

## PUBLIC SAFETY ANSWERING CENTER II

### CHAPTER 5: URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

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#### A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers the potential for the Proposed Action to have a significant adverse effect on urban design and visual resources. As described in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the Proposed Action would include the acquisition of an approximately 8.75 acre parcel of private property by the City of New York (the “City”) for site selection of a public facility, the Public Safety Answering Center II (“PSAC II”), in the Pelham Parkway section of the northeast Bronx. The proposed public facility would serve as an emergency communications center for the City that would consist of an approximately 640,000 gsf building, which would accommodate the City’s second 911 center and command control centers for the New York City Police Department (NYPD) and the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) in the City, as well as extensive mechanical and data systems. A 500-space accessory parking garage would also be constructed on the site. As the proposed development site is relatively isolated from the surrounding area with no linear frontage adjacent to a public street, the Proposed Action also involves the mapping an existing private roadway as a public street. The proposed street would extend north of Waters Place for approximately 0.63 miles to the southern boundary of the proposed development site.

The *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual* states that urban design components and visual resources determine the “look” of a neighborhood—its physical appearance, including the size and shape of buildings, their arrangement on blocks, the street pattern, and noteworthy views that may give an area a distinctive character. As the Proposed Action would facilitate the development of a public facility, which would be notably different in height and scale from existing development, and would establish a new public street, a detailed urban design and visual resources analysis was conducted to determine whether the Proposed Action would result in significant adverse impacts to these resources. This chapter analyzes existing conditions and the future without and with the Proposed Action for the 2012 analysis year. The study area for urban design and visual resources coincides with the land use and zoning study area, and is defined as extending a quarter mile (¼-mile) from the boundary of the Project Site.

#### B. METHODOLOGY

In accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual*, this analysis considers the effects of the Proposed Action on the following elements, which collectively form an area’s urban design:

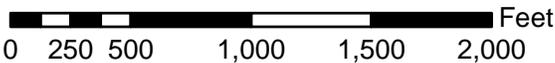
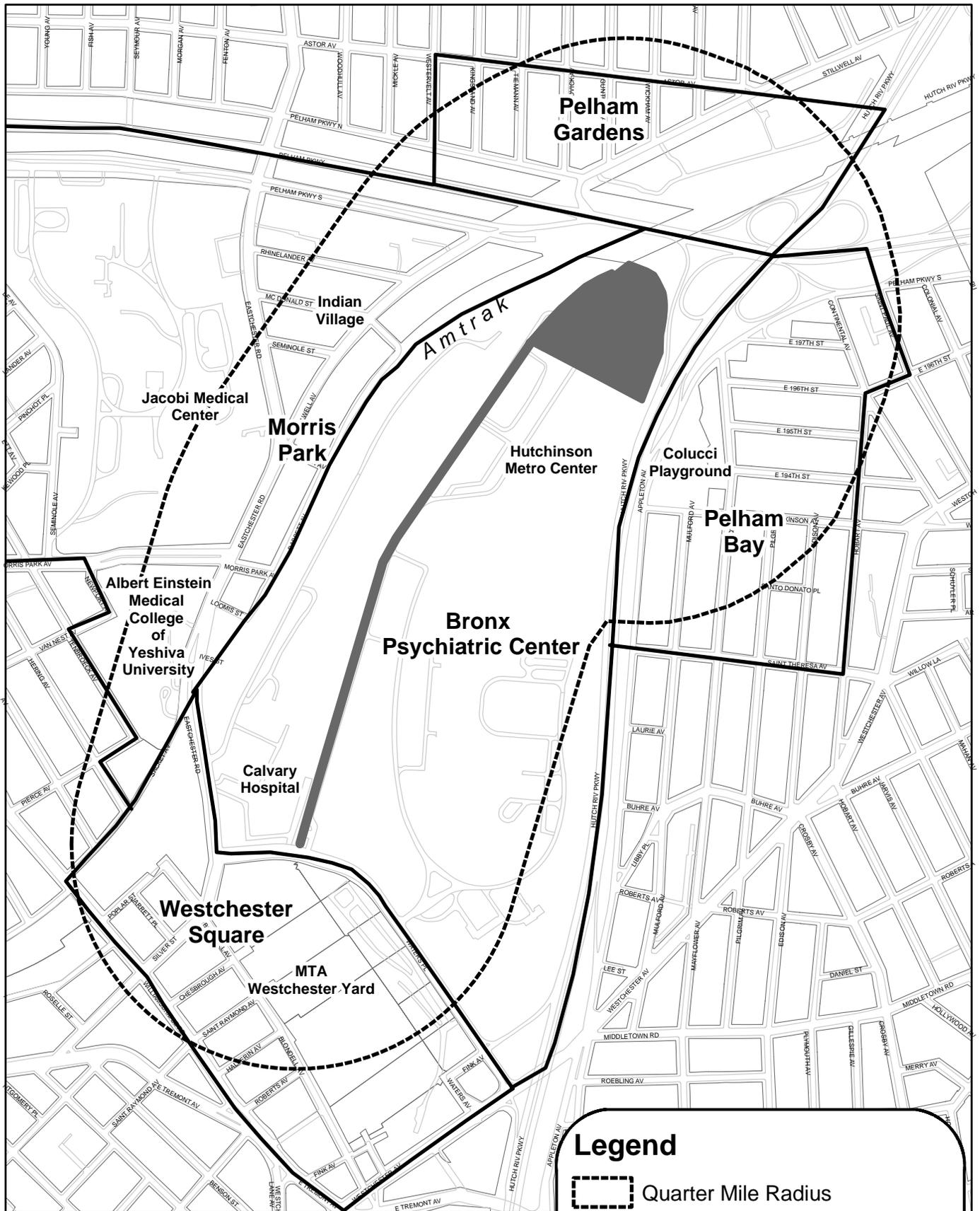
- *Block Form and Street Pattern.* This urban design feature refers to the shape and arrangement of blocks and surrounding streets, such as a grid pattern with regularly sized, rectangular blocks. These features set street views, define the flow of activity

through an area, and create the basic format on which building arrangements can be organized.

- *Building Arrangement.* This term refers to the way that buildings are placed on zoning lots and blocks. The buildings can have small or large footprints, be attached or detached and separated by open space uses, and be varied in their site plans. This urban design feature helps to convey a sense of the overall form and design of a block or a larger area.
- *Building Bulk, Use, and Type.* Buildings are usually described by these characteristics. A building's bulk is created from an amalgam of characteristics that include its height, length, and width; lot coverage and density; and shape and use of setbacks and other massing elements. The general use of a building (e.g., residential, manufacturing, commercial office) gives an impression of its appearance and helps to convey visual and urban design character. Building type refers to a distinctive class of buildings and suggests distinguishing features of a particular building. Examples of building type include: industrial loft, church, gas station, and walk-up tenement.
- *Streetscape Elements.* Streetscape elements are the distinctive physical features that make up a streetscape, such as street walls, building entrances, parking lots, fences, street trees, street furniture, curb cuts, and parking ribbons. These features help define the immediate visual experience of pedestrians.
- *Street Hierarchy.* Streets may be classified as expressways, arterials, boulevards, collector/distributor streets, or local streets, and they may be defined by their width, type of access, and the presence or absence of at-grade pedestrian crossings. Street hierarchy helps convey a sense of the overall form and activity level of a neighborhood.
- *Topography and Natural Features.* Topographic and natural features help define the overall visual character of an area and may include varied ground elevations, rock outcroppings and steep slopes, vegetation, and aquatic features.

This analysis also considers the effects of the Proposed Action on the area's visual resources, which the *CEQR Technical Manual* defines as unique or important public view corridors, vistas, or natural or built features. Visual resources can include waterfront views, public parks, landmark structures or districts, or natural features, such as rivers or geologic formations.

As recommended by the *CEQR Technical Manual*, this technical analysis evaluates the potential for impacts in two areas—the Project Site and a surrounding study area (see Figure 5-1). The Project Site encompasses a total of approximately 13.08 acres and includes the approximately 8.75-acre proposed development site and the approximately 4.33-acre area affected by the proposed street mapping action. The study area extends an approximate ¼-mile radius from the Project Site and for the assessment of urban design, has generally been divided into five distinct sub-areas: Pelham Gardens (north of the Project Site); Pelham Bay (east of the Project Site); the Bronx Psychiatric Center Area (generally bounded by the Pelham, Hutchinson River Parkways, Waters Place and Amtrak); Westchester Square (south of Waters Place); and Morris Park (west of the Amtrak right-of-way), as shown in Figure 5-1.



**Legend**

- Quarter Mile Radius
- Project Site
- Neighborhood Subarea Boundary

## C. EXISTING CONDITIONS

### Urban Design

#### *Project Site*

As noted above, the Project Site encompasses a total of approximately 13.08 acres and is located in the Pelham Parkway area of the northeast Bronx to the southwest of the interchange for the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways. The site is generally bounded by the Pelham Parkway to the north, the Hutchinson River Parkway to the east, Waters Place to the south, and the Amtrak right-of-way to the west (refer to Figure 5-1).

The proposed development site is bell-shaped and comprises the northernmost portion of the Hutchinson Metro Center office complex (“Hutchinson Metro Center”) (see Figure 5-2). It consists largely of unimproved land. There are no existing buildings or structures on the site. The northern approximately 4 acres of the site are occupied by vacant land that formerly accommodated two ball fields. The two ball fields are unkempt, no longer functional, and largely overgrown with tall grasses, shrubs, and some small trees. A series of debris mounds also overlays the northwestern portion of the site. Chain link fencing partially encloses each former ball field, and a narrow, approximately 12-foot wide asphalt pedestrian walkway cuts through the center of the northern portion of the development site providing a pedestrian connection between the Pelham Parkway and the Hutchinson Metro Center. This pathway is lined on either side with small trees and lampposts. Paved at-grade accessory parking lots for the Hutchinson Metro Center occupy the remainder of the proposed development site. A total of approximately 513 existing accessory parking spaces are located within the boundary of the proposed development site. These parking spaces are largely reserved for Mercy College, which leases space within the Hutchinson Metro Center.

There is little to no landscaping on the proposed development site. The asphalt parking lots are in good condition. The ground surface of the accessory parking lot located in the southeastern portion of the site slopes upwards toward the adjacent Hutchinson Metro Center office building to the south, resulting in an approximate 10-foot terrace separating the southeastern and southwestern parking lots occupying the southern portion of the development site (refer to aerial view in Figure 5-2).

The proposed development site is relatively severed from the surrounding area bounded by the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways and their associated mapped open spaces to the north and east, and partially by an Amtrak right-of-way to the west. The nearest buildings to the proposed development site are the 4-story office building and single story warehouse within the Hutchinson Metro Center, which are located more than 150 feet to the south. The proposed development site itself does not have any linear frontage along a public street. Vehicular access is provided from the south via Industrial Street, which is a private roadway that extends north from Waters Place to the southern boundary of the proposed development site.

Industrial Street operates as an approximately 30-foot wide private access roadway for the Hutchinson Metro Center with one travel lane in each direction and no parking lanes (see Figure 5-3). A small, one-story attended gatehouse is located at the southern terminus of roadway just north of Waters Place, providing secure access to the Hutchinson Metro Center. The southern portion of the road has been recently paved and is in good condition. The northern portion of Industrial Street is currently closed, unpaved, and consists of recently graded soil due to ongoing construction occurring at the southwestern corner of the Hutchinson Metro Center, which is being redeveloped with two new approximately 13-story office buildings. As part of the Proposed Action, Industrial Street would be mapped as a public street (“Marconi Street”) to ensure permanent vehicular access and utility services

to the proposed PSAC II development along a public right-of-way. The proposed public street would extend north of Waters Place for approximately 0.63 miles to the southern boundary of the proposed development site.

As shown in Figure 5-3, Industrial Street has limited streetscape elements. There are no existing sidewalks and staggered, white metal streetlights line this private roadway. Along the western edge of the street, dense foliage and a tall chain-link fence obscure views to the light industrial and commercial properties located to the west. There is only one curb cut on the west side of the street that provides access to an accessory parking lot for the Hutchinson Metro Center (see Figure 1-2 in Chapter 1, “Project Description”). At the southern end of the street, trees and other dense foliage, as well as tall chain-link fencing line the eastern edge of the street and obscure views to the Bronx Psychiatric Center and the little league ball fields lining the eastern edge of the street.

### ***Study Area***

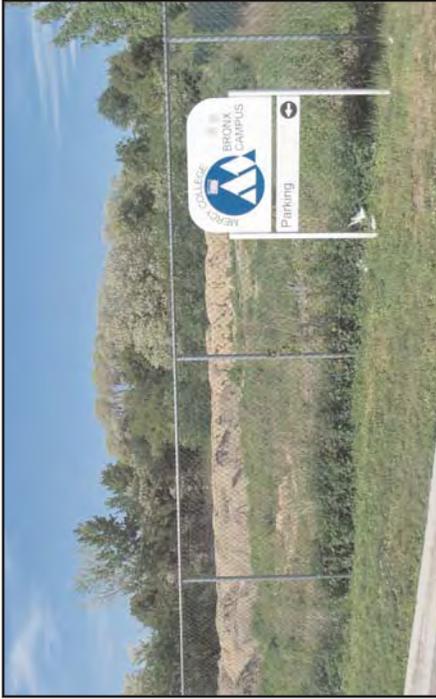
The approximate ¼-mile urban design study area extends north to Astor Avenue and south to Williamsbridge Road. The eastern boundary is Saint Paul and Hobart Avenues and the Hutchinson River Parkway, while the western boundary includes Eastchester Road, Jacobi Medical Center, Yeshiva University’s Albert Einstein School of Medicine (“Albert Einstein College of Medicine”), and Sacket Avenue. The study area is characterized by the outer edges of several distinct neighborhoods and areas that do not have a strong connection to each other, as they are generally separated by broad thoroughfares and an Amtrak right-of-way, which visually and physically divide the study area into five subareas. As noted above, the five subareas include the following: Pelham Gardens; Pelham Bay; the Bronx Psychiatric Center Area; Westchester Square; and Morris Park (see Figure 5-4).

Topography, natural features, street hierarchy, street pattern, and block shapes are discussed below for the entire ¼-mile study area. Building bulk, use, type, and arrangement, as well as streetscape features are discussed separately and in more detail for each subarea listed above. Figure 5-4 shows the location and direction of photographs referenced in the discussion below.

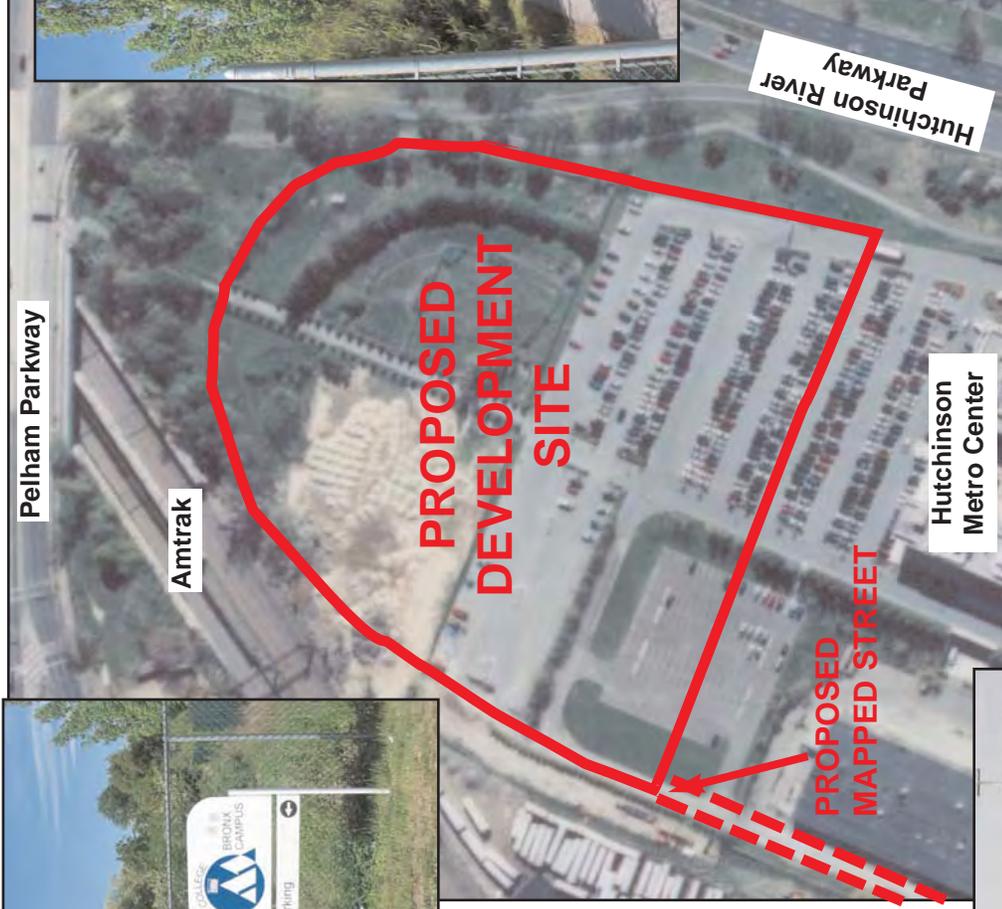
Overall, the urban design of the study area is defined by a number of large health care-related institutional facilities that occupy campus like settings containing several buildings surrounded by vegetation, low-density residential areas featuring detached and semi-detached homes as well as some small apartment buildings, and a clustering of low-rise commercial, light industrial, warehousing, and vehicular storage uses along the Amtrak corridor right-of-way. Commercial uses are primarily concentrated to the southeast of the Project Site within the Hutchinson Metro Center office complex. There are also a few low-rise commercial office buildings, warehouses and/or retail establishments to the west of the Project Site along Stillwell and Bassett Avenues and on the east side of Eastchester Road, as well as further south of the Project Site on the north side of Waters Place to the west of Industrial Street. The irregular street pattern consists of highly trafficked thoroughfares and side streets. Most of the buildings throughout the study area—including industrial, commercial, and residential buildings—are one to six stories tall. Taller structures are typically institutional buildings on campus settings along the western edge of the study area (e.g., 28-story Staff Housing Complex of Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Jacobi Medical Center’s 13-story Nurse’s Residence building, and 13-story Bronx Psychiatric Center).

### **Topography and Natural Features**

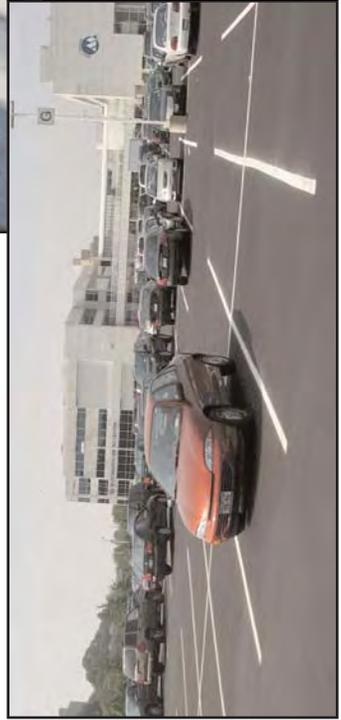
Throughout the study area, the topography is generally level, with a gentle rise in terrain to the north, as well as to the west. There are no natural resource features in the area. Greenery is provided by street trees, grass-covered yards on residential properties, the Pelham Parkway malls, the Hutchinson River



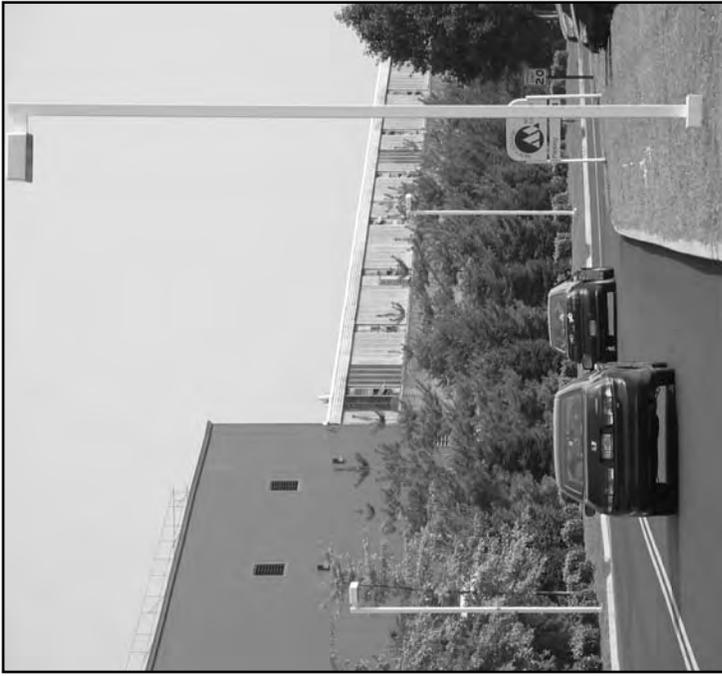
View looking north to the northwest portion of the proposed development site. The series of debris mounds are visible in the background of the photograph.



View looking north to the asphalt pathway that cuts through the northern portion of the site providing a pedestrian connection between the Hutchinson Metro Center and the Pelham Parkway.



View looking south to the accessory parking lot for the Hutchinson Metro Center. The 4-story retrofitted office building for Hutchinson Metro Center is in the background of the photograph.



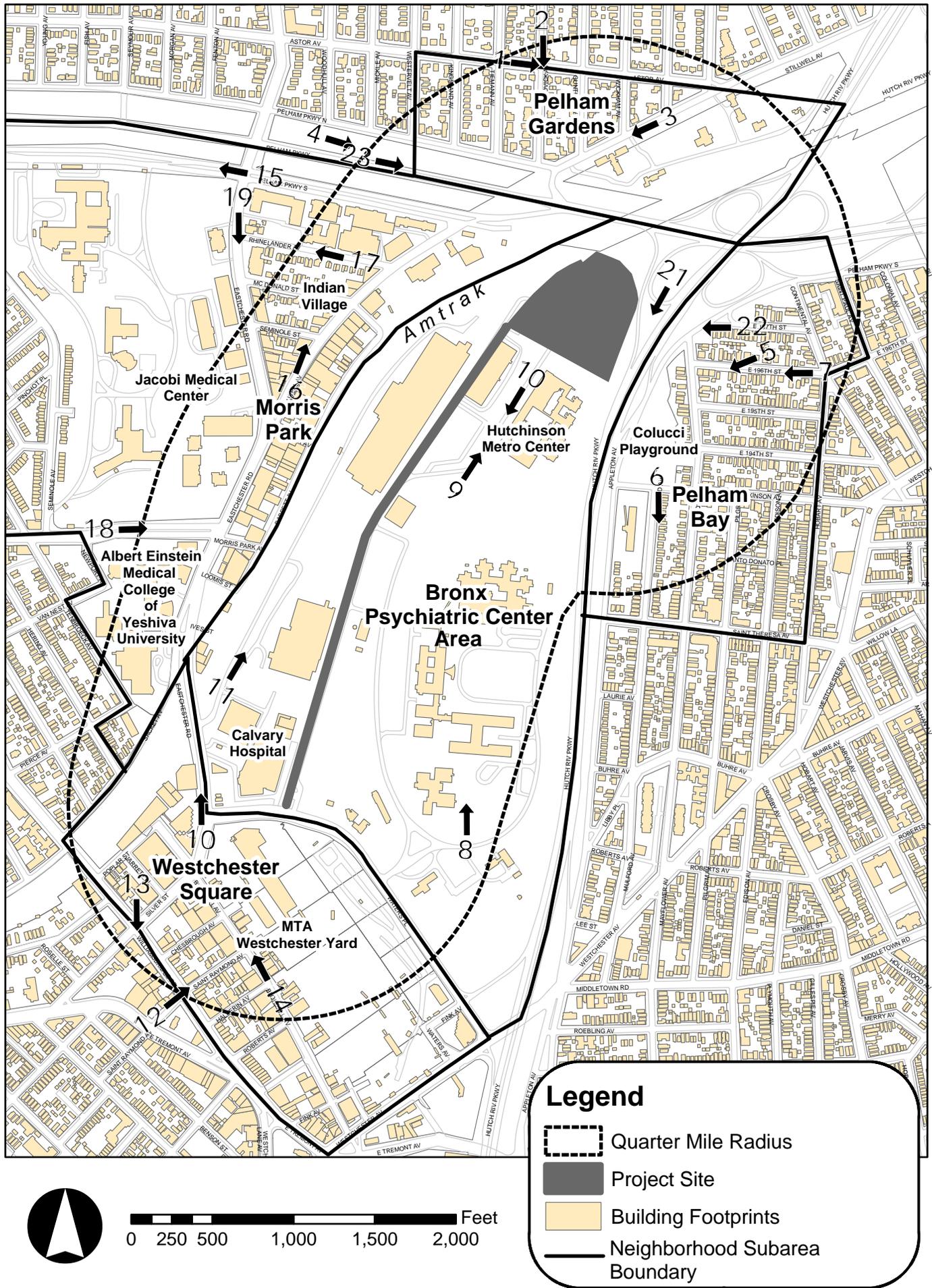
View looking north on Industrial Street.



View looking south on Industrial Street to the guardhouse at the southern terminus of the roadway. The large stack visible in the background of the picture is part of the Bronx Psychiatric Center.



View looking north from Waters Place to the attended one-story guardhouse at the southern terminus of Industrial Street



Greenway, Colucci Playground, and the grassy landscaped lawns of the campus settings of the Bronx Psychiatric Center, Jacobi Medical Center, and Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and the Bronx Rehabilitation Center for the United Cerebral Palsy of New York City.

### Block Form, Street Pattern and Street Hierarchy

The study area has a highly irregular street pattern that consists of a network of arterials, local streets and private roadways, as well as the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways. The broad thoroughfares of the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways, as well as the railroad right-of-way of Amtrak's New York-New Haven and Hartford line divide the study area, and establish small distinct subareas that generally feature discrete street patterns. Several large irregular-shaped superblocks have also had a strong impact on the street patterns and block shapes in the study area interrupting cross streets, and creating curvilinear streets that follow the perimeters of the superblocks (e.g., Jacobi Medical Center, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Bronx Psychiatric Center, and New York City Transit Westchester Yard). The study area also contains a number of short streets, which only extend for one, or just a few blocks.

The primary roadways in the study area are the Pelham Parkway, which runs east-west through the northern portion of the study area, and the Hutchinson River Parkway, which extends north-south at the eastern edge of the study area. These two parkways form a major traffic interchange directly to the northeast of the Project Site. Eastchester Road, an arterial in the western portion the study area, is a wide, north-south roadway that also carries a substantial amount of traffic and connects East Tremont Avenue to the south with the Pelham Parkway in the north. In the southern portion of the study area, Waters Place is a wide east-west roadway that provides a connection between Eastchester Road in the west with the Hutchinson River Parkway and Westchester Avenue in the east.

The Pelham Parkway is a broad boulevard that is about as wide as two typical city blocks (approximately 400 feet wide). It consists of two primary east and west throughways (respectively the Pelham Parkway East and West) with three travel lanes in each direction and their two respective service roads, the Pelham Parkway South and North, respectively. The parkway is also surrounded by associated mapped public open space that is lined with trees on both sides, and features wide expanses of lawn with full canopies of trees between the travel lanes. This open space is an integral part of the Mosholu-Pelham Greenway in the Bronx, and has a pedestrian/cyclist pathway along its south marginal service road to the north of the proposed development site.

North of the Pelham Parkway the street pattern forms a north-south rectilinear grid that is made somewhat irregular by Stillwell Avenue cutting diagonally through the grid from northeast-southwest directly northwest of the interchange for the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways. Most of the streets in this area are narrow, two-way local residential streets oriented in a north-south direction. The blocks are generally long and narrow, and tapered to a trapezoidal or triangular form by Stillwell Avenue.

The Hutchinson River Parkway is a six-lane, divided highway that connects the Borough of Queens in the south with Connecticut in the north. It has three travel lanes in each direction with a green central median. A narrow landscaped bike path and walkway, known as the Hutchinson River Greenway, extends along the western edge of the parkway.

East of the Hutchinson River Parkway, the area generally bounded by the Pelham Parkway to the north and Saint Theresa Avenue to the south and located west of Hobart Avenue features two small rectilinear grids of local one-way streets that converge at Wilkinson Avenue. The street grid north of Wilkinson Avenue consists of narrow residential streets laid in an east-west grid pattern. The blocks in this area are long rectangular blocks. South of Wilkinson Avenue the grid is oriented in a north-south

direction to form long rectangular blocks that are uninterrupted by east-west streets. At the northeastern edge of the subarea to the east of Continental Avenue, the grid changes orientation and extends in a skewed northwest-southeast direction. Most of the blocks that abut the Hutchinson River Parkway are somewhat irregularly shaped, including the triangular-shaped superblock occupied by Colucci Playground, which is bounded by Mayflower Avenue to the east, Wilkinson Avenue to the south and the Hutchinson River Parkway to the west and north.

The street pattern to the south and west of the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways is very irregular and largely defined by expansive superblocks and the Amtrak right-of-way. As noted above, most of the area's traffic is concentrated on Eastchester Road and Waters Place. Eastchester Road is a wide north-south arterial with two travel lanes in each direction that winds through the western portion of the study area forming the eastern edge of Jacobi Medical Center and Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Waters Place is a curvilinear east-west roadway with two travel lanes in each direction that provides access to the Hutchinson River Parkway South and Westchester Avenue on the east and Eastchester Road on the west. It also provides access to Industrial Street, the entrance to the Hutchinson Metro Center, as well as the entrance to the Bronx Psychiatric Center. Narrow private internal roadways provide access within the large superblocks that contain the Bronx Psychiatric Center and Jacobi Medical Center.

The street pattern to the south of Waters Place is laid in a skewed grid pattern that reflects the angles of Silver Street (Eastchester Road) to the west and Waters Place to the north. The MTA Westchester Yard, which includes approximately 20 acres, comprises most of this area.

### Building Bulk, Use, Type and Arrangement

#### *Pelham Gardens*

Pelham Gardens is located to the north of the Project Site, north of the Pelham Parkway. This area includes blocks and portions of blocks bounded by Astor Avenue to the north, the Hutchinson River Parkway to the east, the Pelham Parkway North to the south, and Westervelt Avenue to the west. This low-density neighborhood primarily consists of residential buildings built in the mid-20th century, which are one-and two-family detached and semidetached homes in a variety of styles (see Figure 5-5). The buildings are generally brick and wood-framed houses with relatively large footprints that are between one-to three-stories tall. They occupy narrow lots and are typically setback from the street, featuring shallow front yards, private driveways, as well as side yards.

Also within this subarea is the approximately 8-acre campus of the Bronx Rehabilitation Center for the United Cerebral Palsy of New York City, which abuts the Amtrak right-of-way to the northwest and extends along the southeast side of Stillwell Avenue between the Pelham Parkway North and Vance Street/Hutchinson River Parkway. This institutional campus contains several one-to 2-story buildings mostly concentrated at its southwestern end and large expanses of open space and recreational amenities at its northern end. The buildings within the campus are generally setback from Stillwell Avenue.

#### *Pelham Bay*

Pelham Bay is located to the east of the Project Site, east of the Hutchinson River Parkway. This area includes blocks and portions of blocks bounded by the Pelham Parkway South to the north, St. Paul and Hobart Avenues to the east, St. Theresa Avenue to the south, and the Hutchinson River Parkway East to the west. This area is characterized by low-to mid-density residential development comprised of large one-and two-family detached homes and semidetached houses in a broad range of styles, as



1). View looking to the north side of Astor Avenue from Lodovick Avenue.



2). View looking south to Lodovick Avenue from Astor Avenue.



3). View looking southwest on Stillwell Avenue.



4). View looking east on the Pelham Parkway North.

well as some low-to mid-rise multiunit apartment buildings. Most of the buildings in this subarea were built in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century and are brick and wood-framed houses that occupy large footprints (see Figure 5-6). These buildings occupy narrow lots and are generally two-to three-stories tall, and somewhat larger and built closer together than the houses within the Pelham Gardens neighborhood. There is one large mid-rise 13-story, red brick apartment building, occupying most of the block bounded by Wilkinson, Mulford and St. Theresa Avenues and the Hutchinson River Parkway East. Built in the late 1960s, it is setback from the adjacent street frontages and surrounded by at-grade accessory parking and private open space.

Directly southeast of the proposed development site, across the Hutchinson River Parkway is the approximately 4.0-acre Colucci Playground, a New York City park, which occupies a superblock generally bounded by Wilkinson and Mayflower Avenues and the Hutchinson River Parkway. It features play equipment, shaded seating areas, handball and basketball courts, and a baseball field.

### *Bronx Psychiatric Center Area*

The Bronx Psychiatric Center area encompasses the Hutchinson Metro Center, the Bronx Psychiatric Center, and the Amtrak corridor (area between railroad tracks and Industrial Street). This area is defined as the area roughly bounded by the Pelham Parkway to the north, the Hutchinson River Parkway to the east, Waters Place/Eastchester Road to the south, and the Amtrak right-of-way to the west. It comprises one large superblock that supports a patchwork of land uses, including commercial, institutional, and light industrial land uses that generally occupy large properties. There is also one small two-story residential building at the northeast corner of Eastchester Road and Waters Place.

The area is primarily zoned for high performance industrial use, except for the southeast portion, which is zoned for moderate-density residential development and comprises the Bronx Psychiatric Center campus. Excluding the Bronx Psychiatric Center, most of the buildings within this subarea are generally low-rise, one-to four-story industrial and commercial structures.

As there are no public streets within this subarea, a number of the properties are only accessible from narrow private access roadways that extend north of Waters Place and Eastchester Road. Industrial Street, which would be mapped as a public street as part of the Proposed Action, somewhat divides this subarea into two sections, separating the Bronx Psychiatric Center and the Hutchinson Metro Center from the light industrial and commercial uses that extend along the east side of Amtrak. Except for the small two-story residential building and a few small single-story retail buildings on the east side of Eastchester Road, all of the buildings within this study area are generally setback from the public streets, arranged on campus like settings and/or surrounded by accessory parking.

The Bronx Psychiatric Center comprises the southeastern portion of the subarea and encompasses more than 53 acres zoned R5. It consists of a number of mid-to low-rise, brick and masonry buildings, as well as two large hospitals set in a campus like setting (see Figure 5-7). Most of the buildings were built in the 1960s and are clustered in smaller groupings near the center of the campus surrounded by landscaped open areas, several ball fields, walking paths, interior roadways, and at-grade accessory parking areas. Access to the campus is provided from a private gated entrance located on the north side of Waters Place to the east of the intersection of Industrial Street and Waters Place.

Directly north of the Bronx Psychiatric Center is the Hutchinson Metro Center, which comprises an irregular-shaped parcel consisting of approximately 32 acres (10 of which are encompassed by the Project Site), located to the southwest of the interchange of the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways. The office complex contains two large commercial buildings including a single-story brick warehouse and a 4-story recently retrofitted office building clad in white paneling, which are surrounded by at-grade accessory parking space and a limited amount of landscaping (see Figure 5-7).

The southwest corner of the office complex is currently undergoing construction, and is anticipated to be redeveloped with two approximately 13-story office towers (the “Towers at Hutchinson Metro Center”) by the Project Build year of 2012 (refer to Section C, “Future Without the Proposed Action”). The first tower stands 13-stories tall and is almost complete. In order to facilitate the construction of the second office tower, the existing warehouse would likely be demolished to construct the required accessory parking at-grade. Industrial Street provides the only vehicular access to the site.

The area to the west of Industrial Street consists of a range of low-density commercial and light industrial uses, as well as Calvary Hospital and a small 2-story detached house on the northeast corner of Waters Place and Eastchester Road. Two large industrial properties extend along the northeast side of the Amtrak corridor, including a 12-acre parcel containing an approximately 285,600 gsf warehouse with 2-stories that is used as a distribution center/trailer storage area for a sports goods company, and a 5-acre parcel supporting a slightly smaller factory with 2-stories that accommodates a food manufacturer. Both of these buildings were erected in the 1950s/1960s, and are accessible from a private roadway (Bassett Road) that extends north of Eastchester Road directly east of the elevated rail for Amtrak. Calvary Hospital and its associated at-grade accessory parking area are located directly south of the industrial uses. Built in the late 1970s, the hospital is a modern, mid-rise 6-story building composed of red brick and glass. A small single-story shopping center anchored by a Pathmark supermarket and a renovated 2-story office building are located to the south and east of the hospital, as well as a 2-story residential building and single-story attached retail structures.

### *Westchester Square*

Westchester Square is located to the south of the Project Site, south of Waters Place. This area includes blocks and portions of blocks bounded by Waters Place to the north, Westchester Avenue to the east, Williamsbridge Road to the south, and Sacket Avenue to the west.

The Westchester Yard of the no. 6 subway line, occupying approximately 20 acres, comprises much of this subarea. It extends along the south side of Waters Place from roughly Westchester Avenue on the east to Eastchester Road on the west, across from the Bronx Psychiatric Center. South of the Westchester Yard, the area supports a range of uses with low-to mid-density residential development comprised of one- and two-family detached homes and a few multiunit apartment buildings typically concentrated on the inner blocks and low-rise commercial office, retail, warehousing and light industrial uses along Blondell Avenue and Williamsbridge Road (see Figure 5-8). Most of the buildings are built to the lot line and are one-to three-stories tall. The majority of residential buildings are wood framed houses and the commercial structures are mostly masonry buildings with little to no articulation. There are also a number of vacant properties, vehicle storage areas, parking lots and garages (see Figure 5-8).

The northwestern portion of the study area is largely commercial and contains a several office buildings, most of which are professional offices affiliated with Montefiore Medical Center, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and Jacobi Medical Center. One of the more prominent buildings is a blue-green glass and steel 9-story medical office building built in the late 1990s at the corner of Eastchester Road and Blondell Avenue. This building contains ground floor retail, below-grade parking, and approximately 67,000 sf of office. It is setback from the street with at-grade accessory parking.

### *Morris Park*

The eastern edge of the Morris Park neighborhood comprises the western portion of the study area (see Figures 5-9 and 5-10). This area includes blocks and portions of blocks bounded by Pelham Parkway South to the north, the Amtrak right-of-way to the east, Williamsbridge Road to the south, Eastchester



5). View looking to the south side of East 196th Street.



6). View looking southeast to Mulford Avenue from Wilkinson Avenue.



7). View looking west on East 196th Street.



8). View looking north to the Bronx Psychiatric Center.



9). View looking north to the 4-story office building in the Hutchinson Metro Center.



10). View looking west to Tower One of the planned Towers at Hutchinson Metro Center development.



11). View looking north on Bassett Road, which is a private road providing access to two industrial properties located north of Calvary Hospital.



12) View looking to the west side of Saint Raymond Avenue.



14). View looking along the southern side of Blondell Avenue at Saint Raymond Avenue.



13). View looking southeast to the south side of Williamsbridge Road from the northwest corner of Silver Street (Eastchester Road) and Williamsbridge Road.

Road, Jacobi Medical Center, Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Sacket Avenue to the west. This area contains a wide range of buildings that vary in use, type, height and bulk, and style.

Some of the more prominent characteristics of the area are the major health-care related institutions of Jacobi Medical Center, Albert Einstein College of Medicine and the east campus of Montefiore Medical Center. These facilities occupy two expansive superblocks that feature a number of single use buildings arranged on campus like settings with landscaped open areas, at-grade accessory parking, interior roadways and walking paths. Most of the buildings are brick and masonry structures, and many are setback from the street, arranged in clusters, or are attached to form huge complexes. Originally built in the 1950s and 1960s, these campuses have undergone a number of renovations and expansions with the introduction of new buildings and additions to existing buildings as recently as 2007. There are several tall buildings including the Staff Housing complex of Albert Einstein College of Medicine, which contains three 28-story towers, the 12-story Ullmann Research Center, and the Jacobi Medical Center's Nurses' Residence building, which is 13-stories, and the Main Building, which is 12-stories (see Figures 5-9 and 5-10).

East of Jacobi Medical Center there is a small residential enclave, known as Indian Village, which comprises four irregular-shaped blocks bounded by the Pelham Parkway South, Stillwell Avenue, and Eastchester Road. Detached and semidetached houses, built primarily in the early to mid-20th century, line the interior portions of blocks. These one-, two-, and three-family houses occupy relatively narrow rectangular lots and contain two- and three-stories. Building styles include brick and wood-framed houses, some of which have attics beneath pitched roofs and front porches. Several large, six-story, red brick apartment buildings are concentrated within the northern portion of Indian Village on the block directly south of the Pelham Parkway, as well as on the east side of Eastchester Road between Rhinelander Avenue and McDonald Street.

The eastern edge of this subarea, which extends along the east side of the Amtrak right-of-way, is industrial in nature featuring low-rise one- and two-story bulky warehouses and automotive-related commercial buildings. Most of the buildings are attached and built to the lot line. However, there are a few buildings that are setback from the street, which have associated at-grade accessory parking. There are also a few scattered undeveloped vacant lots, as well as open vehicle storage areas.

## Streetscape

### *Pelham Gardens*

It is a well-maintained community characterized by relatively uniform residential development with few institutional and retail uses. It is a quiet area that generally supports single- and two-family houses that face the street with shallow landscaped or grassy front yards (see Figure 5-5). There are numerous mature trees, both located along the street and within property lines. Narrow public sidewalks, which are in good condition flank the street, and standard metal lampposts, which are commonly found throughout the City, provide street lighting. Other street furniture includes traffic lights, stop signs and other standard metal street signs, fire hydrants, and tall wood utility poles carry overhead lines through the area. On-street parallel parking is provided along the curbline on one or both sides of most streets.

### *Pelham Bay*

Similar to Pelham Gardens, most of the streets are quiet local residential streets of detached and semi-detached houses that feature narrow public sidewalks shaded by mature trees (see Figure 5-6). Buildings are generally two- to three-stories tall and oriented towards the street. They form a relatively uniform street wall with most buildings built to the lot line, or featuring shallow front yards, some of which are fenced in by low metal or brick walls. Street furniture in the study area includes traffic lights

and stop signs, fire hydrants, trash receptacles, standard metal lampposts, and tall wood utility poles. On-street parallel parking is provided along the curbline on one or both sides of most streets.

### *Bronx Psychiatric Center Area*

Many of the properties within this subarea do not have linear frontage along an accessible public street, and are accessible only from private narrow roadways, such as Industrial Street and Bassett Road that extend north of Waters Place and Eastchester Road (see Figures 5-3 and 5-7). These roadways generally have limited or barren streetscapes and do not feature sidewalks. The Hutchinson Metro Center and Bronx Psychiatric Center comprise large-scale, campus-like settings, which contain buildings within landscaped areas. Vehicular access is provided to each of these campuses from separate private access roadways that have gated entrances on the north side of Waters Place that connect to internal roadways within the campus. The streetscape is generally open with street furniture that includes only metal lampposts, fire hydrants, and directional signage. The western edge of the study area is primarily industrial and contains a number of at-grade accessory parking facilities and open storage areas for trailers.

### *Westchester Square*

Waters Place, which forms the northern border of Westchester Square and the southern boundary of the Bronx Psychiatric Center Area, is a heavily trafficked roadway with two travel lanes in each direction. It has a very open streetscape with no street wall. An approximately 6-foot tall chain-link/barb wire fence encloses the MTA property along the south side of the street, and the buildings on the north side are generally setback from the street. Wide concrete sidewalks flank the street and street trees line the north side of the street.

The streetscape of Williamsbridge Road has a busy commercial character where most buildings have ground floor retail with sign-covered storefronts (see Figure 5-8). As shown in Figure 5-8, Blondell Avenue is lined by vehicle storage and accessory parking lots enclosed with chain-link fencing interspersed with attached, low-rise masonry commercial or industrial buildings with blank walls distinguished only by relatively small signage, vehicular openings, and the occasional window. The inner blocks of this subarea are generally lined by large detached single-to three-family houses set back from the street within landscaped or grassy yards, some of which enclosed by metal fencing, occasionally intermixed with non-descript commercial or industrial buildings.

Street furniture in the study area includes traffic lights and stop signs, fire hydrants, trash receptacles, standard metal lampposts, and tall wood utility poles. On-street parallel parking is provided along the curbline on one or both sides of most streets.

### *Morris Park*

The eastern edge of the Morris Park subarea is largely industrial in nature and contains low-rise commercial, warehouse, and auto-service uses that generally occupy attached, low-rise masonry buildings with blank walls distinguished only by vehicular openings, minimal signage, and a few windows. Buildings are generally built to the lot line (see Figure 5-9). There are also several vacant or undeveloped lots that accommodate vehicular storage or parking. This area does not have street trees, and the street furniture consists primarily of tall wooden utility poles and standard metal traffic signs. On-street parallel parking is provided along the curbline on both sides of the streets.

The Indian Village area of Morris Park is defined by quiet local streets, which are well maintained and lined with narrow sidewalks and street trees (see Figure 5-9). Buildings in this area are typically residential detached and semidetached houses that face the street and are generally setback from the



15). View looking west to Jacobi Medical Center from the southeast corner of Eastchester Road and the Pelham Parkway South.



17). View looking east on Rhineland Avenue. Six-story apartment buildings line the north side of the street and 2-story detached homes line the south side of the street.



16). View looking north on Stillwell Avenue.



18). View looking east on Morris Park Avenue. Yeshiva University's Albert Einstein College of Medicine lines both sides of the street.



20). View looking north on Eastchester Avenue from Waters Place. The mid-to high-rise institutional buildings of Albert Einstein College of Medicine are visible in the background of the photograph.

19). View looking south on Eastchester Road from Rhineland Avenue. The Staff Housing complex of Albert Einstein College of Medicine is visible in the background of the photograph.



curbline with shallow landscaped front yards with private driveways. Low metal fences enclose some of the houses. There are a few mid-rise multiunit apartments located near the Pelham Parkway North. A small active retail corridor featuring a number of small, one-story restaurants and service establishments built to the lot line are located along Eastchester Road between McDonald Street and Stillwell Avenue. Street furniture in the study area includes traffic lights and stop signs, fire hydrants, trash receptacles, standard metal lampposts, and tall wood utility poles. On-street parallel parking is provided along the curbline on one or both sides of most streets.

The western portion of Morris Park is defined by large institutional uses on campus like settings. There is no defined street wall as buildings are generally setback from the street. Morris Park Avenue, which physically divides the north and south campuses of Albert Einstein College of Medicine, is a wide two-way street divided by a central tree-lined median with numerous street trees also extending along either side of the street (see Figure 5-9). As shown in Figure 5-10, Eastchester Avenue is a wide busy arterial street that features wide sidewalks lined with mature trees. Street furniture includes traffic lights and metal signs, fire hydrants, trash receptacles, standard metal lampposts, and tall wood utility poles. There are also a few covered bus stops, and bus stop signs along bus routes. On-street parallel parking is provided along the curbline on one or both sides of most streets.

## Visual Resources

An area's visual resources are its unique or important public view corridors, vistas, or natural or built features. (For the purposes of a CEQR analysis, this includes only views from public and publicly accessible locations and does not include private residences or places of business.) Visual resources could include views of the waterfront, public parks, landmark structures or districts, or natural resources. Natural resources may be vegetation, topography, and geologic formations; and wetlands, rivers, or other water resources.

Based on the criteria outlined in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, three resources have been identified as having visual significance in the approximately ¼-mile study area. These resources include a New York City public park and the view corridors along two parkways. There are no historic or architecturally significant landmark structures or districts, natural resources, or views of the waterfront within an approximate ¼-mile radius of the Project Site.

Table 5-1 lists the three visual resources, and Figure 5-11 provides a photograph of each resource. All of these visual resources are located outside of the Project Site. The accessory parking lots, limited vegetation, and Industrial Street on the Project Site are not visual resources. Colucci Playground is located to the southwest of the proposed development site across the Hutchinson River Parkway, and the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways abut the proposed development site to the north and east, respectively.

**TABLE 5-1**  
**Visual Resources in the Vicinity of the Project Site**

Key #	Visual Resource	Location	Resource Description	Description of Views
1	Colucci Playground	Pelham Bay; Wilkinson & Mayflower Avenues	Play equipment, baseball field, basketball & racquetball courts, shaded seating areas, and a comfort station	Visible from immediate surroundings
2	Pelham Parkway	Extends between Bronx Park & Pelham Bay Park	Pedestrian malls (north & south sides of the parkway), green space includes a large variety of trees, a pedestrian and cyclist path is located on the south side of parkway	Visible from immediate surroundings
3	Hutchinson River Parkway	Extends between Ferry Point Park & Pelham Parkway	Bike and pedestrian path along the west side of the Hutchinson River Parkway	Visible from immediate surroundings

## **D. FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTION (NO-BUILD CONDITION)**

For conservative analysis purposes, it was assumed that the Project Site itself would remain largely unchanged in the future without the Proposed Action. The proposed development site would continue to be occupied by at-grade accessory parking and vacant land. The area affected by the proposed street would continue to serve as a private roadway providing access to the Hutchinson Metro Center. The northern portion of road, which is currently closed, would be reopened to vehicular traffic.

As described in Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy,” five (5) major No-Build development sites have been identified to be constructed in the future without the Proposed Action (refer to Figure 2-4 in Chapter 2). These include projects recently completed, currently under construction, as well as planned developments. Four of these five No-Build developments are expansions to existing commercial or institutional developments, including the Towers at Hutchinson Metro Center, the new ambulatory pavilion at Jacobi Medical Center and the Michael Price Center and Staff Housing garage at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, which would be built pursuant to as-of-right zoning or through discretionary City approvals. For analysis purposes, only those sites that would accommodate new aboveground construction will be discussed.

## **Urban Design**

### ***Overview***

In the future without the Proposed Action, planned developments are not expected to significantly change the urban design character of the study area, and anticipated No-Build development sites are expected to either not yield significant changes or contribute site-specific improvements to the visual quality of the study area. Given the modest number and distribution of these developments in the southern and western portions of the study area, it is anticipated that overall conditions would remain essentially unchanged without the Proposed Action.

### ***Project Site***

There are not expected to be any new structures on the Project Site in the future without the Proposed Action, and therefore, no changes to height or bulk would be anticipated. The proposed development would remain largely unimproved and partially occupied by at-grade accessory parking for the



21). View looking south to the Hutchinson River Greenway along the west side of the Hutchinson River Parkway.



22). View looking west to the northern tip of Colucci Playground, which features a passive sitting area with benches at Mayflower Avenue between East 196th and East 197th Streets. The Hutchinson River Parkway and the proposed development site are visible in the background of the photograph.



23). View of one of the Pelham Parkway's malls located directly northeast of the proposed development site.

Hutchinson Metro Center at its southern end, and vacant land at its northern end. The narrow asphalt pathway would continue to provide pedestrian connection between the Hutchinson Metro Center and the Pelham Parkway.

Industrial Street, which is proposed to be mapped as a public street, will continue to provide vehicular access to the Hutchinson Metro Center in the future without the Proposed Action, as a narrow two-way private roadway. The northern portion of road, which is currently closed due to ongoing construction efforts at the southwest corner of the Hutchinson Metro Center, would be paved and opened to vehicular traffic.

### ***Study Area***

As noted above, the only major new aboveground construction projects within the study area include expansions to the existing campus-like settings of the Hutchinson Metro Center, Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Jacobi Medical Center.

To south of the proposed development site, abutting the proposed street to the east, the existing Hutchinson Metro Center will be expanded with the addition of two new office buildings (“The Towers at Hutchinson Metro Center”) that will contain a total of approximately 525,000 gsf of office at its southwest corner. The planned office buildings would be parallel structures that would each contain approximately 262,500 gsf of office space. The buildings would be typical office structures composed of steel, glass, and masonry materials that would complement the existing 4-story office building. The buildings would each rise 13-stories tall and be connected by a central lobby. Based on preliminary information, the upper stories of the buildings will contain office with typical floor plates of 28,000 gsf. The lowest levels of the buildings will accommodate enclosed parking. The existing warehouse located directly to the south of the proposed development site will likely be demolished to facilitate the construction of the two buildings.

Directly beyond the study area’s western boundary, the Albert Einstein College of Medicine recently completed the construction of an approximately 201,000 sf research facility, the Michael F. Price Center for Genetic and Translational Medicine (MPCGTM) and Harold and Muriel Block Research Pavilion. This research center is a new 5-story building located near the corner of Morris Park Avenue and Eastchester Road, on the north side of Morris Park Avenue. It is a modern structure composed of masonry panels, glass and steel. In addition, the Albert Einstein College of Medicine is also planning a 310-space enlargement to its Staff Housing garage to meet the need for additional off-street parking generated by the continued expansion and modernization of its educational and medical facilities.

A new approximately 125,000 sf ambulatory care pavilion (the “Jacobi Medical Center Ambulatory Care Pavilion”) is being added to the Jacobi Medical Center campus. The four-story ambulatory care pavilion will be located within the courtyard of the main hospital building, the West Jacobi Hospital Building (or West Wing) and will be connected to the main hospital by a galleria and courtyard.

All of the planned projects will add to the density of development in the study areas and will be in keeping with the areas’ mix of uses, building arrangements, heights, bulk, and massing. These planned projects would not alter any natural features, street patterns, or block shapes in the study area. They are also not expected to impact the streetscape, except to the extent that they may enhance the vitality of streets and sidewalks in the area.

## Visual Resources

In the future without the Proposed Action, existing views of visual resources are not expected to undergo substantial change. There are no anticipated changes to existing view corridors within the study area and other visual resources within the study area are not anticipated to be affected in the future without the Proposed Action.

### *Project Site*

There is no new development on the Project Site anticipated in the 2012 future without the Proposed Action that would result in any significant changes to existing visual resources.

### *Study Area*

None of the No-Build developments discussed above would result in major changes to existing structures, or change the views of any visual resources. Most of the No-Build developments involve site-specific additions to existing large-scale commercial and institutional developments in the form of new buildings added to campus-like settings. The planned 13-story Hutchinson Metro Center office buildings would be visible from Colucci Playground and the Hutchinson River Parkway.

## **E. FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED ACTION (BUILD CONDITION)**

### **Project Site**

The Proposed Action would dramatically alter the urban design and general appearance of the proposed development site by replacing a largely vacant, approximately 8.75-acre site with a new public facility development (PSAC II). The proposed PSAC II development would consist of an approximately 640,000 gsf office building that would accommodate the City's second 911 center and command control centers for the FDNY and NYPD, as well as the necessary extensive mechanical and data systems. A 500-space accessory parking garage structure would also be constructed at the southern edge of the site, and would be interconnected to the ground floor of the office building by a narrow enclosed walkway. As the proposed development site is relatively isolated from the surrounding area with no linear frontage adjacent to a public street, the Proposed Action also involves mapping an existing private roadway, Industrial Street, as a public street ("Marconi Street"). The proposed street would extend north of Waters Place to the southern boundary of the proposed development site.

The proposed PSAC II building would be a modern, architecturally distinctive structure with a unique shape and style. It is envisioned to have an extruded rectangular form, which would have smaller floor plates at its lower levels with the building's largest floor plate comprising its uppermost story (see Figure 5-12). The building would have 14-stories above-grade, including three mezzanine levels, with an overall height of 350 feet (elevation of 374 feet) to the parapet roofline. Mechanical systems and other communications equipment necessary for the building's efficient operation may rise above the roofline. Floor to floor ceiling heights would be 20 to 45 feet tall due to the building's extensive mechanical infrastructure.

The building would be oriented in a northeast-southwest direction with a parallelogram-shaped footprint that would occupy approximately 41,160 gsf (see Figure 5-12). It would be setback from all property lines by more than 100 feet and would be positioned towards the western property line (i.e.,

Elevation of the proposed PSAC II development from the Hutchinson River Parkway.

PSAC II

Hutchinson Metro Center  
Planned Tower One

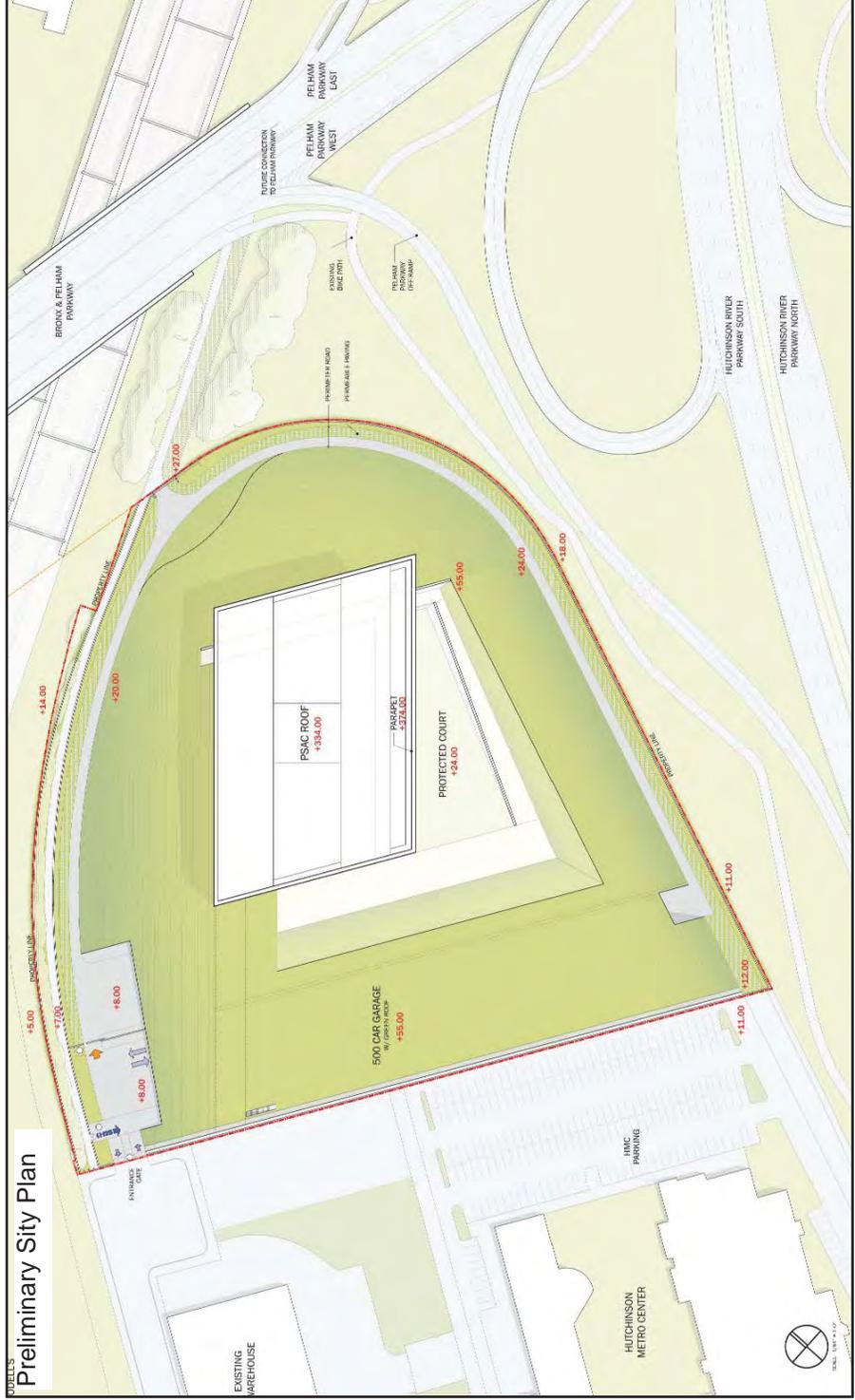


Hutchinson Metro Center  
Existing 4-story office building

Accessory  
Garage



Accessory  
Garage



Preliminary Site Plan

FOR ILLUSTRATIVE  
PURPOSES ONLY  
PREPARED BY SOM

the Amtrak right-of-way). The exterior of the building is proposed to be primarily clad in architecturally crafted pre-cast white concrete panels, which would be contextual to the light colored aesthetic of the existing and planned Hutchinson Metro Center office buildings that are clad in white panels (see Figure 5-13). The building's main entrance would be located on its southern façade, and would be accessible from an enclosed walkway extending from the garage. The loading and service and delivery area for the building would be an open, asphalt area, also located to the south of the building directly north of a truck turnaround and vehicular screening area.

The proposed garage would be located south of the PSAC II building to the northeast of the mapped street, and would extend along the southern boundary of the proposed development site. The structure would be long and narrow, oriented in an east-west direction, with a trapezoidal-shaped footprint comprising approximately 61,000 gsf. It would contain a total of approximately 163,000 gsf and would have a height of approximately 30 feet tall with a landscaped green roof. The structure would be mechanically ventilated and have three levels of enclosed parking. The main vehicular entrance to the garage would be located on its western façade with separate openings for vehicles entering and exiting the structure. A secondary vehicular access point would be located on the structure's eastern façade.

A small security control office would occupy approximately 2,000 gsf on the second floor of the new garage structure, which would house security and screening operations for entering the proposed office building. An enclosed walkway would interconnect the security screening office in the garage to the main entrance of the office building. All visitors and employees to the proposed facility would be required to pass through the security screening facility and the interconnected walkway to enter the office facility.

The proposed development site would be completely regraded and landscaped to establish a bermed plateau that would be visible from both the Pelham Parkway and the Hutchinson River Parkways. Abundant greenery and landscaping would be planted between the proposed facility and the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways.

The proposed PSAC II development would occupy a relatively large crossroads site located to the southwest of the interchange for the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways in the northeastern Bronx. This site offers a secure location that is essentially severed from most of the surrounding area by the broad thoroughfares and associated linear open spaces of the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways, as well as by an Amtrak right-of-way to the west. The low-density residential areas of Pelham Gardens and Pelham Bay are separated from the proposed development site by more than 500 feet, and the small residential enclave of Indian Village, within the Morris Park subarea, is located more than 800 feet to the west of the site. The area to the south of the proposed development site consists of a patchwork of land uses that generally occupy large properties, which contain one or more buildings surrounded by at-grade accessory parking, private open space and/or landscaped areas. Furthermore, most of these properties do not have frontage along a public street and are only accessible via narrow private roadways extending north of Waters Place or Eastchester Road. This area does not have cohesive neighborhood identity or defined urban design elements. It supports a wide range of commercial, light industrial and institutional buildings, which vary in type, bulk, height and style. The proposed PSAC II development is expected to add to this varied context.

The proposed PSAC II building would be substantially taller than most buildings within the study area. At 350 feet tall (elevation of 374 feet), the building would be highly visible and prominent within the Bronx skyline. It would also have a strong presence on the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways, which abut the proposed development site to the north and east. To minimize the structure's bulk and height from the abutting parkways, the building would be setback from the site's northern and eastern lot lines towards the Amtrak right-of-way with abundant greenery and

landscaping proposed between the proposed facility and the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways.

### **Urban Design Study Area**

The proposed PSAC II development would be prominent and on a very visible site in the northeastern Bronx. As described above, the Proposed Action would facilitate the construction of a substantial public facility that would be a considerably taller and more conspicuous building than existing and planned developments, and would develop a largely unimproved and underutilized site. The proposed building would be a significant change to the area and a prominent addition to the cityscape, both within its immediate environment and from some distance away.

### **Topography and Natural Features**

The proposed PSAC II development would be built on a site that does not contain natural or important topographic features. Although the proposed development would necessitate the removal of some existing small trees on the proposed development site and within the mapped public open space of the Pelham Parkway, their removal would not constitute a significant adverse impact. Further, they would be replaced as part of the landscape plan for the overall site. As noted previously, the grade of the proposed development site would be modified to create a bermed plateau that would be visible from both the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways. Abundant greenery and landscaping would be planted between the proposed facility and the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways. No other changes would be made to the topography of the study area. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in significant adverse impacts on topography or natural features in the study area.

### **Block Form and Street Pattern, and Street Hierarchy**

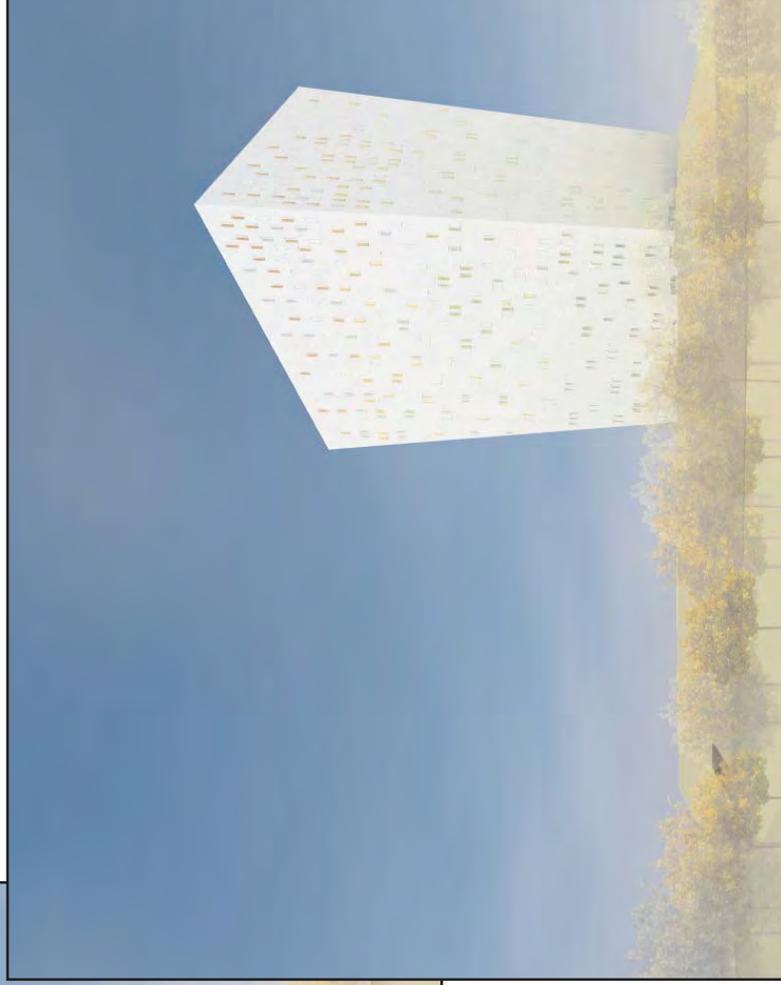
The Proposed Action would also not have significant adverse impacts on the block forms, street pattern, and street hierarchy of the ¼-mile study area. The proposed development program would establish an emergency communications center for the City on the northernmost portion of a superblock generally bounded by the Pelham Parkway, Hutchinson River Parkway, Waters Place and the Amtrak right-of-way. To provide vehicular access and utility services to the site along a public right-of-way, the Proposed Action would map an existing private road, Industrial Street, as a public street, which would extend north of Waters Place and terminate in a hammerhead cul de sac. This mapping of an existing built right-of-way would maintain the area's existing block form. As such, the Proposed Action would not substantially alter the block shapes found in the study area or create new block forms, and would therefore maintain these existing urban design features.

### **Building Arrangements**

Building arrangement refers to the way that buildings are placed on zoning lots and blocks. Similar to the immediately surrounding area, the proposed PSAC II development would occupy a relatively large site and would be setback from all street frontages. The Proposed Action would not result in new or different building arrangements than currently existing in the study area. There is no existing streetwall; buildings in the vicinity of the proposed development site are arranged on expansive properties and generally setback from public streets with variously shaped footprints. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not have significant adverse impacts on building arrangements in the study area.



View looking northwest to the proposed development from the Hutchinson River Parkway. The proposed accessory garage is visible in the foreground of the rendering. (View 1)



View looking southeast to the proposed development from the interchange of the Pelham Parkway and the Hutchinson River Parkway. (View 2)



### Building Use, Bulk, Height, Setbacks, and Density

The proposed PSAC II development would not introduce a new use to the surrounding area, and would be consistent with the prevailing land uses in the surrounding area, including large commercial and institutional uses. The proposed development is also not expected to adversely affect surrounding building uses.

Although the proposed building and garage structure would be similar in bulk to some of the larger commercial and institutional buildings in the ¼-mile study area, such as the 460,000 gsf, 4-story Hutchinson Metro Center office building at 1200 Waters Place, and the planned 525,000 gsf Tower at Hutchinson Metro Center, its design would be unique and contrast with much of the surrounding area. The proposed building would be substantially different in height, form, size and scale than other development currently existing and planned for the immediate surrounding area.

The proposed building would be a modern, freestanding structure that would be considerably taller than the majority of the buildings within the study area. Due to its extensive mechanical and data system requirements, the PSAC II building would have a height of approximately 350 feet tall (elevation of 374 feet). There are some taller, large-scale institutional buildings located further to the south, southwest, and west of the proposed development site in the Morris Park area. The nearest building of comparable height would be the Staff Housing complex of Albert Einstein College of Medicine, located at the northwest corner of Eastchester Road and Morris Park Avenue, which contains three 28-story towers, with an estimated building height of 280 feet.

As described above, there is no cohesive urban design character for the study area, which can generally be divisible into five distinct neighborhoods or areas physically divided by board thoroughfares and an Amtrak right-of-way. As a whole, the study area is quite varied, mixing a variety of uses, building types and scales, including large-scale campus settings featuring large mid-to high-rise buildings, low-density residential areas of one-to three-story detached homes, and low-rise commercial areas. The proposed development program would alter the area's urban design by introducing a tall, large-scaled uniquely formed building to an area characterized by primarily low-rise office, warehouse and factory buildings, as well as detached and semidetached residential homes and small multiunit apartment buildings. The proposed building would change the Bronx skyline by introducing a unique form that would be considerably taller than most of the existing and proposed buildings in the surrounding area.

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, in terms of building use, bulk, type, and setbacks, a significant impact would result if an action would alter that aspect of land use that defines urban design character, or if the size and mass of the proposed action would be substantially different from that prevailing in the area. The proposed PSAC II development would be located in a non-homogenous setting, one that is already quite varied, mixing a variety of uses, building types and heights within several distinct neighborhoods or areas. The proposed public facility is expected to be compatible with existing and anticipated office and institutional uses in the study area. However, the introduction of a tall and modern office building would modify the urban design of the study area, which is currently defined primarily by low-to-mid-rise commercial, warehouse and residential buildings. Larger buildings are located within the study area to the south, southwest, and west of the proposed development site within campus-like settings of the Jacobi Medical Center, the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and the Bronx Psychiatric Center. The proposed PSAC II building would be visually distinctive in the area because it would differ from the lower-rise buildings in the immediately surrounding area. This change, though significant, would not be considered adverse to urban design. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in significant adverse impacts to the study area.

## Streetscape

Streetscape elements are distinctive physical features, including street trees, street walls, street furniture, building entrances, fences, steps, and parked cars along a street.

The Proposed Action would introduce new streetscape elements that would affect the urban design of the study area. The Proposed Action would improve the appearance of the area's streetscape by adding sidewalks, street lighting and landscaping to Industrial Street, which would be mapped as a public street. This is expected to encourage pedestrian activity and activate the streetscape. In addition, the Proposed Action would result in landscaping improvements to the open space of the Pelham Parkway right-of-way directly north of the proposed development site.

## **Visual Resources (1/4-Mile Study Area)**

As described in the Existing Conditions section, there are no historically significant landmark structures or districts, natural resources, or views of the waterfront within an approximate 1/4-mile radius of the Project Site, and therefore, the proposed PSAC II development would not obstruct views of these visual resources. The proposed development would be located within the vicinity of Colucci Playground, an approximately 4.0-acre New York City public park, and directly south and west of the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways, respectively, which are public view corridors.

The proposed building, at approximately 350 feet tall (elevation of 374 feet), would be a prominent addition to the 1/4-mile study area that would alter the visual environment of the generally low-to mid-rise character of the surrounding area. The upper floors of the building are expected to be visible above the generally two-to six-story buildings within the study area, and would be comparable in height to the taller buildings of Albert Einstein College of Medicine, including the 28-story towers of the Staff Housing complex, located in the southwestern portion of the study area, more than 1,000 feet to the southwest of the development site. The building's bulk would be comparable to some of the surrounding commercial and light industrial buildings, including the existing 460,000 gsf Hutchinson Metro Center office building and the planned approximately 525,000 gsf Hutchinson Metro Center Towers.

Due to the height and scale of the proposed PSAC II building, views along some of the low-rise, residential street view corridors in the Pelham Garden neighborhood to the north, Pelham Bay to the east, and Indian Village to the west would include views of the proposed building from some vantage points. Typically, the density of the detached and semidetached houses and small multiunit apartment buildings and mature street trees along these streets, which create relatively uniform streetwalls on narrow streets, would obscure street-level views to the proposed development. Furthermore, the highly irregular street pattern of the study area, which contains a number of expansive superblocks that interrupt cross streets, creating curvilinear streets as well as short streets, which only extend for one, or just a few blocks would further obscure views of the proposed development. The upper stories of the proposed PSAC II building would be visible from some areas located farther from the proposed development site. However, the blocks and buildings that intervene between the proposed building and the low-and mid-rise buildings along these view corridors would create a buffer that would limit the visibility and presence of the proposed building on these view corridors.

The proposed PSAC II development would be located more than 500 feet to the northwest of Colucci Playground, across the Hutchinson River Parkway. As seen from Colucci Playground on the east side of the Hutchinson River Parkway, the proposed building would be prominent in the generally low-to mid-rise character of the immediately surrounding area. It is not expected to detract from the visual appreciation of the park or the landscaping, trees, shaded seating areas, and ball fields that make the

park a visual resource. The proposed PSAC II development would not be located immediately adjacent to Colucci Playground, nor would it have any adverse shadow impacts on the playground.

The proposed building would not block the visual view corridors of the Pelham and the Hutchinson River Parkways, as the structure would be setback at least 100 feet from the northern and eastern edges of the subject property. At approximately 350 feet in height (elevation of 374 feet), the building would be visible in the distance to passing traffic and pedestrians and cyclists along the parkways. It is expected that the Proposed Action would make positive contributions to the visual resources in the study area with landscaping improvements to the open space of the Pelham Parkway right-of-way directly north of the proposed development site, as well as adding abundant greenery and landscaping to the proposed development site.

Although the proposed PSAC II development would be a prominent addition to the study area, which would be visible from the distance, it would not result in a significant adverse impact to the visual environment of the identified visual resources in the study area, and would not block any existing view corridors in the study area. As such, the proposed development is not expected to result in significant adverse impacts on visual resources in the study area.

## **F. CONCLUSION**

In the 2012 future with the Proposed Action, significant, but not adverse changes would be made to the urban design conditions in the study area. The Proposed Action would dramatically alter the urban design and general appearance of the proposed development site by replacing a largely unimproved, approximately 8.75-acre site with a new public facility development consisting of an approximately 640,000 gsf building and a 500-space accessory parking garage. The proposed development would be substantial and on a very visible site in the northeastern Bronx, and is expected to result in a considerable visual change to the surrounding area and a prominent addition to the cityscape, both in its immediate environment and from some distance away. The proposed PSAC II building would be a tall, modern, and visually distinctive structure in the area, as it would differ from the generally lower-rise buildings in the immediately surrounding area.

Similar to the immediately surrounding area, the proposed PSAC II development would occupy a relatively large site and would be setback from all street frontages. The Proposed Action would not result in new or different building arrangements than currently exist in the study area. There is no existing streetwall; buildings in the vicinity of the proposed development site are arranged on expansive properties and generally setback from public streets with variously shaped footprints.

The Proposed Action would not have significant adverse impacts on the block forms, street pattern, and street hierarchy. To provide vehicular access and utility services to the proposed development along a public right-of-way, the Proposed Action would map an existing private road, Industrial Street, as a public street ("Marconi Street"), which would extend north of Waters Place and terminate in a hammerhead cul de sac at the southern boundary of the proposed development site. The Proposed Action would not substantially alter the block shapes found in the study area or create new block forms, and would therefore maintain these existing urban design features.

The Proposed Action would improve the appearance of the area's streetscape by adding sidewalks, street lighting and landscaping to Industrial Street, which would be mapped as a public street. This is expected to encourage pedestrian activity and activate the streetscape. In addition, the Proposed Action

would result in landscaping improvements to the open space of the Pelham Parkway right-of-way directly north of the proposed development site.

No adverse impacts upon visual resources are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action would considerably change views within the study area, but would not block significant public view corridors, vistas, or natural or built features.