

A. INTRODUCTION

This analysis of land use, zoning, and community character considers the existing conditions of the project area, anticipates and evaluates those changes in land use and zoning that are expected to occur independently of the proposed project, and identifies and addresses any potential impacts to land use, zoning, and community character associated with the proposed project.

To determine existing conditions and assess the potential for impacts, the land use study area has been defined as the area bounded generally by Tillary Street to the north, Lawrence Street to the east, Fulton and Joralemon Streets to the south, and Cadman Plaza to the west (see Figure 2-1). This is the area in which the project has the potential to affect land use or land use trends. Various sources have been utilized to prepare a comprehensive analysis of land use, zoning, and community character, including field surveys, evaluation of land use and zoning maps, and consultation of other sources, such as municipal documents and regulations.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

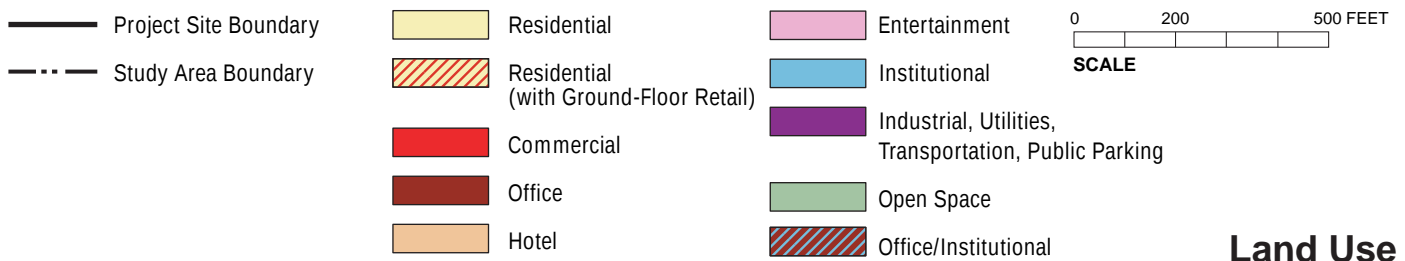
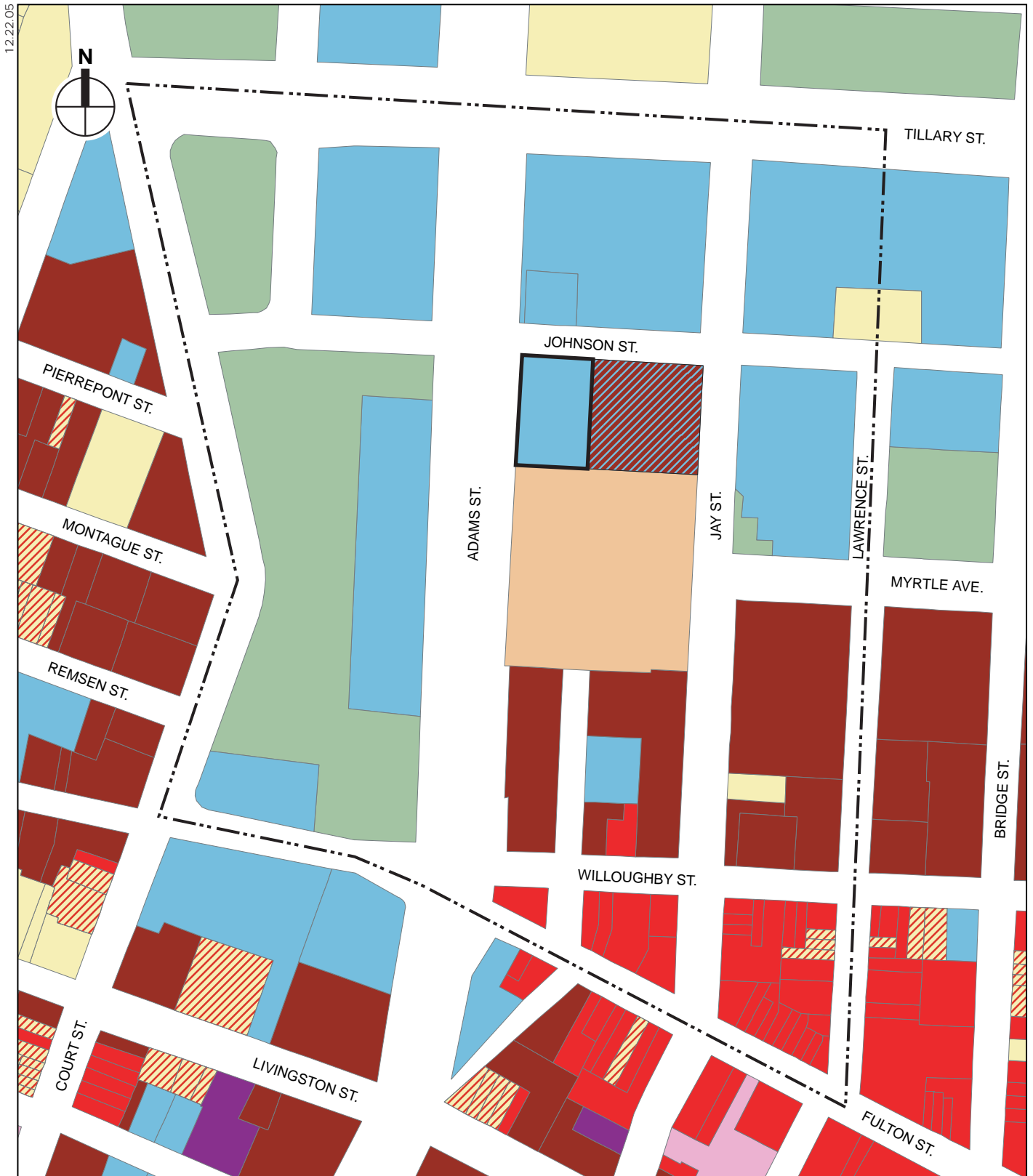
Existing land use patterns and trends are described below for the project site and the study area. This is followed by a discussion of zoning and community character for both areas.

LAND USE*PROJECT SITE*

The project site, comprised of Lot 10 on Block 140, is located on the block bounded by Johnson Street to the north, Jay Street to the east, Willoughby Street to the south, and Adams Street to the west (See Figure 2-1). Located in Downtown Brooklyn, the new school facility would primarily serve Brooklyn residents, but could serve high school students citywide. The rectangular-shaped site is approximately 28,000 square feet (sf) and contains one 5-story building that is the former Brooklyn Family Courthouse building. The existing building's total square footage is approximately 140,000 square feet. It is currently empty.

STUDY AREA

The study area is bounded roughly by Tillary Street to the north, Lawrence Street to the east, Fulton and Joralemon Streets to the south, and Cadman Plaza to the west. The study area contains a wide variety of uses, the most predominant of which are institutional, office and open space uses. Institutional uses in the area are largely governmental buildings and schools, including colleges and a yeshiva. The office and commercial uses are concentrated in the southeast portion of the study area, primarily along Fulton, Willoughby, and Lawrence Streets. There are two public open space uses within the study area, in addition to the open space that is part of Polytechnic University.



Adams Street High School

Institutional uses are one of the predominant uses in the study area. Immediately north of the project site are the New York City College of Technology and the Brooklyn General Post Office. On the west side of Adams Street, adjacent to Columbus Park, are the New York State Supreme Court and Brooklyn Borough Hall. The Domestic Relations Court occupies a portion of the building adjacent to the project site to the east. On the east side of Jay Street is the Polytechnic University campus. Also within the study area, on Pearl Street, is the Brooklyn Friends School.

Office and commercial uses are also dominant in the study area. The project block has several high rise office buildings, including the 32-story building immediately east of the project site (housing the Domestic Relations Court mentioned above), a 14-story building along Adams Street, and the 13-story building facing Jay Street. Also on the project block is the Marriott Hotel on Adams Street, a 5-story office building along Pearl Street and a 2-story retail building along Willoughby Street. The study area also includes a 14-story office building on Jay Street, and numerous buildings with ground-floor retail that are 1 to 5 stories, south of Willoughby Street.

The other principal use in the study area is open space, provided by Columbus Park. Columbus Park dominates the western portion of the study area, supplying 4.14 acres of open space with sitting areas, malls, and a plaza.

ZONING AND PUBLIC POLICY

PROJECT SITE

The project site is located in a C5-4 commercial district (see Figure 2-2). C5-4 districts are medium bulk commercial districts intended primarily for retail uses where continuous retail frontage is preferred. These districts are usually developed with department stores or large office buildings and are exempt from parking requirements because public transportation is readily available. C5-4 zoning districts allow commercial uses like office buildings, residential buildings, and community facilities, including schools, to be built as-of-right. C5-4 zoning districts have a maximum allowable floor area ratio (FAR) of 10.0, which could be increased to 12.0 with a bonus plaza.

STUDY AREA

The study area is zoned C5-4, C6-1, C6-1A, C6-4, and C6-4.5, and is located within the Special Downtown Brooklyn District (DB). The Special Downtown Brooklyn District was created to strengthen the business core of Downtown Brooklyn by improving the working and living environments of Downtown Brooklyn by fostering development and providing a transition between the Downtown commercial core and the lower-scale residential communities of Fort Greene, Boerum Hill, Cobble Hill and Brooklyn Heights. The Special Downtown Brooklyn District promotes new development that is in character with the area, while preserving the historic architectural character of development and pedestrian orientation of ground-floor uses. Allowable FAR in DB districts ranges from 3.44 to 12.0.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Community character is defined as an amalgam of a number of traits, including land use, urban design and visual resources, traffic, and noise. These elements are considered together to create a sense of the neighborhood in which a project is proposed, so that the compatibility of the project within its community setting can be presented and assessed.

PROJECT SITE AND STUDY AREA

The community character of the Downtown Brooklyn is generally that of a central business area surrounded by schools and a residential neighborhood included in the fabric of the community. There are several types of land uses that characterize the study area, including commercial, community facility and residential uses.

The major thoroughfares in the study area are Adams Street and Cadman Plaza. Adams Street is a two-way street, with two lanes in each direction, and a service lane with parking on each side of the street. Cadman Plaza is also a two-way street with three lanes in each direction, with one lane usually used for parking. Adams Street and Cadman Plaza are predominately lined with tall office and governmental buildings on one side and Columbus Park on the other. They typically carry local and through traffic.

Much of the area surrounding the project site is fully developed with a mixture of uses, predominantly with commercial and institutional uses. The northern portions of the study area includes institutional uses, such as the post office, NYC College of Technology, and Polytechnic University, while commercial and office buildings dominate the southeastern portion of the study area. The office buildings vary from 2 to 32 stories. The commercial uses are predominantly ground-floor retail, including shoe and clothing shops, eateries, and jewelry stores.

Columbus Park Playground, which is located across the street from the project site, contributes to the neighborhood's pedestrian character. The park is generally used by workers and students for lunch, reading, and people-watching. Pedestrians walk along the streets of the study area, mainly to and from the surrounding schools, office and court buildings, and subways. The subway stations in close proximity to the project site are the Borough Hall Station for the 2/3/4/5 lines and the Jay Street Station on the A/C/F lines.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

A new school facility would provide additional community resources for area residents. The project is not expected to place additional demands on hospitals and other health care facilities, libraries, or public school or day care facilities. This analysis focuses, therefore, on police and fire protection services and publicly accessible open spaces.

The project is served by the 84th Police Precinct. The precinct house is located at 301 Gold Street in the Brooklyn Heights section of Brooklyn. The project site is served by Engine 207, Ladder 110 Battalion, located at 172 Tillary Street; Engine 205, Ladder 118 at 74 Middagh Street; Engine 210 at 160 Carlton Avenue; Engine 224 at 274 Hicks Street; and Engine 226 at 409 State Street.

C. THE FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED PROJECT

LAND USE

In the future without the project, this analysis assumes that no changes to the project site or its surroundings would occur by the 2008 build year. The existing 5-story building on the site would remain empty. The only new known development planned for the study area is the Marriott Hotel expansion, located directly south of the project site, which is expected to be completed by 2006. The new expansion would include 280 rooms and 8,500 square feet of retail.

ZONING AND PUBLIC POLICY

There are no zoning changes that are expected to occur on the project site or in the study area by the 2008 build year. There are no new public policy initiatives that will have an effect on the project site and its associated study area in the future without the proposed project.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

In the future without the proposed project, it is anticipated that the new Marriott Hotel expansion would be consistent with the existing character of the area. Therefore, no change to the existing community character is expected.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The Police Department has no plans for any changes that will affect law enforcement services in this portion of the 84th Precinct. Similarly, there are no other projects or changes in fire protection services or equipment expected by the 2008 build year.

D. PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

LAND USE

PROJECT SITE

The proposed project would convert the existing vacant building on the project site with a new 1,075-student capacity school facility. The existing penthouse would be replaced with a 40-foot tall, approximately 12,900-square-foot sixth-floor addition. The proposed six-story facility would contain up to approximately 141,500 gross square feet (gsf) of classroom, administration, and mechanical space.

The proposed project would contain facilities for two high school organizations for ninth to twelfth grade students. It is expected to primarily serve students from Brooklyn, although it could serve high school students citywide.

STUDY AREA

The proposed use of the project site for a new school facility would be compatible with the uses in the study area, which primarily consist of institutional and commercial uses and include nearby colleges and office buildings. It is not expected that development of the proposed high school facility would affect adjacent land uses, such as the Marriott Hotel, as the project would comply with setback regulations according to the zoning code and would include planters along Adams Street. The proposed school facility would improve land use on the site by converting a vacant building into a more productive use.

ZONING AND PUBLIC POLICY

The new school facility would conform to the use requirement of C5-4 zoning district, in which school uses are permitted as-of-right, including the sixth-floor addition. The new school facility would consist of approximately 141,500 gsf (approximately 5.0 FAR), well below the district's permitted 10.0 FAR. As a portion of tax lot 10's development rights have previously been transferred to adjoining property, the existing building could not be expanded to 10 FAR. The

new school facility would comply with the floor area requirements for the project site, which allow a maximum development of 116,908 zoning square feet (zsf).

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

In the future with the proposed project, a new school facility would be created on the project site. The renovated building would be of similar scale to neighboring buildings. In addition, the school facility would be compatible with surrounding institutional and commercial land uses. The increase in traffic volumes with the proposed project is not expected to result in any significant adverse community character impacts.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The Police and Fire Departments would adjust their services as they deem necessary, and no significant adverse impacts to police or fire services are expected to result from the proposed project. *