

**A. INTRODUCTION**

Neighborhood character is an amalgam of many components that give an area its distinctive personality. These components include land use; street layout; scale, type, and style of development; historic features; patterns and volumes of traffic; noise levels; and any other physical or social characteristics that help to distinguish the community. However, not all of these elements affect neighborhood character in all cases; a neighborhood usually draws its character from a few determining elements. Using information presented in other technical chapters of this EIS, this chapter examines neighborhood character at the project site (both the Farley Complex and the Development Transfer Site) and a surrounding ¼-mile study area, as well as future conditions without and with the proposed action.

**PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS**

Under Phase I of the proposed Farley/Moynihan project, the proposed changes to the use, size, and scale of the Farley Complex would be consistent with land use under existing conditions and in the Future Without the Proposed Action. The proposed project would improve the appearance and activity level of the Eighth and Ninth Avenue streetscapes. The proposed project would also be expected to attract new office workers, residents, or visitors to the project site and surrounding area who would utilize the neighborhood streets. These changes are anticipated to improve the neighborhood character of the area immediately surrounding the Farley Complex between West 31st and West 34th Streets and Eighth and Ninth Avenue.

The proposed project provides for the beneficial reuse of the historic Farley Complex and while the rehabilitation will result in certain modifications to the structure, it is noted that the building exterior would be restored and the final design would be developed in consultation with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP). Where the final design would have potential adverse impacts on the Farley Complex, mitigation would be developed and stipulated in a Letter of Resolution to be executed with OPRHP. Other analyses in this DEIS indicate that while the Phase I component of the proposed project would bring physical changes to the existing building, new uses to the site, and generate increased activity at and around the site (i.e., additional traffic and pedestrian movements), these changes would not adversely affect neighborhood character, as discussed below.

In general it is expected that the potential Phase II development—which would either be a commercial overbuild constructed on the Farley Complex or a primarily residential or mixed-use building constructed on the Development Transfer Site—would not have a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character. Although the proposed project would result in significant adverse traffic and pedestrian impacts, all of those impacts would be mitigated as described in Chapter 19, “Mitigation,” and, therefore, there would be no significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character. However, the overbuild scenario could have an adverse visual impact

on the historic Farley Complex that could be considered an adverse neighborhood character impact to the superblock corridor portion of the study area (defined below).

## **B. METHODOLOGY**

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, an assessment of neighborhood character is generally needed when the action would exceed preliminary thresholds in any one of the following areas of technical analysis: land use, urban design, visual resources, historic resources, socioeconomic conditions, traffic, or noise. An assessment is also appropriate when the action would have moderate effects on several of those areas. Potential effects on neighborhood character may include:

- *Land Use.* When development resulting from the proposed action would have the potential to change neighborhood character by: introducing a new, incompatible land use; conflicting with land use policy or other public plans for the area; changing land use character; or resulting in significant land use impacts.
- *Urban Design and Visual Resources.* In developed areas, urban design changes have the potential to affect neighborhood character by introducing substantially different building bulk, form, size, scale, or arrangement. Urban design changes may also affect block forms, street patterns, or street hierarchies, as well as streetscape elements such as streetwalls, landscaping, curbcuts, and loading docks. Visual resource changes have the potential to affect neighborhood character by directly changing visual features such as unique and important public view corridors and vistas, or public visual access to such features.
- *Historic Resources.* When an action would result in substantial direct changes to a historic resource or substantial changes to public views of a resource, or when a historic resources analysis identifies a significant impact in this category, there is a potential to affect neighborhood character.
- *Socioeconomic Conditions.* Changes in socioeconomic conditions have the potential to affect neighborhood character when they result in substantial direct or indirect displacement or addition of population, employment, or businesses, substantial differences in population or employment density, or if the project results in changes to a unique industry.
- *Traffic and Pedestrians.* Changes in traffic and pedestrian conditions can affect neighborhood character in a number of ways. For traffic to have an effect on neighborhood character, it must be a contributing element to the character of the neighborhood (either by its absence or its presence), and it must change substantially as a result of the action. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, such substantial traffic changes can include: changes in level of service (LOS) to C or below; change in traffic patterns; change in roadway classifications; change in vehicle mixes; substantial increases in traffic volumes on residential streets; or significant traffic impacts, as identified in that technical analysis. Regarding pedestrians, when a proposed action would result in substantially different pedestrian activity and circulation, it has the potential to affect neighborhood character.
- *Noise.* According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, for an action to affect neighborhood character in regards to noise, it would need to result in a significant adverse noise impact and a change in acceptability category.

The proposed project is expected to be developed in up to two phases. Phase I—development of Moynihan Station, USPS space, and the commercial uses within the Farley Complex—is

expected to be completed by 2010. As described in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” Phase II would consist of the utilization of 1 million zoning square feet (zsf) of unused development rights from the Farley Complex, and there are two development options for Phase II. Under Scenario 1, the unused development rights would be utilized to construct an approximately 1 million-zsf commercial overbuild on the Western Annex of the Farley Complex by 2015. Under Scenario 2, the unused development rights would be utilized to construct a 1.1 million-gross-square-foot (gsf) primarily residential or mixed-use building on the Development Transfer Site—that building would be constructed concurrently with Phase I and completed by 2010. This chapter will analyze the two Phase II development options and examine the extent to which the proposed project would affect neighborhood character in relation to long-term development projections in the surrounding Hudson Yards Special Zoning District. For Scenario 1, this chapter assesses the 2015 Phase II conditions using land use projections anticipated through 2025 based on the Hudson Yards Rezoning and Redevelopment Plan Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (Hudson Yards FGEIS).

In summary, this chapter examines neighborhood character in the area surrounding the project site (an approximately ¼-mile study area) as it currently exists and in the Future Without and the Future With the Proposed Action. The chapter’s impact analysis focuses on changes to neighborhood character resulting from changes in the technical areas discussed above, since changes in those technical areas are most likely to result in changes to neighborhood character.

### **C. EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The character of the ¼-mile study area surrounding the project site varies depending on particular locations. The study area encompasses portions of four districts and neighborhoods including a superblock corridor that contains the Farley Complex, Hell’s Kitchen, the Garment Center/Herald Square commercial district that contains the Development Transfer Site, and the residential neighborhood of Chelsea. As described below, a variety of conditions characterize these four distinct neighborhoods.

#### **SUPERBLOCK CORRIDOR**

The Farley Complex block and the two blocks immediately adjacent to the east and west compose a unique area in Midtown. These three superblocks extend along a corridor from Seventh to Tenth Avenues, between West 33rd and West 31st Streets and are characterized by three large, bulky buildings occupying all or part of the superblocks—the Farley Complex, Madison Square Garden (MSG), and the Westyard Distribution building (“Westyard building”) on Tenth Avenue—and the Amtrak tracks, which lie in a large open cut surrounded by masonry walls on the west side of Ninth Avenue. Each of the three building dominates its site, is distinctly different from the others, and is visible for long distances on adjacent streets and avenues.

The approximately 1.4 million gsf Farley Complex fully occupies the superblock over the Pennsylvania Station (Penn Station) Rail Yard between Eighth and Ninth Avenues from West 31st to West 33rd Streets. Originally built as the U.S. General Post Office, the Farley Complex is a grand building in the form of a Corinthian temple raised above the street. The main public entrance is at the top of the monumental steps on Eighth Avenue and there are entrances on Ninth Avenue and West 33rd Street for postal trucks. The building is listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places and is a New York City Landmark. The elegance of the

## **Farley Post Office/Moynihan Station Redevelopment Project**

---

Farley Complex's design offsets its great bulk and size, and it is a strong visual feature in this portion of the study area.

Constructed in 1966, MSG is a concrete drum-shaped building, 150 feet tall, that is set back from the side streets and Eighth Avenue to create a surrounding pedestrian plaza. MSG is connected by a skyway to the adjacent Two Penn Plaza on Seventh Avenue, with a street-level vehicle drop-off for Penn Station beneath the skyway. Entrances to Penn Station are also located on the corners of West 31st and West 33rd Streets at Eighth Avenue. Two Penn Plaza is a 1.56-million-square-foot, 30-story office building that was built in 1967. The broad east and west façades of this monolithic building are clad in metal and glass with regularly spaced light-colored masonry piers. The structure sits above a 0.42-acre plaza, which contains steps, planters, and lighting, and serves as an entry and gathering place for the building and for MSG and Penn Station.

The Westyard building straddles the Penn Station Rail Yard between Tenth Avenue and Dyer Avenues, West 31st and West 33rd Streets, and is visible across the below-grade rail yards from the east. This bulky concrete building, 15 stories tall and designed in the 1970s "Brutalist" style, sits high atop a platform, with corner buttresses on its north, west, and south façades. Its shape is unusual, in that the north, west, and south façades slope away from the street as they rise. Two other large buildings are prominent in this superblock corridor, because they also face the open-cut rail yards—the loft buildings at 424 West 33rd Street and 406-426 West 31st Street. They are 12- and 15-story loft buildings constructed for the printing trades. Both overlook the rail yards and are historic resources in the superblock corridor.

The employment base in the superblock corridor is mostly service-based, led by the finance insurance and real estate sector, and business, legal, and professional services sector. The superblock corridor contains a substantial amount of employment, given the presence of four major employers—MSG, Penn Station, the USPS, and the Daily News, which has headquarters in the Westyard building—as well as the Two Penn Plaza office building and two relatively large commercial/loft buildings on West 31st and West 33rd Street.

Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth Avenues are the major traffic routes in the superblock corridor. Eighth Avenue, adjacent to the Farley Complex and Penn Station, carries substantial traffic. Although Ninth Avenue also carries heavy traffic, volumes are significantly less through the superblock corridor than in areas to the north. Tenth Avenue typically carries substantial traffic, and serves as an access route to the Lincoln Tunnel; however, traffic volumes are lower along Tenth Avenue in the superblock corridor than in locations to the north. West 33rd Street and West 31st Street, which is not a through street because it ends at Tenth Avenue, serve as local streets and provide entrances to the Lincoln Tunnel. Similar to all streets and avenues in Midtown, the traffic routes in the superblock corridor experience heavy traffic during the peak hours, particularly along the routes that provide access to and from the Lincoln Tunnel.

The portion of the study area near Penn Station experiences substantial foot traffic in support of the retail uses, particularly in the eastern part of the superblock corridor. There is substantial pedestrian activity on the MSG block, with many people working at Two Penn Plaza, attending activities and events at MSG, and accessing/exiting Penn Station, which handles some 550,000 people a day. There is some pedestrian activity at the Farley Complex, which is primarily associated with the post office functions. However, except at the entrances to these destination uses, the streetscape does little to invite pedestrian passage. The long sides of the Farley Complex and the bank of loading docks on the West 31st Street façade at Ninth Avenue detract

from the pedestrian experience. The entrance to the Westyard building attracts pedestrian activity, but its other three sides are uninviting.

The area surrounding the Farley Complex is characterized by generally high levels of ambient noise, due to the density of development and the Central Business District location. Measured noise levels are typical of a downtown urban setting.

### **HELL'S KITCHEN**

The Hell's Kitchen neighborhood generally encompasses the portion of the study located north of the Farley Complex between Eighth and Tenth Avenues. The neighborhood has a wide mix of uses and a diverse neighborhood character including residential, a variety of low-scale industrial and commercial uses, vacant lots, and transportation infrastructure associated with the railroads and the Lincoln Tunnel approaches in the midblocks west of Ninth Avenue.

The area between West 33rd and 35th Streets, Eighth to Tenth Avenues, exhibits a mix of urban development patterns more representative of Midtown Manhattan with a typical street grid. This corridor along West 34th Street contains a wide range of building types, including bulky apartment buildings, residential towers, large- and low-scale institutional uses, office towers, low-rise residential tenements with ground-floor retail, and low-rise former manufacturing buildings. This area has a strong sense of streetwall continuity, because it has seen regular development and redevelopment, and has few vacant lots.

North of West 35th Street between Ninth and Tenth Avenues, Hell's Kitchen is a distinct neighborhood with a cohesive character from the uses along Ninth Avenue. Tenement buildings, with housing above and a lively array of food shops and restaurants at street level, attract substantial foot traffic. The streetscape is further improved by street trees along the east side of the avenue. The land use and street pattern west of Ninth Avenue is broken up by the ramps to the Lincoln Tunnel.

The history of Hell's Kitchen is reflected in eight historic resources within the study area, including three religious institutions, the former Manhattan Opera House (now the Manhattan Theater Center), the former William F. Sloan Memorial YMCA building, the New Yorker Hotel, the former J.C. Penney Company building, and the Cheyenne Diner. The three historic religious buildings in the study area are also visual resources in Hell's Kitchen—the Romanesque Revival-style St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church that spans the midblock between West 33rd and 34th Streets, west of Ninth Avenue, the West Side Jewish Center on the north side of West 34th Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues, and the Glad Tidings Tabernacle located on the north side of West 33rd Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues. The presence of these resources helps to support the distinct character of this district.

Most of the employment in Hell's Kitchen is service based, led by the health and social services sector, the finance insurance and real estate sector, and business, legal and professional services sector. Prominent office-based employment is located at the corporate headquarters of Affinia Hospitality located between West 36th and West 37th Streets. There are also several non-profit employers, the largest of which is Group Health Incorporated, a Statewide non-profit health insurer. Several retail businesses are found along West 34th Street and Ninth Avenue.

West 34th Street serves as a major crosstown route with high traffic volumes. Traffic along Ninth Avenue in Hell's Kitchen is heavy traveling southbound, especially as it approaches the Lincoln Tunnel. West 35th through West 38th Streets operate generally as local crosstown

## **Farley Post Office/Moynihan Station Redevelopment Project**

---

access; West 39th Street serves the Lincoln Tunnel and bus access to the Port Authority Bus Terminal.

The Hell's Kitchen neighborhood has active pedestrian traffic primarily along Ninth Avenue but, in general, pedestrian circulation is limited by the intrusive expanses of grade-separated ramps to the Lincoln Tunnel and industrial and warehouse uses with little pedestrian activity.

The Tenth Avenue corridor in Hell's Kitchen experiences higher noise levels due to traffic queuing to enter the Lincoln Tunnel. Traffic leading to and from the Lincoln Tunnel also contributes to higher noise levels along the 34th Street corridor in Hell's Kitchen. Noise levels along Eighth and Ninth Avenues are generally attributed to traffic along these avenues. Higher noise levels occur along some of the midblocks during the morning hours due to the loading and unloading of garment-related goods and throughout the day due to the mechanical equipment from some of the low-rise manufacturing buildings.

### **GARMENT CENTER/HERALD SQUARE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT**

The study area east of Eighth Avenue between West 31st and West 37th Streets (excluding the MSG superblock) contains portions of the predominately commercial Garment Center and Herald Square neighborhoods. The loft buildings in the midblocks of the Garment Center contain a mix of commercial and light manufacturing uses, while many of the loft buildings along Seventh and Eighth Avenues have been entirely converted to office uses. This office space is typically occupied by fashion design companies, publishing houses, and design firms unrelated to the apparel industry, such as architects, engineers, and graphic designers. The Herald Square area, a major commercial center of Midtown, contains Macy's and the Manhattan Mall, and high-rise office buildings, such as One Penn Plaza, and hotels.

The blocks east of Eighth Avenue in the Garment Center are primarily sub-divided into mid-size parcels occupied by mid-rise loft buildings, ranging from 12 to 22 stories. Many of the uses east of Eighth Avenue are related to the garment industry, but a number of buildings are partially or completely in commercial use. The streets in the Garment Center are active, with shops, restaurants, and loft storefronts that display and advertise to the trade, and with workers, visitors, shoppers, and residents. Several of the loft buildings in this area are historic resources.

The blocks in the Herald Square office and shopping area, bounded by West 35th and West 30th Streets from Sixth to Seventh and Eighth Avenues, generally contain mid-size and large lots, including through lots and full block parcels that accommodate mid- to high-rise buildings (12 to 57 stories). The nine-story Macy's department store occupies a full block between Broadway and Seventh Avenue, from West 35th to 34th Streets; its designation as a National Historic Landmark reflects its distinctive design and long history as the central building in the area. One Penn Plaza, a 57-story high-rise office tower, occupies the center of the block bounded by Seventh and Eighth Avenues, from West 34th to West 33rd Streets. This building is set back from the street and is surrounded by multiple plaza areas. The western portion of this block contains the Development Transfer Site. One Penn Plaza's façade of steel and gray glass and strong verticality supplied by columns, surmounted by the large red "1" high on all four façades, create an orienting feature for the area. The Development Transfer Site itself contains three small retail structures, a small public plaza, and a portion of the below-grade One Penn Plaza parking garage.

This portion of the study area contains the largest concentration of jobs, with the office-based sector as the largest employer. There are several major retail concentrations in the area including

at One Penn Plaza. The north side of West 34th Street contains continuous retail frontages consisting mainly of discount stores. Although the Garment Center is historically known for manufacturing employment, particularly related to the apparel industry, the employment distribution has shifted dramatically in recent years. Manufacturing employment has declined and employment growth has been driven by the service sector.

West 34th Street serves as a major crosstown route with high traffic volumes. Eighth Avenue carries substantial traffic in the area near Penn Station. Traffic volumes along the side streets of West 36th to West 39th Streets in the Garment Center are associated with local traffic serving the commercial and manufacturing uses and numerous parking facilities. Intersections operate fairly well, with a minimal number of existing congested intersection approach movements.

Noise levels are typical of Midtown Manhattan in this area, with higher noise levels along the 34th Street corridor attributed to the higher traffic volumes.

## **CHELSEA**

Chelsea is primarily a large residential neighborhood in the southern portion of the study area, but it also contains a mix of industrial and commercial uses in the area east of Seventh Avenue. Residential uses prevail in Chelsea between Seventh and Tenth Avenues, but not all in one form. Many of Chelsea's side streets, particularly between Eighth and Tenth Avenues, are lined with older row houses. South of West 29th Street are the Penn South Houses and the Chelsea and Eliot Houses, large housing complexes built in the early 1960s that offer a different building form and street system. West 28th Street, between Eighth and Ninth Avenues, curves around the complex of tall buildings set on broad plazas; West 27th Street does not run between Eighth and Ninth Avenues. More recent residential buildings can be found on Eighth and Ninth Avenues, as well as on Seventh Avenue. These newer residential buildings are generally contextual structures of no more than 18 stories. The influence of Chelsea's proximity to the Garment District is evident. Most striking is the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), a large complex of modern buildings located between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, from West 26th to West 28th Streets. The blocks between Sixth and Seventh Avenues in this area are fully developed to the lot line, with loft buildings of varying heights. These buildings contain a mixture of manufacturing (originally garment) uses and wholesaling (including the flower market on West 28th Street), offices, and housing.

The northern portion of Chelsea contains several historic resources that reflect its proximity to the rail yards and associated commercial and industrial uses. The loft building at 406-426 West 31st Street (described above) overlooks the Penn Station Rail Yard to the north, the Pennsylvania Station Service Building on West 31st Street between Eighth and Seventh Avenues was built in 1908 two years before the completion of the old Pennsylvania Station, and the USPS Morgan General Mail Facility at Ninth Avenue and West 29th Street was constructed in 1933 over part of the New York Central rail yards.

Given the primarily residential nature of Chelsea, employment levels are relatively low, especially west of Eighth Avenue with the Morgan Facility as the predominant non-residential use in the area. In 2000, the blocks between Eighth and Tenth Avenues and West 26th and West 30th Streets contained about 333 jobs, accounting for less than one percent of the total private sector employment in the entire study area. The commercial uses east of Eighth Avenue contained approximately 12 percent of the total private sector employment in 2000.

## **D. FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTION: 2010**

Projects that are expected to be complete in the Future Without the Proposed Action are summarized in Chapter 2, “Analytical Framework.” In the study area, a number of privately and publicly sponsored development projects that are now proposed or in construction will be completed. 2010 is also the first phase of projected development associated with the Hudson Yards project. As shown on Figure 2-1 of Chapter 2, “Analytical Framework,” only one Hudson Yards Projected Development Site is located in the study area.

### **SUPERBLOCK CORRIDOR**

In the Future Without the Proposed Action, the Farley Complex would be redeveloped to contain increased USPS service space primarily at the Farley Building and new commercial space, primarily at the Western Annex. The commercial space would consist of retail and office space. Some alterations to the exterior of the Western Annex would be required, including new entrances, windows, and signage for the new commercial uses. Workers and visitors coming to the new retail and office uses at the Farley Complex could bring greater activity to the surrounding streets.

A large mixed-use office and residential building would be completed over the Penn Station Rail Yard on Ninth Avenue between West 31st and West 32nd Streets as part of the Hudson Yards redevelopment (this is Projected Development Site 33). This development would contain approximately 2.2 million square feet of office use, with 514 residential units and retail at the base. Its presence would diminish the visibility of transportation uses in the area, add density and height on Ninth Avenue, and greatly strengthen the commercial character of the corridor. Together with the more active retail and office uses anticipated at the Western Annex of the Farley Complex, this new development also could bring greater pedestrian and vehicular activity to Ninth Avenue south of West 34th Street, further enhancing the streetscape.

### **HELL’S KITCHEN**

Although there are no known residential developments proposed by 2010, Hell’s Kitchen would be expected to strengthen as a cohesive residential and commercial neighborhood in the Future Without the Proposed Action. The only known development project is the West 37th Street Arts Baryshnikov Center for Dance along West 37th Street between Ninth and Tenth Avenues, which is under construction. The new seven-story building will contain dance studios and performance space.

### **GARMENT CENTER/HERALD SQUARE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT**

The character of the Garment Center/Herald Square commercial district is not expected to substantially change by 2010 in the Future Without the Proposed Action. In general, the Garment District has experienced the replacement of some manufacturing uses with commercial and residential uses, and this trend would be expected to continue. New residential construction is expected on West 31st Street, between Sixth and Seventh Avenues, where a 50-story residential building on land owned by the Franciscan Friars, adjacent to the existing church complex, is proposed. Along West 34th Street, a new commercial building at 435 Seventh Avenue, at the corner of West 34th Street, has been partially constructed, with two floors of retail space completed. However, construction of the office component of the project has not yet begun. Although both projects would introduce new building forms to the neighborhood, these

changes would not affect neighborhood character in the Garment Center/Herald Square district, given the cycles of redevelopment that have characterized the area over time.

## **CHELSEA**

The character of the portion of the Chelsea neighborhood located in the study area is not expected to change by 2010 in the Future Without the Proposed Action. The only known development project is the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) renovation and conversion of the existing historic loft building at 406 West 31st Street into a 1,104-bed dormitory. This project will maintain and restore the historic building's exterior while changing its use.

## **E. FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED ACTION: 2010**

As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," there are two development scenarios for the proposed project. In both scenarios, the Farley Complex would be redeveloped by 2010 with the new train station and commercial uses, which is Phase I of the proposed project. For Phase II, the Farley Complex's unused development rights would be utilized under Scenario 2 to construct a building on the Development Transfer Site by 2010. Under Scenario 1, the unused development rights would be utilized to construct an overbuild on the Farley Complex and that potential Phase II development would be constructed by 2015, and is, therefore, discussed under the 2015 analysis year.

## **SUPERBLOCK CORRIDOR**

### *SCENARIO I*

The proposed project would increase the presence of passenger-oriented transportation uses in the superblocks abutting the Farley Complex, and would encourage major retail and high-profile commercial office uses. The interior form of the Farley Complex would change substantially in Phase I with construction of the new intermodal hall and train concourse. The glass and metal skylight above the intermodal hall would become a new element of the building. The streetscape of Eighth and Ninth Avenues and West 31st and 33rd Streets surrounding the Farley Complex would be expected to change with the creation of the new avenue and midblock entrances on the side streets. The Farley Complex would become more utilized and active, which would improve the appearance and activity level of the streetscapes and have a beneficial effect on neighborhood character.

It is anticipated that the new train station design, retail space, physical modifications to accommodate the new commercial space, and other modifications to the Farley Complex would be done in consultation with OPRHP and, where practicable, in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards (SI Standards) for the Treatment of Historic Properties to ensure compatibility with the historic character of the structure. Therefore, it is not anticipated that Phase I would have an adverse historic resources impact on the Farley Complex. However, where the final project design is determined to have adverse impacts, mitigation would be developed and stipulated in a Letter of Resolution to be executed with OPRHP. Therefore, it is not anticipated that any alteration of the historic character of the Farley Complex would significantly impact neighborhood character in the superblock corridor.

Under Phase I, the proposed project would not introduce any new economic activities to the study area or alter existing economic patterns, and it would not directly displace any uses or

## **Farley Post Office/Moynihan Station Redevelopment Project**

---

properties. All of the uses proposed in Phase I are currently well established and present in the study area that is characterized by a dense and diverse amount of economic activity in and around Penn Station and the Farley Complex. Phase I would also not directly or indirectly displace residents, workers, or visitors who form the consumer base of existing businesses in the study area or significantly affect business conditions in any industry or category of business within the study area. Therefore, the socioeconomic effects of the proposed project in Phase I would not have a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character in the study area.

Although Phase I is anticipated to result in a slight increase in traffic in the area immediately surrounding the Farley Complex, this would not result in a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character. Similarly, noise levels would continue to be at typically high levels associated with a midtown urban location. With Phase I of the proposed project, changes in noise levels would be less than 3.0 dBA, which is barely perceptible. Phase I of the proposed project would, therefore, not result in a significant adverse noise-related impact on neighborhood character.

### *SCENARIO 2*

Under Scenario 2, the Farley Complex would be redeveloped in Phase I as described above. The potential development of the Development Transfer Site under Scenario 2 would not occur in the superblock corridor portion of the study area, but rather just to the north in the Garment Center/Herald Square Commercial District. The primarily residential or mixed-use building proposed at the Development Transfer Site would be consistent with the uses and scale of future mixed-use development in the superblock corridor area. The streetscape surrounding the Farley Complex and the Development Transfer Site would be expected to change considerably with Scenario 2 as the development would eliminate the elevated pedestrian circulation space that currently exists on the Development Transfer Site, would form stronger streetwalls at this location, and would bring greater pedestrian and vehicular activity to the area. Nonetheless, changes to the streetscape would be compatible with the existing high density commercial and transportation hub that characterizes the area around the Farley Complex and the Development Transfer Site. Although Scenario 2 would displace three businesses on the Development Transfer Site, there would be no adverse socioeconomic impact, because those businesses reflect uses and businesses currently plentiful in the area. Further, the Development Transfer Site building would not introduce any new economic activities to the area or alter existing economic patterns. Thus, the neighborhood character of the superblock corridor would not be expected to change as a result of Scenario 2.

The potential building constructed on the Development Transfer Site under Scenario 2 is anticipated to result in an increase in traffic in the immediate traffic study area and along the 34th Street corridor. Although the Scenario 2 development (inclusive of Phase I and Phase II) would result in significant adverse traffic and pedestrian impacts, all such impacts would be mitigated, as described in Chapter 19, "Mitigation." Further, given the existing and future anticipated conditions reflecting the dense urban setting of the Development Transfer Site, the incremental increase and mitigated impacts are not expected to result in a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character. With Scenario 2, changes in noise levels would be less than 3.0 dBA, which is barely perceptible. Scenario 2 would therefore not result in a significant adverse noise-related impact on neighborhood character.

## **HELL'S KITCHEN**

### *SCENARIO 1*

Overall, Phase I would have a beneficial effect on the neighborhood character of Hell's Kitchen as the proposed Moynihan Station would provide new transit uses to support the existing and emerging residential uses in the area. Phase I would not adversely impact the urban design of the area as it would not involve any changes to block form, street pattern or street hierarchies, or building arrangement, bulk, use, or type within Hell's Kitchen. The streetscapes of Eighth and Ninth Avenues and West 33rd Street surrounding the Farley Complex would be expected to change; however, as described above, the changes would have a beneficial effect on neighborhood character. The streetscape of the remainder of Hell's Kitchen would not be expected to be altered by the proposed project. Views to the Farley Complex in which the intermodal hall skylight would be visible would change, particularly along West 33rd Street in Hell's Kitchen, but from most locations within Hell's Kitchen the change to the design of the Farley Complex in Phase I would not be visible. No physical, visual, or contextual impacts on architectural resources in Hell's Kitchen are expected as a result of the proposed project. There would be no adverse socioeconomic impacts, because the project would not introduce any new economic activities to the area or alter existing economic patterns. Because of the congested nature of the existing traffic conditions and the high level of neighborhood noise, the new traffic and noise generated by the proposed project are not expected to have an adverse impact on the neighborhood character.

### *SCENARIO 2*

The use, height, and bulk of the building constructed on the Development Transfer Site would be consistent with development along the 34th Street corridor in Hell's Kitchen. The new building would become a notable element in views north and south along Eighth Avenue and eastward toward the Empire State Building and One Penn Plaza. As the changes to the Development Transfer Site would be created within the existing block form, it would not eliminate views toward the West Side Jewish Center, Glad Tidings Tabernacle, or St. Michael's Catholic Church. There would be no adverse socioeconomic impacts, because the project would not introduce any new economic activities to the area or alter existing economic patterns. The neighborhood character of the remainder of Hell's Kitchen would not be expected to change as a result of Scenario 2. Although the project would have significant adverse traffic and pedestrian impacts, those impacts would be mitigated and the new traffic generated by the proposed project is not expected to have an adverse impact on the neighborhood character due to the congested nature of the existing traffic conditions.

## **GARMENT CENTER/HERALD SQUARE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT**

### *SCENARIO 1*

Under Phase I, the new Moynihan Station and the commercial uses in the Farley Complex, including the proposed hotel and banquet facilities, would be consistent with the predominantly commercial character in this area. Phase I would not involve any changes to block forms; street pattern or street hierarchies; or building arrangement, bulk, use, or type within the Garment Center/Herald Square commercial district. The streetscapes of Eighth Avenue and West 33rd Street surrounding the Farley Complex would be expected to change; however, as described above, the changes would have a beneficial effect on neighborhood character. The streetscape of

## **Farley Post Office/Moynihan Station Redevelopment Project**

---

the remainder of the Garment Center/Herald Square commercial district would not be expected to be altered by the proposed project. No physical, visual, or contextual impacts on architectural resources in the Garment Center/Herald Square commercial district are expected as a result of the proposed project. Due to the congested nature of the existing traffic conditions and the high level of neighborhood noise, the new traffic and noise generated by the proposed project are not expected to have an adverse impact on the neighborhood character.

### *SCENARIO 2*

The 1.1 million gsf primarily residential or mixed-use building constructed on the Development Transfer Site would be consistent with the existing mixed-use character of the area and the notable trends in new residential and commercial projects in the Garment Center/Herald Square Commercial District. The proposed building is anticipated to have a modern design, similar to other new buildings in the area. The streetscape surrounding the Development Transfer Site would be expected to change considerably under Scenario 2 as the development would eliminate the small elevated pedestrian plaza and the low scale restaurant and retail uses currently located on the Development Transfer Site. There is no socioeconomic impact associated with the displacement of the two restaurants and the drug store on the Development Transfer Site as they are considered to reflect uses and business already plentiful in the study area. In addition, the project would not introduce new economic activities to the area or alter existing economic patterns.

The new building would bring greater pedestrian and vehicular activity to the area, and would become a notable element in views eastward toward the Empire State Building and One Penn Plaza. In all, while it would be a notable visual change to the existing setting, the proposed primarily residential or mixed-use building on the Development Transfer Site, together with the Phase I development, would reinforce the central business district and transportation hub that currently defines the neighborhood character of the Garment Center/Herald Square area. As a result, there would be no significant impact on neighborhood character. Due to the congested nature of the existing traffic conditions and the high level of neighborhood noise, the new traffic and noise generated by the proposed project are not expected to have an adverse impact on the neighborhood character. Further, all significant adverse traffic and pedestrian impacts would be mitigated, as described in Chapter 19, "Mitigation."

## **CHELSEA**

### *SCENARIO 1*

Under Phase I, the proposed Moynihan Station would provide new transit uses to support the residential uses in the portion of the study area located in Chelsea. The new commercial uses in the Farley Complex would also be consistent with the commercial character of the eastern portion of this area. Phase I would not involve any changes to block forms, street pattern or street hierarchies, or building arrangement, bulk, use, or type within the portion of the study area located in Chelsea. The streetscapes of Ninth and Eighth Avenues and West 31st Street adjacent to the Farley Complex would be expected to change; however; as described above, the changes would have a beneficial effect on neighborhood character. The streetscape of the remainder of Chelsea would not be expected to be altered by the proposed project. No physical, visual, or contextual impacts on architectural resources in the portion of the study area located in Chelsea are expected as a result of the proposed project. Due to the congested nature of the existing traffic conditions and the high level of neighborhood noise, the new traffic and noise generated

by the proposed project are not expected to have an adverse impact on the neighborhood character.

#### *SCENARIO 2*

The proposed building constructed on the Development Transfer Site would be consistent with the mixed-use character in the portion of the study area located in Chelsea. Scenario 2 would not introduce any new economic activities to the area or alter existing economic patterns, and it would not involve any change to the block forms, street pattern or street hierarchies, streetscape, or building arrangement, bulk, use, or type within the portion of the study area located in Chelsea. Views from limited locations within Chelsea could include the upper floors of the new development on the Development Transfer Site, along with One Penn Plaza's tower. Under Scenario 2, the Phase II development would not have adverse physical, visual, or contextual impacts on any historic resources in the portion of the study area located in Chelsea. Due to the congested nature of the existing traffic conditions and the high level of neighborhood noise, the new traffic and noise generated by the proposed project are not expected to have an adverse impact on the neighborhood character. In addition, the significant adverse traffic impacts would be mitigated. Overall, the neighborhood character of Chelsea would not be expected to change as a result of the Development Transfer Site building.

### **F. FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTION: 2015**

By 2015 a substantial amount of new office and residential uses associated with Hudson Yards projected development would occur in the study area. Residential development would be predominantly located in Hell's Kitchen (see Figure 2-2 from Chapter 2, "Analytical Framework"). In the superblock corridor, the rail yard on the west side of Ninth Avenue would no longer be visible, and the block would become strongly commercial, with a mix of office, retail, and hotel uses, supported by some residential uses. The 2015 analysis year considers the full build out of Hudson Yards, which is based on the 2025 analysis year of the Hudson Yards FGEIS.

#### **SUPERBLOCK CORRIDOR**

This portion of the study area is also expected to undergo substantial improvement as projected in the Hudson Yards FGEIS. Two mixed-use buildings are projected for development directly west of the Farley Complex along Ninth Avenue, between West 31st and West 33rd Streets (Projected Development Sites 32 and 33). The historic loft building at 424 West 33rd Street would be removed to develop Projected Development Site 32. On the western portion of the block, Projected Development Site 31 (the Westyard building), which contains the headquarters for the Daily News, would be renovated to permit development of a large mixed-use building and new retail and residential uses. This site would also contain a new hotel tower. The three buildings would completely cover the Penn Station Rail Yards, greatly reducing the visible presence of transportation uses in the corridor.

#### **HELL'S KITCHEN**

Existing residential neighborhoods would be strengthened and enhanced in Hell's Kitchen with moderate-density, primarily residential redevelopment taking place along West 34th Street and Ninth and Tenth Avenues. Eight Projected Development Sites were identified in the Hudson Yards FGEIS, and residential buildings constructed on them would be similar in bulk, height,

## **Farley Post Office/Moynihan Station Redevelopment Project**

---

and configuration to existing buildings. Development on the Ninth Avenue sites would partially restore the physical damage to the neighborhood caused by construction of the Lincoln Tunnel. Gaps in the streetscape would be filled, and the pedestrian environment would be improved.

### **GARMENT CENTER/HERALD SQUARE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT**

There are no known land use developments proposed for the Garment Center/Herald Square Commercial district by the 2015 analysis year.

### **CHELSEA**

One residential development is projected in the Hudson Yards FGEIS for the portion of the study area located in Chelsea. A new residential development on Projected Development Site 44, located at the southwest corner of West 31st Street and Eighth Avenue adjacent to the Farley Complex, would be approximately 120 feet in height and would replace a parking lot. The building would be compatible to the density and uses along Eighth Avenue.

### **G. FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED ACTION: 2015**

Under Scenario 1 in the Future With the Proposed Action in 2015, the approximately 1 million zsf of unused development rights from the Farley Complex would be used to construct a commercial overbuild on the Western Annex. This overbuild is in addition to the Phase I development, and there would be no changes to the Development Transfer Site, which would continue to be occupied by the retail buildings and plaza.

Under Scenario 1, the Phase II commercial overbuild would not introduce any new economic activities or alter existing economic patterns and would not directly displace any uses or properties. The overbuild would also not directly or indirectly displace residents, workers, or visitors who form the consumer base of existing businesses in the study area, nor would it significantly affect business conditions in any industry or category of business within the study area. Therefore, the proposed socioeconomic effects of the Phase II development under Scenario 1 would not have a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character in the entire study area.

### **SUPERBLOCK CORRIDOR**

The proposed office use, height, massing, and design for the Phase II overbuild would be consistent with the future mixed-use development in the abutting superblock across Ninth Avenue on Hudson Yards Projected Development Sites 32 and 33. However, the bulk of the Farley Complex would be considerably altered with the addition of an overbuild to the Western Annex. The type of building on the project site would change from a 120-foot-tall historic masonry community facility building to a commercial office development with a historic masonry base and a modern structure clad in modern materials, such as glass and steel. The Western Annex would become a base for the overbuild, which would become the focal point of this portion of the Farley Complex. However, through the choice of materials and style, and by setting the overbuild well back from the edges of the Western Annex, the proposed project could create a composition in which each component is clearly different from the other, allowing each to retain its individual identity and essential character. The expected use of glass and metal for the overbuild would serve to highlight and differentiate the modern layer from the historic masonry base. It is also possible that a portion of the West 33rd Street façade of the Western

Annex could be concealed by a glass curtain wall for the overbuild, in which case, views of this portion of the façade would be lost and the differentiation of the historic masonry building from the modern structure above would be less clear. Overall, while the additional Phase II commercial use under Scenario 1 would be consistent with the overall adaptive reuse of the Farley Complex, the overbuild could have an adverse visual impact on the Farley Complex that could also be considered an adverse impact to neighborhood character.

The streetscape of Ninth Avenue and West 31st and 33rd Streets surrounding the Farley Complex would be expected to change with development of the Phase II overbuild, as a large number of office workers or visitors would be expected to utilize these streets to access the new building. This heightened activity would be particularly noticeable on West 33rd Street, where a new entrance to the overbuild would be located, and it would improve the appearance and activity level of the streetscapes. Further, the use, height, and bulk of the overbuild would be in keeping with the urban design and land use characteristics of the area.

The Phase II overbuild is anticipated to result in additional increases in traffic above the Phase I program in the immediate traffic study area and along the 34th Street corridor that would be slightly larger than the overall levels of future traffic projected by the Hudson Yards zoning initiative. Overall, the proposed project in the 2015 analysis year would have significant adverse traffic and pedestrian impacts. Those impacts, however, would all be mitigated, as described in Chapter 19, “Mitigation,” and given the existing and future anticipated conditions reflecting the dense urban setting of the project site, the incremental increase and mitigated impacts are not expected to result in a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character. With the overbuild development, changes in noise levels would be less than 3.0 dBA, which is barely perceptible. The Phase II overbuild development would therefore not result in a significant adverse noise-related impact on neighborhood character.

### **HELL’S KITCHEN**

The potential Phase II overbuild development would continue the area trend towards expanding commercial and retail uses within Hell’s Kitchen and would not involve any changes to block forms, street pattern or street hierarchies, or building arrangement, bulk, use, or type within Hell’s Kitchen. The streetscapes of Eighth and Ninth Avenues and West 33rd Street surrounding the Farley Complex would be expected to change; however, as described above, the changes would have a beneficial effect on neighborhood character. The streetscape of the remainder of Hell’s Kitchen would not be expected to be altered by the proposed project. As described above, the overbuild would involve further alterations to the Farley Complex, an important visual resource. Views of the Farley Complex would be mainly of the overbuild alone as part of the new skyline of Ninth Avenue, and the juxtaposition of the historic masonry base and the tall, modern overbuild would not be disruptive. The glass and metal skylight above the intermodal hall would become less visible behind the new structure in the immediately adjacent views from Ninth Avenue. Changes to the visual resource as a result of the overbuild development would not have a significant adverse impact on overall neighborhood character. No physical, visual, or contextual impacts on other architectural resources in Hell’s Kitchen are expected as a result of the proposed project.

The potential Phase II overbuild is anticipated to result in additional increases in traffic above the Phase I program in the immediate traffic study area and along the 34th Street corridor that would be slightly larger than the overall levels of future traffic projected by the Hudson Yards zoning initiative. It would also result in significant adverse traffic and pedestrian impacts, but all

## **Farley Post Office/Moynihan Station Redevelopment Project**

---

of those impacts would be mitigated. Given the existing and future anticipated conditions reflecting the dense urban setting of the project site, the incremental increase and mitigated impacts are not expected to result in a significant adverse impact on neighborhood character. With the overbuild development, changes in noise levels would be less than 3.0 dBA, which is barely perceptible. The Phase II overbuild development would therefore not result in a significant adverse noise-related impact on neighborhood character.

### **GARMENT CENTER/HERALD SQUARE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT**

The proposed office use, height, massing, and design for the Phase II overbuild would be consistent with the character in this area. The development of Phase II under Scenario 1 would not involve any changes to block forms, street pattern or street hierarchies, or building arrangement, bulk, use, or type within the Garment Center/Herald Square commercial district. The streetscapes of Eighth Avenue and West 33rd Street surrounding the Farley Complex would be expected to change; however, as described above the changes would have a beneficial effect on neighborhood character. The streetscape of the remainder of the Garment Center/Herald Square commercial district would not be expected to be altered by the proposed project. In views from Eighth Avenue, the expected modern design of the new overbuild would be consistent with the new buildings on Hudson Yards Projected Development Sites 32 and 33 across Ninth Avenue. Changes to the Farley Complex visual resource would not have a significant adverse impact on overall neighborhood character. No physical, visual, or contextual impacts on architectural resources in the Garment Center/Herald Square commercial district are expected as a result of the proposed project.

The potential Phase II overbuild is anticipated to result in additional increases in traffic above the Phase I program in the immediate traffic study area and along the 34th Street corridor that would be slightly larger than the overall levels of future traffic projected by the Hudson Yards zoning initiative. It would also result in significant adverse traffic and pedestrian impacts, but those impacts would be mitigated and outside of the immediate traffic study area, the overall change in traffic conditions would be within the overall framework as analyzed in the Hudson Yards FGEIS. Therefore, in the context of the existing and future anticipated conditions in the Garment Center/Herald Square area, there would be little incremental increase and no anticipated significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character. Similarly, changes in noise levels would be less than 3.0 dBA, which is barely perceptible and would, therefore, not result in a significant adverse noise-related impact on neighborhood character.

### **CHELSEA**

The proposed office use, height, massing, and design for the overbuild would be consistent with the mixed-use character in the portion of the study area located in Chelsea. Development of the overbuild would not involve any changes to block forms, street pattern or street hierarchies, or building arrangement, bulk, use, or type within the portion of the study area located in Chelsea. The streetscapes of Eighth and Ninth Avenues and West 31st Street surrounding the Farley Complex would be expected to change; however, as described above; the changes would have a beneficial effect on neighborhood character. The streetscape of the remainder of Chelsea would not be expected to be altered by the proposed project. In views from Eighth Avenue, the expected modern design of the new overbuild would be consistent with the new buildings on Hudson Yards Projected Development Sites 32 and 33 across Ninth Avenue. Changes to the Farley Complex visual resource would not have a significant adverse impact on neighborhood

character. No physical, visual, or contextual impacts on architectural resources in the portion of the study area located in Chelsea are expected as a result of the proposed project.

The potential Phase II overbuild is anticipated to result in additional increases in traffic above the Phase I program in the immediate traffic study area and along the 34th Street corridor that would be slightly larger than the overall levels of future traffic projected by the Hudson Yards zoning initiative. However, outside of the immediate traffic study area, the overall change in traffic conditions would be within the overall framework as analyzed in the Hudson Yards FGEIS; thus, in the context of the existing and future anticipated conditions in the Chelsea area, there would be little incremental increase and no anticipated significant adverse impact on neighborhood character. Similarly, changes in noise levels would be less than 3.0 dBA, which is barely perceptible and would therefore not result in a significant adverse noise-related impact on neighborhood character. \*