



## **EAST HARLEM / EL BARRIO**

## **EAST 125th STREET COMMUNITY VISIONING ACTION PLAN**





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**WE ACT for Environmental Justice** is a 30-year-old North Manhattan, grassroots organization that builds healthy communities by ensuring that people of color and/or low-income participate meaningfully in the creation of sound and fair environmental health protection policies and practices. WE ACT is a leader in the nationwide movement for environmental justice. Our groundbreaking efforts to shift public policy on issues like climate justice, clean air, and healthy homes have improved the health and well-being of all New Yorkers and provide a blueprint for communities facing similar challenges across the nation.



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# 01 INTRODUCTION

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# INTRODUCTION

Following the completion of the New York City’s East Harlem Rezoning in November 2017 and launch of Phase II of the Second Avenue Subway extension by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) earlier that year, East Harlem/El Barrio finds itself on the verge of a major transformation.<sup>iii</sup>

The timing and combined impact of both projects are expected to spur a dramatic wave of new development that, without a guiding community-oriented framework, will likely result in inequitable growth, compound social and environmental challenges, and accelerate the decades-long trend towards gentrification and displacement in the neighborhood.<sup>iv</sup>

With greater construction latitude, expanded transportation access, and a new consumer base, there is growing concern in the community that private developers now have incentive to fast track new developments that are out-of-character and out-of-reach for the majority of the East Harlem community.

In anticipation of these market changes, WE ACT for Environmental Justice, a 30-year-old Northern Manhattan community organization, began bringing together a diverse group of East Harlem stakeholders in September 2017 to explore the creation of a comprehensive community vision for the East 125th Street corridor. Since then, the group has expanded into an active, multi-sector steering committee body, with participants representing a broad array of over 40 East Harlem-based community organizations, elected offices, and city and state agencies.

Through an extensive community engagement process – including on-the-ground canvassing, Town Halls, community surveys, meetings, and an interactive design charrette – the **125th Street Metro-North Transit Hub Steering Committee** has engaged over 400 East Harlem community members and stakeholders, including residents, public transit users, small business owners, and workers, in the development of the following **Community Visioning Action Plan**.

In December 2017, WE ACT retained Farzana Gandhi Design Studio to help create this document, which articulates a number of the most important needs, desires, challenges, and opportunities for East 125th Street as identified by the people who live, work, visit, and serve the area.

The plan offers a roadmap to transform East Harlem’s under-resourced 125th Street corridor into a thriving economic hub and cultural destination on par with the famed Central and West Harlem portions of the thoroughfare. In nine interlocking strategies, it details actions that private and public sector leaders can take to ensure transit-oriented development in the area benefits the existing community.

Based on priorities identified by our steering committee and other stakeholders over the past year, the plan unveils bold and realistic proposals to bring good jobs to local residents, strengthen small businesses, celebrate African-American and Latino cultural heritage, enhance environmental sustainability, and better meet the social and survival needs of all East Harlemites. The product of months of community dialogue and planning, it also represents a compelling alternative to a dominant model of growth that increasingly leaves behind low-income communities of color.

In short, the changes on the horizon need not spell disaster for longtime East Harlem community members. Across the country, more and more cities are demonstrating the value of “smart growth strategies” – planning and investment that integrate economic development, social equity, civic engagement, and environmental sustainability – and the value of employing infrastructure and transit as anchors for development.

With active community involvement, these projects can yield major benefits. Locally, our 125th Street Metro-North Transit Hub project dovetails with the stated priorities of a broad range of City and State leaders, and resonates with planning and philanthropic trends. Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature have long championed investment in local jobs and infrastructure, including the State’s signature \$100 billion infrastructure program. At the City level, addressing homelessness, environmental resiliency, income inequality, and affordable housing have all figured prominently in Mayor Bill de Blasio’s public commitments to turn New York City into the “fairest big city” in the country.

Collaboration and dialogue among elected leaders, investors, agencies, and community stakeholders are critical to ensure new development spurs the proper resources and attention that East Harlem has needed for decades. As our city, state, and the nation at large continue to confront the intersecting crises of transportation, housing affordability, climate change, and public health, East Harlem’s 125th Street corridor can serve as an inspiring model for just, sustainable, and equitable growth in similarly situated communities across the country.





# PROJECT STUDY AREA

The **study area** of this project, and the present document, is bordered by East 124th Street to the South and East 126th Street to the North, and Madison Avenue and Second Avenue on the West and East, respectively. Although the impact of the rezoning and subway extension will reach far beyond these boundaries, East Harlem’s section of the 125th Street corridor will increasingly become ground zero.

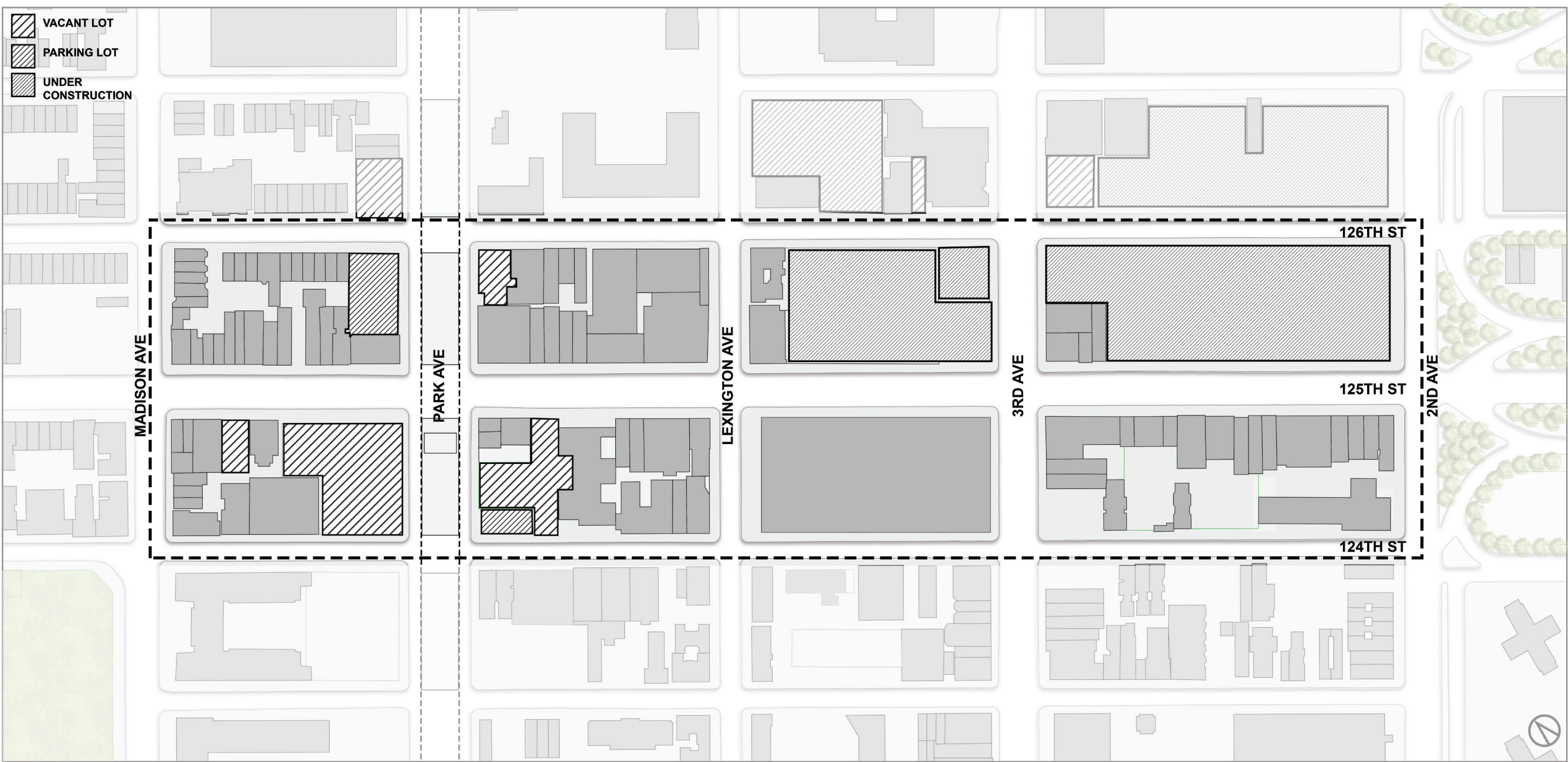
**Project timeline:** Sept. 2017 - ongoing  
**Community members engaged:** +400  
**Participating organizations:** +40  
**Number of community planning sessions:** 6

Focusing on this area was both necessary and desirable for three key reasons:

**Feasibility:** A focused study area made the development of proposed solutions far more manageable and expeditious, particularly in light of the fast-approaching subway construction. The majority of stakeholders engaged through our steering committee brought specialized experience in this particular area of the neighborhood.

**Assets:** As a point of connection between existing car, railroad, bus, and subway services, as well as the terminal station for the future Q and T lines, the area is poised to blossom as a major transit hub. The site of a significant amount of vacant and underutilized space, including a lesser-known subterranean facility beneath the Harlem-125th Street Metro-North Railroad station, the area has great potential to house a broad range of commercial and social amenities. Therefore, strategic intervention on East 125th Street can yield immediate benefits for the area as well as set the tone for broader development in the neighborhood.

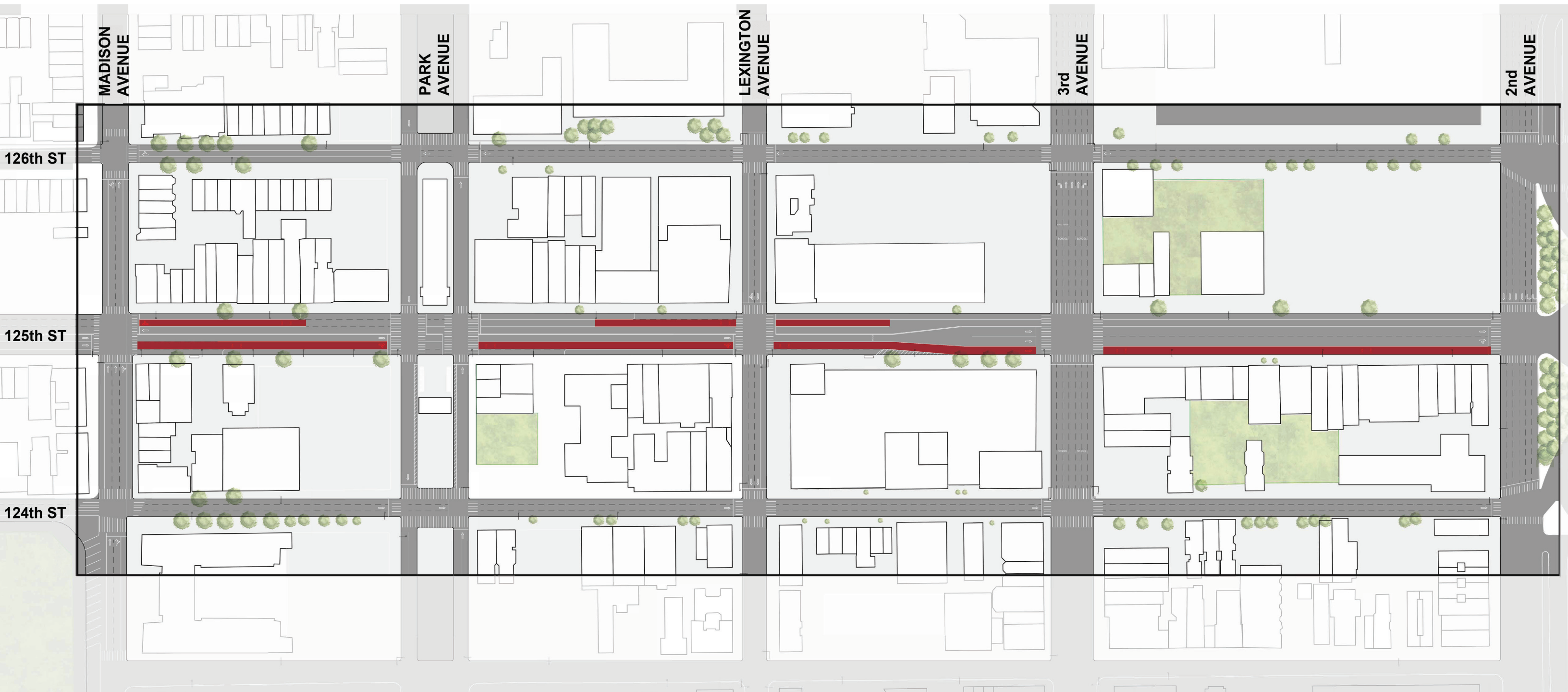
**Needs:** East 125th Street suffers from a concentrated range of social, economic, environmental, and public health challenges that reflect entrenched racial and class disparities. Core neighborhood challenges include high rates of asthma, substance abuse, homelessness, chronic disease, climate vulnerabilities, and poverty.<sup>v</sup> Our plan explicitly seeks to help scale up the capacity of local organizations and agencies addressing the root causes of these challenges, as well as advance complementary public policy and design solutions.





# PROJECT STUDY AREA

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

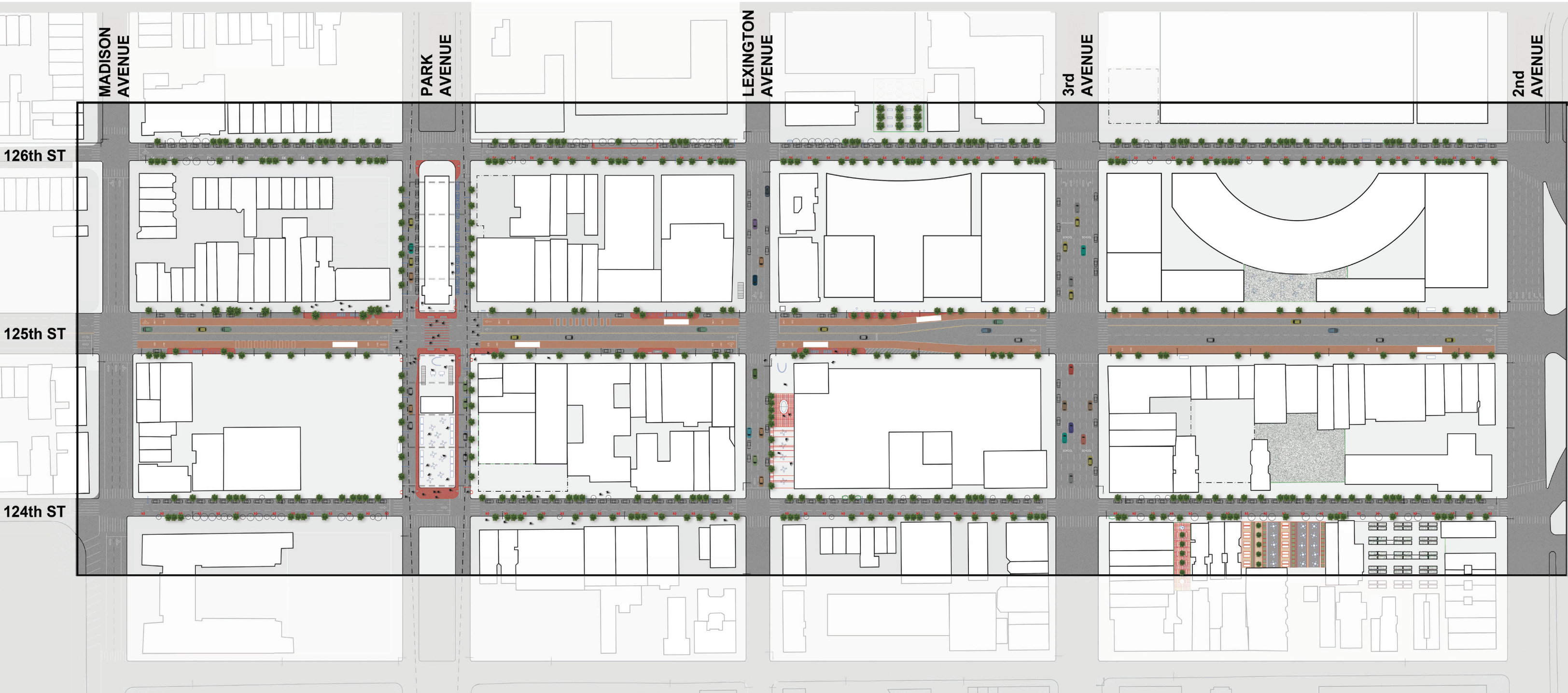




# PROJECT STUDY AREA

## RECOMMENDED VISION PLAN

- Core Goals:**
- Make East 125th Street an accessible & efficient transit center
  - Ensure new development enhances neighborhood culture, economy, and social services
  - Create fair and vibrant public spaces to support community needs
  - Promote environmental resilience and sustainability throughout new construction





# FRAMEWORK & PROCESS

The methodological framework for this community visioning process employed public health, social justice, and community planning tools. For over two decades, WE ACT has led a number of community-planning, organizing, and advocacy projects to uplift the voices of Northern Manhattan residents in land-use initiatives. This deep, participatory experience informed our approach as a primary facilitator in this process.

## Outlining the Four Issue Areas & Organizing the Stakeholders

In September 2017, WE ACT convened a small group of veteran East Harlem civic, business, community, and elected leaders to develop a community-led visioning process for East 125th Street. Collectively, we put together an outreach plan to recruit additional stakeholders and representatives representing a broad swath of relevant issues and constituencies to the process.

In October 2017, an informal steering committee was formed and agreed on four key issue areas through which to analyze conditions, assess challenges and opportunities, and ultimately formulate change proposals in a holistic and integrated manner: 1) Arts & Culture, 2) Transit & the Environment, 3) Small Business & Jobs, and 4) Social & Survival Services. To ensure each issue area was represented by one or more organizations with subject matter expertise, we actively recruited new partners and representatives from East Harlem.

During meetings and a community visioning charrette held in December 2017, steering committee members and participants generated a broad range of ideas on improving and revitalizing East 125th Street, which formed the basic blueprint for this plan. With process stakeholders and additional consultants, we performed in-depth research on parallel initiatives, zoning and land-use data, and existing community conditions to ground and substantiate our thinking.

## Validating the Vision

From January to April 2018, the group began to refine and pare down the “blueprint” during a series of interactive exercises and workshops. We formalized our structure and leadership as a steering committee, and then developed a plan for the rest of the year. We then continued to test, develop, and eliminate ideas based on public input and feedback we solicited primarily through: a bilingual community survey; two Town Halls; and street canvassing throughout East Harlem. Along the way, a “sounding board” of representatives from relevant city and state agencies provided insight and helpful feedback on the feasibility of certain ideas.

# TIMELINE

## SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER 2017

- Initial meeting held at Henry J. Carter Hospital. 11 stakeholders in attendance.
- Additional invitees identified and recruited. Agencies engaged.
- Meetings held at Henry J. Carter and Manhattan Neighborhood Network El Barrio’s Firehouse.

## DECEMBER 2017

- A daylong community design and planning conference, or charrette, held at P.S. 109 El Barrio’s ArtSpace. Over 40 participants attended. Ideas were generated through visioning workshops, forming the basis for a community Vision Plan.

## JANUARY - MARCH 2018

- Steering committee formalized and co-chairs appointed to oversee effort.
- Steering committee identified planning priorities and consolidated platform around four axes: 1) Arts & Culture, 2) Transit & the Environment, 3) Small Businesses & Jobs, and 4) Social & Survival Services.
- Community survey designed with Steering Committee and launched along 125th Street by WE ACT and Picture the Homeless.

## APRIL - JUNE 2018

- Community survey completed and analyzed. Two hundred and twenty residents, commuters, small business owners, and area employees respond.
- Over 40 hours of canvassing conducted throughout East Harlem by a team of organizers from Picture the Homeless and WE ACT.
- Two Town Halls are organized to receive direct community feedback on the platform, drawing an additional 100 community members.

## JULY - OCTOBER 2018

- Research and drafting of community vision statement and plan completed.





# 02

## CONTEXT

With sufficient public and political will, the transformation of East 125th Street into a thriving community-affirming center is possible. The groundwork for possibility is already in play and will continue to expand with large-scale physical and economic changes brought on by transit-oriented development in the study area.

Development activities on 125th Street are, of course, not new. Many efforts to revitalize the area have been carried out for several decades; some of which have been done by our steering committee members and allies.<sup>vi</sup> Our vision from day one has been to build on, complement, and synchronize these efforts into a broad and multi-disciplinary platform.

In addition to the market impact of the Second Avenue Subway extension and East Harlem rezoning, there are a set of local and national trends, outlined below, which support the recommendations offered herein.

To enrich our collective thinking, we consulted a broad range of academic, practitioner, and popular resources. While this research helped to develop our recommendations, it also served as a source of validation. We increasingly found that our methodology, issue areas, and general approach comported strongly with a wealth of evidence-based research on the structural relationship between neighborhood conditions and health, safety, and quality of life. Among other findings, it showed that:

- **A strong relationship exists between land-use and transportation design and community mental and physical health.**<sup>vii</sup>
- **Increasing clean and green public space initiatives, such as those offered herein, improves public health, safety, and quality of life outcomes in low-income communities.** Most recently, the New York Restoration Project found that crime rates in East Harlem and similar neighborhoods dropped “strikingly” as green space grew.<sup>viii</sup>
- **Improving access to safe and quality public spaces, good public transit, affordable housing, and family-sustaining jobs** can substantially improve public health outcomes in medically-underserved communities and reduce the exorbitant costs of health inequities to the public and private sectors.<sup>ix</sup>
- **Embedding protective climate adaptation strategies in New York City infrastructure development projects delivers immediate and long-term benefits for communities** like East Harlem that are vulnerable to extreme weather events.<sup>x</sup>



# POLICY & PHILANTHROPY

In tandem with the aforementioned research on public health and urban design, there is a burgeoning trend within philanthropic and urban planning circles towards supporting local community development initiatives that transcend limiting econo-centric frameworks.<sup>xi</sup>

Some prominent recent examples include:  
**Reimagining the Civic Commons** – a three-year, \$40 million initiative spearheaded by the JPB Foundation, Knight Foundation, Kresge Foundation, and Rockefeller Foundation. Its stated goals are to “foster engagement, equity, environmental sustainability and economic development by revitalizing and connecting public places such as parks, plazas, trails and libraries.”

**EcoDistricts** – an increasingly popular planning framework driven by environmental sustainability goals, now shaping community development projects in a number of major cities across the country.<sup>xii</sup>

**Fourth Regional Plan**<sup>xiii</sup> – the flagship report and long-range masterplan for the NY-NJ-CT region by the Regional Plan Association offers a comprehensive list of recommendations to promote sustainable and equitable growth by addressing equity, transportation, climate change, and affordability in the region.

# HISTORY

## Harlem’s Main Street

End to end, Harlem’s 125th Street thoroughfare runs only two miles across the northern section of Manhattan. On a map, it appears as a horizontal line just before the island narrows into the northwestern cone of Washington Heights/Inwood. Despite its size, the street has been a central driving force in the development of the neighborhood for generations.<sup>xiv</sup> The birthplace of some of the country’s most prominent cultural, political, and religious movements and icons, it has been a steadfast anchor for Black social and economic life since the late 1800’s.

Throughout Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, the co-name of 125th Street, numerous sites of historical importance are interspersed between a mixture of more recent public, commercial, and residential developments. Going from Riverside Drive to 5th Avenue, where the name flips from West to East 125th Street, you will see such well-known institutions and entertainment venues as the Apollo Theater, Adam Clayton Powell Jr. State Office Building, Studio Museum of Harlem, Harlem Children’s Zone, and National Black Theatre, flanked by chain stores like Red Lobster, GameStop, Staples, and H & M. Locally-owned enterprises - including popular restaurants like Manna’s and Uptown Veg, street vendors selling everything from shea butter to books, and cosmetic stores, hair braiders, and other retailers - are also a prominent feature of this vibrant streetscape that is traversed by over 160,000 pedestrians each week and around 8.5 million annually.



Photographic views of NYC, 1870s-1970s from the New York Public Library Digital Collections



Alongside culture and history, the area's transportation assets have been critical to its development as "Harlem's Main Street."<sup>xv</sup> A multi-modal transit corridor with significant connectivity, the study area is currently serviced by 10 subway lines, 19 bus lines, and the Metro-North Railroad, as well as by bridges providing access to the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and international airports, connecting hundreds of millions of people to this two mile strip each year. After 5th Avenue, the streetscape takes a visible turn, reflecting an overarching pattern of uneven economic growth among the West/Central and East sections of 125th Street East Harlem's section of the corridor.

**East Harlem and East 125th Street**

To grasp the full scope of this endeavor, it is important to recognize the historical processes that have set the stage for East Harlem's contemporary challenges.

For generations, East Harlem/El Barrio has played a critical role in the formation of Latino identity in New York City and beyond. An early settlement site of the Puerto Rican Diaspora, it has been specifically celebrated as the cradle of "Nuyorican" cultural heritage. In recent years, migrants from Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and South America, and more recently, Asian and African countries, have increasingly called the area home.<sup>xvi</sup>

While the area has been long regarded as one of the last affordable neighborhoods in New York City and a stronghold for Latino and working-class culture, the forces of displacement have increasingly put that distinction in jeopardy.

A 2016 study by the Regional Plan Association (RPA) found that the neighborhood lost close to 2,000 units of affordable housing between 2011 and 2016, and projected that without significant intervention, an additional 7,000 units would likely disappear over the next 10 years. That decline in affordable housing, and by extension, retail and community spaces, has hit low-income people of color the hardest. In the same study, the RPA found that, from 2000 to 2013, the neighborhood's Latino and Black populations dropped by 9% and 11% respectively, while the number of white residents more than doubled and the area's median income spiked by 35%.<sup>xvii</sup> Alarmingly, without intervention, this pattern is expected to hold throughout new waves of development and its impact will be felt far beyond the housing realm.

The origins of this crisis can be traced back to at least the mid-20th Century. Deliberate government neglect and disinvestment in the 60's and 70's laid the groundwork for large-scale predatory real estate speculation by unscrupulous developers and landlords in the 80's and 90's who sought to profit from an economically vulnerable and politically disenfranchised community of color. Relying on the lax enforcement of housing laws, marginalization of new immigrants of color, and rising demand for housing across the city, bad actor landlords have continued to disrupt the fabric of the neighborhood, forcibly removing long-term tenants and illegally de-regulating apartments.<sup>xviii</sup>

At the same time, the El Barrio's long and ongoing history of community organizing and advocacy, including along East 125th Street, has been the driving force of progress. Various community groups and leaders banding together have secured some of the most important gains in the neighborhood - including better housing, schools, government investment, job training, small business development, and other social justice gains.

**New Displacement Pressures**

In recent years, outside brokers and developers have been assembling a portfolio of dormant East Harlem properties to capitalize on a more favorable market. Unsurprisingly, a significant number of these properties are located within short radius from East 125th Street.

In 2015, reporting on the acquisition of 10 such properties, the New York Post called the thoroughfare a "hot spot" and prophesied that the "125th Street of Harlem mythology is fast disappearing. River to river, a whirlwind of new development, redevelopment and 'repositioning' is sweeping away old for new."<sup>xix</sup>

While this "whirlwind" has been long in the making, the cumulative impact of the rezoning and subway extension threatens to directly and indirectly escalate the pressures of displacement like never before. Buoyed by a complex set of factors, property values and prices will likely rise, new subway ridership will create a new consumer base, and vacant facilities will be developed, activated, and in some cases, usurped for subway construction purposes. On this latter point, by the MTA's own estimates, Second Avenue extension-related construction will impact nearly **181,000 square feet of commercial property and 65 residential units**, resulting in the permanent or temporary displacement of **505 commercial employees and 170 residents**.<sup>xx</sup>

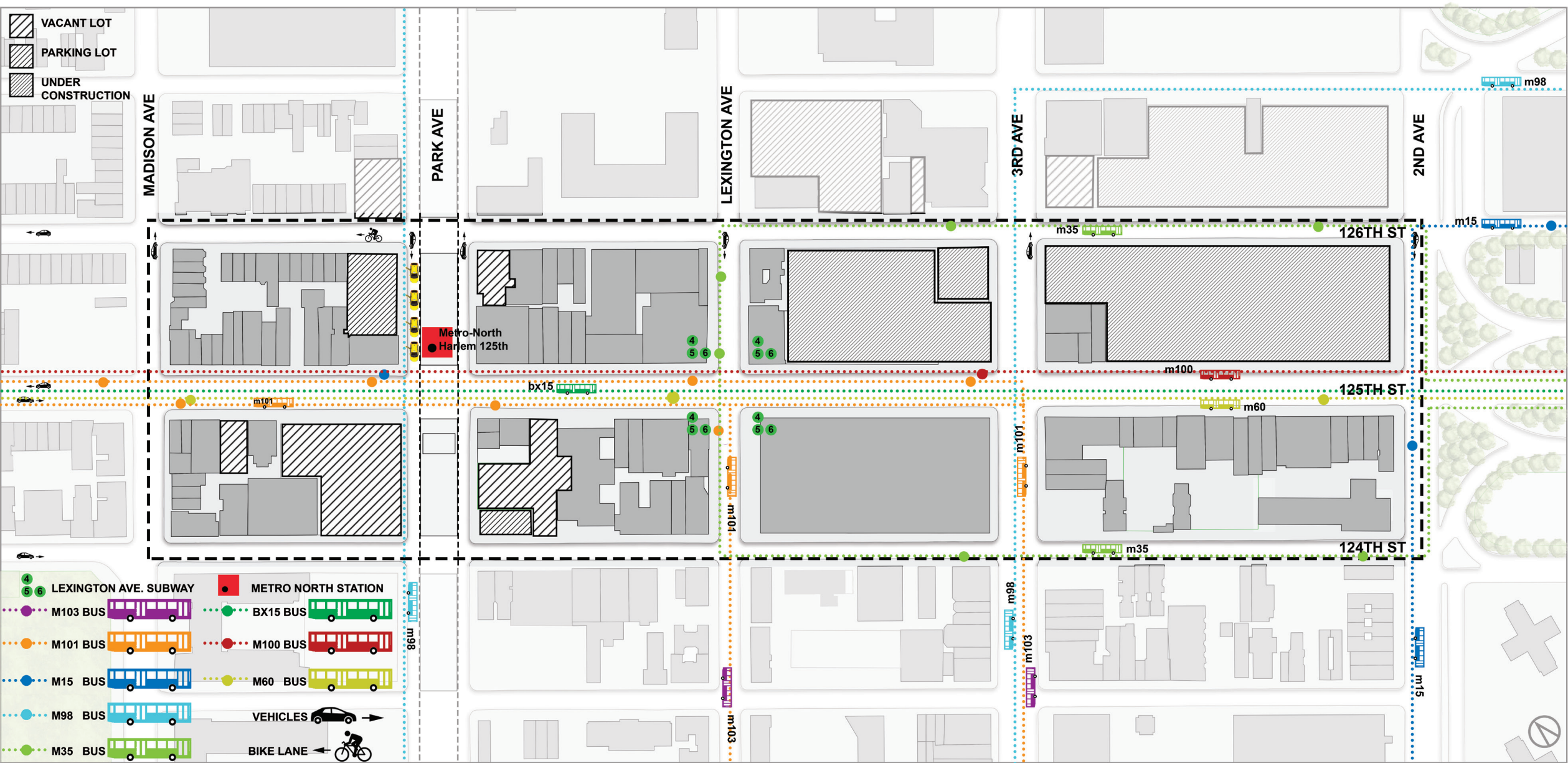


Photographic views of NYC, 1870s-1970s from the New York Public Library Digital Collections



# EXISTING TRANSPORTATION

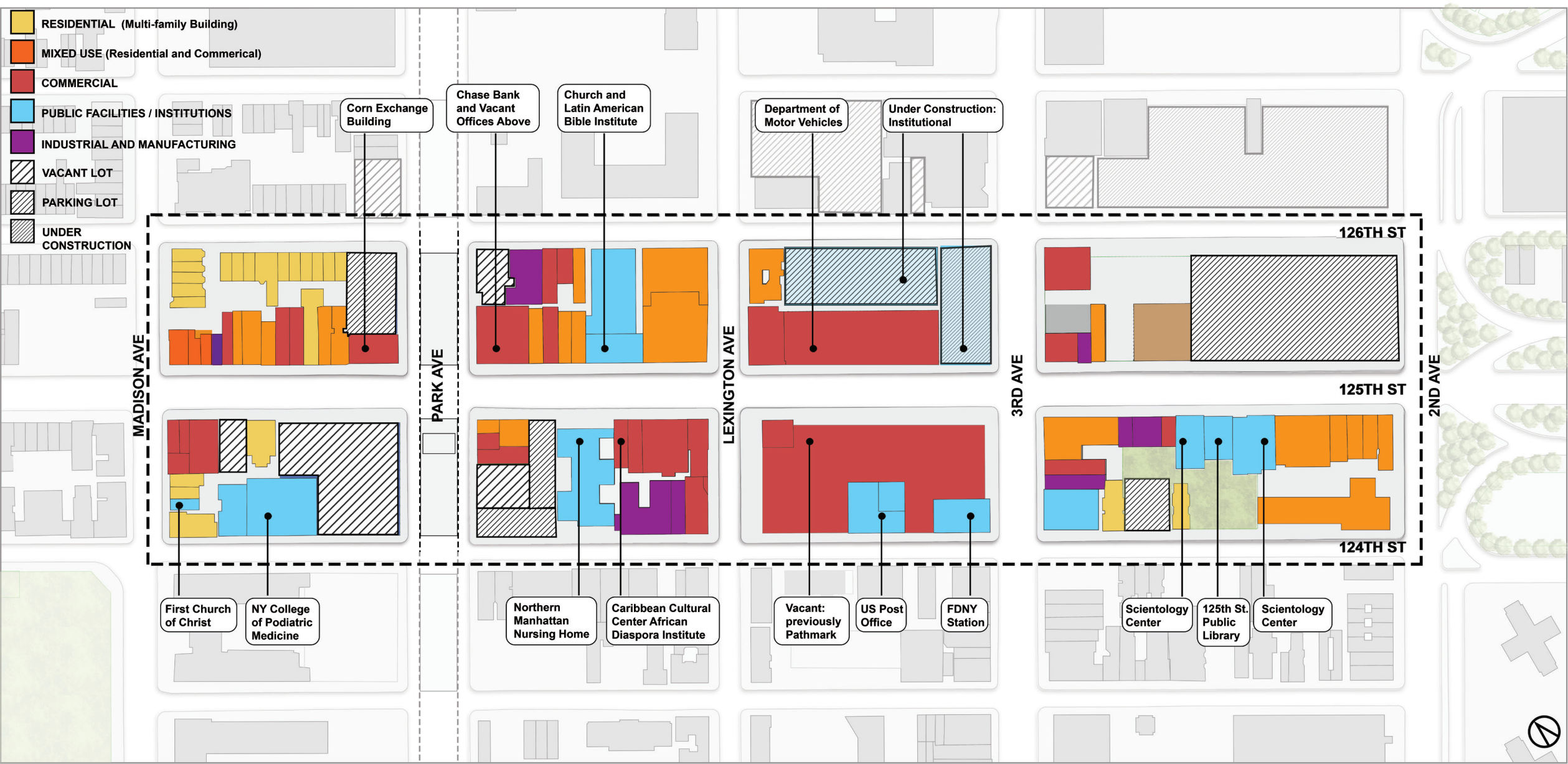
The East Harlem 125th Street Corridor is marked by multiple modes of transportation. With the addition of the extension of the Second Avenue Subway Line (Q and T), there is opportunity to rethink 125th Street as an Intermodal Transit Corridor, seamlessly connecting public transit from East to West.



The elevated **Metro-North Commuter Railroad Harlem-125th Street Hub Station** at East 125th Street and Park Avenue is served by the Hudson Line, Harlem Line, and New Haven Line. The station serves as an important transfer point between Metro-North trains and the **IRT Lexington Avenue Subway Line (4, 5, and 6)** which currently has 125th Street Station entrances one block East at 125th Street and Lexington Avenue. The **IRT Lenox Avenue Subway Line (2 and 3)** 125th Street Station is located nearby at 125th Street and Lenox Ave/Malcolm X Blvd. An existing **taxi stand on the West side of the Metro-North Station** on Park Avenue between 126th and 125th Streets serves commuters and neighborhood residents alike. Multiple bus routes run through the area including the **north-south M103 and M101 lines on Lexington Ave**, the **M15 on Second Ave**, the **M98 on Park Ave and Third Ave**, the **M35 that loops around 124th and 126th Streets**, and the **BX15, M100, and M60 SBS on 125th Street**. An existing **bike lane runs west on 126th Street** between Second Avenue and Madison Avenue and a CitiBike rack is located on the Southwest corner of 124th Street and Park Avenue. **Vehicular traffic (cars and trucks) add to the congestion on 125th Street** as they arrive moving west from Randalls and Wards Islands, LaGuardia Airport in Queens, and beyond and leave the area moving East to access Robert F. Kennedy Bridge at the end of the corridor.



# EXISTING LAND USE



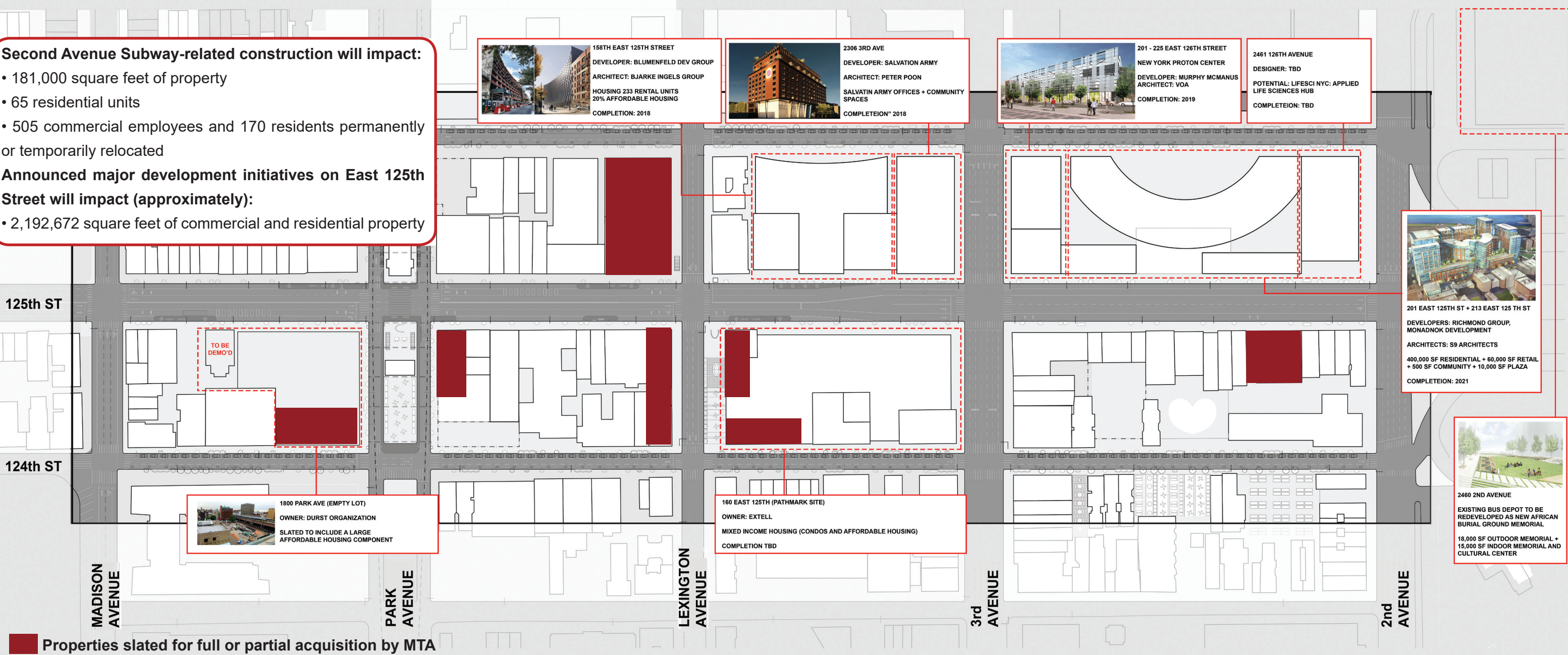
The project study area as it stands today is predominantly commercial and mixed-use with respect to land use. Some residential use exists on 126th, 125th and 124th Streets between Madison and Park Avenues. There are several existing institutional uses of note, including the Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute on 125th Street between Park and Lexington Avenues and the Northern Manhattan Nursing Home adjacent to it. The Department of Motor Vehicles is housed on 125th Street between Lexington and 3rd Avenues and two Scientology centers and the landmarked 125th Street Public Library building are located one block East. Multiple fast food establishments dot the 125th Street corridor while affordable quality and healthy food options are more limited. Although the area is ripe with potential for a vibrant, mixed-use streetscape, many buildings stand vacant including the landmarked Corn Exchange Building on 125th Street and Park Avenue and the block-wide building on 125th Street between Lexington Avenue and Third Avenue previously leased by Pathmark. Several ground-level storefronts along 125th Street have been vacant in recent years due to an unaffordable rise in rents for local small businesses. East of Lexington, the scale changes to accommodate much larger lots, many of which are under construction or empty today. NYCHA Wagner Houses begin on the Southeast corner of the area on Second Avenue and 124th Street. The following pages show maps noting current and proposed tenancy in detail, including vacancies.



# FORTHCOMING DEVELOPMENTS & TENANCY

Several empty lots in the study area are either under construction or under design development. These projects will bring significant physical and human change to the area. The vacant lots at 1800 Park Avenue and 160 East 125th Street (formerly Pathmark) are both slated to include mixed-income housing with an affordable housing component. The Gotham East project currently under construction at 158 East 126th Street is slated for completion in 2018 and includes 235,000 square foot housing (20% affordable). Adjacent and east of this property, at 2306 Third Avenue, a new building to house the Salvation Army's offices and community facilities is also under construction and due for completion in 2018. The 187,730 square foot building includes 223 affordable housing units for seniors planned for the 4th through 11th floors.

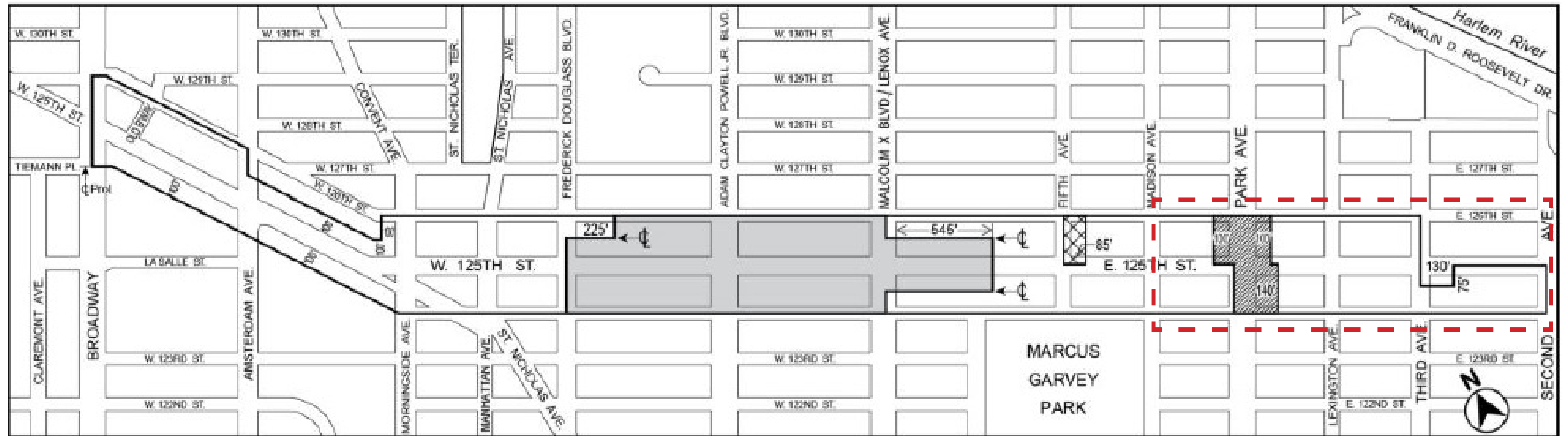
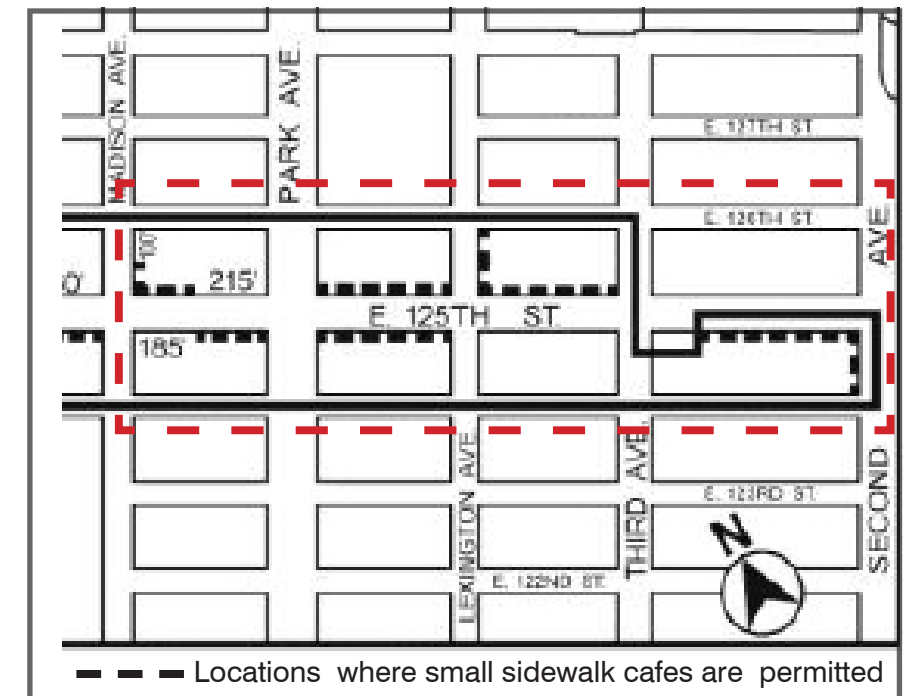
At 201 East 125th Street and 213 East 125th Street, two buildings (19 and 14 stories, respectively) will include 359,480 square foot residential space (404 units), 60,730 square foot commercial space (three shops), and a 9,990 square foot public plaza. This project has a projected completion date of 2021. The New York Proton Center will be completed in 2019 at 201-225 East 126th Street with 115,300 square foot of healthcare space. East of this site, at the corner lot facing East on Second Avenue between 126th and 127th Streets, discussions have been had for a new Applied Life Sciences Hub (LifeSci NYC). Finally, a new development East of the study area at 2460 Second Avenue (existing bus depot site) will include a 18,000 square foot outdoor burial ground and 15,000 square foot indoor African Burial Ground Memorial and Cultural Center (completion 2022). Over 300,000 square foot of commercial space and 30,000 square foot of community facilities will also accompany a 300-car parking garage and 18,000 square foot of outdoor space.









# ZONING

Historically, the area was predominantly zoned either as C4-4, a commercial zoning district allowing for medium-density residential and commercial development, or as C4-7, a commercial zoning district that allows for high-density mixed-use development. In 2008, the entirety of the study area, with the exception of the block that sits between 3rd and 2nd Avenues and 125th and 126th Streets (currently re-zoned as C6-3), was designated as a Special District in order to protect the character of Harlem’s “main street” and to provide incentives for visual and performing arts spaces. This requires any new buildings to maintain a street wall on 125th Street with a base consistent to the existing context and ensures ground floor retail use, floor area (5% of new developments 60,000 square foot and higher) designated to special arts and entertainment uses, and minimum glazing and transparency requirements at ground floor to encourage pedestrian walkability. The 125th Street Corridor permits small sidewalk cafes in multiple locations as noted in the map on the right.



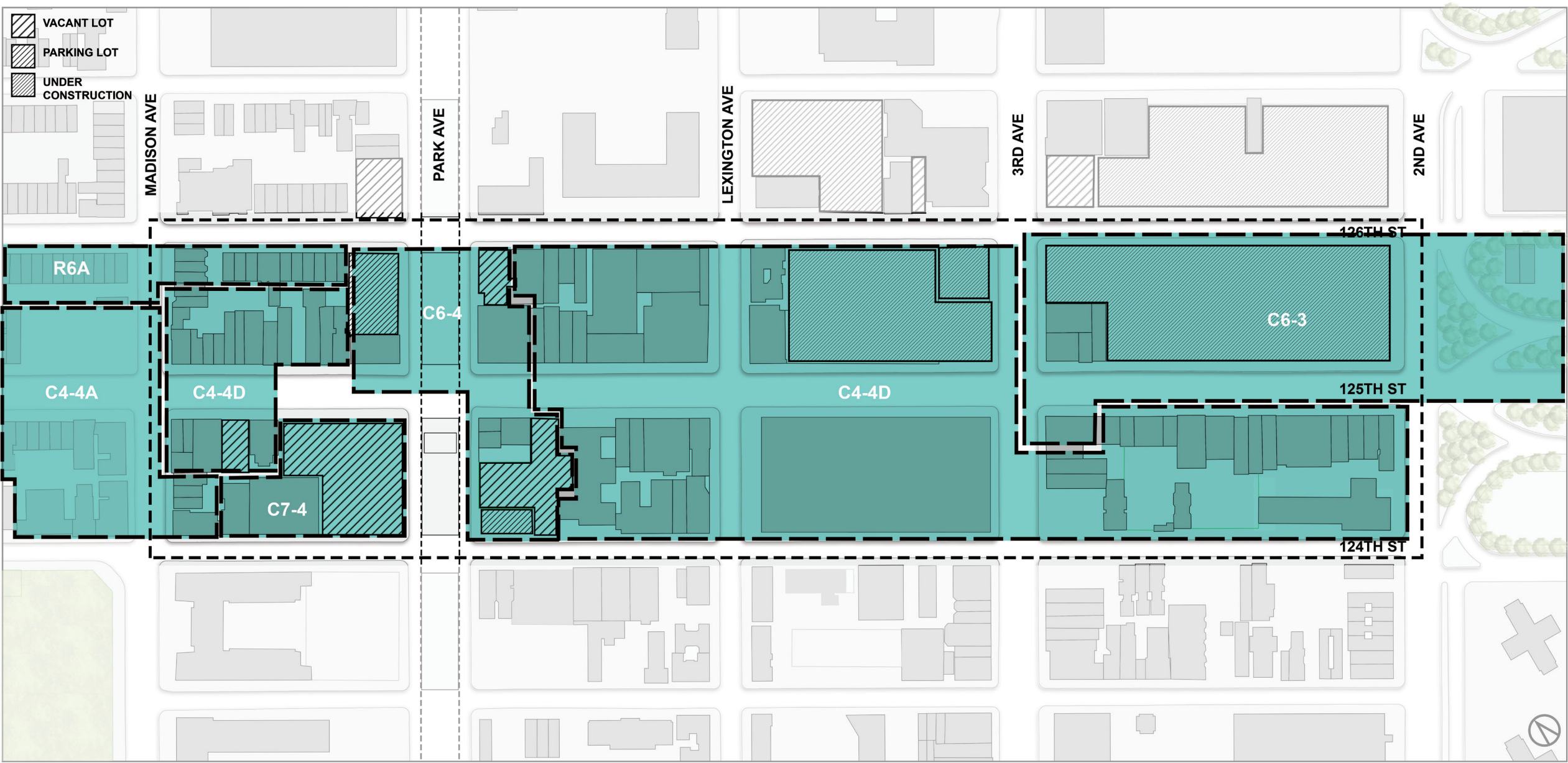
-  *Special 125th Street District boundary*  
 Core Subdistrict  
 Park Avenue Hub Subdistrict  
 Subdistrict A



Project Study Area



# ZONING



The zoning map represents the current zoning of the area after an East Harlem re-zoning that was adopted in 2017. Additionally, new developments in the area on Park Avenue that is zoned as C6-4 are capped with a maximum FAR (Floor Area Ratio) of 12 as an R-10 equivalent Residential District. An Inclusionary Housing Bonus based on Section 23-154 of the Zoning Resolution is offered for new developments in this area zoned as C4-4D. The area on Park Avenue zoned as C6-4 is designated a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) Program Area requiring new developments to set aside 25% affordable housing units.

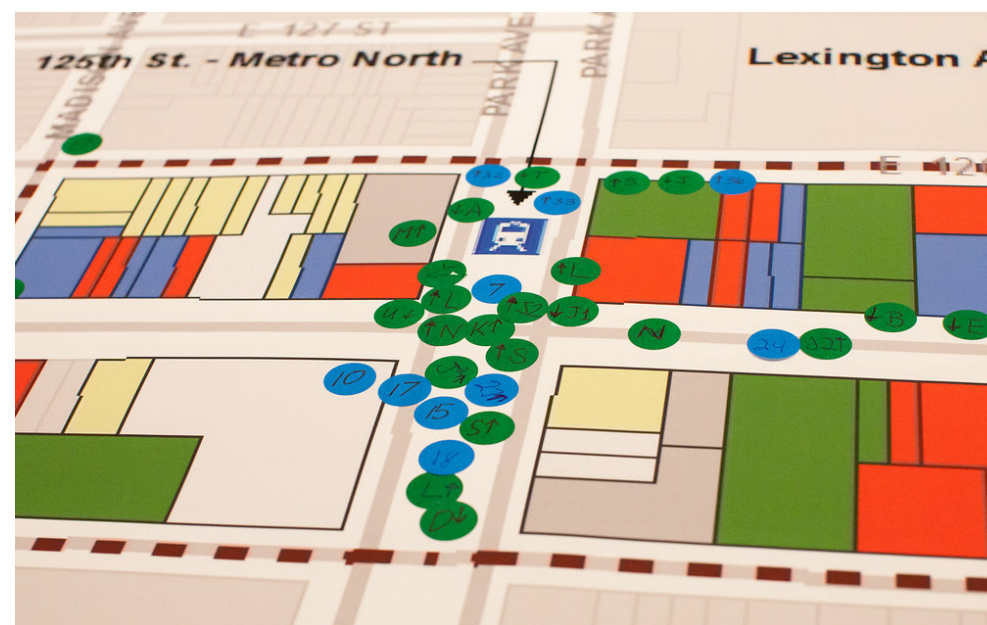
Zoning incentives also encourage and/or mandate ground-level public plaza or arcades and ground-level use for special arts and entertainment uses. The majority of vacant lots in the study area are owned by single owners who will develop adjacent lots together as single developments. Forthcoming developments, uses, and tenancy as publicly published are noted prior to the zoning section of this report at the time of this writing.





## 03 PROCESS

Following three East 125th Street Steering Committee meetings from September through November 2017, a Community Visioning Charrette event was organized by WE ACT for Environmental Justice in mid-December 2017 to develop a shared understanding of the area's major challenges and opportunities for equitable revitalization. Over 40 key stakeholder representatives, including from two dozen local community organizations, state and local agencies, and East Harlem elected leaders, took part in this event.



Event participants engaged in two separate exercises. First, each individual filled out two distinct handouts - one soliciting up to three policy changes and goals to improve the study area along with action items to achieve these goals and secondly, asking individuals to prioritize and circle from (or add to) a list of potential physical improvements and action items they would like to see in the area. Participants then joined one of four topical breakout groups (Arts & Culture, Small Business & Jobs, Transit & Environment, Social & Survival Services) to engage in targeted group discussion and to mark relevant concerns (with blue dots) and desires (with green dots) at specific locations on a series of maps. These exercises resulted in robust conversations to envision improvement scenarios and build consensus for a community visioning framework.

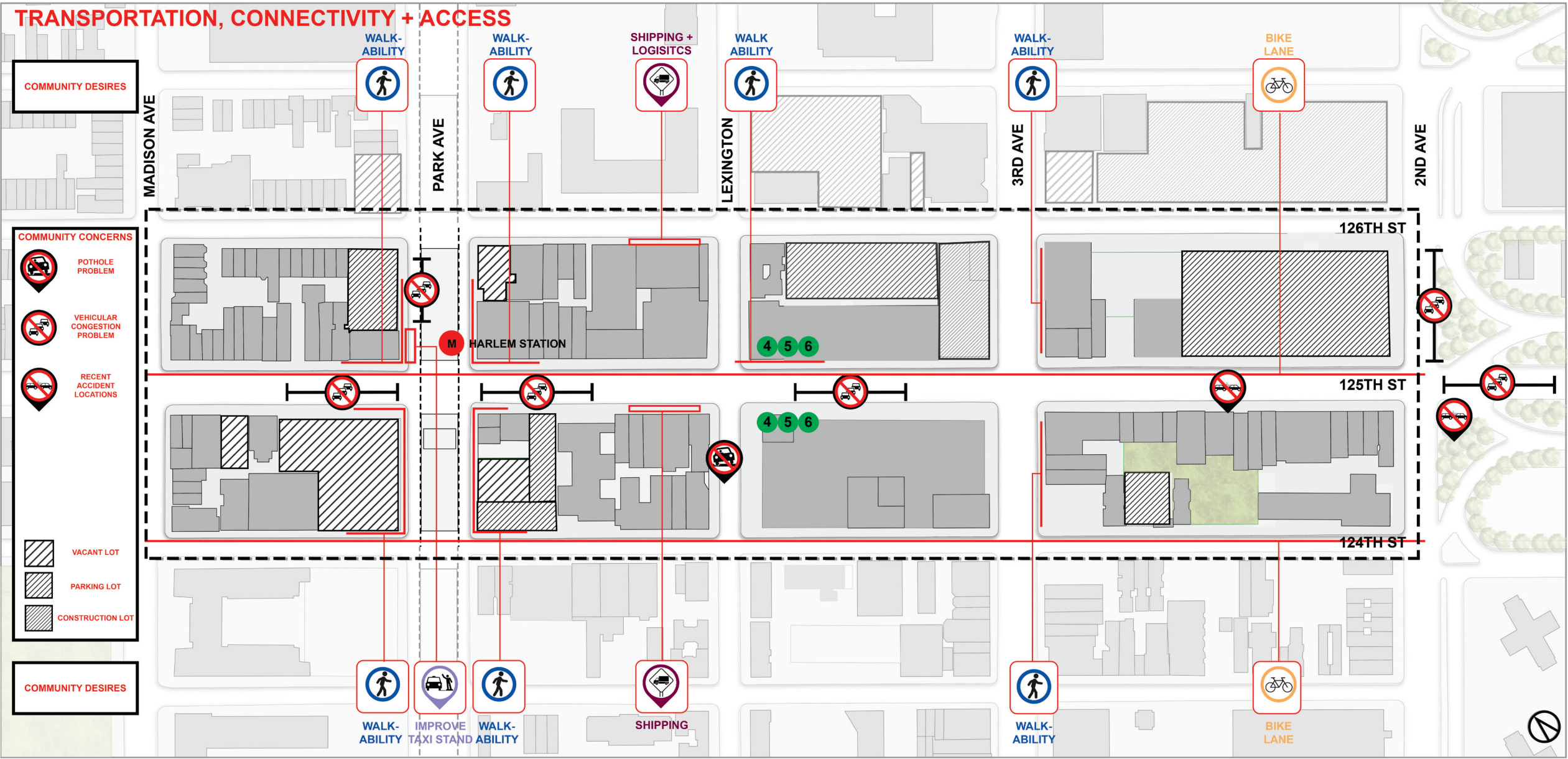


Some keywords that were repeated often in conversation included connectivity, access, perception, advocacy, culture, history, and arts. Analysis of the collected handouts demonstrated that the concerns most frequently cited by participants included the need for additional community/social spaces and access to fresh food and issues of car congestion, trash, loitering, and vacant lots. Most frequently cited desires included introducing lighting, trees, landscaping, and community gardens and increasing access to arts & culture, market stalls and fresh food options, restaurants/bar/cafes, and public restrooms.

Map diagrams were created after the charrette to synthesize and capture the community concerns and desires that participants marked by dots. The maps classified these items in one of three categories: Transportation, Connectivity, and Access; Block and Lot Space Usage, and Streetscape. Key takeaways are included alongside each map.



# COMMUNITY CONCERNS & DESIRES: Transportation, Connectivity, and Access

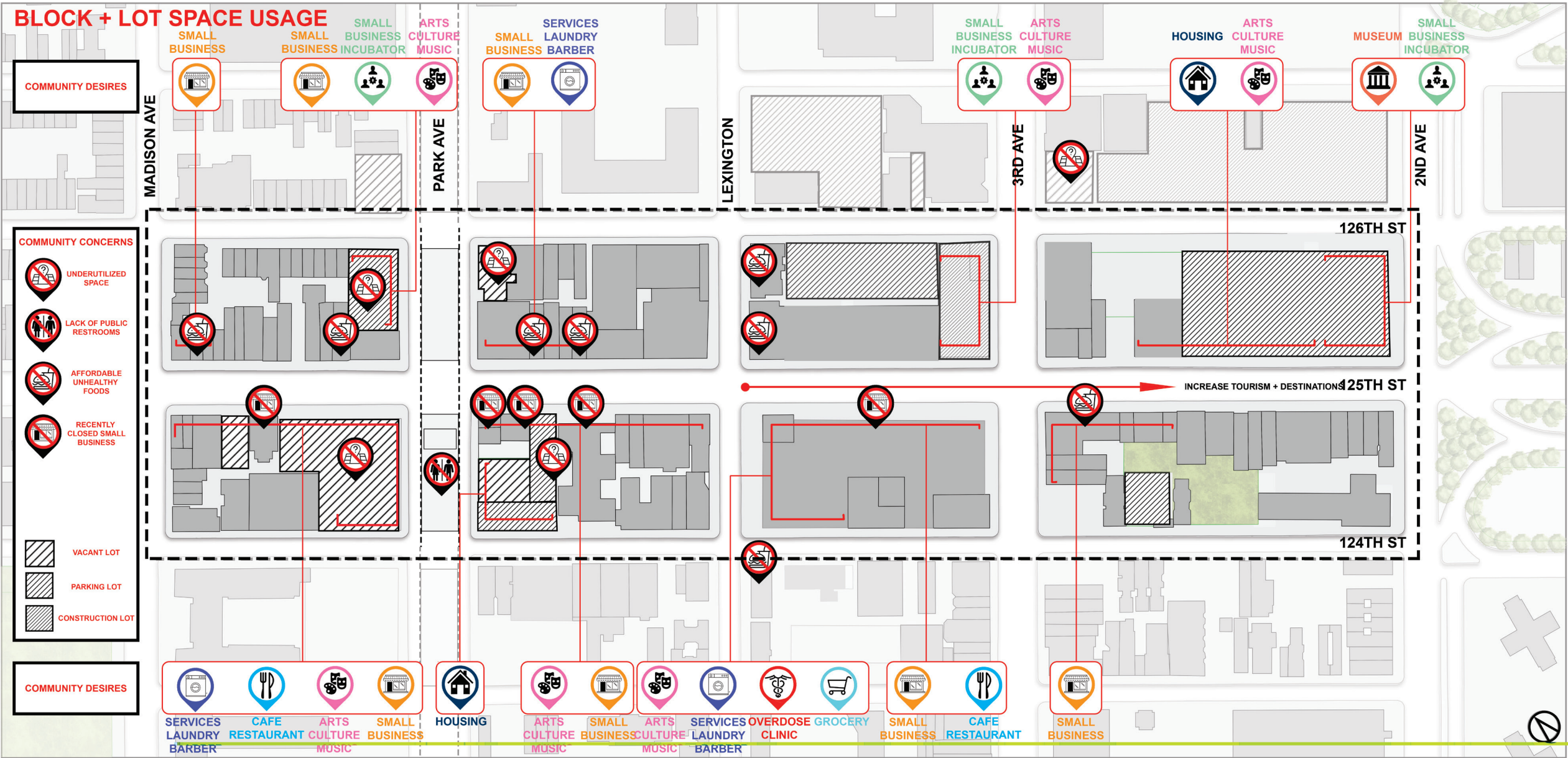


Charrette participants discussed concerns of vehicular congestion primarily along East 125th Street between Madison Avenue and 3rd Avenue and specifically at the Park Avenue and Lexington Avenue intersections. This congestion is due to a number of factors including buses pulling in and out to the curb at stops, truck traffic and double parking for loading, lack of enforcement of traffic rules at dedicated bus lanes and for speeding or double-parking, and lack of traffic signal alignment. Much of the congestion is also due to East 125th Street acting as a primary access point to the Robert F. Kennedy Bridge and Harlem River Drive. This brings traffic into the area from the outer boroughs.

Improving and dedicating off-peak shipping and logistics locations for trucks and making the existing taxi stand along the West side of Metro-North Station more efficient were among the primary community desires. Participants also discussed and marked areas for improved pedestrian walkability throughout the study area and especially in the context of linking Metro-North Station with the existing 4/5/6 subway line and proposed Q/T Second Avenue Subway line. Participants felt that improved walkability would, in turn, support small businesses along the corridor and allow for more foot traffic East of Lexington Avenue.



# COMMUNITY CONCERNS & DESIRES: Neighborhood Amenities

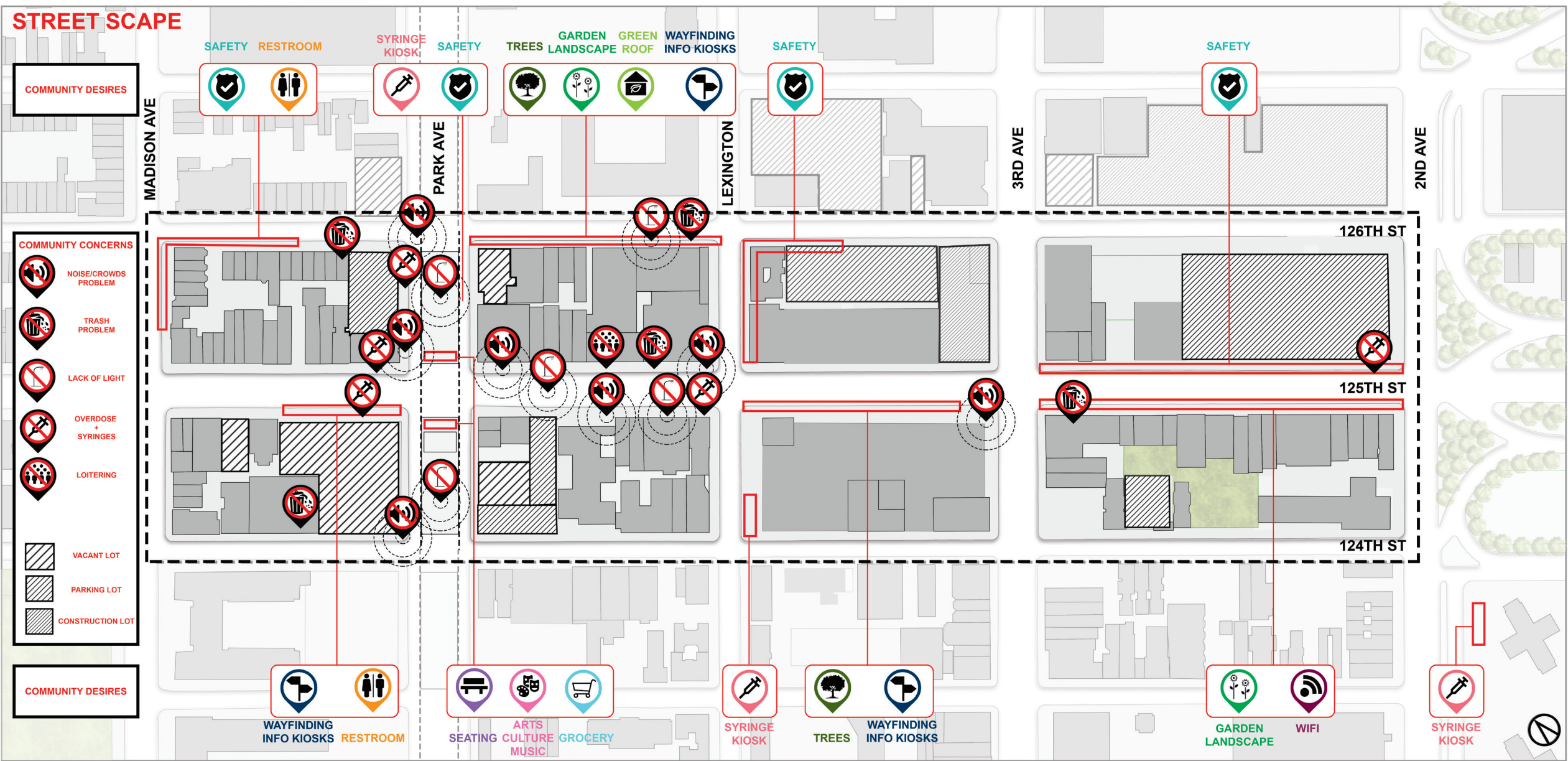


Primary community concerns that were noted on maps during the Visioning Charrette exercises included numerous vacant lots and parking lots that were labeled as underutilized spaces and a number of locations where small businesses had recently closed along East 125th Street due to rent increases and/or inadequate revenue streams.

Any new developments or tenancies at vacant lots and storefronts could potentially include uses that are most desired by the community including arts and culture spaces, and small business incubators and/or local small business retail. The community also noted the abundance of unhealthy, fast food options along East 125th Street between Madison and 3rd Avenues and suggested the need for healthier cafes/restaurants in the area. With the closure of Pathmark between Lexington and 3rd Avenues, a large-scale fresh food grocery establishment was also notably missing.



# COMMUNITY CONCERNS & DESIRES: Streetscape



The majority of community concerns in relationship to streetscape were located within close proximity to the Park Avenue Metro-North Viaduct. Charrette participants cited problems of noise, inadequate street lighting, insufficient trash management, overdoses and syringes, and pedestrian congestion within this area and on East 125th Street between Park and Lexington Avenues.

Desires for improved pedestrian safety throughout the area along with trees, landscaping, seating, and information/cultural wayfinding along East 126th and 125th Streets were noted. Participants also recommended having syringe kiosks and safe injection sites at several locations including under the Park Avenue Viaduct and at the NYCHA campus East of 2nd Avenue.



# EAST 125th ST RESIDENT & COMMUTER SURVEY

Following the first community visioning charrette, a community survey was designed with the Steering Committee and administered along 125th Street with support from Picture the Homeless and WE ACT. Extensive canvassing yielded significant responses from 220 residents, commuters, small business owners, and area employees. Community concerns and recommendations were congruent with discussions at the charrette.

## EAST HARLEM PROFILE<sup>xi</sup>

### DEMOGRAPHICS

OVERALL POPULATION: **123,579**  
LATINO: **50%**  
BLACK: **31%**  
FOREIGN BORN: **26%**  
MEDIAN AGE: **33**

### ECONOMICS

RENT BURDEN: **49%**  
POVERTY: **31%**  
UNEMPLOYMENT: **12%**

### HEALTH

ASTHMA HOSPITALIZATIONS: **5th (adults) and 6th (children) in NYC**  
AIR POLLUTION: **16th in NYC**  
DRUG-RELATED DEATHS: **9th in NYC**

### BUSINESS

EAST 125th STREET STOREFRONT VACANCY: **25%** (MANHATTAN 20%<sup>xii</sup>)  
OVERALL ANNUAL RESIDENT SPENDING: **\$2.9 BILLION**  
ANNUAL RESIDENT SPENDING OUTSIDE OF NEIGHBORHOOD: **\$804 MILLION**  
TOTAL BUSINESS SALES GROWTH 2008-2015: **+57%**

### TRAFFIC

DAILY VEHICULAR TRAFFIC AVERAGES  
EAST 125th STREET - FIFTH AVENUE AND LEXINGTON AVENUE: **19,871**  
EAST 125th STREET - LEXINGTON AVENUE AND HARLEM RIVER DRIVE: **25,500**  
LEXINGTON AVENUE - 129th STREET AND 125th STREET: **13,600**  
LEXINGTON AVENUE - 125th STREET AND 96th STREET: **13,220**



# MARCH - APRIL 2018

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

### SURVEYS COMPLETED: 220

AFRICAN AMERICAN: **52%**  
LATINO: **29%**  
USE PUBLIC TRANSIT: **93%**

### RESPONDENT AGES (18-65+)

18-21: **20%**  
35-44: **17%**  
45-54: **27%**

### RARELY SPEND MONEY IN CORRIDOR 55% ...WOULD SPEND MONEY ON:

FOOD & DINING: **60%**  
ARTS & CULTURAL VENUES: **46%**  
LOCAL RETAIL: **44%**

### ...WANT TO SEE ADDITIONAL:

SMALL/LOCAL BUSINESSES: **44%**  
ARTS & CULTURAL SPACES: **35%**  
PUBLIC SPACES: **28%**

### ...WOULD LOVE MORE:

PARKS: **45%**  
LOCAL CULTURAL CENTERS: **43%**  
PUBLIC RESTROOMS: **31%**

### ...THE AREA NEEDS:

BETTER WASTE MANAGEMENT: **61%**  
MORE GREEN PUBLIC SPACES: **39%**  
LESS NOISE POLLUTION: **39%**

### SECOND AVENUE SUBWAY PHASE 2: ...FOR THE PROJECT TO BE SUCCESSFUL.

INVOLVE RESIDENTS IN DESIGN AND PLANNING: **84%**  
INSTALL BLACK & LATINO ARTWORK IN STATIONS: **63%**  
REQUIRE LOCAL HIRING 55% & MWBE CONTRACTING: **48%**  
PROVIDE REQUISITE JOB TRAINING TO RESIDENTS: **49%**



# COMMUNITY QUOTES



“New York has invested a lot in green energy and infrastructure over the years, demonstrating that we don’t have to choose between a vibrant economy and a healthy environment anymore. But far too little of that investment is actually reaching the low-income communities of color who are most impacted by climate change and environmental issues. I’ve lived in East Harlem for over ten years and Hurricane Sandy made it painfully clear that our neighborhood isn’t prepared for the challenges on the horizon. That’s why equity and resiliency were important building blocks of our plan. Everything from expanding green spaces to strengthening social services -- it’s all in there and it’s good for everyone. Now what we need is the right amount of political courage to turn these ideas into reality.”

**Jewel Jones, East Harlem resident and member of WE ACT for Environmental Justice**



“As a long standing youth and community development agency situated in the vicinity of the East 125th Street planning area, Youth Action Programs and Homes, Inc. is proud to have been included in the work of this report. Our program students and residents in our low-income housing frequently shop along the East 125th Street corridor, receive services from providers in the area, and utilize the transit hub in their daily lives. They are anxious to be beneficiaries and not be excluded from the opportunities of the corridor’s redevelopment. This study initiative presents an opportunity for authentic community voices to be heard and taken into account as the East Harlem community braces for a shift resulting from the planned revitalization in the district. Given what is at stake, it is important that there be real integrity in the community input process. This planning process has been thoughtful and has brought together a wide range of stakeholders to formulate a vision which excites us all. I am hopeful that decision-makers will see the value in the work we have undertaken for the past one and a half years.”

**Robert T. Taylor, Executive Director, Youth Action Programs and Homes, Inc.**



As a small business owner in the area, I support the East Harlem/El Barrio East 125th Street Community Visioning Action Plan because it sets a goal of supporting local small businesses and stimulating the local economy. I have worked hard to build my business by providing quality service and good food to people on East 125th Street and I want to make sure that the coming of the Second Avenue Subway doesn’t disrupt economic life on East 125th Street. I want the MTA to work with neighborhood minority business owners to ensure that we can positively benefit from the changes that the new subway will bring.

**Betty Park, Owner/Proprietor of Manna’s Soul Food**



“East Harlem/El Barrio has long been an important home for people of the African Diaspora. Through our small business entrepreneurship, community leadership, and vibrant artistic and cultural traditions, many diverse Afro-descendent communities from around the world have made El Barrio home. They have settled here, recreated the sense of home, community and family in a space that has come to be known as *Nuestro Querido Barrio* in NYC. Yet in the attempts to ‘redevelop’ this area, the voices, contributions and narrative of the people have been excluded. With the East 125th Street corridor facing another wave of development and yes let’s call it what it is, *gentrification*, the Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute (CCCADI) remains committed to supporting efforts like this community Vision Plan that positions and empowers the people of El Barrio. From our historic Firehouse location on East 125th Street, we will continue to preserve, celebrate, and nurture the unique multi-cultural history and identity of East Harlem long into the future and be the mirror of a community that will always be recognized for its contributions and accomplishments in this neighborhood. CCCADI is the place to document and tell our stories in our own voice. It is our expectation that partnerships with developers and businesses coming into our community will do so in the true spirit of collaboration, working in tandem with our Vision Plan to assure the inclusion of local artists, historians, leaders and representatives of El Barrio as active participants at this time of change.”

**Melody Capote, Executive Director, Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute (CCCADI)**



“Our homeless brothers and sisters are among East Harlem’s fiercest advocates and longtime residents—as a leader at Picture the Homeless, I know this firsthand. Through uplifting the homeless perspective in the 125th Street/Metro-North Transit Hub Steering Committee, we have contributed real solutions to long-neglected issues impacting the East 125th Street area. Our Community Vision Plan is an important first step to making the area and larger community better for all Harlemites. As the neighborhood struggles with large-scale displacement and poverty, we look forward to working together to implement these recommendations and, ultimately, to do the long-term work of ensuring the housing, health, and economic needs of the people are met with dignity and respect. With Steering Committee members, homeless folks will remain at the forefront of creating just and better future for East Harlem.”

**Jermain Abdullah, Leader, Picture the Homeless**





## TOWN HALLS

Two Town Halls were held between April and June 2018 to receive meaningful community feedback on specific goals, strategies and actions assembled as policy and capital project recommendations for the study area. This platform addresses and finds opportunity in many of the challenges, concerns, and desires that were directly voiced by agency stakeholders and the community at large throughout the visioning process including an interactive design charrette and public survey. Together the two Town Halls drew an additional 100 community members and created a space for residents and small business owners to take leadership in the project.



Town Hall participants worked together in one of five intimate breakout groups to help prioritize concerns and issues through a series of interactive exercises and group discussions. Up to 10 “ballots” were pinned up -- each ballot representing a different overall goal and strategy for improvement in the East 125th Street study area ranging from issues of transportation, access, and environment to promotion of vibrant public spaces supporting social, economic, and cultural needs. Group facilitators comprised of Steering Committee members and/or WE ACT staff led each group discussion and asked participants to begin by voting on each ballot. They were asked to record their individual opinions regarding each overall goal and strategy by placing dot stickers under “yes,” “no,” or “neutral.” Votes were tallied and those ballots receiving the most “yes” votes were then chosen for in each group for in-depth discussion. Participants considered each proposed action item listed to achieve the stated goal and ranked the proposal from 1 (poor) to 5 (great). A second Town Hall was held to solicit feedback once again after the platform was revised based on participants’ feedback. The **top priorities** that emerged for Town Hall participants included reducing congestion on East 125th Street, promoting community-owned businesses and employment opportunities for residents, enhancing neighborhood social services, and implementing sustainable strategies to promote environmental resilience and community health.



These priorities as well as the **top action items** list on the following page reveal that the East Harlem community at large is in tune with the current social, economic, and environmental challenges in the area and recognizes the opportunities to make improvements for the people who live, work, and visit the area. The next section details a community vision statement and plan that represents the interests of East Harlem residents, commuters, and small business owners/workers to transform the East 125th Street corridor into a vibrant transit, economic, and cultural hub.



# TOWN HALLS

The discussions that followed ballot voting and prioritizing allowed participants to weigh both the positive and possibly negative consequences of each proposed action item. Several proposed actions items were dismissed by participants and the recommendations that follow in this report have been revised as such. Across all goals and strategies, the key action items that were considered most favorable in the Town Halls included:

- Improved lighting for safety
- Right-turn pockets at heavy intersections
- Off-board bus fare collection to improve travel times
- Arts and culture destination (Harlem African Burial Ground) on 2nd Avenue
- Social and recreation destination (Harlem River Greenway Park Esplanade) at waterfront
- Historic markers for significant buildings
- Raise awareness of SBS Neighborhood 360 Program/available grants to support local small businesses
- Incentivize introduction of small businesses in new developments with subsidized rent and tax credits
- Increase community partnership/employment opportunities by linking business development opportunities with job training
- Create a wayfinding map specific to 125th Street corridor in collaboration with local community groups
- Strengthen linkages among social services providers to collaborate between agencies for funding and to solicit input on current barriers to service delivery
- Analyze existing shelter, methadone, and other clinics and their effectiveness
- Public plazas with flexible seating, movable tables, umbrellas, and space for markets/cultural events
- Vibrant street above ground with vibrant retail transit concourse underground
- Public trash receptacles with lids and recycling cans at each intersection
- Trees and plantings throughout area to provide shade, improve air quality, and create a buffer to noise and exhaust from traffic
- Rain gardens and permeable pavers to improve stormwater drainage
- Green roofs and rainwater collection incentivized through grant programs
- Encourage solar panel renewable energy installation at developments and ensure that related jobs go to local residents
- Increase sanitation pickup and street cleaning frequency
- Solar powered LED street lighting throughout





# 04 VISION PLAN

The East 125th Street Community Visioning Action Plan that follows includes a number of key recommendations that directly emerged from the community visioning process described in this report. The plan includes concept designs and guidelines for the overall study area and also key areas to focus advocacy efforts. This includes a combination of capital projects and policies to support the concerns and desires of community residents, neighborhood small business owners, and area visitors/commuters alike. The plan considers the anticipated growth in East Harlem based on the recent rezoning of the area and also the addition of the Second Phase of the Second Avenue Subway Line (Q and T) and aims to address a number of challenges and concerns that may result. The following pages detail the Vision Plan's recommendations based on four identified goals:

**GOAL 1: MAKE EAST 125th STREET AN ACCESSIBLE AND EFFICIENT TRANSIT CENTER THAT BETTER SERVES COMMUNITY AND COMMUTER NEEDS.**

**GOAL 2: SUPPORT EAST HARLEM/EL BARRIO ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL TRADITIONS, STIMULATE THE LOCAL ECONOMY, AND ENHANCE NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL SERVICES.**

**GOAL 3: CREATE FAIR AND VIBRANT PUBLIC SPACES TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY'S SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND CULTURAL NEEDS.**

**GOAL 4: PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND KEEP THE NEIGHBORHOOD SAFE FROM EXTREME WEATHER.**

These four goals broadly capture the priorities of the four working group themes that were identified early in the community visioning process as Arts and Culture (goal 2 & 3), Transit and Environment (goals 1 & 4), Jobs and Small Business (goals 2 & 3) and Social and Survival Services (goal 2).



**GOAL 1: MAKE EAST 125th STREET AN ACCESSIBLE AND EFFICIENT TRANSIT CENTER THAT BETTER SERVES COMMUNITY AND COMMUTER NEEDS.**

**STRATEGY 1: REDUCE CONGESTION AND IMPROVE THE FLOW OF TRAFFIC AND PEOPLE ON THE STREET.**

*With the proposed developments in the area, East 125th Street will inevitably become even more congested with people, cars, buses, bikes, and trucks than it is today. It is important to ensure pedestrian safety, access, and connectivity and maintain efficient movement of traffic along the corridor.*

**PROPOSED ACTIONS**

**WALKING:**

- Repaint high visibility crosswalk markings and introduce pedestrian walking signs for safety throughout.
- Shorten crosswalk distances by introducing neckdowns to widen sidewalk at intersections along Park Avenue and under the Viaduct including at 124th, 125th, and 126th Streets.
- Improve lighting for safety under the Park Avenue Viaduct and with additional street lighting throughout.
- Improve walkability with street-level small business retail in all new developments and along currently vacant storefronts along East 125th Street. Encourage open, transparent, glass storefronts to create a visible relationship between inside and out.
- Improve walkability with cultural wayfinding and signage at major intersections along East 125th Street including at Park Avenue, Lexington Avenue, and 2nd Avenue.

**BUSES:**

- Continue dedicated off-set bus lane along discontinuous portions of East 125th Street in both cross-town directions to improve traffic flow. Enhance road markings and traffic enforcement of bus lane rules with bus lane cameras.
- Widen sidewalk with bus bulbs at all SBS bus stops along 125th Street so that buses can run continuously and more efficiently. Introduce bus shelters and other streetscape amenities (trees, trash cans, City Bench) at all such locations. Introduce off-board fare collection and all-door boarding at these stops to improve travel times and decrease traffic congestion. Bundling these amenities together in single locations not only offers convenience to passengers waiting for the bus, but also creates social hub areas where pedestrians naturally come together.
- Introduce right-turn pockets at bus lanes for heavy intersections such as 125th Street and Park Avenue.
- Introduce dedicated freight truck off-peak loading zones in place of street parking where needed to decrease double parking on 125th and 126th Streets.
- Introduce transit signal priority to optimize traffic signal timing and ensure smooth traffic flow.

**BIKES**

- Relocate bike lane from East 128th Street to 124th Street moving West to East. With the existing East to West bike lane on 126th Street, this would ensure safe bike lane traffic on streets adjacent to 125th Street and continued access from existing lanes along 2nd Avenue and 5th Avenue to Marcus Garvey Park.

**STRATEGY 2: MAKE PUBLIC TRANSIT LINES CONNECTED TO PROMOTE ACCESS AND A BETTER RIDER / COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE.**

*The addition of the Second Avenue Subway Line offers opportunity to create an inter-modal transit corridor, prioritizing seamlessly connected public transit (Metro-North, subway, taxi, bus, bike) over private vehicular access and parking. This Vision Plan recommends that the East 125th Street corridor be marked by two vertically stacked, commercially and culturally active streets – one at grade and one underground – that connect up and down with multiple stairways and elevators at various points East to West between Park Avenue and 3rd Avenue. In combination with mixed-use zoning, a vibrant streetscape, and expanded city services, this would support future local community growth, sustainable contextual development, and higher future ridership.*

**PROPOSED ACTIONS**

**SUBWAYS: 4/5/6 & Q/T (SECOND AVENUE SUBWAY)**

- Ensure Second Ave Subway jobs to go to M/WBE and local residents.
- In line with MTA proposals, introduce a new sidewalk subway entrance at the existing 125th Street plaza under Viaduct at Park Avenue and at the Southeast (Pathmark) corner of Lexington Avenue and 125th Street to connect Metro-North Station with Lexington Avenue (4/5/6) and Second Avenue (Q/T) Subways.
- Remove one existing sidewalk subway entrances at 125th Street and Lexington Avenue intersection to relieve congestion.
- Integrate secondary subway entrances into building envelopes at mid-block developments on the North and South sides of 125th Street between Lexington and 3rd Avenues to encourage pedestrian travel East of Lexington.
- Connect East between 125th Street Metro-North Station and the 4/5/6 existing station and proposed Q/T subway stop with an underground pedestrian concourse. Study the feasibility of additionally extending this concourse West to connect to the 2/3 subway station at 125th Street and Malcolm X Blvd.
- Mark this underground concourse with local small businesses and vibrant, interactive spaces to eat, shop, and socialize. Introduce seating, lighting, locally commissioned public art, cultural programming, and digitally equipped Wi-Fi and cultural wayfinding kiosks along the length of the concourse.

**METRO-NORTH RAILROAD**

- Introduce clear wayfinding signage to mark transportation transfers between Metro-North to subway transit entries, bus routes, and taxi stands.
- Introduce plaza and sidewalk improvements under the Park Avenue Viaduct for pedestrian safety and to mark taxi queue areas. Relocate taxi stand to the East and West sides of Metro-North station.
- Introduce no standing signage and improve traffic enforcement under the Viaduct and at station entry.
- Improve lighting under Viaduct between 126th and 124th Streets.
- Minimize off-street parking requirements for new developments to discourage private vehicular transit.
- Replace municipal parking lot under the Viaduct with public plaza between 124th and 125th Streets.
- Introduce public restrooms at new underground transit station.



**GOAL 2: SUPPORT EAST HARLEM/EL BARRIO ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL TRADITIONS, STIMULATE THE LOCAL ECONOMY, AND ENHANCE NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL SERVICES.**

**STRATEGY 1: LIFT UP LOCAL COMMUNITY-OWNED BUSINESSES, CULTURAL SITES, AND PUBLIC SPACES THROUGH PROMOTING BETTER VISIBILITY, RESOURCES, AND OPTIONS.**

*New developments at vacant lots and tenancy at vacant storefronts in the 125th Street East Harlem neighborhood should support the creation of anchor cultural/commercial/recreational nodes to encourage pedestrian movement East of Lexington and along the way in support of consumer spending along the corridor. Access to quality fresh foods and markets and vibrant public and social spaces should celebrate and make visible the neighborhood history, indigenous cultural identity, and work of local artists.*

**PROPOSED ACTIONS**

**FROM LEXINGTON TO 2nd AVENUE:**

- Promote foot traffic with anchor destinations and activity nodes East of Lexington Avenue in support of local small businesses along the corridor.
- Encourage arts and culture destinations such as the proposed Harlem African Burial Ground east of Lexington Avenue within new developments. Ensure that new developments in the study area that fall within the Special 125th Street District Boundary provide cultural spaces for visual and performing arts using zoning incentives that are already in place. At least 5% of developments that are 60,000 square foot and higher should be designated to special arts and entertainment uses.
- Introduce wayfinding, signage, and safe pedestrian connections across 2nd Avenue and beyond to provide access to social and recreational destinations such as the proposed Harlem River Greenway Park Esplanade at the waterfront.
- Encourage a multi-cultural food hall and healthy grocery destination at new developments. New developments can take advantage of financial discretionary tax and zoning incentives to provide retail space for fresh grocers through the NYC program, FRESH (Food Retail Expansion to Support Health), already available throughout the study area.

**EAST 125th STREET CORRIDOR AND ADJACENT STREETS:**

- Improve pedestrian plaza under the Viaduct with flexible seating and event space / farmer’s markets.
- Encourage street-level public spaces (pocket parks, community gardens, privately owned public spaces) with local art and murals at new developments through incentivized zoning along East-West streets. Promote and support programs that enable pop-up farmer’s markets, food co-ops, and mobile markets in these spaces to ensure healthy food options for local residents.

- Encourage integration of street-level local small businesses with large transparent storefronts that offer community amenities, cafes/restaurants, and retail. Ensure that new developments in the study area that fall within the Special 125th Street District Boundary follow minimum glazing and transparency requirements at ground floor to encourage pedestrian walkability.
- Encourage multi-level community uses with street-level access at new developments as per allowable zoning.
- Introduce cultural wayfinding throughout and info kiosks at key intersections such as 125th Street at Park and Lexington Avenues.
- Introduce historic markers for significant buildings in the study area.

**STRATEGY 2: MAKE ECONOMIC GROWTH WORK FOR THE EXISTING COMMUNITY BY STRENGTHENING TRAINING, HIRING, AND CAPACITY-BUILDING PROGRAMS THAT PROMOTE COMMUNITY-OWNED BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS.**

*New developments at vacant lots and tenancy at vacant storefronts in the 125th Street East Harlem neighborhood should support the overall economic revitalization of the area including provisions for local small businesses, employment opportunities, and vocational training.*

**PROPOSED ACTIONS**

- Raise awareness of SBS Neighborhood 3600 Program and available grants to support local small businesses.
- Incentivize introduction of local small businesses in new developments with subsidized rent and tax credits.
- Encourage local businesses to apply and participate in the NYEZ (New York Empowerment Zone) program, available throughout the study area. Businesses can take advantage of tax incentives and investment funds for hiring local residents.
- Introduce local small business incubators to work with trainings offered by Small Business Services (SBS) and HireNYC.
- Establish social enterprises working with private foundations.
- Build vocational skill-based training centers and spaces for financial literacy/justice/immigration legal.
- Increase community partnership/employment opportunities by linking business development opportunities with job training.
- Provide assistance to small businesses interested in applying and taking advantage of the NYC New Business Acceleration Team Program.



**STRATEGY 3: HELP LOCAL CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS GROW AND STRENGTHEN EAST HARLEM’S AFRICAN-AMERICAN AND LATINO ARTS/CULTURE INFRASTRUCTURE.**

**PROPOSED ACTIONS**

- Create a local artist network & commission list, an East Harlem Arts funding coordinator, and a dedicated fund for small budget arts groups.
- Create a wayfinding map specific to the 125th Street corridor in collaboration with local community groups.
- Work with Landmarks East Harlem to designate a historic district.
- Raise awareness of DCLA funding available through the Building Community Capacity Program to support arts and culture objectives.
- Provide assistance to local artists interested in applying to the NYC Percent for Art Program.

**STRATEGY 4: INCREASE COMMUNITY ACCESS TO, COLLABORATION BETWEEN, AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY OF SERVICE PROVIDERS IN THE AREA.**

**PROPOSED ACTIONS**

- Create social services provider network of those that provide workshops and community support for substance abuse, mental health, homelessness, and trauma.
- Create monthly or quarterly list of activities and services provided.
- Strengthen linkages among social services providers to collaborate between agencies for funding and to solicit input on current barriers to service delivery.
- Analyze existing shelter, methadone, and other clinics and their effectiveness.
- Introduce MTA overdose training centers and monitoring for overdose at public restroom facilities.
- Introduce used syringe kiosks at Metro-North Station, at 124th and Lexington, and in NYCHA developments.

**GOAL 3: CREATE FAIR AND VIBRANT PUBLIC SPACES TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY’S SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND CULTURAL NEEDS.**

**STRATEGY 1: EXPAND SOCIAL SPACES, EVENTS, AND AMENITIES FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.**

*The 125th East Harlem Streetscape must be improved to create better shared public space for people of all ages including community residents, pedestrians, commuters, small business owners, shoppers, and tourists. East 125th Street should be marked with a vibrant atmosphere that encourages the spilling of street-level indoor activities out using large storefront windows, sidewalk cafes, and cultural and social programming in plazas and pocket parks. Improvements should support local community, cultural, small business, and leisure activities by attracting a larger consumer base and with increased commercial and pedestrian activity.*

**PROPOSED ACTIONS**

- Study the viability of removing several parking spaces on 125th Street to introduce sidewalk extensions for bus bulbs, parklets, and other social spaces.
- Introduce multi-activity bus bulbs at all SBS stops along East 125th Street between Madison and 2nd Avenues with bus stop shelter, Wi-Fi hotspot / wayfinding / info kiosk, trees/plantings, trash receptacles, City Bench, and public art as appropriate.
- Encourage large storefront windows and sidewalk cafes (where permitted) to relate street activity to street-level small businesses.
- Program public plazas with flexible seating, movable tables, umbrellas, and space for farmers’ markets and other cultural events.
- Promote a vibrant pedestrian street life above ground to mirror a vibrant retail transit concourse underground connecting from the Viaduct East to 2nd Avenue.
- Study the feasibility of making the existing subterranean facility / station beneath the Metro-North Station a cultural and historic tourist destination.

**GOAL 4: PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND KEEP THE NEIGHBORHOOD SAFE FROM EXTREME WEATHER.**

**STRATEGY 1: IMPROVE WASTE MANAGEMENT, GREEN SPACES, AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY IN THE STREETScape.**

*The 125th East Harlem Streetscape must be improved to include sustainable infrastructure for lighting, communications, noise management, waste management, and stormwater management. This should include trees and plantings that dampen street noise, improve air quality, minimize stormwater runoff, introduce shade, improve pedestrian safety, reduce crime rates, and calm traffic patterns.*

**PROPOSED ACTIONS**

- Introduce public trash receptacles with lids and recycling cans at each intersection.
- Introduce additional trees and plantings throughout area to provide shade, improve air quality, and create a buffer to the vehicular street.
- Introduce additional trees along Park Avenue to provide a natural buffer to elevated rail noise.
- Introduce bioswales and permeable pavers to improve stormwater management and surface runoff.
- Introduce street-level public spaces (pocket parks, privately owned public spaces, community gardens, and plazas) at vacant lots and at new developments incentivized by zoning.
- Encourage green roofs and rainwater collection incentivized through grants programs.
- Encourage solar panel renewable energy installation at existing/new developments and ensure that related jobs go to local residents.
- Increase sanitation pickup and street cleaning frequency.
- Solar powered LED street lighting throughout at existing and proposed street lamps and at Viaduct.



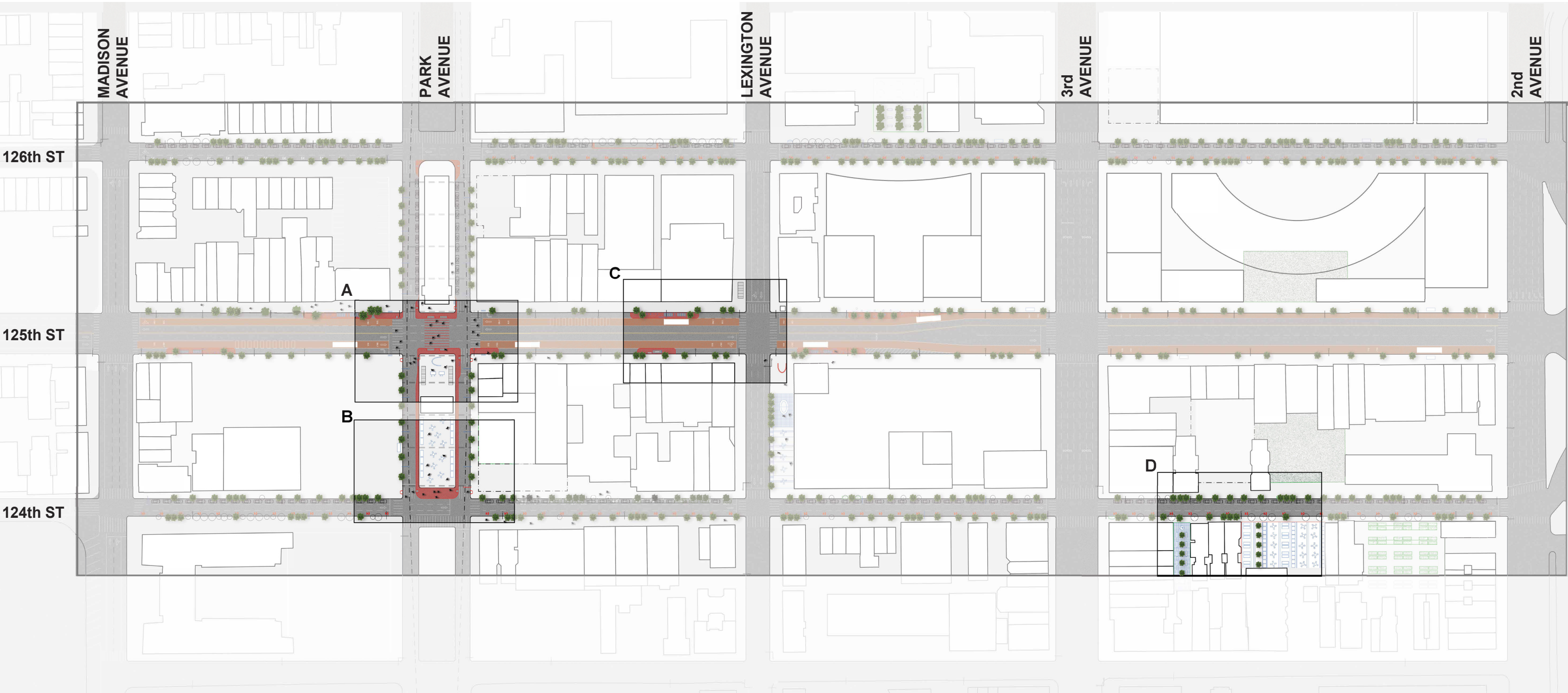
# KEY LOCATIONS

Four key locations are represented in more detail to show a variety of conditions with the study area and the various physical streetscape improvements that are proposed. The four areas are as follows:

- Location A: 125th Street and Park Avenue under the Viaduct
- Location B: Park Avenue between 125th & 124th Streets under the Viaduct
- Location C: 125th Street and Lexington Avenue
- Location D: 124th Street between 3rd and 2nd Avenues

The potential strategies listed for improvements in Locations A & B under the Park Avenue Viaduct are in line with and build on the recommendations made by WXY Studio for the 125th Street Feasibility Study Vision Plan for areas beneath the station made for the NYC Economic Development Corporation.

Strategies for Location C at 125th Street and Lexington Avenue are representative of potential improvements along the length of the entire East 125th Street corridor. Details at Location D show potential strategies that can be replicated along the streetscape along both 124th and 125th Street and for ground-level public plazas and pocket parks at vacant lots throughout the study area.



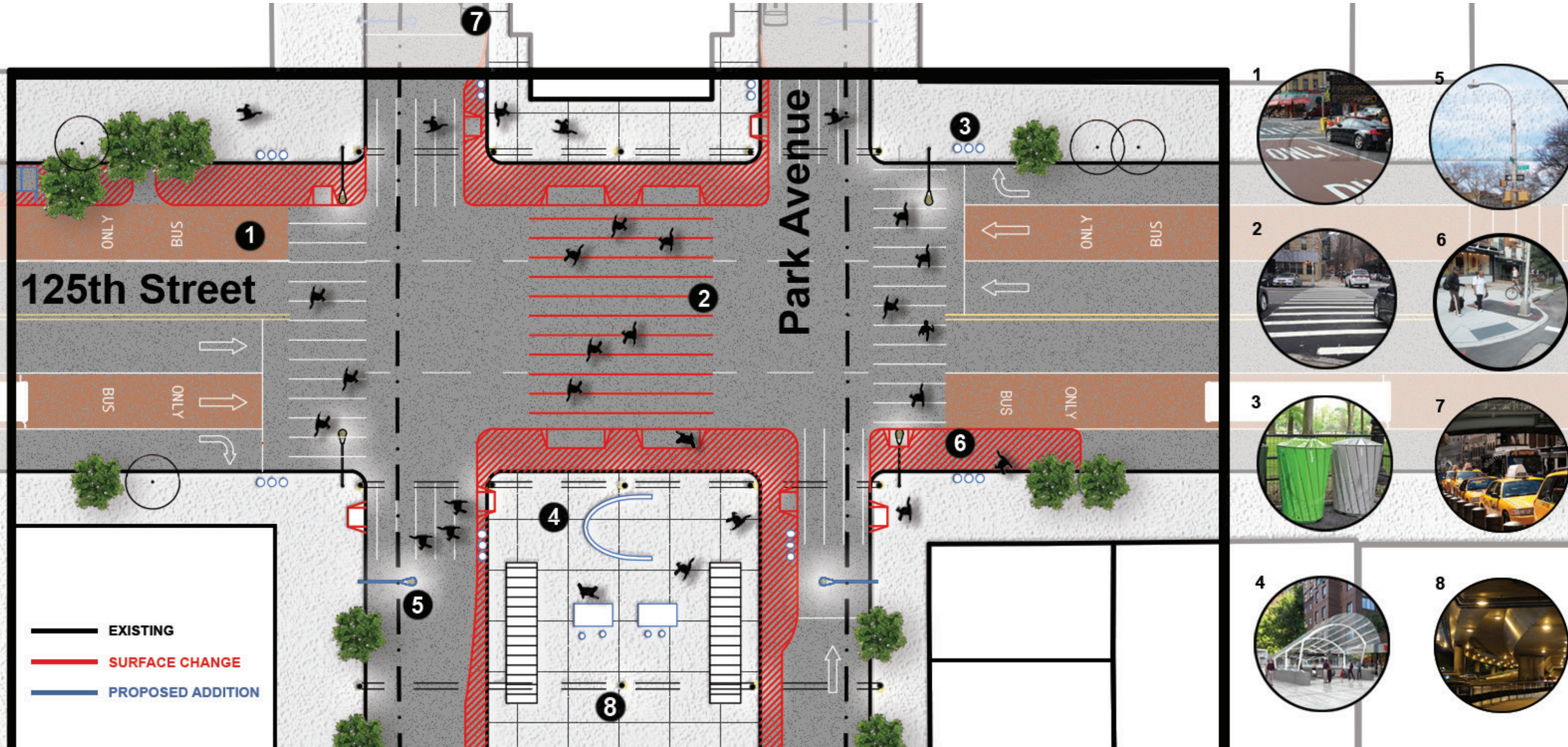


# KEY LOCATIONS: potential actions

## LOCATION A: 125th Street and Park Avenue under the Viaduct

- 1 Continue off-set dedicated bus lanes along discontinuous portions along East 125th Street to improve flow
- 2 Introduce block-wide high visibility crosswalk marking and pedestrian walking signs for safety
- 3 Introduce public trash and recycling receptacles with lids at each intersection to promote clean streets
- 4 Introduce a new sidewalk subway entrance under the Viaduct at plaza and link Metro-North with subway lines

- 5 Introduce additional street lighting (LED) and lighting under the Viaduct to promote safety
- 6 Introduce neckdowns to widen sidewalks in pedestrian areas under the Viaduct prone to congestion and shorten crosswalk distances to promote pedestrian safety
- 7 Introduce taxi stand on East side of Metro-North Station to supplement existing stand on West side. Add clear signage for north and south bound taxi stand queue areas to enable efficient transfer for commuters
- 8 Improve pedestrian plaza to include spaces for vendors, seating, adequate lighting, and social activity





# KEY LOCATIONS

## LOCATION A: 125th Street and Park Avenue under the Viaduct | Existing Conditions & Challenges

Cars line up at the entry to Metro-North Station and prevent efficient traffic flow along East 125th Street.

Commuters leaving Metro-North Station crowd the limited sidewalk space and prevent efficient circulation.



The current taxi stand on the west side of Metro-North Station creates congestion on Park Avenue.

The community voices many concerns for the area under the Viaduct including both pedestrian and vehicular congestion, poor trash management, too much noise, and poor air quality.

Lack of lighting under the Viaduct creates an unsafe environment. The presence of NYPD flood lights decreases the economic, social, and cultural value of the area.

## LOCATION A: 125th Street and Park Avenue under the Viaduct | Potential Strategies

Offer opportunities for locally commissioned public art under the Viaduct.

Transit signal priority optimizes traffic signal timing to ensure smoother traffic flow.

Additional street lighting (LED) and lighting under the Viaduct makes people feel safer at night.



Street-wide high-visibility crosswalk markings and no standing signage for vehicles at the Metro-North station entrance increases pedestrian safety and relieves congestion.

Splitting the taxi stand to both east and west sides of Metro-North with clear signage taxi queue area creates efficient transfer for commuters.

Additional trees on either side of the Viaduct act as a noise buffer.

Introduce public trash and recycling receptacles with lids at each intersection to promote clean streets.

A continuous dedicated off-set bus lane along 125th Street along with bus lane cameras ensure traffic enforcement and less congestion.

Neckdowns widen sidewalks to relieve congestion and shorten crosswalk distances to increase pedestrian walkability.

Bioswales at neckdowns and bus bulbs improve stormwater management and visually soften the corridor.

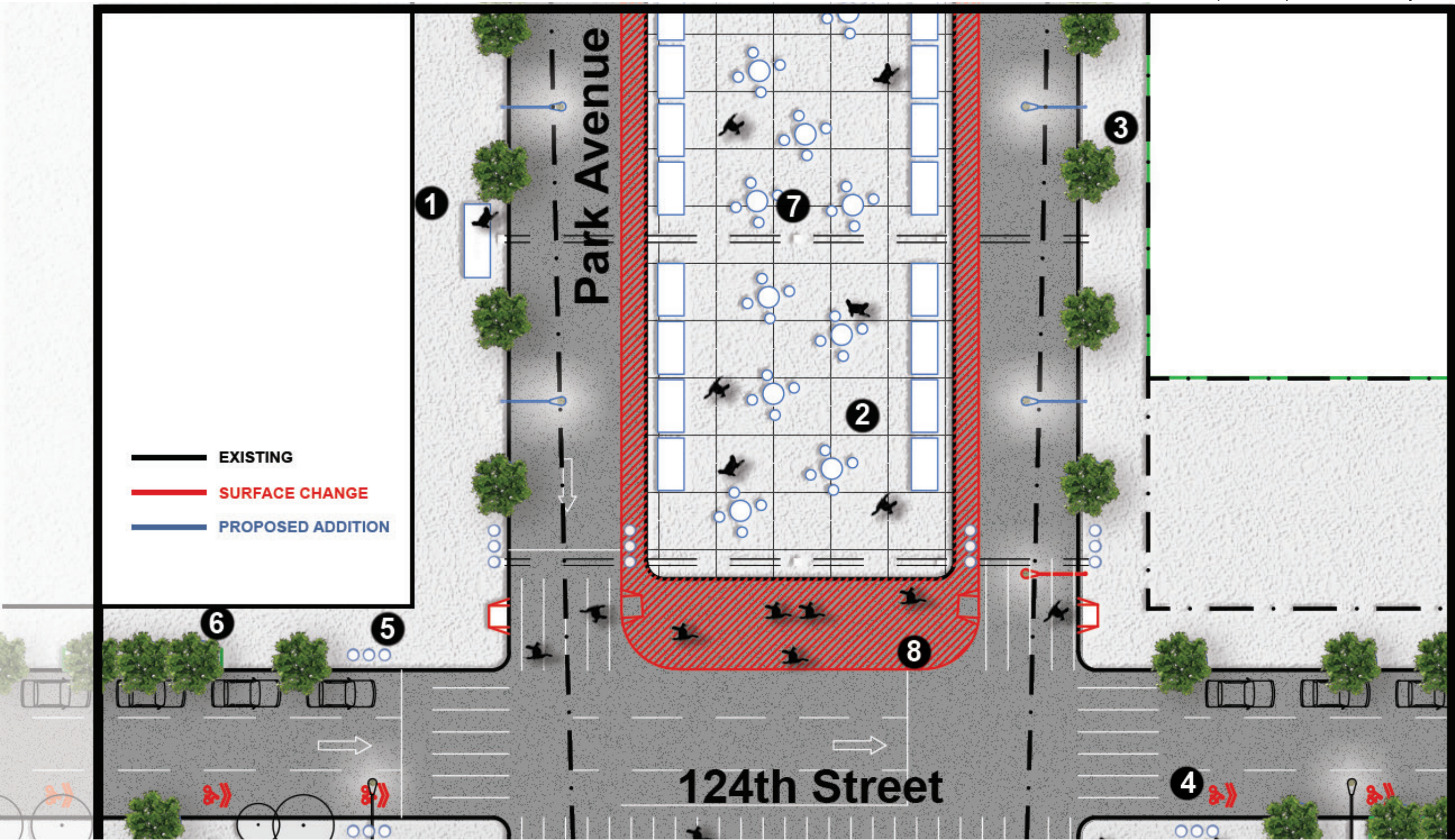


# KEY LOCATIONS: potential actions

## LOCATION B: Park Avenue between 125th and 124th Streets under the Viaduct

- 1 Introduce bus shelters at busy stops
- 2 Replace municipal parking lot with new pedestrian plaza with flexible seating, market vendors, and space for cultural and social events
- 3 Introduce additional trees on either side on Park Avenue to act as Metro-North elevated rail noise buffer

- 4 Relocate bike lane from East 128th Street to 124th Street moving West to East to ensure safe bike traffic
- 5 Introduce public trash and recycling receptacles with lids at each intersection to promote clean streets
- 6 Introduce bioswales along East 124th and 126th Streets to improve stormwater management and provide future storm surge resiliency in the area
- 7 Improve lighting for safety under the Park Avenue Viaduct and with additional LED street lighting throughout
- 8 Introduce neckdowns to widen sidewalks in pedestrian areas under the Viaduct prone to congestion and shorten crosswalk distances to promote pedestrian safety





# KEY LOCATIONS

LOCATION B: Park Avenue between 125th & 124th St under Viaduct | Existing Conditions & Challenges

Without a proper curb, pedestrians crossing this area feel unsafe and unprotected from traffic.



The current fences make this space uninhabitable. The space is an underutilized and untapped resource for a community that craves public space for flexible social uses.

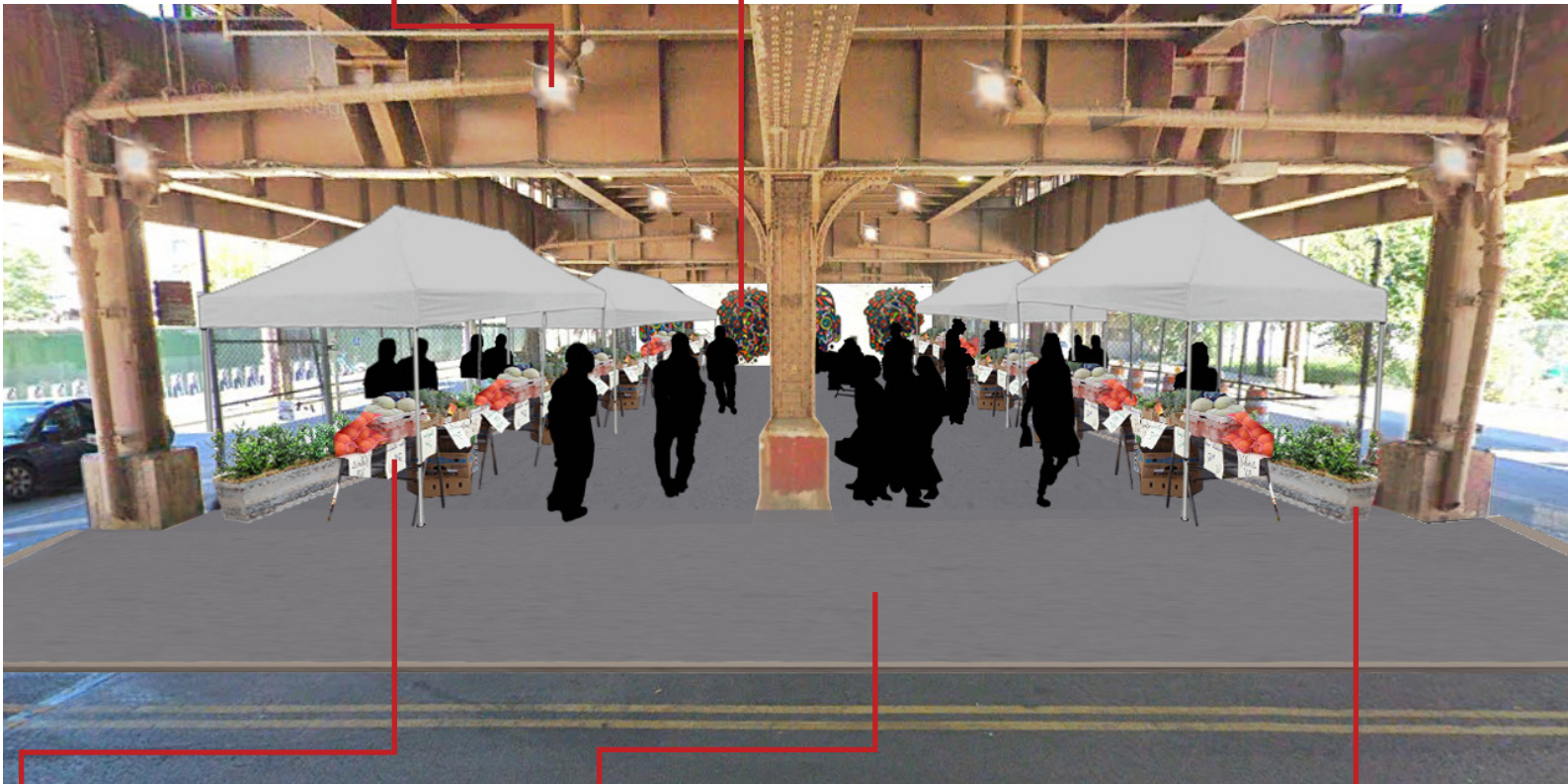
The community voices many concerns for the area under the Viaduct including poor trash management, too much noise, and poor air quality.

Lack of lighting under the Viaduct creates an unsafe environment. The presence of NYPD flood lights decreases the economic, social, and cultural value of the area.

LOCATION B: Park Avenue between 125th & 124th St under Viaduct | Potential Strategies

Additional street lighting (LED) and lighting under the Viaduct makes people feel safer at night.

Consider opportunities for locally commissioned art - for example, at beams or at facade of existing comfort station.



Remove existing fences and make public as new pedestrian plaza with flexible seating, fresh food market vendors, and space for pop-up temporary cultural, arts, and social events. Consider adding composting pickup station.

Add planters and other vegetation to soften the edge.

Neckdowns widen sidewalks to relieve congestion and shorten crosswalk distances to increase pedestrian walkability.



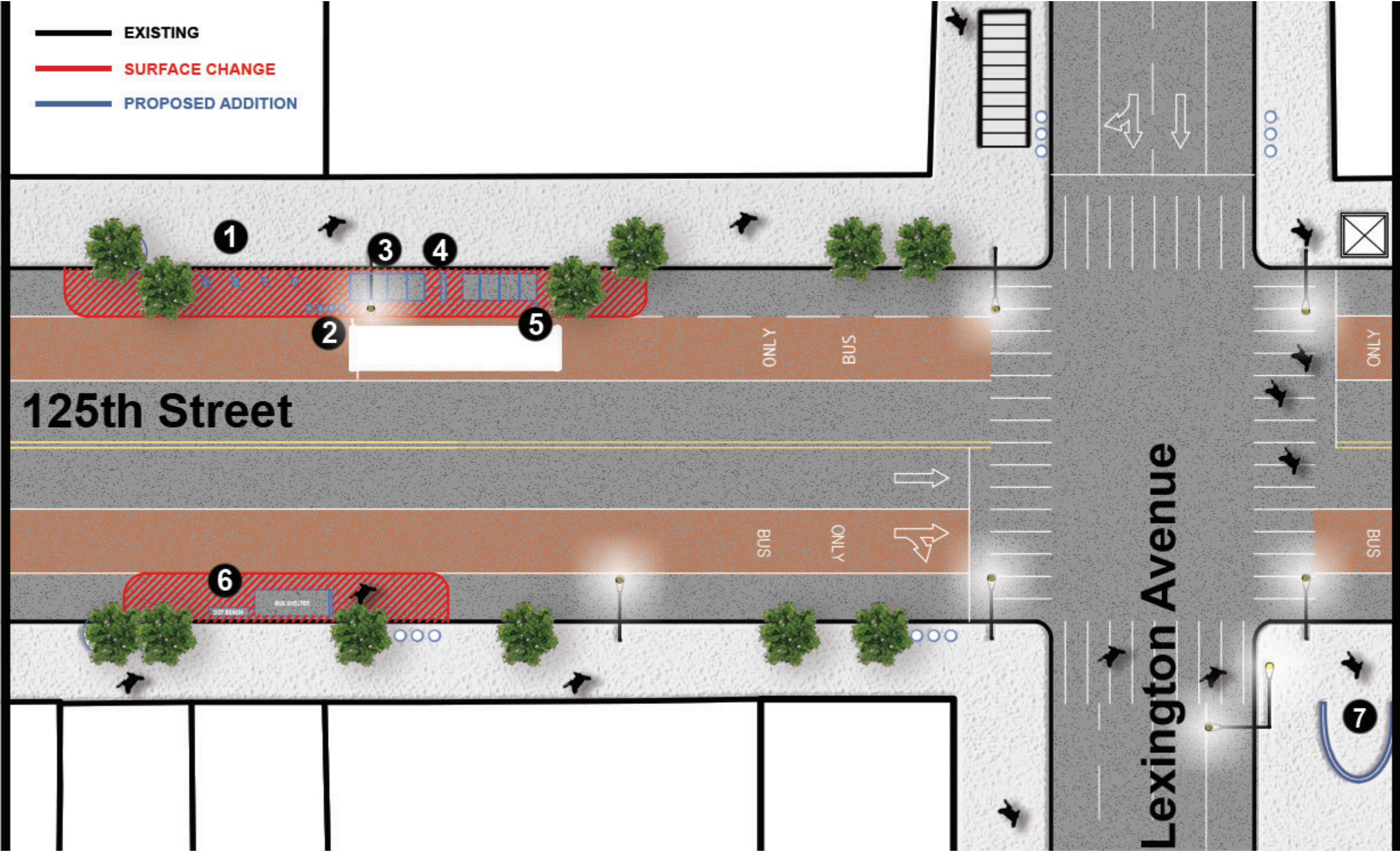
# KEY LOCATIONS: potential actions

## LOCATION C: 125th Street and Lexington Avenue

Introduce bus bulbs to extend sidewalk to meet dedicated bus lanes at Select Bus Service stop locations along East 125th Street to improve traffic flow, bus efficiency, and traffic congestion. These bus bulbs may act as social spaces on the street and include amenities such as vegetation, trash/recycling cans, and:

- 1 Information kiosks, cultural wayfinding, and/or locally commissioned art display
- 2 Off-board MetroCard fare collection boxes enabling passengers to board quickly

- 3 Bus shelters for shade and seating
- 4 LinkNYC infrastructure to offer free public Wi-Fi, phone calls, device charging and interactive maps
- 5 Real-time digital display for bus arrival information and wait times
- 6 City Bench for additional seating as needed
- 7 Introduce a new sidewalk subway entrance to serve as primary combined entry for 4/5/6 and Q/T lines
- 8 Take advantage of greater sidewalk width and introduce public plaza south of this subway entry on Lexington Avenue with flexible seating, information kiosk, cultural wayfinding, and place for public art



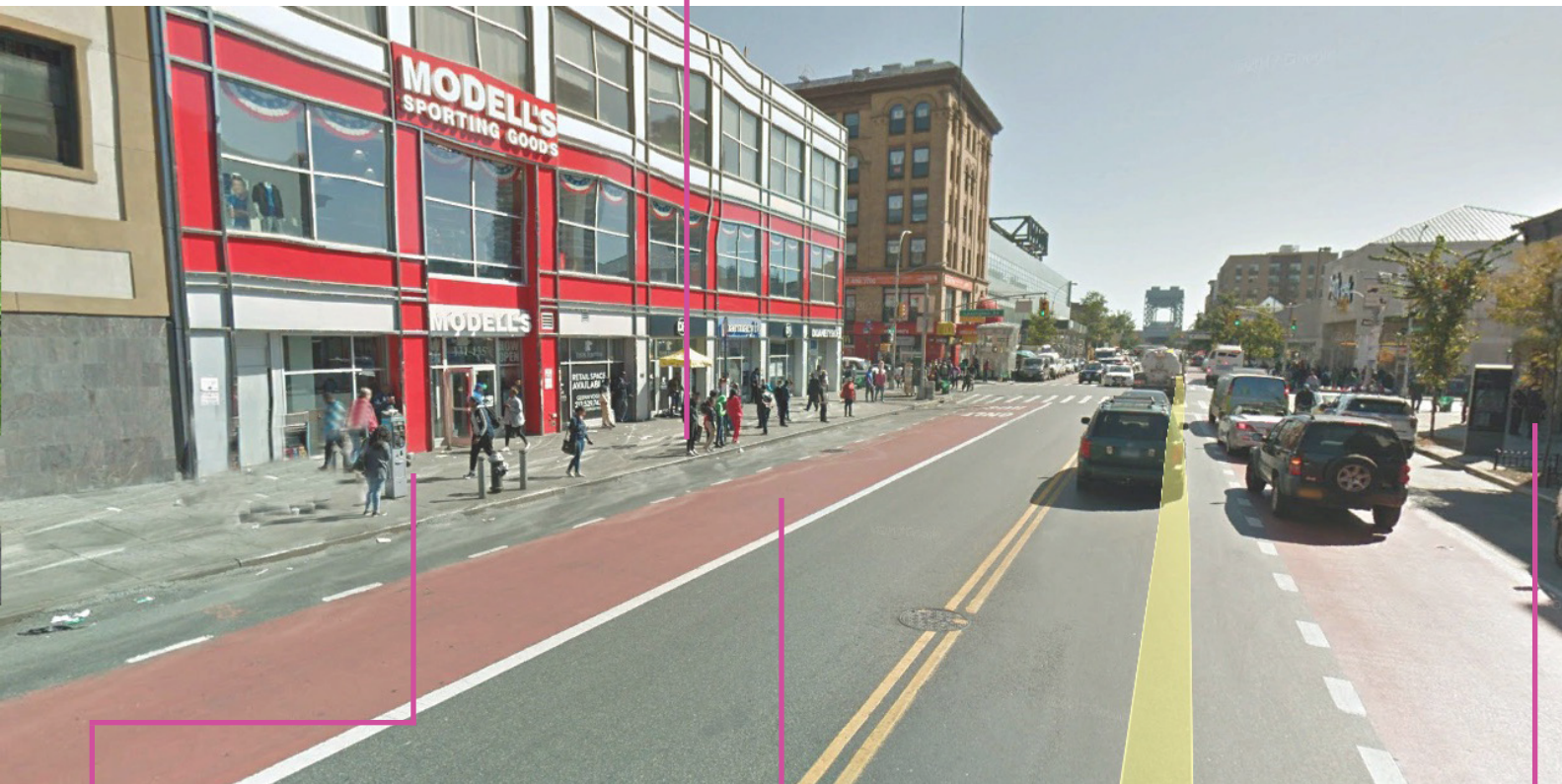


# KEY LOCATIONS

LOCATION C: 125th Street and Lexington Avenue

Existing Conditions & Challenges

Bus transit times are not efficient due to traffic congestion along East 125th Street



Many existing bus stops lack shelter, shade, lighting, and seating.

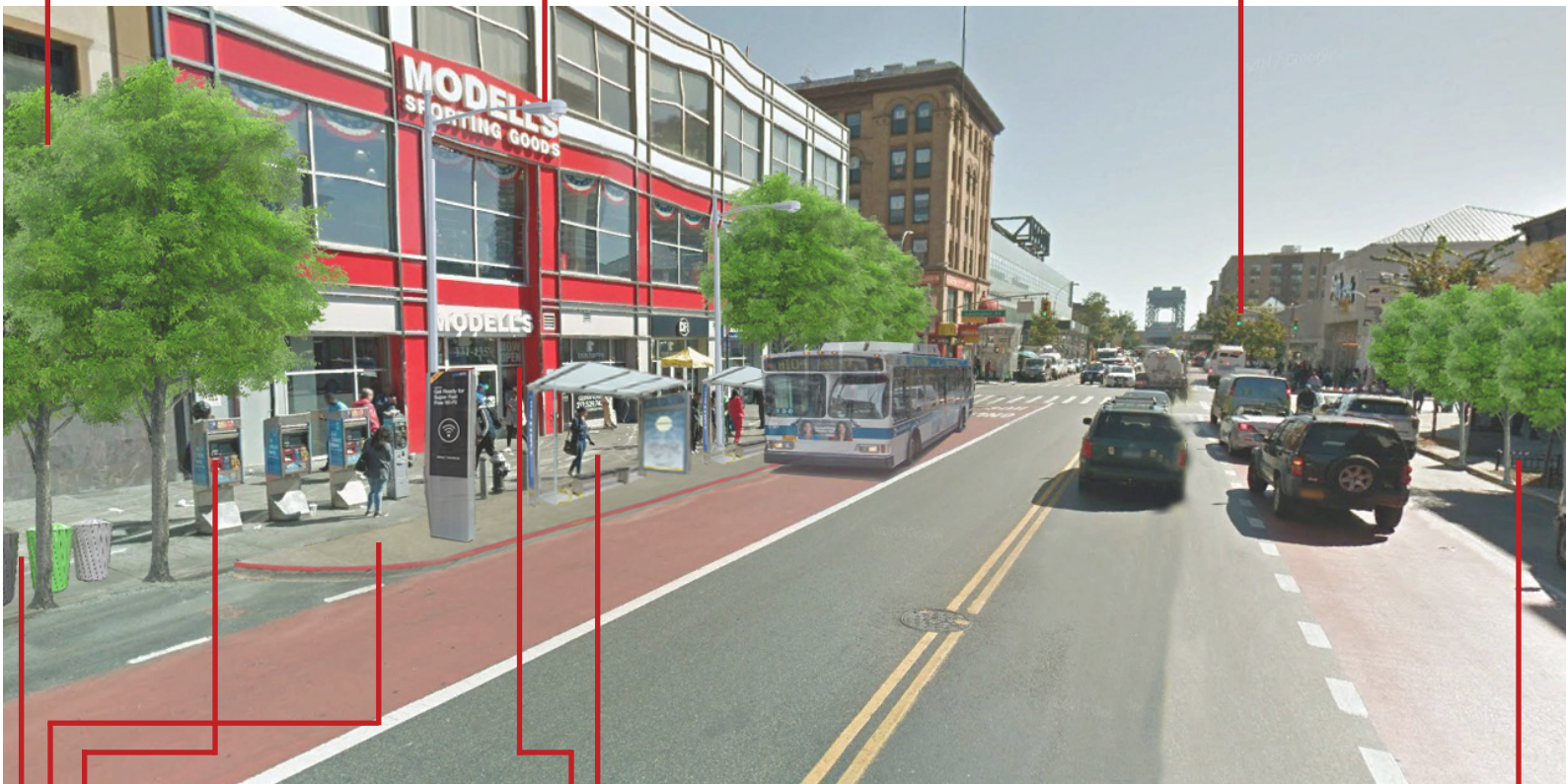
Trucks often double-park for loading and shipping logistics along 125th and adjacent streets. This prevents efficient traffic flow.

Traffic rules for private vehicles and trucks are not well enforced along dedicated off-set lanes.

LOCATION C: 125th Street and Lexington Avenue

Potential Strategies

Additional trees lining East 125th Street visually soften the area, improve air quality, and create shade.



Additional street lighting (LED) at bus bulbs / SBS stops increases safety and creates natural spots for gathering.

Transit signal priority optimizes signal timing to ensure smoother traffic flow.

Off-board MetroCard fare collection boxes can enable passengers to board more quickly / improve transit times.

Introduce bus bulbs and extend sidewalk to meet dedicated bus lanes at Select Bus Service stop locations along East 125th Street so that buses do not have to pull in and out of traffic.

Introduce public trash and recycling receptacles with lids at each intersection.

Bus bulbs can include amenities such as Information kiosks, cultural wayfinding, and/or locally commissioned art display, and bus shelters for shade and seating.

Introduce dedicated freight truck off-peak loading zones where appropriate.

Encourage large storefront windows and sidewalk cafes (where permitted) to relate street activity to street-level small business.

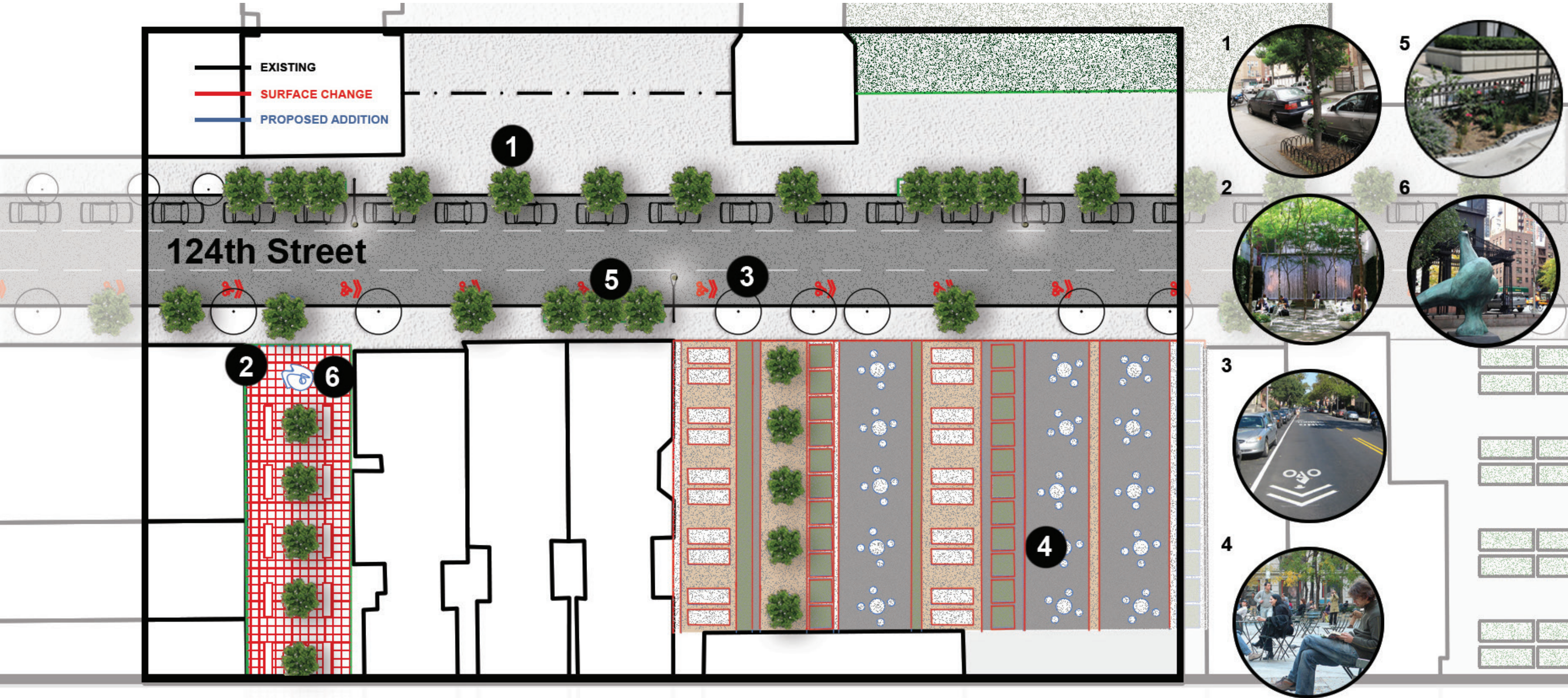


# KEY LOCATIONS: potential actions

## LOCATION D: 124th Street between 3rd and 2nd Avenues

- 1 Introduce additional trees on either side of the street at all East to West corridors to create shade and improve air quality
- 2 Encourage street-level public spaces such as pocket parks through incentivized zoning
- 3 Relocate bike lane from East 128th Street to 124th Street moving East to West to link with other North to South bike lanes and provide better access to Marcus Garvey Park

- 4 Encourage street-level public plazas at new developments through incentivized zoning and program these plazas with flexible seating that can be rearranged for cultural events, vendor spaces, and farmers' markets
- 5 Introduce bioswales on both sides of the street on East 124th and 126th Streets to facilitate better stormwater management
- 6 Introduce spaces for public art and provide opportunities for local artist commissions in new public spaces





# KEY LOCATIONS

LOCATION D: 124th Street between 3rd and 2nd Avenues | Existing Conditions & Challenges

Trees and vegetation along East 126th and 124th Streets are sparse.



This space is currently an underutilized and untapped resource for a community that craves public space for flexible social uses.

The community voiced many concerns for the area including lack of civic and public plazas and amenities (shade, seating, lighting) along 126th and 124th Streets.

LOCATION D: 124th Street between 3rd and 2nd Avenues | Potential Strategies

Bioswales along 126th and 124th Streets improve stormwater management and visually soften the corridors.



Relocate bike lane from East 128th Street to 124th Street moving East to West. Add high-visibility bike lane markings for bike safety.

Consider opportunities for locally commissioned art.

Make underutilized spaces public by adding new pocket parks and plazas with flexible seating, fresh food market vendors, and space for other pop-up temporary cultural, arts, and social events.



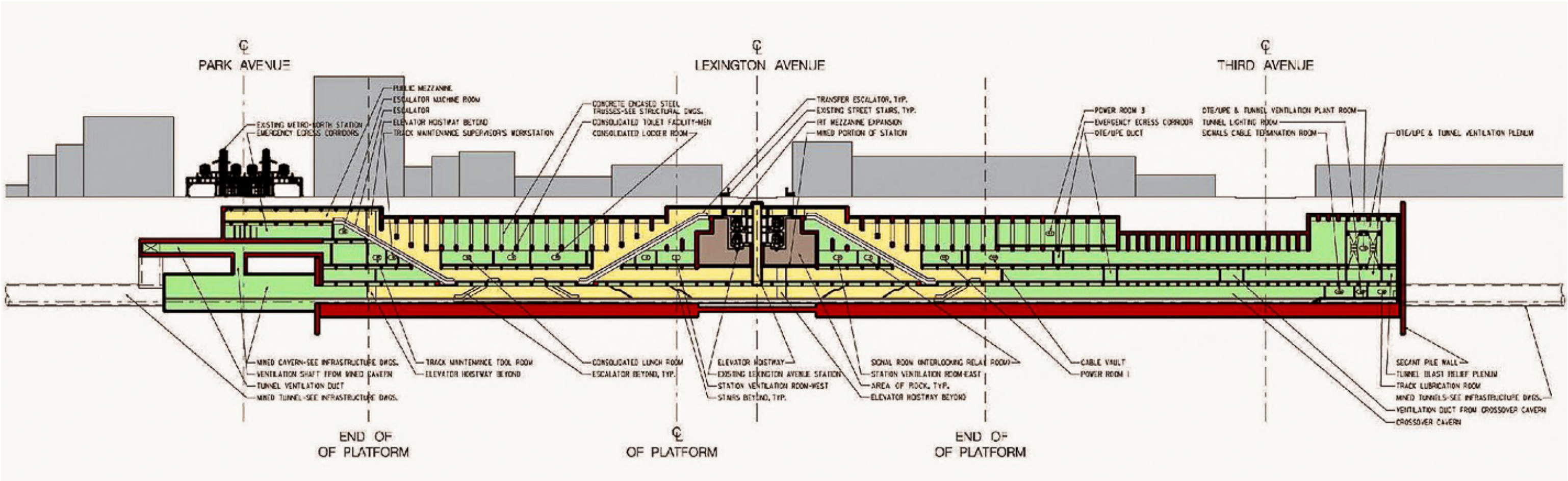
# KEY LOCATIONS

## Proposed 125th Street Underground Station & Concourse | Proposed Conditions (by MTA)

A concept drawing included in the 2004 MTA New York City Transit, Second Avenue Subway: Supplemental Environmental Assessment to the Second Avenue Subway Final Environmental Impact Statement document suggests that a new subterranean Second Avenue Q/T subway platform accessible by escalators is planned to extend along East 125th Street from Park Avenue to the middle of the block between Lexington and Third Avenues. While “public mezzanine” areas are noted right at the subway entrances at Park and Lexington Avenues, no continuous underground concourse is illustrated. Several existing properties are noted for either full or partial acquisition as shown on pages 26-29.

## Potential Strategies

Connect East between 125th Street Metro-North Station and the 4/5/6 existing station and proposed Q/T subway stop with a **continuous underground pedestrian concourse at mid-level between grade and subway platforms below**. Study the feasibility of additionally extending this concourse West to connect to the 2/3 subway station at 125th Street and Malcolm X Blvd. In combination with recommendations to support a vibrant streetscape at grade, this underground commercially and culturally active “street” will support future local community growth, sustainable contextual development, and higher future ridership.



Second Avenue Subway, MTA Conceptual Drawings of the 125th Street Station (Figures 2-7)  
MTA New York City Transit, Second Avenue Subway: Supplemental Environmental Assessment to the  
Second Avenue Subway Final Environmental Impact Statement: 2004



# KEY LOCATIONS

## Proposed 125th Street Underground Station & Concourse

### Proposed Conditions (by MTA)

New subway entrances are noted under the Metro-North Viaduct at Park Avenue and at the two Southern corners of Lexington Avenue and 125th Street. It is unclear what kind of sidewalk entrances are planned for this area, but images of several existing types are noted within the MTA Environmental Impact Statement.

Renderings for proposed platform and mezzanine areas are also included. However, these are generic and suggest general design concepts applicable to all Second Avenue line subway stops. If the newly constructed stations along 2nd avenue can be considered models for what is to come, it is important to note that station designs do not yet indicate any planned social spaces and/or commercial and retail opportunities. The potential for public art within mezzanine spaces is illustrated.

### Potential Strategies

- New primary sidewalk subway entrances at existing 125th Street plaza under the Viaduct and at Southeast (Pathmark) corner of Lexington Avenue and 125th Street should catalyze public space improvements in both locations. Plazas should include flexible seating, public art, information kiosk, and cultural wayfinding. (Refer to recommended Vision Plan on pages 12-13.)
- To encourage pedestrian travel East of Lexington, multiple stairways and elevators should connect to the station below at various points East to West between Park Avenue and 3rd Avenue. The feasibility of integrating “off-street” secondary subways entrances into building envelopes at new mid-block developments on North and South sides of 125th Street between Lexington and 3rd Avenues should be studied. These may supplement station entries, both existing and those proposed by the MTA.



Traditional sidewalk entrance - not under consideration for the Second Avenue Subway project



Illustration of an existing off-street entrance to the subway system



Illustration of an existing plaza entrance to the subway system



Conceptual Platform Illustration



Conceptual Mezzanine Illustration

(Figures 2-8 and 2-9)

MTA New York City Transit, Second Avenue Subway: Supplemental Environmental Assessment to the Second Avenue Subway Final Environmental Impact Statement: Phase 2, July 2018



# KEY LOCATIONS

## 125th Street Underground Station & Concourse

### Potential Strategies

Connect East between 125th Street Metro-North Station and the 4/5/6 existing station and proposed Q/T subway stop with a continuous underground pedestrian concourse. Explore feasibility of seamless connection to 2/3 lines. Consider making the existing subterranean facility / station beneath the Metro-North Station a cultural and historic tourist destination.

Introduce opportunities for permanent and rotating artwork installations by East Harlem artists along the underground concourse as well as at transit platforms and subway entries.

Mark this underground concourse with local small businesses and vibrant, interactive spaces to eat, shop, and socialize.

Introduce digitally equipped Wi-Fi and cultural wayfinding kiosks along the length of the concourse.

Introduce flexible seating, and lighting to create spaces for social interaction and cultural programming.





# PARALLEL INITIATIVES

Several projects that are proposed, planned, or already underway that intersect the aforementioned goals:

## Small Business & Jobs

- Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development East Harlem Points of Agreement includes comprehensive neighborhood investments in housing, transportation, public space, community services, and culture working together to improve the quality of life for East Harlem residents.
- Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) to continue implementing HireNYC at the Upper Manhattan Workforce1 Center at 215 West 125th Street and at an additional satellite Workforce1 Center in East Harlem. Small Business Services (SBS) to connect East Harlem residents to trainings provided by Workforce1 Center System. Services to be provided for target populations including youth aged 18-24 years of age.
- Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) to continue promoting participation of M/WBEs in the affordable housing development industry through the Building Opportunity Initiative.
- SBS Neighborhood 3600 Program to protect and enhance viability of local businesses with \$1.49M in grants to local nonprofit partners to staff, plan, and implement programs.
- Union Settlement to partner with New Harlem East Merchants Association (NHEMA) and Hope Community Inc. to implement customized commercial revitalization programs informed by the Commercial District Needs Assessment of major commercial corridors.
- Workforce Investment Act awards funds for East Harlem, specializing in Adult and Dislocated Workers by NYC Department of Small Business Services. Job preparation and placement services provided to dislocated workers and high-need individuals.

## Arts & Culture

- NYC Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) & City of NY East 126th Street Bus Depot Memorial & Mixed Use Project to include mix of permanently affordable and middle income residential, commercial, and community facility uses and provide a publicly-accessible memorial commemorating the Harlem African Burial Ground. The Memorial will include an outdoor area and indoor cultural facility. Zoning will be amended from M1-2 Light Manufacturing to C6-3 General Central Commercial District.
- Department of Transportation (DOT) Banner and Wayfinding working with local community groups to create wayfinding maps. Marcus Garvey Park offers an art installation map from park to park between 106th Street and 135th Street. The Caribbean Cultural Center and African Diaspora Institute collaborated with Open House NY and Apollo to create an app celebrating the history of El Barrio.
- CIVITAS working with the Parks Department to designate an ecological area and working with Landmarks East Harlem to designate a historic district.
- The East Harlem Community Walking Trail project created by Harlem Neighborhood Health Action Center running east and west along 106th and 115th Streets to highlight East Harlem’s rich history, local art institutes/galleries, and cultural centers.
- Department of Cultural Affairs funding available through the Building Community Capacity Program to support arts and culture objectives identified in the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan.

# Transit & Environment

- NYCEDC & DOT & MTA & Department of Design and Construction (DDC) plan to construct two bus bulbs with shelters for M60 SBS at Lexington Avenue and 125th Street.
- NYCEDC & DOT Park Avenue and 125th Street Improvement Project will begin construction this summer and include a block-wide crosswalk running the length of the Viaduct on 125th Street, improved lighting, and sidewalk extensions on East and West sides of station for better taxi stands.
- MTA replacing historic stairways on South side of 125th Street through Small Business Program Tier II.
- MTA completing installation of new art work lighting at exterior of Metro-North Station & Viaduct through Small Business Mentoring Program Tier I.
- MTA Station Enhancement Program to provide station house and platform improvements as well as enhanced lighting installation under the Viaduct
- Park Avenue and 125th Street is a Vision Zero priority intersection for pedestrian safety.
- NHEMA (Uptown Grand Central) to maintain community programming under the Metro-North Viaduct through the DOT Plaza Program.
- DOT’s Office of Freight Mobility to release comprehensive plan in 2018 to study and improve commercial delivery loading and unloading regulations along 125th Street.
- DOT plan to install additional benches through the City Bench Program in collaboration with Manhattan North District Council of Presidents to focus on NYCHA development areas, with East Harlem Community Alliance to focus on commercial and crosstown corridors, and with Health Action Center to focus on areas around NORCs/Franklin Plaza and East Harlem Walking Trail.
- NYC Dept of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to design and expand Harlem River Greenway Park Link to connect 125th and 132nd Street.
- This is a MillionTrees NYC “Trees for Public Health” neighborhood. DPR conducts block-by-block street tree plantings, and nonprofit organizations, including New York Restoration Project, oversee plantings and outreach throughout the community.
- NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Green Infrastructure Grant program available to private property owners and new developers to encourage stormwater management and runoff from impervious areas.
- NYC Department of Sanitation (DSNY) engaging local stakeholders to develop a shared sanitation vision for the East 99th Street DSNY facility and the construction and operation of the East 127th Street facility.

## Social & Survival Services

- NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) to extend Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training for individuals ages 18 and over targeting East Harlem with trainings and awareness campaigns.
- DOHMH to conduct outreach and identify new Opioid Overdose Prevention Providers (OOPPs) to train East Harlem residents to administer naloxone.
- DOHMH opened East Harlem Neighborhood Health Action Centers at 158 East 115th Street and 161 East 110th Street to provide co-located health and social services.



# 05 APPENDICES

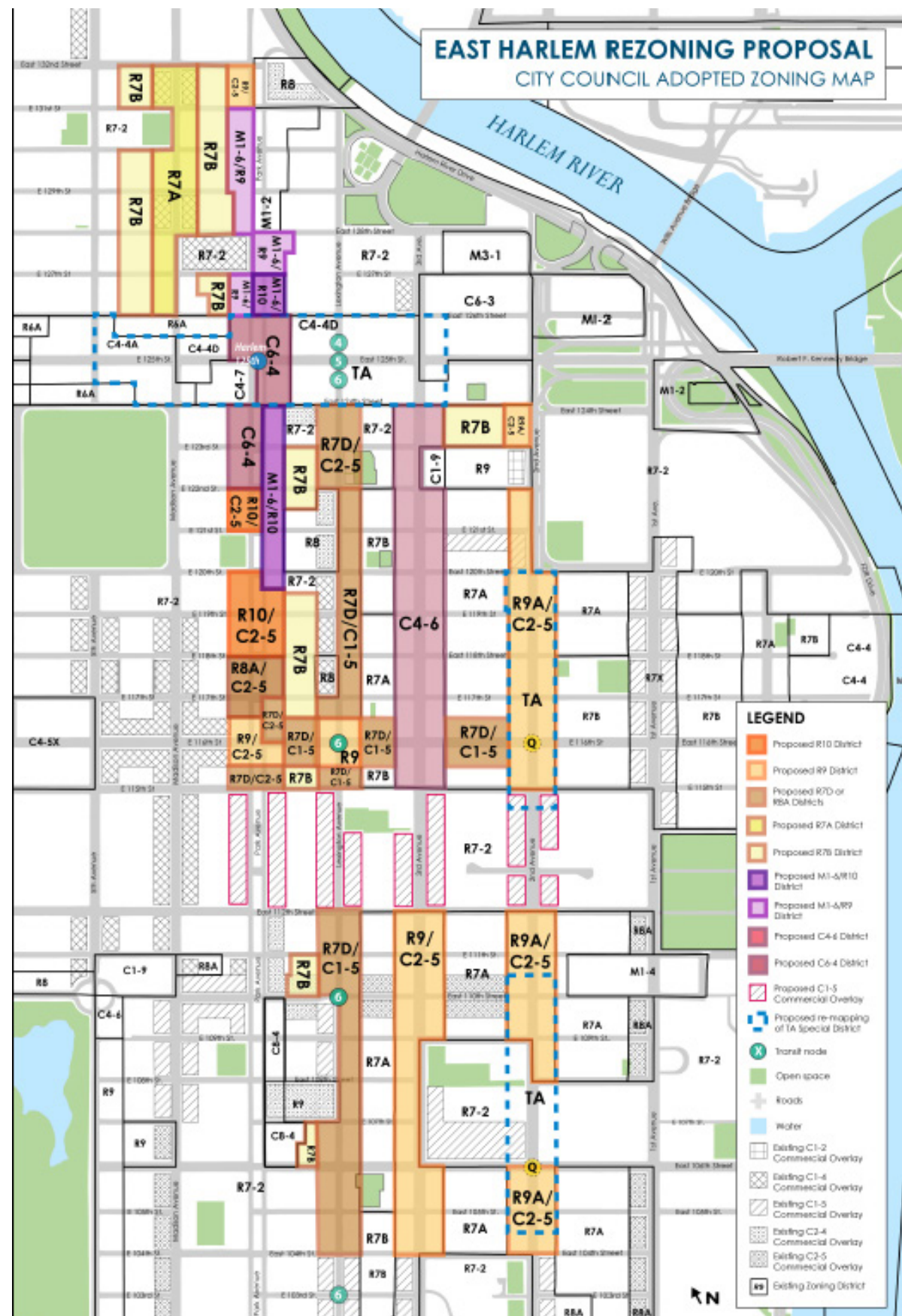
## COMMUNITY VISIONING PARTICIPANTS<sup>i</sup>

- Ascendant Neighborhood Development
  - Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute
  - Center for Urban Community Services (CUCS)
  - Community Voices Heard
  - CIVITAS
  - East Harlem Talent Network
  - East Harlem Tutorial Program
  - Exodus Transitional Community
  - Harlem Neighborhood Block Association (HNBA)
  - Hi-ARTS
  - JustLeadershipUSA (JLUSA)
  - Landmark East Harlem
  - LenoxFive 127th Street Block Association
- LSA Family Health Service
  - Manhattan Community Board 11
  - Marcus Garvey Park Alliance
  - MNN El Barrio Firehouse Community Media Center
  - New Harlem East Merchants Association (NHEMA)
  - New York Academy of Medicine (NYAM)
  - New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
  - Northern Manhattan Collaborative
  - Picture the Homeless
  - Tri-State Transportation Campaign
  - TWU Local 100
  - Strive International
  - Youth Action YouthBuild
- Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA)
  - New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC)
  - New York City Department of City Planning
  - New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
  - New York City Department of Transportation (DOT)
  - New York City Human Resources Administration/ Department of Homeless Services
  - New York City Police Department – 25th Precinct
  - New York Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) Capital Construction
  - New York Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) Metro-North Railroad
- Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer
  - New York City Councilmember Diana Ayala
  - New York City Councilmember Bill Perkins
  - Former New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito
  - New York State Assembly Member Robert J. Rodriguez
  - New York State Senator Jose M. Serrano



As part of our visioning process, a preliminary information document was created in order to facilitate our first community visioning charrette event in December 2017. You can find a copy of this document here at the following link: <https://bit.ly/2LnL7VG>














**NORTHERN MANHATTAN  
EAST HARLEM**

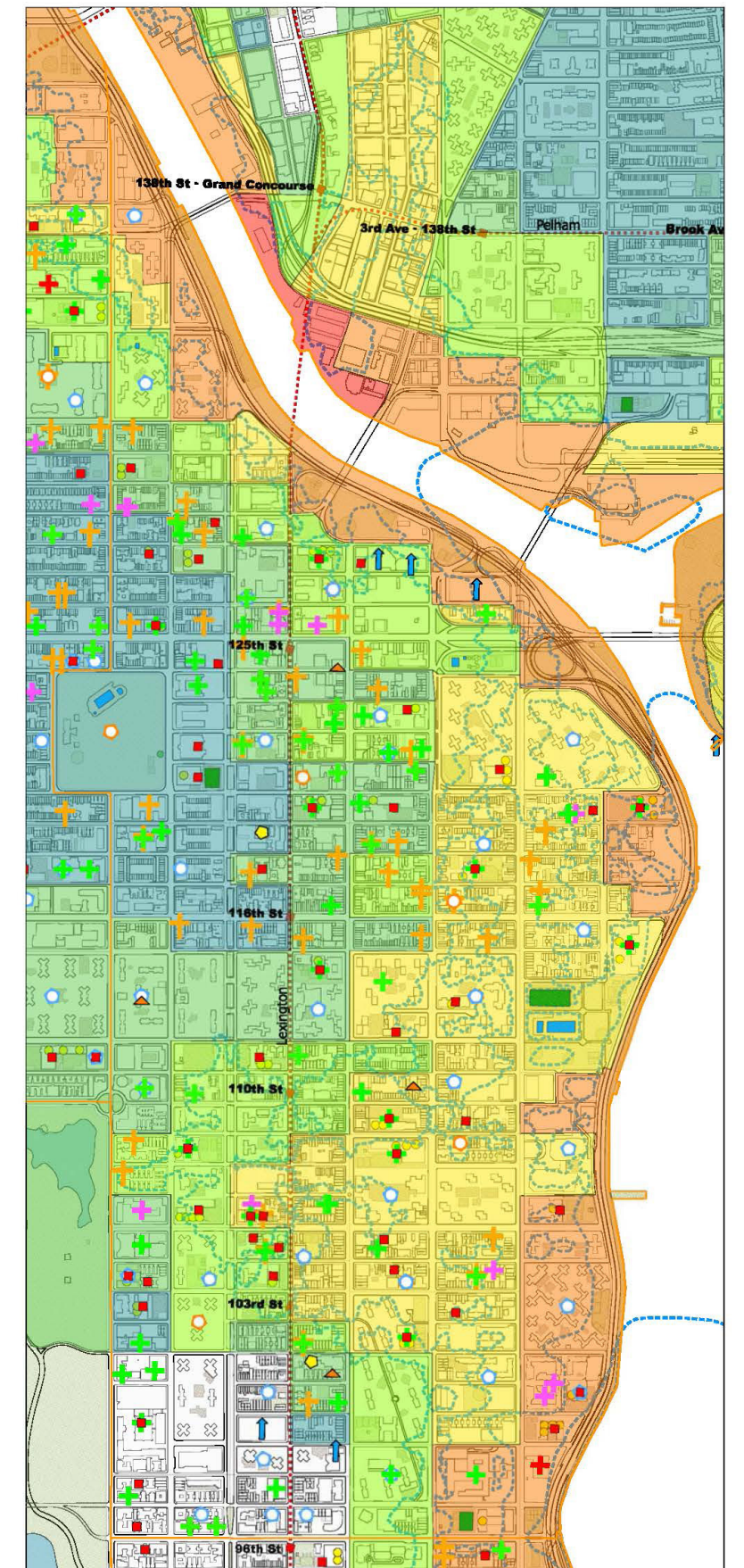
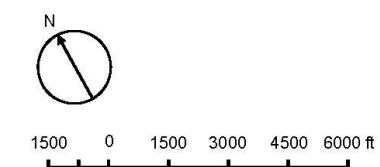
LEGEND

## NYC HURRICANE EVACUATION ZONES

-  ZONE 1  
 ZONE 2  
 ZONE 3  
 ZONE 4  
 ZONE 5  
 ZONE 6  
 Flood Hazard Line  
 Hurricane Evacuation Center  
 Accessible Hurricane Evacuation Center

## FACILITIES

-  EDUCATION
-  THEATERS
-  SWIMMING POOLS
-  SOCCER & FOOTBALL FIELDS
-  FIREHOUSE
-  POLICE PRECINCT
-  EMS STATION
-  HEALTH
-  SOCIAL CARE CENTER
-  CHILD CARE
-  SENIOR CITIZEN CARE
-  CHURCH & CHARITY
-  TRANSPORTATION



<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/plans-studies/east-harlem/eat-harlem-adopted-zoning-map-113017.pdf>

<https://www.weact.org/publications/northern-manhattan-climate-action-plan-climate-map-of-east-harlem/>

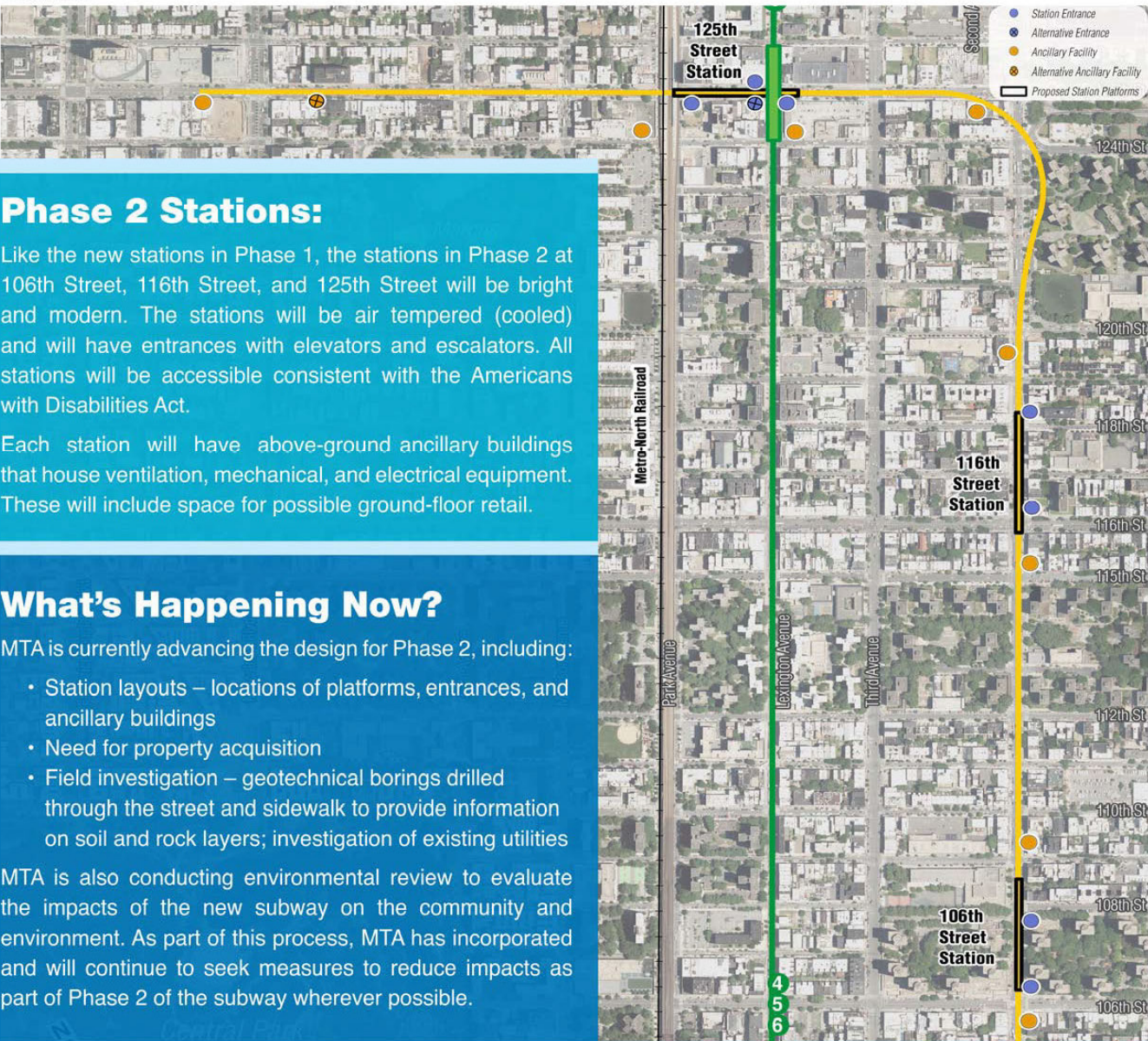


# Second Avenue Subway Phase 2

Fact Sheet

## The Second Avenue Subway is Coming to East Harlem

With the recent opening of Phase 1 of the Second Avenue Subway, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is now advancing Phase 2. Phase 1 extended Q subway service from 63rd Street to 96th Street along Manhattan's East Side, with new stations at 72nd, 86th, and 96th Streets, providing one-seat service from the Upper East Side to Times Square and on to Coney Island via the Broadway line. Phase 2 will extend into East Harlem to 125th Street and include three new stations at 106th, 116th, and 125th Streets. Phase 2 will provide direct passenger connections to the Lexington Avenue (4/5/6) subway line at 125th Street and an entrance at Park Avenue to allow convenient transfers to Metro-North Railroad.



### Phase 2 Stations:

Like the new stations in Phase 1, the stations in Phase 2 at 106th Street, 116th Street, and 125th Street will be bright and modern. The stations will be air tempered (cooled) and will have entrances with elevators and escalators. All stations will be accessible consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Each station will have above-ground ancillary buildings that house ventilation, mechanical, and electrical equipment. These will include space for possible ground-floor retail.

### What's Happening Now?

MTA is currently advancing the design for Phase 2, including:

- Station layouts – locations of platforms, entrances, and ancillary buildings
- Need for property acquisition
- Field investigation – geotechnical borings drilled through the street and sidewalk to provide information on soil and rock layers; investigation of existing utilities

MTA is also conducting environmental review to evaluate the impacts of the new subway on the community and environment. As part of this process, MTA has incorporated and will continue to seek measures to reduce impacts as part of Phase 2 of the subway wherever possible.

# Second Avenue Subway Phase 2

## Construction

Construction of Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway will include moving some utilities (water, sewer, electric) currently located under Second Avenue away from the construction zone, excavation for the new tunnel and stations, and construction of the station entrances, ancillary buildings, and connections to the 4/5/6 subway at Lexington Avenue. MTA is seeking to minimize construction impacts on the community as much as possible.

Construction work will include:

- Modification and use of the existing tunnel sections beneath Second Avenue that were built in the 1970s
- Cut-and-cover construction for 106th Street Station and 116th Street Station to connect to the existing tunnel sections
- Mined tunnel constructed below-ground using a Tunnel Boring Machine from Second Avenue at 120th Street to 125th Street near Lenox Avenue; mined construction of 125th Street Station
- Excavation and above-ground construction for all station entrances and ancillary buildings



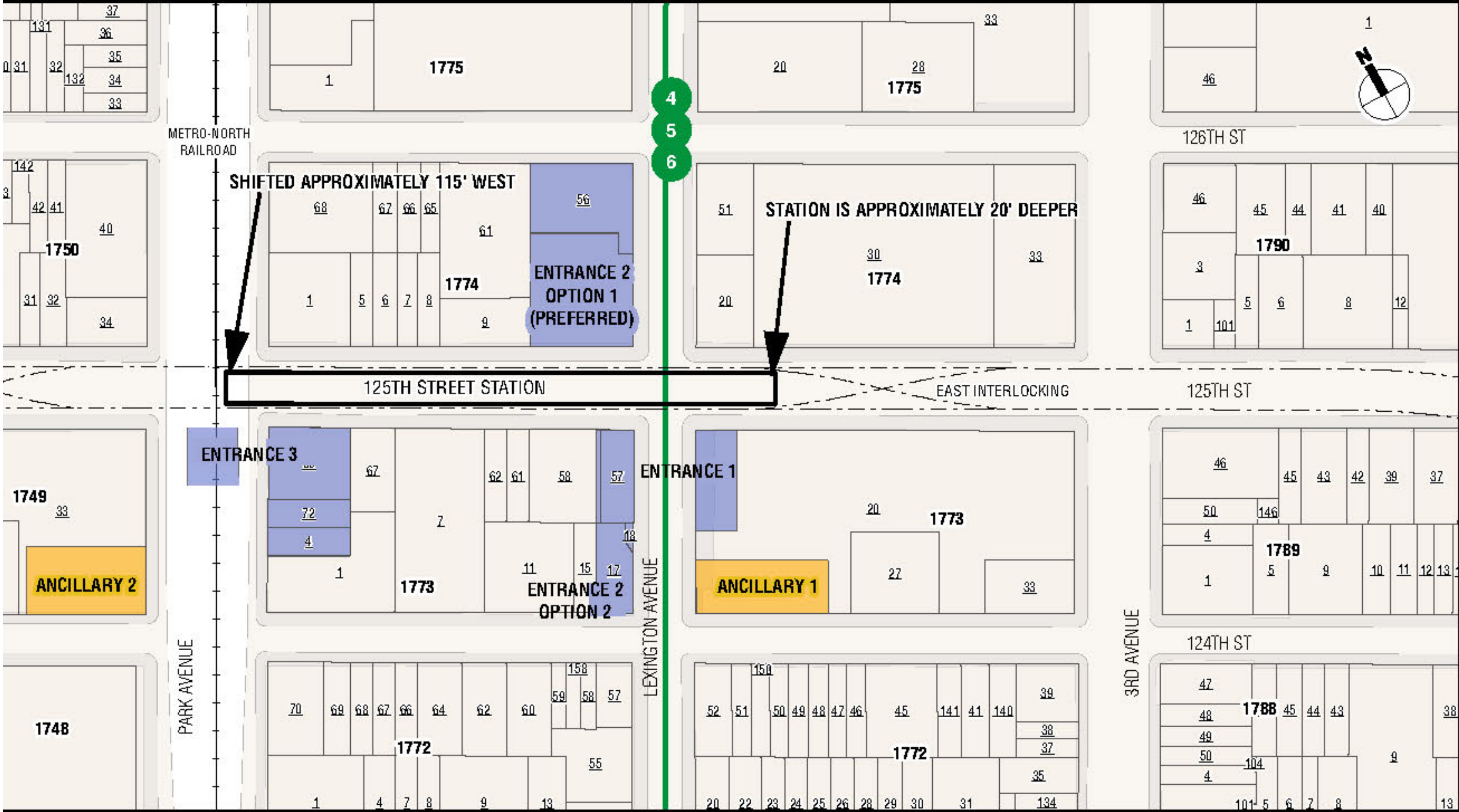
## Environmental Review

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires environmental review for projects that will seek federal funding. As required by NEPA, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and MTA evaluated the full proposed Second Avenue Subway between 125th Street and the Financial District in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) completed in 2004. Because of the long duration for completion of the new subway, FTA and MTA will prepare an updated supplemental NEPA environmental document for each phase of the subway. Each supplemental NEPA document will evaluate updated conditions and any **refinements to the project design from what was presented in the 2004 EIS.**

FTA and MTA have completed a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) that evaluates the impacts of Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway and are now inviting comments from the public on the information presented in the Supplemental EA.

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS	
Construction Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overall construction for approximately 9 years, with construction at some locations for shorter periods</li><li>• <b>Traffic disruption, noise, visual appearance of construction sites, temporary modified access to buildings</b></li></ul>
Permanent Operational Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Beneficial impacts of new subway service and enhanced transit accessibility</b></li><li>• New ancillary buildings 90 to 140 feet high on Second Avenue, 45 to 75 feet high on 125th Street; designed to be compatible with neighborhood setting</li><li>• New station entrances on both Second Avenue and 125th Street (see graphic on previous page)</li><li>• Need for acquisition of private property to accommodate entrances and ancillary facilities: possible acquisition of 36 to 39 properties and partial acquisition of 4 to 5 properties. This would result in an estimated displacement of 170 residents and 157 to 505 employees. As with Phase 1 of the Project, MTA will work with owners and tenants, and will follow all state and federal regulations for compensation and displacement, as well as robust MTA real estate protocols.</li></ul>





(Figure S-6)  
 MTA New York City Transit, Second Avenue Subway: Supplemental Environmental Assessment to the  
 Second Avenue Subway Final Environmental Impact Statement: Phase 2, July 2018



# FOOTNOTES

<sup>i</sup> Participation in this community visioning does not necessarily connote endorsement of the platform or process.

<sup>ii</sup> All concepts and recommendations would require and be subject to further design and detailed study for any implementation by appropriate parties. Renderings are for illustrative purposes only.

<sup>iii</sup> See appendices for more information on these initiatives.

<sup>iv</sup> Busà, A. “After the 125th Street Rezoning,” Urbanities, Vol. 4, No 2, November 2014: 51-68; Anuta, J. “Rezoning could be boon for East Harlem landlords,” Crain’s New York, June 12, 2017: [http://www.crainsnewyork.com/article/20170612/REAL\\_ESTATE/170619989](http://www.crainsnewyork.com/article/20170612/REAL_ESTATE/170619989); Midday on WYNC, “The Threat of Gentrification With Rezoning in East Harlem,” WYNC, January 16, 2018: <https://www.wnyc.org/story/legal-aid-society-enters-fight-affordable-housing-nyc/>; Ornella, M. “Rezoning Forecasts Concern NYCHA Residents in East Harlem,” Medium, December 23, 2016: <https://medium.com/newharlemworld/rezoning-forecasts-concern-nycha-residents-in-east-harlem-ba473f2ae688>

<sup>v</sup> King L, Hinterland K, Dragan KL, Driver CR, Harris TG, Gwynn RC, Linos N, Barbot O, Bassett MT. Community Health Profiles 2015, Manhattan Community District 11: East Harlem; 2015; 11(59):1-16.

<sup>vi</sup> See our summary of parallel initiatives for more information.

<sup>vii</sup> Dannenberg, Andrew L. et al. “The Impact of Community Design and Land-Use Choices on Public Health: A Scientific Research Agenda.” American Journal of Public Health 93.9 (2003): 1500–1508. Print.

<sup>viii</sup> Anuta, J. “As green space went up, crime went down in poor neighborhoods,” Crain’s New York Business, August 21, 2018: [http://www.crainsnewyork.com/article/20180821/REAL\\_ESTATE/180829973/as-green-space-went-up-crime-went-down-in-poor-neighborhoods](http://www.crainsnewyork.com/article/20180821/REAL_ESTATE/180829973/as-green-space-went-up-crime-went-down-in-poor-neighborhoods)

<sup>ix</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Communities in Action: Pathways to Health Equity. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2017.

<sup>x</sup> See Braaten, D., et al. Responding to Climate Change in New York State: The ClimAID Integrated Assessment for Effective Climate Change Adaptation in New York State, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, Vol. 1244: Wiley, 2011; WE ACT for Environmental Justice, Northern Manhattan Climate Action: A Draft Plan, August 2015: [https://www.weact.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Final\\_NMCA\\_Print\\_UpdateNov2016.pdf](https://www.weact.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Final_NMCA_Print_UpdateNov2016.pdf)

<sup>xi</sup> Bourland, D. “Reinventing Cities Means Fixing Neglected Public Places,” Chronicle of Philanthropy, July 10, 2018.

<sup>xii</sup> Wells, L. “Eco Districts: Making NYC More Sustainable & Resilient, One Neighborhood at a Time”: [https://www.sallan.org/Snapshot/2014/04/eco\\_districts\\_making\\_nyc\\_more\\_sustainability\\_resilient\\_one\\_neighborhood\\_at\\_a\\_time.php#.W3H\\_rdJKiUI](https://www.sallan.org/Snapshot/2014/04/eco_districts_making_nyc_more_sustainability_resilient_one_neighborhood_at_a_time.php#.W3H_rdJKiUI)

<sup>xiii</sup> Regional Plan Association, “The Fourth Regional Plan: Making the Region Work for All of Us,” 2017: <http://fourthplan.org>.

<sup>xiv</sup> See McGruder, K. Race and Real Estate: Conflict and Cooperation in Harlem, 1890-1920. New York: Columbia University Press, 2015.

<sup>xv</sup> American Planning Association. “Harlem’s 125th Street: New York, New York.” <https://www.planning.org/greatplaces/streets/2007/125thstreet.htm>

<sup>xvi</sup> See: Davila, A. Barrio Dreams: Puerto Ricans, Latinos and the Neoliberal City. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004.

<sup>xvii</sup> Regional Plan Association, “Preserving Affordable Housing in East Harlem,” 2016: <http://library.rpa.org/pdf/RPA-Preserving-Affordable-Housing-in-East-Harlem.pdf>

<sup>xviii</sup> See Davila (2004); Busà (2014); Calmes, M. “Wary of Change, East Harlem Braces for Rapid Change,” Gotham Gazette: <http://www.gothamgazette.com/city/6253-wary-of-gentrification-east-harlem-braces-for-rapid-change>; Schumacher, J. “The Changing Face of East Harlem,” Gothamist, January 21, 2007: [http://gothamist.com/2007/01/21/the\\_changing\\_fa.php](http://gothamist.com/2007/01/21/the_changing_fa.php); Johnson, K. “Suddenly, the Barrio is Drawing Buyers,” New York Times, June 2, 1985: <https://www.nytimes.com/1985/06/02/realestate/suddenly-the-barrio-is-drawing-buyers.html>. See also: Asian Americans for Equality, “Demolition through Deliberate Neglect,” 2011: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4eIzUF5UOI9TS1jUGdUOXhSaTZLXy1ueXRSVmQ1Zw/view>.

<sup>xix</sup> Cuzzo, S. “The changes coming to Harlem’s 125th Street make it a hot spot,” New York Post, December 29, 2015: <https://nypost.com/2015/12/29/the-changes-coming-to-harlems-125th-st-make-it-a-hot-spot/>

<sup>xx</sup> MTA New York City Transit, Second Avenue Subway: Supplemental Environmental Assessment to the Second Avenue Subway Final Environmental Impact Statement: Phase 2, July 2018. Available online here: [http://web.mta.info/capital/sas\\_docs/ea\\_phase2.htm](http://web.mta.info/capital/sas_docs/ea_phase2.htm)

<sup>xxi</sup> NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene Community Health Profile: East Harlem (2015); NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS) Neighborhood 360° Commercial District Needs Assessment; New York State Department of Transportation Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) by Roadway Segment.

<sup>xxii</sup> Kilgannon, C. “This Space Available,” New York Times, Sept. 6, 2018: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/09/06/nyregion/nyc-storefront-vacancy.html>





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