.

Legend

- Shaft Location
- Alternative Site Water Mains
- ⋯ 400-Foot Study Area of Shaft and Water Mains
- ▭ Alternative Site
- Public Open Spaces
(see table 7.3-3 for references)
- ▨ Other Area



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
 PROPOSED SHAFT 33B TO CITY TUNNEL NO. 3
 STAGE 2 - MANHATTAN LEG
 E. 61ST STREET SHAFT SITE
 PUBLIC OPEN SPACES**

FIGURE 7.3-1

Map Document: (S:\Projects\21751568\GIS_Figures\Shaft_33B\EIS_Field_Work\Alternative_F_(AKRF).mxd) 9/13/2005 -- 12:47:18 PM

Evansview (No. 17) and Paladin (No. 22) are located north of the bridge, and are separated from the Shaft Site by the Queensboro Bridge exit ramp as well as intervening buildings. The plaza at BridgeTower Place (No. 2), also located north of the Bridge, is approximately 400 feet from the Shaft Site on the east side of First Avenue, but adjacent to the potential water main connections route. None of these open spaces are within view of the E. 61st Street Shaft Site.

The Study Area also includes an area that is jointly used for both public open space and by the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) for parking and Bridge maintenance. That “multi-use” area on the south side of the Bridge is sometimes referred to as “14 Honey Locusts Park” or “Gateway Plaza” and is described in detail in Section 4.3, “Open Space,” in Chapter 4, “Preferred Shaft Site.” The multi-use area is completely buffered from the E. 61st Street Shaft Site by the Bridge structure and is separated from the water main connections route by an intervening parcel used by NYCDOT at the corner of E. 59th Street and First Avenue (the preferred Shaft Site).

In addition, the sidewalk adjacent to the west side of the E. 61st Street Shaft Site, which runs alongside the elevated Queensboro Bridge exit ramp, is a “Greenstreet.” Through its Greenstreets program, the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYCDPR) converts paved, vacant traffic islands and medians into landscaped green spaces.

7.3.3 Future Conditions Without the Project

In the Future Without the Project, the Archdiocese of New York is planning to build a residential structure for priests on the E. 61st Street Shaft Site. In addition, as described previously in Section 7.2.3 of Section 7.2., “Land Use and Community Facilities, Zoning, and Public Policy,” three other development projects are expected to be completed in the Study Area in the Future Without the Project. These projects would bring additional population to the Study Area, who would presumably use the area’s open spaces. In the Future Without the Project, no significant changes to open spaces in the Study Area are anticipated to occur. NYCDPR is planning a rehabilitation project at the multi-use area, to add landscaping, seating, paving, and lighting once the NYCDOT’s Queensboro Bridge Rehabilitation Program is complete.

7.3.4 Future Conditions With the Project

Construction

Shaft 33B

Construction activities at the E. 61st Street Shaft Site would create some disruption for surrounding land uses, as noted in Section 7.2, “Land Use and Community Facilities, Zoning, and Public Policy.” Construction equipment would be visible above the construction barrier, and construction-related traffic would arrive at and depart from the alternate Shaft Site. No open spaces would be directly affected by construction. The sidewalk to the west of the alternative Shaft Site, which is a Greenstreet, would not be affected by construction.

None of the open spaces in the Study Area are close enough to the alternative Shaft Site to experience any potential significant adverse impacts. Distance and intervening buildings would fully buffer the open spaces from construction activity on the E. 61st Street Shaft Site. As described in Sections 7.11 and 7.12, no potential significant adverse air quality or noise impacts would occur at any of the open spaces in the Study Area because of construction activities on the E. 61st Street Shaft Site. Overall, therefore, construction activities would not adversely affect open space users' ability to enjoy the nearby open spaces.

Water Main Connections

Construction of 2½ blocks of additional water main connections from the E. 61st Street Shaft Site to E. 59th Street and First Avenue using the First Avenue or Sutton Place route would result in temporary disruption to the open space at BridgeTower Place, which faces First Avenue between E. 60th and E. 61st Streets, and the open space at Bridgemarket, which faces First Avenue between E. 59th and E. 60th Streets. As described in Section 5.3, "Open Space," in Chapter 5, "Water Main Connections," construction activity for the water mains is anticipated to be disruptive to adjacent open spaces, with some disruption to nearby traffic patterns and temporary adverse noise impacts to the nearest properties, which would include the two nearby open spaces. Both of these open spaces already exist in the context of busy and noisy First Avenue, and the disruption, which would be of short duration, would not be anticipated to result in potential significant adverse impacts to the usability of open spaces in its immediate vicinity. The other open spaces in the Study Area near the water main connections (those at the Grand Sutton and Sovereign apartment buildings as well as the multi-use area) would generally be buffered from water main construction activities by distance. Given the short duration and limited disruption of water main construction activities, no potential significant adverse impact on open space resources is expected. Other than the addition of the extra 2½ blocks for the First Avenue and Sutton Place routes, the water main connections would be the same from this alternative Shaft Site as from the preferred Shaft Site, and the potential effects of the work is described in Section 5.3.

Conclusions

Overall, construction of Shaft 33B at the alternative Shaft Site and the associated water mains would not occur in, or directly affect, any open spaces. While the water main construction would be disruptive to open spaces adjacent to the water main route, the disruption would be of short duration. Overall, construction activities for Shaft 33B at the E. 61st Street Shaft Site and for its water main connections would not be anticipated to result in potential significant adverse impacts at any of the open spaces in the Study Area.

Operation

Activation and operation of Shaft 33B are not anticipated to have potential adverse effects on any publicly accessible open spaces near the E. 61st Street Shaft Site. As described in Chapter 2, activation would occur for a very short period of time and would involve limited on-site activity. The shaft would not be located in any open space, and the completed shaft would have only

limited equipment above grade. Activities associated with operation of the shaft would not result in increased traffic, air pollution, or increased noise or vibration levels at the site. For more information, see Sections 7.6, “Urban Design and Visual Resources,” 7.9, “Traffic and Parking,” 7.11, “Air Quality,” 7.12, “Noise,” and 7.13, “Vibration.” Limited on-site activity would occur once the shaft is operational. In addition, NYCDEP would fund and support NYCDPR re-vegetation and greening efforts in the Study Area; these efforts could include the provision of additional street trees or support for other park or open space improvement initiatives intended to benefit the residents of local communities. NYCDEP would work with NYCDPR and the community to identify desired improvements in the general project area. Overall, therefore, operation of Shaft 33B at the E. 61st Street Shaft Site is not anticipated to result in any potential significant adverse impacts to nearby open spaces.

