

10.1 INTRODUCTION**10.1.1 CONTEXT**

The Twin Towers were a defining element of the New York City skyline, and were recognized around the world. The Twin Towers symbolized the power and commercial vitality of New York City and the nation as a whole. These extraordinary structures and the rest of the World Trade Center (WTC) were also the symbolic and functional centerpiece of Lower Manhattan's reputation as a vital, international economic center. They were a focal point of New York City's newest (Battery Park City) and oldest (Financial District) neighborhoods. The streets and sidewalks surrounding the WTC bustled with traffic and with pedestrians going to work, shop, sightsee, and travel to other areas. The WTC superblock, bounded by Vesey, Church, and Liberty Streets and Route 9A (WTC Site), replaced a series of smaller blocks. Although it was a busy nexus of transportation and an important destination itself, the WTC Site was often a barrier for residents, workers, and visitors of the three distinct neighborhoods surrounding it—Tribeca to the north, Battery Park City (BPC) to the west, and the Financial District to the east and south.

The collapse of the Twin Towers and the destruction and damage to the rest of the WTC and adjacent areas on September 11, 2001, dramatically altered the character of the immediate area and surrounding neighborhoods. The attacks tore through the urban fabric of Lower Manhattan, leaving in their wake death and destruction, untold grief and emotional trauma, and now an enormous physical and economic void. The loss of life, jobs, infrastructure, and open and office space severely affected the Financial District, devastated area residents, workers, and businesses, and continues to undermine the vitality of Lower Manhattan.

With extensive public input and participation, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) and The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (the Port Authority) developed the World Trade Center Memorial and Redevelopment Plan (Proposed Action). Among other things, the plan strives to rebuild and foster the growth of Lower Manhattan as a vibrant mixed-use district by introducing new cultural uses which did not exist at the Project Site prior to September 11, to remember and restore life at the Project Site, to extend streets back through the superblock, and to reestablish the underlying fabric of Lower Manhattan neighborhoods with better connections between the areas to the north, south, east, and west of the Project Site. The plan endeavors to repair the neighborhoods that bore the brunt of the attacks and create both a Memorial and an economic engine for the future, as well as an active neighborhood center of retail, cultural, and open space uses. The Memorial would be a place to remember and honor the victims and heroes of the attacks who will forever remain a vital part of the neighborhood, while simultaneously allowing the surrounding community of workers, residents, and visitors to persist and to build a new neighborhood for the future.

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Neighborhood character is an amalgam of the various elements that give a neighborhood its distinct personality. These elements can include land use, urban design, visual resources, socioeconomic, historic resources, traffic, pedestrians, and noise, as well as any other physical or social characteristics that help to distinguish the community in question from other communities. This neighborhood character analysis assesses a proposed action born out of catastrophic events that had devastating impacts on the neighborhoods of Lower Manhattan. This chapter of the GEIS examines neighborhood character on the Project Site and in the surrounding areas, and the Proposed Action's effects on that character. The impact analysis focuses on changes to neighborhood character resulting from changes in the technical areas discussed above, since changes in these technical areas are most relevant to potential changes in neighborhood character. The analysis also considers the value of the Proposed Action in furthering the effort to revitalize Lower Manhattan.

10.1.2 CONCLUSIONS

The Proposed Action was analyzed with respect to neighborhood character under the Pre-September 11 Scenario and the Current Conditions Scenario. Under both scenarios, the analyses conclude that the Proposed Action would result in overall benefits to neighborhood character.

PRE-SEPTEMBER 11 SCENARIO

As described in greater detail below, the Proposed Action would not result in any significant adverse impacts to neighborhood character under the Pre-September 11 Scenario. Overall, the Proposed Action would have substantial positive effects on neighborhood character at the Project Site and throughout Lower Manhattan.

The Proposed Action, compared to pre-September 11 conditions, would result in a number of beneficial changes to neighborhood character. By replacing many of the uses that existed before September 11, adding new cultural uses, and creating new open spaces, the Proposed Action would enliven the Project Site and surrounding area.

Freedom Tower and the four additional office towers would create new elements of the skyline, while keeping with building uses, heights, and designs on the WTC Site and the Southern Site prior to September 11 as well as buildings throughout the study area. These towers would block some views across the WTC Site; however, these views were blocked by development on the Project Site prior to September 11.

The Memorial and museum would attract millions of visitors annually, substantially increasing pedestrian activity at the Project Site and on surrounding streets. While some sidewalks and crosswalks immediately adjacent to the WTC Site would be heavily congested during peak periods, this would be comparable to pre-September 11 conditions, and would not adversely affect the overall character of the neighborhood.

While the amount of office space on the Project Site would be less than what existed prior to September 11, there would be additional retail and other amenities that would create a more vibrant presence. With a greater amount of retail on the Project Site compared to pre-September 11 conditions and a substantial portion of the new retail above ground, the streets through and adjacent to the Project Site would be enlivened. Large numbers of new workers and visitors will generate visits at other places of interest throughout Lower Manhattan, supporting area businesses and enlivening the streets and neighborhoods surrounding the Project Site. In addition, the existing retail stores in Lower Manhattan would benefit from the increased visitation expected on the Project Site, compared with visitation to the former WTC complex.

The increased traffic levels expected throughout the area as a result of the Proposed Action would have some effect on neighborhood character, but not to a degree that they would constitute a significant adverse impact. This is primarily because most of the traffic impacts would occur on streets already burdened with high levels of traffic, and mitigation measures have been identified to help relieve some of this congestion. In addition, the context of the area has historically been one of a busy urban crossroads located in the heart of the central business district. Outdoor noise levels at the Project Site and throughout the study area would continue to represent a relatively noisy urban environment due to high levels of vehicular activity and pedestrians. The extension of Fulton and Greenwich Streets through the former superbblock configuration of the WTC Site would restore that portion of Lower Manhattan's street grid, connecting areas north-to-south and east-to-west that would facilitate vehicular access within and around the site, as well as throughout Lower Manhattan. It would also restore the street linkage between historic resources to the north and south of the WTC Site, and open up new view corridors.

The proposed redevelopment of the Project Site—coupled with existing financial incentives and other physical improvements planned for Lower Manhattan—would constitute a clear signal to residents and commercial businesses that the city and state are committed to attracting and supporting new investments in Lower Manhattan that, in turn, would help encourage a vibrant, bustling, and overall attractive area for the long term.

CURRENT CONDITIONS SCENARIO

As described in greater detail below, under the Current Conditions Scenario, the Proposed Action would represent a substantial improvement to the Project Site and surrounding area by replacing a largely vacant and inactive site that detracts from the character of the area, with a mix of active uses, new urban design elements, improved transportation connections, and significant new open spaces.

Undoubtedly, the Proposed Action would result in substantial changes to the character of the Project Site and the surrounding neighborhoods. Were the Proposed Action not to change the character of the area, it would fail to realize the project's purpose, including the revitalization of Lower Manhattan as a center of commercial, residential, and cultural activity to help make the area a lively environment, with a Memorial at its heart to honor and remember the victims of the attacks. Overall, substantial positive effects on neighborhood character at the Project Site and throughout the study area and all of Lower Manhattan are expected to result from the Proposed Action.

The Proposed Action would be in keeping with the traditional character of the surrounding area, which is a densely developed urban setting. The amenities associated with the Proposed Action would make the area livelier and would serve as a key component of the broader initiative to make Lower Manhattan a more attractive place to live, work, and visit. By removing the post-disaster blighted conditions that currently exist at the Project Site and replacing them with the Memorial and museum, new cultural uses, open spaces, office buildings, retail, and hotel and conference facilities, the Proposed Action would help to revitalize the Project Site and the surrounding neighborhoods. This critical mass of mixed-use development would help to restore Lower Manhattan as a vibrant central business district that attracts and retains businesses, residents, and visitors. These uses would be consistent with the uses that surround the Project Site today as well as new developments anticipated in the future in the surrounding neighborhoods.

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The Memorial and museum would attract millions of visitors annually, substantially increasing pedestrian activity at the Project Site and on surrounding streets. While some sidewalks and crosswalks immediately adjacent to the WTC Site would be heavily congested during peak periods, this would not adversely affect the overall character of the neighborhood.

Freedom Tower would reintroduce a very tall, modern structure to the Project Site. Along with the four additional office towers, it would restore the Lower Manhattan skyline while keeping with building uses, heights, and designs typical of the study area that exist in juxtaposition with smaller-scale and historic buildings. While it would block certain views across the WTC Site, it would not block unique view corridors or unique views of visual resources, or otherwise adversely affect neighborhood character.

The retail presence at the Project Site could be an anchor for the Lower Manhattan shopping experience, drawing customers to Lower Manhattan, many of whom would then proceed to shop at other Lower Manhattan locations. Large numbers of new workers and visitors are expected to generate visits at other places of interest throughout Lower Manhattan, supporting area businesses, and enlivening the streets and neighborhoods surrounding the Project Site.

Projected traffic conditions in the area are expected to worsen at a number of locations. However, this traffic would not result in a significant change to neighborhood character because many streets are already burdened with high levels of traffic. Outdoor noise levels at the Project Site and throughout the study area would continue to represent a relatively noisy urban environment due to high levels of vehicular activity and pedestrians. The extension of Fulton and Greenwich Streets through the former superblock configuration of the WTC Site would restore that portion of Lower Manhattan's street grid, connecting areas north-to-south and east-to-west, which would connect neighborhoods on every side of the Project Site. It would also create new view corridors and restore the street linkage between historic resources to the north and south of the WTC Site. This would be particularly beneficial to resources south of Liberty Street that are now isolated by the large construction area that exists on the WTC Site.

The proposed redevelopment of the Project Site, coupled with existing financial incentives and other physical improvements planned for Lower Manhattan, would represent a clear signal to residents and businesses that the city and state are committed to attracting and supporting new investments in Lower Manhattan that, in turn, would help encourage a vibrant, bustling, and overall attractive area for the long term.

10.2 METHODOLOGY

This analysis of neighborhood character addresses the potential impacts of the Proposed Action on neighborhood character at the Project Site and in the surrounding area. The study area, as defined below, is composed of a number of different neighborhoods, all of which are clearly urban, but each with its own context and feeling. To understand the extent to which the Proposed Action may affect a given neighborhood, it is necessary first to identify which factors play a major role in determining that neighborhood's character, and how these factors might change as a result of the Proposed Action. Land use, urban design, visual resources, socioeconomics, historic resources, traffic, pedestrians, and noise may each play a role in shaping the character of a neighborhood and each is examined in detail in other chapters of the GEIS. This chapter draws on that material in considering potential impacts on neighborhood character.

As described in Chapter 2, "Methodology," two scenarios (Current Conditions and Pre-September 11) and two analysis years (2009 and 2015) are considered. Under the Current

Conditions Scenario, probable impacts to neighborhood character are assessed based on actual current conditions at the Project Site and throughout the study area. For the Pre-September 11 Scenario, impacts to neighborhood character are assessed based on conditions that existed prior to September 11 and development that would have been expected to occur in the future had the events of September 11 never taken place. The first analysis year of 2009 represents a time when the initial phases of the Proposed Action would be in place, while 2015 assumes full build-out of the Proposed Action. Changes in neighborhood character, if any, that are expected to occur independently of the Proposed Action by each analysis year are identified, and potential impacts to neighborhood character associated with the Proposed Action are assessed.

The study area used to assess the effects of the Proposed Action on neighborhood character conforms to the primary study area defined in Chapter 3, "Land Use and Public Policy." This is the area that would most likely be affected by the Proposed Action. It is also the area that experienced the greatest impacts from September 11 and its aftermath. The study area has been divided into four subareas based on geographic boundaries and commonly accepted neighborhood boundaries, as follows: (1) North of the WTC Site, (2) Broadway Corridor, (3) Greenwich South Corridor, and (4) Battery Park City. To the degree that the Proposed Action may also have effects on parts of Lower Manhattan outside the study area, those changes are qualitatively discussed where appropriate.

10.3 CURRENT CONDITIONS SCENARIO

10.3.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS 2003

PROJECT SITE

In its current state, the Project Site has a blighting effect on the surrounding neighborhood. A significant portion of the WTC Site resembles a construction zone. With the exception of commuters traveling to and from the temporary WTC PATH station at the beginning and end of the workday and a number of PATH employees and other workers at the station, the site remains substantially underutilized, barren, and largely unpopulated. The WTC Site is vacant except for the temporary WTC PATH station and the No. 1/9 IRT subway lines crossing the site. Aside from the viewing areas and the temporary WTC PATH station, the site is fenced-off and not accessible to the public.

Certain measures have been taken to improve conditions for visitors to the site. Sidewalk viewing areas established along Church and Liberty Streets have fencing that is far more attractive than normal construction fences and allows people to see through it. The Port Authority has also posted informational boards telling the history of the site and high-rise buildings in Lower Manhattan.

Whereas the Twin Towers were the defining element of the area prior to September 11, the vast open space where the towers once stood defines the area today. It serves as a conspicuous reminder of the devastation that occurred on September 11, and can infuse a deep sense of loss and emptiness in the people who live or work nearby or visit the site each day. It also acts as a physical barrier between the financial district to the east and BPC to the west, and between the Tribeca and Greenwich South neighborhoods to the north and south. The vast emptiness of the WTC Site allows visual resources located in the study area to be seen from and across the site, including views toward the World Financial Center (WFC) and the Winter Garden.

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On the Southern Site, the vacant lot at Liberty Street and Route 9A and the large vacant office building at 130 Liberty Street that was severely damaged in the attacks of September 11 both add to the substandard character of the area. These two blocks are surrounded by fencing and are inaccessible, with limited pedestrian passageways along the streets. The plaza area between the large vacant office tower and the WTC Site has been excavated, leaving a large hole surrounded mainly by a high construction wall and is only visible from the west at grade level. The building itself is covered in protective black netting and is a forlorn reminder of September 11. The large size of its lot, as well as the damaged and abandoned condition of the building, creates a strong presence on the adjoining streets. After September 11, Liberty Street was closed to vehicular traffic between West and Church Streets. Only construction vehicles associated with the WTC Site and pedestrians are permitted in this area. Site 26 in BPC is a surface parking lot and construction staging area.

STUDY AREA

North of the WTC Site

The damage resulting from the events of September 11 largely affect the character of the blocks immediately north of the WTC Site. The large commercial buildings along Vesey Street damaged on September 11 remain mostly unoccupied and Vesey Street itself remains closed to vehicular traffic. A narrow walkway weaves along Vesey Street past these buildings and the construction site of the new Seven World Trade Center (7 WTC), connecting Church Street with Route 9A and the newly constructed pedestrian bridge to BPC. Pedestrian traffic is steady throughout the area during weekdays, especially at rush hour when commuters travel between the subway and temporary WTC PATH stations and the WFC and other BPC destinations. A steady flow of tourists can also be found along the walkway, which offers views of the WTC Site. This area becomes desolate during evening hours and on weekends.

More generally, this area is a transition zone between the mainly commercial office buildings of the financial district to the south and the more residential and institutional development in Tribeca to the north. The subarea is developed with a mix of historic and modern, low- and high-rise buildings. Almost all the buildings were originally constructed as office buildings, although several have been converted to residential use. The transition from a mainly commercial district to a more mixed-use neighborhood is most evident east of Greenwich Street between Park Place and Chambers Street, where the dominant use changes from commercial to retail and residential. Mid- to high-rise office buildings give way to older, smaller-scale structures some of which have been converted to residential use with a variety of ground-floor retail uses. The retail uses are more heavily concentrated along the north-south streets and Chambers Street, with smaller businesses along the east-west streets. Some retail and commercial vacancies can be seen along the sidewalks, a continuing sign of the economic hardships faced by businesses in the aftermath of September 11.

City Hall and City Hall Park dominate the easternmost portion of the subarea. The park creates an open streetscape, with its lawn, fountain, and trees offering a picturesque break from the densely developed urban neighborhood surrounding it. Across Broadway from City Hall is the Woolworth Building, an architecturally striking, historically significant structure that was the tallest building in the world at the time of its construction in 1913. New York University's School of Continuing and Professional Studies located in the Woolworth Building and P.S. 234 and St. John's University School of Risk Management, Insurance, and Actuarial Science near Route 9A north of Murray Street all add to the daytime activity in the area. The large-scale commercial towers, smaller residential and mixed-use buildings, and institutional structures in

the area attract a range of users and form a diverse urban setting. Narrower neighborhood streets, such as Warren and Murray Streets, carry lighter traffic than the wider through streets such as Church Street, Broadway, and Chambers Street, where traffic is heavy throughout the day and evening. Noise levels in the subarea, and throughout the rest of the study area, represent a relatively noisy urban environment with streets experiencing high levels of vehicular and pedestrian activity (especially before and after school due to the large number of students in the schools along Chambers Street), and due to ongoing construction activities at 7 WTC and on surrounding streets.

Broadway Corridor

The blocks directly across Church Street from the WTC Site are far more active than the blocks immediately north of the WTC Site, described above. All of the buildings located in this area that suffered damage on September 11 have reopened and are active with a range of uses including office, retail, hotel, and open space. This busy area attracts large numbers of workers and visitors throughout the day and evening traveling to and from work, shopping, or viewing the WTC Site across the street. Liberty Plaza is a full-block open space at Church and Liberty Streets, a rare find within the dense business district. Although damaged on September 11 and not fully restored, it contains benches, planters, and lighting, providing respite for workers and visitors.

Office and other commercial buildings and uses dominate the Broadway Corridor as a whole. It is part of the historic financial district, the traditional home of financial institutions and corporate headquarters and the smaller businesses and industries which serve them. This area contains a very dense office center and is home to part of Wall Street and the New York Stock Exchange, the primary symbols of the financial district. Broadway and Church Street are lined with large office buildings—both older structures constructed in the first half of this century and modern skyscrapers such as 140 Broadway and 1 Liberty Plaza, located directly across Church Street from the WTC Site. A number of older buildings throughout this area are designated historic resources including the Equitable Building, Bank of New York Building (1 Wall Street), and the New York Stock Exchange. A greater mix of uses characterizes the blocks generally north of Cortlandt Street, with a number of older, small scale buildings along Broadway and Cortlandt, John, and Fulton Streets.

The streets east of Broadway and south of Wall Street and continuing beyond the boundary of the study area are part of the historic Street Plan of New Amsterdam and Colonial New York, as described in Chapter 5, “Historic Resources.” These narrow and winding streets retain their original street plan that dates to the 17th century and define the historic character of the area. As a result of these irregular street patterns, blocks tend to have irregular shapes. Blocks between Park Row and Nassau Street tend to be triangular-shaped, while blocks south are generally angled or trapezoidal in shape. Trinity and St. Paul’s Churches and their churchyard cemeteries were built in the 18th century and stand as reminders of the city’s early history. A number of early 20th century lampposts are located in this area, adding to the historic character of the corridor. Older office buildings such as 70 Pine Street and 40 Wall Street exist in juxtaposition with modern skyscrapers, including 140 Broadway and 1 Liberty Plaza, located directly across Church Street from the WTC Site. The blocks east of Broadway between Liberty and Fulton Streets, and extending east beyond the study area comprise the John Street/Maiden Lane Historic District. This district is characterized by a collection of late 19th and early 20th-century early skyscraper office buildings. Many were built on speculation to house collateral businesses that were attracted to the area by the success of the neighboring Financial District.

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Broadway and Church Street carry large volumes of traffic and are often congested during the weekday. However, traffic volumes in the area and throughout Lower Manhattan in general are noticeably lower today than they were prior to the tragic events of September 11. Many of the area's narrow streets and alleys to the east of Broadway are controlled only by stop signs and do not have substantial vehicular traffic. Nassau Street is a very narrow roadway and is closed to vehicular traffic in the midday during the week. Streets in the vicinity of the New York Stock Exchange are closed to most vehicular traffic at all times. Sidewalks throughout the area experience heavy pedestrian flows, particularly during the weekday when commuters, tourists, residents, and workers converge. However, the subarea, along with the rest of the study area, is not as active as it was before September 11, 2001.

Greenwich South Corridor

The Greenwich South Corridor contains a hodgepodge of land uses, building types, and block sizes. The area is somewhat isolated and noticeably less active than the Broadway Corridor to the east or BPC across Route 9A to the west. The Greenwich South Corridor is perhaps the most densely developed of the subareas. Buildings generally occupy their entire lots and public plazas are non-existent. Immediately south of the Project Site, all but one of the buildings along Liberty Street are occupied after having been vacant for many months after September 11. The reopening of the redesigned firehouse housing Engine Co. 10 and Ladder Co. 10 at the corner of Liberty and Greenwich Streets and the active ground floor businesses along Liberty Street facing the WTC Site have brought back activity and with it some sense of normalcy to these blocks which remained inactive for many months, and in some cases years, after September 11.

While home to the fewest number of people compared to the other subareas in the study area, this neighborhood has experienced tremendous growth in its residential population in recent years, mainly due to a number of conversions of older office buildings to residential use, a trend expected to continue in the future. The vacant office tower at 130 Liberty Street on the Project Site stands high above the northern portion of the subarea, overshadowing everything around it. Further south are the ramps to the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel and the massive, multilevel Battery Garage built above. These features make it difficult to navigate through the area. Traffic on interior streets is light with none of the streets extending for more than a few blocks in any direction. Route 9A and Trinity Place at the edges of the corridor carry the greatest levels of vehicular traffic, with many segments of other streets closed for the recovery activities. Additional multilevel public parking structures along Washington Street and the narrow east-west streets create a quiet, isolated atmosphere. Activity is slow but steady during the day with office workers, students, hotel guests, and residents present throughout the area at different times of the day and night.

Battery Park City

BPC, one of New York City's newest neighborhoods, is a "city within the city" that is still being completed. Built in part on landfill from the large volume of soil excavated for the WTC complex, BPC is a mixed-use community with a commercial center, two residential neighborhoods, schools, cultural facilities, hotels, and neighborhood amenities such as dry cleaners and grocery stores, shopping opportunities, movie theatres, and restaurants, as well as the most extensive open space network in Lower Manhattan. While still very urban in character, BPC is visually distinct from the rest of the study area. It is physically divided from the WTC Site, the Southern Site, and the other subareas of the study area by Route 9A (West Street), a major arterial roadway. The portion of the roadway adjacent to the WTC Site suffered extensive damage on September 11, its aftermath, and during the recovery period. Today, a six-lane

temporary roadway runs between Liberty and Vesey Streets between the WTC Site and the World Financial Center (WFC). One permanent pedestrian bridge across Route 9A at Liberty Street, damaged on September 11, and two temporary pedestrian bridges at Rector and Vesey Streets help connect BPC to the rest of Lower Manhattan.

BPC is largely built with high-rise modern office and residential buildings, and is still developing in accordance with the 1979 BPC Master Plan. Although the east-west streets of BPC are laid out along the Manhattan street grid, the north-south streets do not continue throughout the length of the neighborhood. Nonetheless, all three sections are bound together by a common scale and style and by the extensive waterfront parks and esplanade, which begin at Battery Park in the south and extend all the way up along the Hudson River to just north of Chambers Street at the north end. A marina, ferry, and the Winter Garden form a major central public space. The 32-acres of parks and waterfront are highly utilized, not only by BPC residents and workers but also by the surrounding community and the entire city. Smaller green spaces and parks as well as newly constructed ballfields are interspersed throughout the residential areas.

The large commercial buildings of the WFC are located in the center of BPC between the residential neighborhoods, strategically positioned to tie into the WTC complex. Today, the WFC, with buildings ranging from 33 to 51 stories high, are visually prominent from all directions, standing isolated from the rest of the commercial business core to the north, east, and south of the Project Site. During weekday work hours, large numbers of employees are the predominant presence in this area. At other times, visitors to the public sitting areas and shopping opportunities centered around the Winter Garden or those using recreational facilities contribute to the ongoing presence in the area and a high level of activity.

The south neighborhood contains mostly low- and mid-rise residential buildings in addition to cultural and hotel uses. With the exception of two large vacant parcels along Route 9A, the south neighborhood is fully developed. Buildings in the north neighborhood are generally newer and taller, with several vacant parcels between Vesey and Warren Streets which are planned for mainly residential uses. Street-level activity is light in this area. However, the presence of Stuyvesant High School and P.S./I.S. 89 increases the level of activity during daytime hours. The residential structures contribute to a steady flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic along Chambers Street from the morning hours through the day into the evening hours.

10.3.2 FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTION 2009—CURRENT CONDITIONS SCENARIO

A number of privately and publicly sponsored development projects that are in construction, planned, or proposed throughout the study area independent of the Proposed Action are expected to be completed by 2009. While these developments may result in some changes to neighborhood character in the immediate vicinity of the development sites, most of the neighborhoods throughout the study area are expected to retain their most prominent characteristics, and overall neighborhood character would be minimally affected.

Lower Manhattan will continue to possess a diversity of uses including commercial office, retail, residential, government, cultural, educational, and open space. Residential use will increase as a result of new construction and conversions, with thousands of new residents expected throughout the area. Most of the buildings damaged on September 11 will be repaired and restored to their former use, increasing activity on now underutilized blocks. All known projects

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are being developed within the boundaries of existing blocks and would not result in the removal of any of the architecturally distinguished buildings located throughout the study area.

Although additional employees are expected in the area by 2009, especially in the three buildings along Vesey Street, the worker population would not return to its pre-September 11 densities while the Project Site remains largely vacant. Without the commercial space destroyed on September 11, Lower Manhattan will continue to suffer from a deficiency of the large floor plates in modern office buildings required to attract large businesses to the area. The study area currently contains a tremendous amount of economic activity. Therefore, any increase in worker and residential populations is not likely to result in significant changes to the character of the neighborhoods beyond the area immediately surrounding the specific developments. Any additional economic activity brought by these developments is likely to be most pronounced in the immediate vicinity of the project locations rather than in surrounding neighborhoods.

While these future developments are expected to occur with or without the Proposed Action, a lack of additional investment by the city, state and federal governments in the redevelopment of the Project Site will send a strong signal to developers and their potential occupants that public support is lacking in Lower Manhattan. As a result, fewer companies and individuals may be willing to invest in nearby businesses or homes which could undermine efforts to revitalize existing neighborhoods throughout the study area. A vast, vacant WTC Site in the future would not only leave a physical hole at the center of the Lower Manhattan central business district, it would also create a void in the fabric of the neighborhood—a void that could potentially extend far beyond the boundaries of the Project Site.

PROJECT SITE

In 2009 without the Proposed Action, it is assumed that the WTC Site will remain largely vacant and underused, with no development on the site except for the permanent WTC PATH Terminal, the No. 1/9 IRT subway line crossing the site, and possibly a restored Cortlandt Street Station. Liberty and Vesey Streets immediately adjacent to the WTC Site may be reopened to traffic when they are no longer needed for construction staging. On the Southern Site and Site 26 it is assumed that construction of three office towers would take place independent of the Proposed Action.

A mostly vacant WTC Site at the center of a bustling business district will continue to have a blighting effect on the surrounding community, impairing the sound growth and development of Lower Manhattan. While the reopening of Liberty and Vesey Street to traffic and the completion of the permanent WTC PATH Terminal will restore some activity to the immediate area, without redevelopment, the WTC Site will remain barren and unpopulated with the exception of commuters traveling to and from the permanent WTC PATH Terminal at the beginning and end of the day. The long-term presence of an essentially empty, excavated space in the heart of New York's Financial District is likely to make the area less attractive for businesses, residents, and visitors and impede investment by potential developers. Thus, lack of development would be likely to have an adverse effect on overall neighborhood character.

STUDY AREA

North of the WTC Site

In the North of the WTC Site subarea, the Barclay-Vesey Building and the Federal Office Building/U.S. Post Office, directly north of the WTC Site, will be repaired, renovated, and reopened. Construction of the new 7 WTC will be complete and the building occupied. These

developments will return almost 3.5 million square feet of office space to Vesey Street bringing new employees and increasing street activity in the immediate area. The two mixed-use residential developments planned for the large development sites at 270 Greenwich Street and at Chambers Street and Route 9A are expected to add over 1,000 residential units to the area increasing activity on the immediate blocks, and increasing demand for retail and other neighborhood services. These buildings will help to bridge the residential and mixed-use areas east of Greenwich Street with the open space amenities and residential neighborhoods of BPC to the west. Uses on these blocks will be more consistent with uses in the northern portion of the subarea and in Tribeca to the north. While all of these developments are significant, they are not likely to affect the overall character of the subarea. Traffic on already busy north-south streets will remain heavy while east-west traffic will continue at lower levels.

Broadway Corridor

In the Broadway Corridor, the Fulton Street Transit Center at Broadway and Fulton Street is expected to be complete as well as security improvements in the area of the New York Stock Exchange. These developments will improve the look of the area. Several residential conversions will also be complete along Maiden Lane and Fulton and John Streets. Overall, the character of the Broadway Corridor will not change.

Greenwich South Corridor

Similarly, while the conversion of 90 West Street in the Greenwich South Corridor will add residents to the area and improve the appearance of the building, neighborhood character is not likely to change.

Battery Park City

Several residential buildings will be completed in the north neighborhood, as well as one residential and one mixed-use development in the south neighborhood. It is anticipated that these projects will result in the continued evolution of the character of the north and south neighborhoods into a more densely populated area of high-rise residential and commercial development and recreational uses. These developments will convert undeveloped land into an assortment of active uses, generating new residents, shoppers, and workers. Overall levels of activity will increase as a result of these projects and become more consistent with the levels of activity in the rest of BPC, creating a more cohesive neighborhood. In addition, reconstruction of Route 9A between Vesey Street and Battery Place would be complete. Whether the reconstruction includes a short-bypass tunnel adjacent to the WTC Site or remains at-grade, roadway improvements are likely to improve traffic flow, allow for easier pedestrian crossings, and better connect BPC with the rest of Lower Manhattan.

**10.3.3 PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION 2009—
CURRENT CONDITIONS SCENARIO**

PROJECT SITE

The Proposed Action would result in substantial changes to neighborhood character both at the Project Site and throughout the study areas. The WTC Site would change from a mostly vacant site to a mixed-use development with a Memorial and museum and office, cultural, retail, and open space uses. On the Southern Site, Washington Street would be closed, St. Nicholas Church would be reconstructed, and an open space would be created between Route 9A and Greenwich Street. If a bus parking facility were located on Site 26, it would be below-grade. The Proposed

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Action would strengthen and be a key element in the revitalization of Lower Manhattan by introducing a range of active and attractive uses. The WTC Site would be divided at grade level into four separate blocks by bringing Fulton and Greenwich Streets through the site, restoring part of the street grid. Together, the changes would have a beneficial effect on neighborhood character.

Proposed designs for redevelopment of the WTC Site are consistent with the character of modern high-rise office and residential buildings located within the study area. Freedom Tower would reintroduce a very tall, modern structure to the WTC Site, restoring an element of the Manhattan skyline as a bold and prominent symbol of a revitalized New York City. While it would block certain views across the WTC Site, it would not block unique view corridors or unique views of visual resources, or otherwise adversely affect neighborhood character. The proposed new buildings would be an improvement over current conditions in that the residential and retail uses would bring increased pedestrian traffic, as well as retail stores, to this part of Lower Manhattan, improving the overall character of the Project Site and surrounding area. By extending Fulton Street through the site, there would be a view from Church Street through to the WTC. With the open spaces along Fulton Street, Wedge of Light Plaza, and Heroes Park, the view corridor would be wider, improving the visual connection across the WTC Site. Greenwich Street would also be extended through the site. This would be particularly beneficial to resources south of Liberty Street which are currently isolated by the large construction site that remains on the WTC Site. The Proposed Action would be in keeping with the character of the surrounding area, which is located in a densely developed urban setting.

Michael Arad's "Reflecting Absence" has been selected for further refinement and future implementation as the Memorial. The design concept would respect the original footprints of the Twin Towers both at-grade to approximately 30 feet below, recognize individual victims, reveal the western slurry wall, and provide access to bedrock. It would also help to reconnect the WTC Site with the fabric of the neighboring community. While the Memorial would feel separate from the bustle of the surrounding business district, allowing visitors to fully experience the Memorial in a respectful setting, it would also be easily accessible from the surrounding plazas and streets and allow for continuous activity throughout the rest of the Project Site. The Memorial would be a place to remember and honor the victims of the attacks who will forever remain a vital part of the neighborhood, while simultaneously allowing the surrounding community of workers, residents, and visitors to persist and to build a new neighborhood for the future.

The Memorial and related uses are estimated to result in approximately 5.5 million visitors per year. However, to account for greater levels of activity upon its opening, a first-year surge in attendance of up to 9 million visitors is assumed for 2009. As discussed in Chapter 9, "Socioeconomic Conditions," these 9 million visits to the redeveloped Project Site would be more than the approximately 8.1 million total visitors to all of Lower Manhattan in 2002, and more than double the projected 3.6 million annual visits to the WTC Site in the future without the Proposed Action in 2009. The vehicular and pedestrian traffic assumed to be generated by the Memorial, which, if these assumptions bear out, would be among the largest attractions in the city, would significantly affect the character of the immediate area. Traffic volumes would increase considerably on streets surrounding the Project Site. Thousands of tourists would fill these streets, sidewalks, and subway stations on weekdays and weekends. While these increases in pedestrian and vehicular traffic would be noticeable, they would not change the overall neighborhood character. The extension of both Fulton and Greenwich Streets through the WTC Site would help to alleviate some of the potential traffic problems by improving site

accessibility, dropoffs at the Memorial, and circulation. The street extensions would also create new at-grade pedestrian crossings. This would improve the ability of BPC residents and others to traverse the site in comparison to the inaccessible superblock which exists today. The new street network would provide direct access to the proposed street level retail establishments on the WTC Site, creating a sense of neighborhood at the site itself. Completion of the Fulton Street Transit Center, permanent WTC PATH Terminal, and related underground pedestrian connections would help to mitigate some of the adverse effects of this massive influx.

The increased pedestrian activity would also result in substantial benefits to neighborhood character. An increase in foot traffic would improve economic activity by increasing the customer base for area shops, restaurants, and cultural and entertainment venues both at the Project Site and throughout the neighborhoods of Lower Manhattan. The increased activity would pour over into neighborhoods where street life is less lively, such as the Greenwich South Corridor.

Together, the diverse components of the Proposed Action would contribute to the creation of a unique memorial as well as a more active and attractive Project Site resulting in a significant positive impact on neighborhood character. While portions of the site would remain under construction, the overall look and feel of the area would be transformed from a largely inaccessible, blighted eyesore into an appealing, mixed-use site that offers cultural, shopping, and open space amenities, and thousands of jobs. The implementation of the Proposed Action would send a signal to the region and the entire world that Lower Manhattan is a major center of business, commerce and culture, making it a more attractive place to live, work, and visit. In short, life would be restored to the WTC Site, significantly improving its overall character.

STUDY AREA

The large scale of the Proposed Action would affect neighborhood character well beyond the boundaries of the Project Site. The entire study area would be far more active as a result of the developments at the Project Site largely due to the additional visitors and workers.

The portions of the Proposed Action to be completed by 2009 would be compatible with the major office use as well as the increasing residential use in the study area. The performing arts and retail uses would benefit residents and workers located throughout the study area, increasing activity and improving the character of the area. The increase in foot traffic from the Project Site would improve economic activity by increasing the customer base for area shops, restaurants, and cultural and entertainment venues. Visitors combined with area workers and residents would enliven less active areas to the north of the WTC Site and throughout the Greenwich South Corridor.

In addition, a stated objective of the Proposed Action is to provide cultural and other amenities that help make the area a lively environment all day, every day. The various amenities planned as part of the Proposed Action reflect an existing and projected need from the growing residential population in Lower Manhattan, rather than an effort to alter or accelerate trends in neighborhood character.

The Proposed Action with its public plazas, walkways, and open space would be an improvement to the streetscape of the study area, compared with the underused land and damaged buildings that currently occupy the Project Site. The opening of Fulton and Greenwich Streets through the WTC Site would relate better to the street patterns and block shapes of the subareas to the north, east, and south of the Project Site, and serve to integrate development on the WTC Site into the surrounding area, significantly improving the overall character of the area.

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New open spaces would particularly benefit the neighborhoods within the North of WTC Site, Broadway Corridor, and Greenwich South Corridor subareas, all of which have only limited open spaces. All of the open spaces would be immediately accessible from area sidewalks and form a part of the east-west circulation routes between BPC and the area east of Church Street, creating a more cohesive Lower Manhattan. The smaller sizes of the blocks on the WTC Site and the expanded block on the Southern Site being used to create an open space would help integrate the Project Site with the built fabric of the Greenwich South Corridor resulting in substantial benefits to neighborhood character.

Traffic levels would increase considerably compared to the future without the Proposed Action as a result of the Memorial, office, and retail developments at the Project Site. However, streets such as Broadway, Church Street, and Route 9A are already burdened with high levels of traffic, and mitigation measures would be implemented to relieve some of the increased congestion. As a result, the increased levels of traffic throughout the study area may affect neighborhood character, but not at a level that would constitute a significant adverse impact. Similarly, while sidewalks would become more congested due to a large increase in pedestrian activity throughout the study area, the increase would not constitute a significant adverse impact.

10.3.4 FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTION 2015—CURRENT CONDITIONS SCENARIO

PROJECT SITE

In 2015 without the Proposed Action, it is assumed that the WTC Site would remain as it was in 2009—vacant except for the permanent WTC PATH Terminal, the No. 1/9 IRT subway lines, and possibly a restored Cortlandt Street 1/9 Subway Station office towers (130 and 140 Liberty Street) would be occupied on the Southern Site, and an approximately 1.4 million-square-foot commercial office tower would be expected to occupy Site 26, in accordance with the BPC Master Plan. As discussed above, a vacant, largely unused WTC Site will have a blighting effect on the surrounding area. This is likely to reduce potential development and deter businesses and residents from locating there. Over time, interest in visiting an undeveloped WTC Site will diminish, and the blighted conditions at the Project Site are likely to spread to adjacent areas as residents and businesses cease from investing in nearby properties. These conditions are likely to result in significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character.

STUDY AREA

The study area is expected to maintain a strong commercial presence as existing trends toward increasing residential, cultural, and other uses continue, creating a greater diversity of uses throughout the community. The distribution of uses and building types is expected to remain much the same as it is today, with commercial development clustered in the blocks immediately north of the WTC Site, the Broadway Corridor subarea, and the World Financial Center in BPC, and residential development concentrated in the Greenwich South Corridor subarea, BPC, and the northernmost sections of the study area between Park Place and Chambers Street. Development of soft sites (i.e., sites not built out to the maximum allowable FAR) may lead to a greater intensity of land uses, with higher-density office and residential uses in the future, but these developments are not likely to affect neighborhood character. However, the continued presence of a highly underutilized WTC Site remaining at the center of the study area is likely to cause disinvestment throughout the study area, particularly North of WTC Site and Greenwich South Corridor.

Traffic is expected to increase substantially throughout the study area. However, the most significant traffic impacts are expected in areas which already experience heavy traffic levels, and neighborhood character would not be affected as a result.

Neighborhood character could change in the Greenwich South Corridor. New York City's *Vision for a 21st Century Lower Manhattan* calls for the creation of a park, Greenwich Square, over the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel ramps, and for the area to become a center of new residential uses that may renovate and occupy existing structures. These developments would change this somewhat isolated, inactive "back-door" area into a more attractive, desirable neighborhood.

10.3.5 PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION 2015—CURRENT CONDITIONS SCENARIO

PROJECT SITE

By 2015, all construction would be complete on the Project Site. The Proposed Action would completely redevelop the WTC Site and the Southern Site and may have built bus parking underground at Site 26 in BPC. In addition to the Memorial, museum, cultural facilities, Freedom Tower, the retail bases of Freedom Tower and the three towers east of Greenwich Street, and the public open spaces, all the office towers and the hotel and conference facility would be complete, bringing the total office space to 10 million square feet. There would be five large, modern office towers ranging in area from 1.6 million to 2.6 million square feet, each with between approximately 56 and 70 stories of office space. The area has historically been developed with tall, modern structures among smaller-scaled historic buildings, and thus the proximity of the new office towers to historic resources would not result in any adverse impacts to neighborhood character. Given the prominence of these new buildings within the Manhattan office market, their exceptional accessibility, and state-of-the-art systems, the additional office space would make the area more attractive to retain existing and gain new businesses, and help to strengthen Lower Manhattan's reputation as a major economic center. The hotel would provide up to 800 rooms and conference facilities. All other development would be as described for 2009. The additional office space, hotel, and their associated populations would support and benefit the retail and cultural uses developed in the initial phase of the Proposed Action, creating a vibrant, mixed-use center of culture, business, entertainment, and recreation.

The Proposed Action undoubtedly would result in substantial changes to the character of the Project Site. Were the Proposed Action not to change the character of the area, it would fail to realize the project's purpose. While the Proposed Action would result in substantial pedestrian and vehicular traffic congestion on area sidewalks and at several intersections, the Proposed Action would add the Memorial and new office, retail, hotel, and open space uses to the Project Site, which would have substantial positive effects on overall neighborhood character at the Project Site.

STUDY AREA

Ten million square feet of office space would provide a significant infusion of state-of-the-art office space to Lower Manhattan. The buildings would be consistent with the large, modern office buildings in the North of the WTC Site area, in the Broadway Corridor, and in the World Financial Center in BPC. They would bring business activity and workers who, by purchasing goods and services, would support the study area's existing businesses. The Proposed Action would be a visible symbol of new office development in Lower Manhattan. In an area where

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residential conversions would have reduced the overall supply of office space, it would bring new, modern office space to the market.

The additional space developed under the Proposed Action would provide capacity to increase employment, retain jobs, and attract finance, insurance, and real estate (FIRE) employment back to Lower Manhattan, intensifying commercial activity throughout the study area. With the additional office space in operation, the retail space on the Project Site constructed during the earlier analysis period would become far more active, and any retail vacancies in the study area would likely decrease significantly as foot traffic and the area worker population increases, creating even more activity and strengthening the vitality of these neighborhoods.

The cultural, shopping, and recreational amenities associated with the Proposed Action would make the area a more lively environment all day, every day, and would serve as a key component of the broader initiative to make Lower Manhattan a more attractive place to live, work, and visit. The proposed development would be compatible with the surrounding study areas, and would reflect, rather than initiate, the growing residential presence and the demands for neighborhood amenities generated by existing residents. As a result, neighborhood character throughout the study area would be both enhanced and improved by the Proposed Action, and no significant adverse impacts would occur.

The Proposed Action undoubtedly would result in substantial changes to the character of the neighborhoods surrounding the Project Site. Were the Proposed Action not to change the character of the surrounding area, it would fail to achieve the project's purpose. While the Proposed Action would result in substantial pedestrian and vehicular traffic congestion at several intersections in the study area, the new uses from the proposed developments would enliven the neighborhoods surrounding the Project Site, increasing their desirability and attractiveness as places to live, work, and visit. Overall, the Proposed Action would have substantial positive effects on neighborhood character throughout the study area.

10.4 PRE-SEPTEMBER 11 SCENARIO

10.4.1 BASELINE CONDITIONS

As discussed in Chapter 2, "Methodology," analyses under the Pre-September 11 Scenario reflect a reasonable depiction of conditions that would have been expected in the study area absent the events of September 11. To avoid repetition with the analysis performed under the Current Conditions Scenario above, only differences in neighborhood character between today and September 11 are discussed. As a result, most of the detail focuses on the Project Site itself and the blocks immediately surrounding it. Baseline neighborhood character conditions throughout much of the study area for the Pre-September 11 Scenario are largely the same as those described in the Current Conditions Scenario.

PROJECT SITE

Prior to September 11, the WTC Site contained over 10 million square feet of office space in five buildings, approximately 500,000 square feet of retail space, a hotel, and a public plaza. The dominating features of the WTC complex were the Twin Towers. These extraordinary aluminum-clad skyscrapers were the tallest buildings in New York and had a dominating presence on the New York City skyline. They also served as the symbolic and functional centerpiece of Lower Manhattan's reputation as the economic core of the world. Each 110-story tower rose over 1,350 feet and contained more than 4.7 million square feet of rentable Class A

office space. One WTC, located along Route 9A between Vesey and Liberty Streets, also had a 351.5-foot mast supporting television and FM radio antennae for major public and private broadcasters in New York City. Two WTC was located on Liberty Street between Church Street and Route 9A. Tourists from around the world came to see and photograph the Twin Towers, to visit the observation deck, and to dine at Windows on the World. It was an exciting, energizing place to visit and spend time. Between the Towers at the southwest corner of the WTC Site was Three World Trade Center, a Marriott Hotel with 820 rooms and meeting spaces. Along the north and east edges of the WTC Site were two nine-story buildings (Four and Five World Trade Center) and the eight-story U.S. Custom House (Six World Trade Center).

The five office buildings and the hotel surrounded Austin J. Tobin Plaza (Tobin Plaza), where concerts and other public events were held. The centerpiece of the open space was the Plaza fountain sculpture, a granite fountain with the Fritz Koenig *Sphere* at its center. Although difficult to access, Tobin Plaza was the home to several outdoor cafes, and it was also used from time to time for performances with a stage set up on its western side. Along Church Street, there was more plaza area expanded into the bed of Church Street and improved with benches and planters which served as visual and urban design amenities. The south end of the closed lanes was the home of the popular and successful Greenmarket held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from spring through the fall. In the last summer of its existence, the plaza area along Church Street had been a regular performance venue with frequent free evening concerts.

Despite its amenities, the WTC complex blocked view corridors. It cut off views north on Greenwich and Washington Streets, views south on West Broadway, and views west on Fulton, Dey, and Cortlandt Streets.

Directly below the Plaza was the Concourse, consisting of a retail mall, the WTC PATH Terminal, and a transportation hub that provided pedestrian connections to seven subway lines and the PATH trains to New Jersey. Although not particularly successful and deserted on weekends for years, the shopping area had been improved and by 2001, it had become an extremely lucrative retail hub. A pedestrian bridge over Route 9A connected the northern part of the WTC complex with the commercial core of BPC at the WFC. There were approximately 48,000 workers employed at the Project Site prior to September 11, with over 34,000 employees in the Twin Towers. The WTC bustled with activity on weekdays, with over 200,000 workers and commuters pouring through each day and into the evening hours. Although weekends were less active, the Twin Towers and the retail mall attracted a steady flow of tourists and shoppers.

On the Southern Site, prior to September 11, the building at 130 Liberty Street was a fully occupied office tower with ground-floor retail. It had a plaza with a fountain in the summer that was replaced by shrubs in the winter. Above this was an additional plaza level originally intended to connect to the plaza level at the WTC. To its west, the block at the corner of Liberty Street and Route 9A was an active parking lot and the site of the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, destroyed on September 11. Liberty Street was open to two-way traffic with traffic medians and driveways along its north side to serve the WTC Site. Site 26 was used as a surface parking lot as it is today.

STUDY AREA

North of WTC Site

With the exception of the blocks to the immediate north of the WTC Site, neighborhood character prior to September 11 in the North of WTC Site subarea was substantially the same as it is today. Vesey Street west of Church Street, currently closed to vehicular traffic due to

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ongoing construction activity at the WTC Site, operated as a two-way roadway. East of Church Street, it operated eastbound only, as it does today. Vesey Street carried substantial vehicular and pedestrian traffic volumes along the northern boundary of the WTC Site.

With the approximately 2 million-square-foot 7 WTC still standing and occupied, and the Federal Office Building/U.S. Post Office and the Barclay-Vesey Building both open and fully functioning, the blocks immediately across from the WTC Site were far more active. The area was a vital part of the dense commercial core of Lower Manhattan rather than the somewhat desolate construction zone it is today. These buildings were not as visible as they are today due to the WTC buildings across the street. Greenwich Street and its view corridor terminated at 7 WTC which occupied the entire area between Washington Street on the west and West Broadway on the east. The renovation of the Borough of Manhattan Community College's Fiterman Hall on West Broadway and Barclay Street, damaged and vacant since September 11, was near completion and was actively used.

Broadway Corridor

Neighborhood character in the Broadway Corridor prior to September 11 was substantially the same as it is today. The buildings on Church Street across from the WTC Site that suffered damage on September 11 have since reopened with the same uses after undergoing repairs and renovations. With the WTC buildings located directly across Church Street, these large buildings along Church Street were not as visible as they are today from the north, west, and south. Traffic along Broadway and Church Street was heavier prior to September 11. However, it was not so different as to indicate any substantial differences in neighborhood character. Thames Street was open and fewer blocks were closed to traffic in the vicinity of the New York Stock Exchange, with far fewer police barriers, allowing for smoother traffic flow along the east-west streets.

Liberty Plaza had trees and a more inviting feeling overall. In spite of being paved, it was a full block of green in the warm months and lights twinkled in the tree limbs during the winter holidays. There were eight metal benches, with a life-sized sculpture of a man with a briefcase and umbrella sitting on one. Visitors were frequently grouped around the sculpture for photographs. Then, as now, chess games took place in the plaza. Across the plaza there were views of the WTC but not the WFC.

Greenwich South Corridor

Prior to September 11, the Greenwich South Corridor was still the least active subarea in the study area. However, there were fewer retail and building vacancies, and the area did not feel as isolated and empty as it does today. The interior streets, though dark and narrow, were open to traffic. The large office tower at 130 Liberty Street on the Southern Site and the office buildings at 90 West Street and 130 Cedar Street near the southwest corner of the Project Site were all active and occupied, bringing more activity in the subarea. In addition, the building at 19 West Street was occupied by the Downtown Athletic Club, a private health club with hotel rooms and the home of the Heisman Trophy. Several buildings between Route 9A and Greenwich Street were being or had already been converted from office to residential use following the trend in Lower Manhattan that had begun well before September 11.

Battery Park City

Neighborhood character in BPC prior to September 11 was the same as described under the Current Conditions Scenario with two minor exceptions. The north neighborhood was less active, with several parcels under construction or vacant that are now occupied or under

construction. In addition, the buildings of the WFC felt more connected to the Lower Manhattan business core, having been designed to harmonize with the size and design of the Twin Towers.

**10.4.2 FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTION 2009—
PRE-SEPTEMBER 11 SCENARIO**

This section considers development that would have been expected to occur in the future had the events of September 11 not occurred, and the effects of those developments, if any, on neighborhood character.

PROJECT SITE

For purposes of the Pre-September 11 analysis, in 2009 without the Proposed Action, it is assumed that the Twin Towers and other buildings at the WTC complex would still be standing and occupied as they were prior to September 11.

On the Southern Site, it is assumed that the block at the corner of Liberty Street and Route 9A would remain a parking lot and that St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church would still be standing. On the block to the east, it is assumed that the building at 130 Liberty Street, now damaged and expected to be demolished, would have remained a fully occupied office building. In addition, Site 26 would have remained a surface parking lot, planned for future development as a commercial office building with ground-floor retail in accordance with the BPC Master Plan.

Because there were no plans to expand or significantly alter the Project Site, the site would have looked and felt much the same in 2009 as it did in 2001. As a result, neighborhood character at the Project Site would have remained as it was prior to September 11.

STUDY AREA

Under the Pre-September 11 Scenario, buildings damaged and vacated on September 11 would continue to be occupied by their former use. For example, 90 West Street was a fully occupied office building; it is now a vacant structure being restored and redeveloped for residential use. In addition, a number of sites proposed for commercial use are assessed as commercial even though they are now expected to be residential. For example, the building at 270 Greenwich Street, a few blocks north of the WTC Site, was expected to be an office building, but is now planned for residential use. However, most developments that would have been expected for completion by 2009 prior to September 11 were the same or similar in use, bulk, and overall design as those projects described under the Current Conditions Scenario. Except as noted below, neighborhood character in the study area in 2009 would have been expected to remain the same as it was prior to September 11.

Prior to September 11, the large parcel at 270 Greenwich Street in the North of the WTC Site subarea, currently planned as a residential building, was slated to be developed as a large commercial office tower with street-level retail, below-grade parking, and a large plaza on Greenwich Street. This would have extended the edge of the dense business core to the north, creating a more abrupt shift from the large commercial structures on the southern blocks of the subarea to the smaller-scale residential and retail buildings in the north and east. The original 7 WTC building would still be standing across Vesey Street from the WTC Site with nearly 2 million square feet of office space. Combined with the other active buildings along Vesey and Barclay Streets, the blocks to the north of the WTC Site would remain an active part of the Lower Manhattan business district in 2009.

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In the Broadway and Greenwich South Corridors, the residential conversion trend already underway before September 11 would have continued, creating a more mixed-use character in these subareas. The Fulton Street Transit Center would not have been funded; thus, in 2009, the block on Broadway between John and Fulton Streets would still be occupied by five separate small-scale buildings ranging in height from one to 12 stories, rather than a larger, streamlined development.

In BPC, all the residential, cultural, and open space developments anticipated in the Current Conditions Scenario would have taken place and any changes to neighborhood character would be the same as described under the Current Conditions Scenario. The short bypass currently being considered for Route 9A between the WFC and WTC Site would not be built and Route 9A would be the same as it was before September 11.

10.4.3 PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION 2009— PRE-SEPTEMBER 11 SCENARIO

The Proposed Action would result in changes to neighborhood character both at the Project Site and throughout the study areas. The Proposed Action would strengthen and be a key element in the revitalization of Lower Manhattan by introducing a range of active and attractive uses and amenities, including new cultural uses which did not exist at the Project Site prior to September 11. The WTC Site would change from a commercial superblock with a large public plaza to a mixed-use development divided at-grade into four separate blocks with a Memorial and museum and office, cultural, retail, and open space uses. These changes would have a beneficial effect on neighborhood character at the WTC Site and throughout the study area.

PROJECT SITE

Compared with conditions without the Proposed Action in 2009, the Proposed Action would provide significantly less office space, approximately 500,000 more square feet of retail, and less public open space than the former WTC. New uses would be added to the mix with the Memorial, museum, and cultural facilities.

Proposed designs for redevelopment of the WTC Site are consistent with the character of modern high-rise office and residential buildings located within the study area. The 1,776-foot Freedom Tower is designed to replace the Twin Towers as the defining icon of the Lower Manhattan skyline, recognizable from miles around. The rest of the WTC Site would also be dramatically different from the way it was prior to September 11. The proposed new buildings would be an improvement over pre-September 11 conditions in that the greater diversity of amenities offered would attract workers, tourists, and residents.

Compared with having a very large central plaza surrounded by buildings, the Proposed Action would create a number of new open spaces designed and built for a variety of uses. All these open spaces would be both at-grade and immediately accessible from the surrounding sidewalks. The south portion of Wedge of Light Plaza would form the entry plaza for the permanent WTC PATH Terminal. Together, Wedge of Light Plaza and Heroes Park would be part of the east-west circulation system along with Fulton Street. Liberty Park South would stretch from Greenwich Street to Route 9A, providing another important east-west circulation route. These open spaces would be visually attractive as well as improve pedestrian connections to and across the WTC Site with adjacent neighborhoods.

By reopening two streets through the WTC Site, the Proposed Action would restore vehicular access both from north to south along Greenwich Street, and from east to west on Fulton Street, improving circulation throughout the area. As a result, the WTC Site would be divided at grade level into four separate blocks, restoring part of the street grid. On the Southern Site, Washington Street would be closed, St. Nicholas Church would be reconstructed, and an open space would be created between Route 9A and Greenwich Street. By extending Fulton Street through the site, there would be a view from Church Street through to the WFC. With the open spaces along Fulton Street, Wedge of Light Plaza, and Heroes Park, the view corridor would be wider, improving the visual connection across the WTC Site. Greenwich Street would also be restored through the site. This would be particularly beneficial to the blocks south of Liberty Street in the Greenwich South Corridor which were cut off by the WTC superblock. The Proposed Action would be in keeping with the densely developed urban character of the surrounding area.

The extension of both Fulton and Greenwich Streets through the WTC Site would also create new at-grade pedestrian crossings that did not exist prior to September 11. This would improve the ability of Battery Park City residents and others to traverse the site in comparison to the relatively inaccessible Tobin Plaza that was in place before September 11. The new street network would also provide direct access to the proposed street level retail establishments on the WTC Site. This would create a sense of neighborhood within the site itself that did not exist before September 11.

Michael Arad's "Reflecting Absence" has been selected for further refinement and future implementation as the Memorial. The design concept would respect the original footprints of the Twin Towers both at-grade to approximately 30 feet below, recognize individual victims, reveal the western slurry wall, and provide access to bedrock. It would also help to reconnect the WTC Site with the fabric of the neighboring community. While the Memorial would feel separate from the bustle of the surrounding business district, allowing visitors to fully experience the Memorial in a respectful setting, it would also be easily accessible from the surrounding plazas and streets and allow for continuous activity throughout the rest of the Project Site. The Memorial would be a place to remember and honor the victims of the attacks who will forever remain a vital part of the neighborhood, while simultaneously allowing the surrounding community of workers, residents, and visitors to persist and to build a new neighborhood for the future.

The Memorial and related uses are estimated to result in approximately 5.5 million visitors per year. However, to account for greater levels of activity upon its opening, a first-year surge in attendance of up to 9 million visitors is assumed for 2009. As discussed in Chapter 9, "Socioeconomic Conditions," these 9 million visits to the redeveloped Project Site would be well more than double the projected visitation (3.4 million) to the former WTC in 2009. Thus, the pedestrian and vehicular traffic assumed to be generated by the Memorial, which, if the assumptions bear out, would be among the largest attractions in the city and would significantly affect the character of the immediate area. Thousands of tourists would fill these streets, sidewalks, and subway stations on weekdays and weekends. While these increases in vehicular and pedestrian traffic would be noticeable, they would not change the overall neighborhood character. The completion of the Fulton Street Transit Center, permanent WTC PATH Terminal, and related underground pedestrian connections would help to mitigate some of the adverse effects of this massive influx.

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Retail below grade along with the retail bases of Towers 2, 3, and 4 would be complete by 2009, providing up to 1 million square feet. This would double the amount of retail space in the former WTC complex. By comparison to the WTC, which had most of its retail space below-grade on the Concourse level, major portions of the new retail space would be at grade and open onto and enliven the sidewalks around and inside the Project Site.

Beneath the office towers and plazas and except in the memorial area, the Proposed Action would provide for retail uses on two below-grade concourse levels. Retail uses would enliven the pedestrian corridor at the lower concourse level linking the permanent WTC PATH terminal to the World Financial Center in BPC on the west and the subway system on Church Street, and would provide connections to street-level retail and pedestrian activities.

On the Southern Site, a major office building at 130 Liberty Street with plazas and a parking lot with a small church in it would be replaced with a major new open space (Liberty Park South and Liberty Park North) along Liberty Street, a new church, and ground-level retail uses at the south end, creating a more inviting environment at the southern portion of the Project Site. In addition, a garage for tour buses would be provided under the Southern Site, below-grade at Site 26 or, possibly, below-grade on the WTC Site. The garage would remove many of the waiting buses parked or idling on area streets, as they did before September 11.

Together, the diverse components of the Proposed Action would contribute to the creation of a more active and attractive Project Site and would have a significant positive impact on neighborhood character.

STUDY AREA

The portions of the Proposed Action to be completed by 2009 would be compatible with the major office use as well as the increasing residential use in the study area. Freedom Tower would be compatible with the large, modern office buildings to the north of the WTC Site, in the Broadway Corridor, and at the WFC in BPC, which it would face across Route 9A. It would be a visible symbol of new office development in Lower Manhattan. However, the overall office space would be far less than was provided before September 11. The substantial reduction in office space, in comparison to the Pre-September 11 Scenario without the Proposed Action, would represent a significant loss in activity and workers employed on the Project Site, which could have an adverse effect on neighborhood character. However, these conditions would be only temporary, as full build out of the Proposed Action would not yet be complete.

The cultural facilities and improved accessibility of the open spaces would benefit the increasing area residents and workers throughout the surrounding study area. The performing arts center would benefit both the worker population and the growing residential population of the surrounding neighborhoods. It would bring more of a type of use previously under-represented in Lower Manhattan. The cultural and performing arts uses would complement the office and residential uses in BPC, creating a more cohesive neighborhood.

The retail use would also benefit both the worker and residential population. Maximizing its street frontage, it would be readily accessible to the people in the area and would enliven sidewalks facing the study area along Church, Vesey, Liberty, Greenwich, and Cedar Streets.

The open spaces provided by the Proposed Action would be used by residents and workers North of the WTC Site, in the Broadway Corridor, and in the Greenwich South Corridor, all of which have only limited open spaces and all of which formerly had access to the original WTC plaza areas. The proposed open space on the Southern Site, would be an important amenity for

adjacent commercial as well as residential uses to the east and south. This would be a far more accessible open space than the two-level plaza that had existed at 130 Liberty Street, creating continuity through the newly developed site. All of the open spaces would be immediately accessible from area sidewalks and form a part of the east-west circulation routes between BPC and the area east of Church Street. By comparison, the former WTC Plaza area along Church Street was a well used open space and north-south pedestrian route, but the large central plaza was somewhat isolated and off the beaten track.

With Greenwich Street reopened through the WTC Site, the Proposed Action would relate better to the street patterns and block shapes of the North of the WTC Site and Greenwich South Corridor subareas. The new section of Greenwich Street would serve to reintegrate the urban fabric south of the Project Site. The Greenwich South Corridor would no longer be isolated. The smaller sizes of the blocks on the WTC Site and the expanded block on the Southern Site being used to create an open space would help integrate the Project Site with the built fabric in the Greenwich South Corridor. Overall, developments at the Project Site would be better integrated with the surrounding area, substantially benefiting neighborhood character.

Redevelopment of the Project Site under the Proposed Action would add significantly to the visitor base for all of Lower Manhattan. The new tourism generated by the redeveloped Project Site would generate new visits to existing places of interest, and would increase the percentage of both domestic visitors (i.e., those outside the New York City region) and international visitors to Lower Manhattan. The increased foot traffic would improve economic activity by increasing the customer base for area shops, restaurants, and cultural and entertainment venues both at the Project Site and throughout the neighborhoods of Lower Manhattan. This activity would pour into neighborhoods where street life is less lively, such as the Greenwich South Corridor, improving the character of the study area. While this substantial increase in visitors also translates into significant traffic impacts at many intersections in the study area, traffic levels along the main thoroughfares, such as Route 9A, Church Street, and Broadway, are expected to be heavy with or without the Proposed Project. Thus, these traffic levels would not increase so as to adversely affect neighborhood character.

Overall, the Proposed Action would provide substantial benefits to neighborhood character throughout the study area, and no significant adverse impacts would result.

10.4.4 FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTION 2015— PRE-SEPTEMBER 11 SCENARIO

PROJECT SITE

In this scenario, it is assumed that the WTC Site—including the Twin Towers and related buildings and the PATH terminal inside—would still be standing. On the Southern Site, the block at the corner of Liberty Street and Route 9A may have been developed, possibly involving demolition of St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church. On the block to the east, it is assumed that the building at 130 Liberty Street would have remained a fully occupied office building. In BPC, an approximately 1.4 million-square-foot commercial office tower would be developed on Site 26. Neighborhood character at the Project Site would remain substantially the same as it was in 2009 without the Proposed Project.

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In this scenario, much of the anticipated private development activity, particularly the development of more residential buildings, and the overall land use through 2015 is similar to conditions described above for the Current Conditions Scenario. Major exceptions to this are the buildings around the Project Site, which would have remained in their pre-September 11 configurations and with their pre-September 11 uses, and the open spaces that may be created with the city's *Vision for a 21st Century Lower Manhattan*, Greenwich Square and Market Square, which could have sparked further development and served to improve the overall character of these areas.

10.4.5 PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION 2015— PRE-SEPTEMBER 11 SCENARIO

PROJECT SITE

By 2015, all construction would be complete on the Project Site. The Proposed Action would completely redevelop the WTC Site and the Southern Site and would include bus parking underground at the Southern Site, Site 26 or the WTC Site. In addition to the Memorial, museum, cultural facilities, Freedom Tower, the retail bases of the three towers east of Greenwich Street, and the open space, all the office towers and the hotel and conference facility would be complete, bringing the total office space to 10 million square feet. There would be five large, modern office towers ranging in area from 1.6 million to 2.6 million square feet, each with between approximately 56 and 70 stories of office space. The hotel would provide 800 rooms and conference facilities. All other development would be as described for 2009. The additional office space, hotel, and their associated populations would support and benefit the retail and cultural uses developed in the initial phase of the Proposed Action, creating a vibrant, mixed-use center of culture, business, entertainment, and recreation.

Given the prominence of these new buildings within the Manhattan office market, their exceptional accessibility, and state-of-the-art systems, the additional office space would make the area more attractive to retain existing and attract new businesses, and help to strengthen Lower Manhattan's reputation as the economic core of the world.

By 2015, a decrease in visitation would be expected given that the Memorial and museum would no longer be "new" places of interest. In addition to the visitors to the Memorial and museum, the Project Site as a whole would continue to maintain large numbers of visitors, at a rate well above what would be expected in the future without the Proposed Action under this scenario. This would result in enlivened streets and a more vivacious Project Site, compared with the former WTC complex.

Overall, substantial benefits to neighborhood character at the Project Site would be expected from the Proposed Action, and no significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character would result.

STUDY AREA

The four office towers to be completed between 2009 and 2015 would provide a significant infusion of office space to the study area and the rest of Lower Manhattan. They would be consistent with the large, modern office buildings in the North of the WTC Site area, in the Broadway Corridor, and in the World Financial Center in BPC. They would bring business activity and workers who, by purchasing goods and services, would support area businesses. It

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would be a visible symbol of new office development in Lower Manhattan. In an area where residential conversions will have reduced the overall supply of office space, it will bring new, modern office space to the market. The new office towers at the Project Site would be far better integrated into the urban fabric of the neighborhood compared with the former WTC complex, enhancing and improving the overall neighborhood character of the study area.

The increase in office workers associated with the new office space would benefit area businesses, particularly restaurants and shops, well beyond the Project Site. International and domestic business travelers to the area would increase, and the large numbers of visitors to the Memorial and museum, open spaces, and retail stores would continue. All of these new workers and visitors will generate visits at other places of interest throughout Lower Manhattan, supporting area businesses, enlivening the streets, and filling the neighborhoods surrounding the Project Site with life. Overall, the Proposed Action would have substantial positive effects on neighborhood character throughout the study area and all of Lower Manhattan. *