# Rail Freight Yard Requirements
# Land Assessment for the East of Hudson Area

March 2003

NEW YORK METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

This New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) report was compiled, written and photographed by **Howard J. Mann**, Associate Transportation Analyst. Preparation was funded by the Federal Highway and Federal Transit Administrations of the United States Department of Transportation, and the New York State Department of Transportation. The contents of this report reflect the views of the author who is responsible for the fact and accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the Federal Highway and Transit administrations or the State of New York. This report does not constitute a standard, specification, or regulation.

NYMTC appreciates the cooperation of all the agencies that have provided information for the Rail Freight Yard Requirements/Land Assessment for the East Of Hudson Area Report. Through their submissions, this report continues to be a useful source of transportation statistical information on the NYMTC region and environs.

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# I OVERVIEW

The objective of this study was to determine the need for freight facilities and to survey land area in the NYMTC region to determine potential locations where yards could be situated or existing yards expanded.

## 1. Studies Point to Rail Freight Solutions

Over the past several years many discussions have been held and analyses performed on the issue of freight transportation in and around the NYMTC region. Moving freight by rail, as an alternative to the intensely used highway mode, has been promoted in several recent studies and plans to that effect are in the process of being developed.

The following five studies, completed for sites in the region, support the effort to promote movement of freight via rail:

*Cross Harbor Freight Movement Major Investment Study*
**New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC)**

*Strategic Plan for the Redevelopment of the Port of New York*
**New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC)**

*Port Development and Investment Planning Study*
**The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ)**

*Intermodal Freight Movement Opportunities for Long Island—Making the Case for the Pilgrim State Hospital Site*
**New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC)**

*Pilgrim Intermodal Feasibility Study*
**New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT)—Region 10**

## 2. Deterioration of the Rail System

The rail facilities in the region are a holdover from a past in which rail played a much greater role in freight movement than it does today. The movement of freight was affected by the implementation of the interstate highway system, expanding and maturing suburban development, and e-commerce: the region has outgrown the existing rail freight system. In fact, today's rail facilities serve less than one percent of the total volume of freight in the NYMTC region.

## 3. Regional Transportation Plan Calls for Increased Yards

Expanding the share of freight moved by rail is a focus of NYMTC's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Mobility for the Millennium. The plan recognizes that such an expansion would require a commensurate increase in the size and/or number of rail freight facilities, such as yards. Whether the objective is to handle an increase in the goods arriving at a port's dockside by rail or to handle trailers on rail cars, the requisite rail facilities would be necessary.

The RTP highlights the need to explore the region's physical ability to accommodate an expansion in the number of yards and terminals and/or expansion of specific existing yards. The availability of land is the single most important criterion necessary to allow for the increase in rail yards and terminals. Some yards in the United States consist of hundreds of acres. The dense development that characterizes the NYMTC region will likely make it difficult to locate sufficient land to meet the size requirements of a modern rail facility.

## 4. Objectives

The objectives of this report are to:

1. Investigate the need for additional facilities,
2. Assess the land area necessary for either expanded or additional facilities, and
3. Catalogue the parcels that are available for potential future use as part of the regional rail freight system.

The focus area of this study is east of the Hudson River.

# II Discussion of Contributing Studies

## 1. Pilgrim Intermodal Feasibility Study
## New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT)—Region 10

Originating from a white paper report prepared by NYMTC staff in January 1999, this feasibility study follows the recommendation that the Pilgrim State Hospital site, the current location of a state mental health facility, is the best location for a large rail yard on Long Island. The study examined market data and analyzed the site itself to determine whether it was appropriate for conducting intermodal and carload rail freight operations. It concluded that the site was sufficient and that the market could be increased if this facility were to be developed. Volume forecasts used in this study were derived from rail freight that does not currently enter Long Island such as Trailer on Flat Car (TOFC) and Container on Flat Car (COFC). The volumes vary, depending on the operating scenario, including:

1. Enhanced car float operation (2005 horizon)
2. TOFC/COFC with no operational restrictions on LIRR and Hudson Line and enhanced car float (2010 horizon)
3. TOFC/COFC with no operational restrictions on LIRR and Hudson Line and enhanced car float (2015 horizon)
4. TOFC/COFC with no operational restrictions on LIRR and Hudson Line and enhanced car float (2020 horizon)
5. Double stack access plus no operational restrictions on LIRR and Hudson Line and enhanced car float
6. Double stack access plus no restrictions on LIRR and Hudson Line and cross-harbor tunnel

As a result of the conclusions of this study, NYSDOT developed concept plans for handling intermodal and bulk freight at this location.

## 2. Cross Harbor Freight Movement Major Investment Study
## New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC)

Conducted by NYCEDC, the Cross Harbor study includes an in-depth analysis of freight volumes and commodities moved in four types of markets:

1. Interregional
2. Intraregional
3. International
4. Through movements

# II Discussion of Contributing Studies

The Cross Harbor study found that existing freight volume was 475 million tons per year. This total was broken down into the following volumes for each type of freight flow:

- Interregional 276 million tons
- Intraregional 108 million tons
- International 56 million tons
- Through flows 35 million tons

The study also concluded that the regional rail freight market includes a few primary commodities and reinforces the fact that the bulk of the region's freight is moved by truck (rail handles less than 1 percent).

The major finding of the study was that with improvements to rail facilities, a portion of the freight market could be diverted to rail. Each of three rail alternatives was found to be capable of diverting varying amounts of tonnage from other modes. The diversions range from 0.7% from long haul truck for a no build alternative (for an additional 731,000 tons over 2020 base case rail tonnage of 4.5 million tons) up to 5.33% from long haul truck for a rail tunnel alternative (for an additional 5.8 million tons over 2020 base case rail tonnage of 4.5 million tons).

## 3. Strategic Plan for the Re-Development of the Port of New York New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC)

The focus of this study was on the potential development of the port in New York City. It explored improvements to the transportation network that would be required to develop the port as well as other infrastructure improvements to port facilities. The study examined the markets for breakbulk, autos and containers, and arrayed the improvements that would be necessary to accommodate the loads these commodities would present over various time frames. It concluded that an inland rail terminal would be feasible as a means of rapidly moving goods off the port and to their ultimate destination.

## 4. Port Development and Investment Planning Study Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ)

This study, conducted for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, examined base levels and forecasts of cargo traffic to the port of New York and New Jersey. In addition, the study sought to analyze the expansion of the port—focusing on sites, location and the potential environmental impact of such development. It indicated that the port must be able to handle the volumes carried by that 6000 teu ships (ships with greater than 40 foot drafts). The study pointed out that 48 percent of trucks serving the port are destined for locations east of the Hudson River. It also concluded that imports will increase by 3.8% per year and containers by 3.5% per year.

## 5. Contributing Projects

Others involved with freight planning include: NYMTC Regional Freight Plan Project; Port Inland Distribution System and the NYMTC Freight Transportation Working Group.

# III REGIONAL FREIGHT MARKET ASSESSMENT

This report made use of the Reebie database, which organizes freight volumes by mode, commodity and county of origin/destination, to study the rail freight market. The Reebie version used for this analysis contained 1998 base year and 2025 forecast year time parameters. Resulting data was compared for carload traffic. The Reebie database forecast is an unconstrained scenario; the projection is based on economic forces only and does not take into account changes to the transportation network.

## 1. Potential Change in Carload Traffic

Table 1 summarizes the base year and forecast year levels of tonnages for carload traffic. These data reveal that even without major new facilities, there will be a large increase in rail carload traffic. Intermodal rail, not currently implemented in the region, would increase the share of the total regional freight moved by rail. Further, even the most minor improvements and a favorable rail business environment would probably increase the rail freight share of the transportation market.

The New York and Atlantic Railway's efforts have stabilized and slightly increased its market. The amount of reefer (refrigerated) traffic into Hunts Point Market has seen similar growth with increased marketing and with only modest physical improvements to the rail system. The acquisition of Conrail by CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern Corporation also played a role.

The overall economy also plays a part in the volume of freight and rail traffic. In general, economic activity is a primary driver of freight volume. Over the last two years, consumer consumption has decreased in parallel with overall economic activity and the onset of an official recession.

| County | Sum Of Carload_1998 (Tons) | Sum Of Carload_2025 (Tons) | Percent Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Kings | 280,646 | 533,331 | 90% |
| Bronx | 650,237 | 1,111,946 | 71% |
| New York | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Queens | 182,743 | 336,244 | 84% |
| Richmond | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Nassau | 115,152 | 187,341 | 63% |
| Suffolk | 186,831 | 370,745 | 98% |
| Putnam | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Westchester | 374,862 | 559,782 | 49% |
| **Totals** | **1,790,471** | **3,099,389** | **73%** |

**Table 1: Potential Change in Carload Traffic 1998 to 2025 (Source: Transearch Reebie Data 1998)**

## 2. Rail Freight Facilities
## Acreage and Activity in Metropolitan New York Area

Table 2 analyzes the car handling efficiency of yards in the New York metropolitan area, comparing rail yards east and west of the Hudson River. Most of the rail traffic destined for destinations east of the Hudson is handled in New Jersey, where yards tend to be larger and more modern than those in New York. Using the average utilization rate of New Jersey yards (364 annual carloads/acre) as a basis for comparison, it can be inferred that efficiencies (ability to move rail cars) vary from county to county in the NYMTC region. However, one observation that appears to hold for all counties, with the exception of Queens, is that greater numbers of carloads could be handled. Staten Island's future facilities, Arlington Yard, Howland Hook and possibly a facility at Proctor and Gamble could increase greatly the City's overall car handling efficiency. Specific facilities, such as Fresh Pond, appear to be operating at capacity.

The Regional Freight Plan Project's Technical Memorandum Task 4, Definition and Assessments of Needs, concludes, "In nearly all the cases of yards and terminals in the downstate study area, some investment in trackage, connections and control systems would be required to increase utilization rates of the underutilized yards to the levels of activity found in northern New Jersey."

Each of the studies described previously concludes that there are additional volumes that could be handled by rail. Rail freight in the NYMTC region today comprises less than one percent of all tonnage in the region. This can be compared to about fifteen percent in New Jersey and about thirty percent in the Midwest. Most rail freight experts concur that an upgrading and expansion of yards, main line track and associated facilities would allow rail freight providers to serve additional customers.

| Location | Facility | Acreage | Annual Carloads | Annual Intermodal Containers | Carloads per Acre | Intermodal Containers and Trailers per Acre |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bronx | Hunts Point Terminal Market | 329 | 6,000 | | 18 | |
| Bronx | Oak Point Yard | 50 | 18,000 | | 360 | |
| Bronx | Bronx Terminal Market | 32 | 0 | | 0 | |
| Bronx | Harlem River Yard | 28 | 6,250 | | 223 | |
| | **Totals** | **439** | **30,250** | **0** | **69** | **NA** |
| Kings | 65th Street Yard | 33 | 4,000 | | 121 | |
| Kings | Brooklyn Terminal Market | 25 | 500 | | 20 | |
| Kings | Atlantic Terminal | 14 | 5,400 | | 386 | |
| Kings | Bushwick Terminal | 2 | 2,055 | | 1,028 | |
| Kings | Bush Terminal | 11 | 4,800 | | 436 | |
| Kings | Second Avenue Yard | 1 | 120 | | 240 | |
| | **Totals** | **86** | **16,875** | **0** | **197** | **NA** |
| Qns | Long Island City Yard A | 17 | 0 | | 0 | |
| Qns | Long Island City Team Yard | 12 | 540 | | 45 | |
| Qns | Fresh Pond Yard | 10 | 15,000 | | 1,500 | |
| Qns | Maspeth yard | 3 | 3,000 | | 909 | |
| Qns | Blissville Yard | 2 | 223 | | 93 | |
| | **Totals** | **45** | **18,763** | **0** | **420** | **NA** |
| L. I. | Garden City Yard | 4 | 0 | | 0 | |
| L. I. | Deer Park Yard | 23 | 1,027 | | 45 | |
| L. I. | Farmingdale Yard | 2 | 82 | | 41 | |
| | **Totals** | **29** | **1,109** | **0** | **343** | **NA** |
| Staten Is | Port Ivory Industrial Center | 125 | | | | |
| Staten Is | Arlington Yard | 50 | | | | |
| Staten Is | St. George Yard | 30 | | | | |
| | **Totals** | **205** | **0** | **0** | **NA** | **NA** |
| N.J. | Oak Island Terminal | 500 | 180,675 | | 361 | |
| N.J. | Doremus Avenue Auto Terminal | 87 | 42,000 | | 483 | |
| N.J. | Ridgefield Heights Auto Terminal | 25 | 16,000 | | 640 | |
| N.J. | Greenville Float Rail Yard | 33 | 4,800 | | 145 | |
| N.J. | Elizabeth Transflow Yard | 13 | 2,500 | | 192 | |
| N.J. | Croxton Yard | 135 | | 155,000 | | 1,148 |
| N.J. | South Kearny Terminal | 120 | | 340,000 | | 2,833 |
| N.J. | APL South Kearny Terminal | 100 | | 120,000 | | 1,200 |
| N.J. | Little Ferry Terminal | 73 | | 132,000 | | 1,808 |
| N.J. | E-Rail Terminal | 55 | | 80,000 | | 1,455 |
| N.J. | North Bergen Terminal | 50 | | 118,000 | | 2,360 |
| N.J. | ExpressRail | 33 | | 175,000 | | 5,303 |
| N.J. | Portside Terminal | 25 | | 31,250 | | 1,250 |
| | **Totals** | **1249** | **245,975** | **1,151,250** | **364** | **2,170** |

**Table 2: Rail Freight Facilities Acreage and Activity in Metropolitan New York Area**

## 3. Market Assessment Conclusions

The potential market for freight traffic in the NYMTC region is large, due to the region's high per capita income and its consumption of goods. The region's rail freight share of about one percent is accommodated through a small number of facilities that are in fair to poor condition.

Discussions with regional railroads revealed that carload volumes could possibly double (from 35,000 to 70,000 carloads) before there is a need for additional or expanded facilities (see Appendix 1). It was not possible to perform an operations planning study to determine the actual number of facilities needed to handle volumes above the higher level that the railroads stated they could attain. It appears that existing facilities could be made more efficient, increasing their utilization. Field trip observations of an out of state regional railroad point to the possibility that higher carload handling can be accommodated at smaller size yards.

As the studies previously described in Section II—Discussion of Contributing Studies, additional facilities and expanded existing facilities will be needed to handle a major increase in volumes generated by the removal of barriers, such as line clearances and weight restrictions. New facilities will also be necessary for trans-Hudson crossing and the expansion of the port.

The Cross Harbor Freight Movement Major Investment Study cites the future need for a major intermodal facility somewhere along the Montauk Division. This report begins with the understanding that additional facilities will be needed. It recommends investigating several locations which could play a role in handling additional freight business for intermodal, bulk transfer or carload operations.

# IV PRELIMINARY SITE SEARCH

The NYMTC region is generally a densely settled area comprised of a variety of land uses. The proportion of industrial zoned land is small compared to all other land uses. Few facilities are currently used for rail freight and the sites themselves are relatively small in terms of land area. Finding new sites in the NYMTC region that could be used for rail freight is difficult.

NYMTC developed a methodology for reviewing potential sites in order to determine sites that could be useful to freight railroads as yard facilities. Search criteria were developed and a method for culling sites from a large database of land parcels was determined. The methodology was customized for each NYMTC subregion. The sections below describe the methodology and include a brief background on the reconnaissance of sites. Maps for each site are available in the Appendix section of the report.

## 1. Long Island

### A. SEARCH METHODOLOGY

Field reconnaissance and previous study search efforts were used to review and identify sites. Previous efforts include: NYMTC's Pilgrim White Paper and LIRR Freight Department reports. County planning staff from Nassau and Suffolk counties provided input.

### B. DISCUSSION

As mentioned previously, Long Island has an opportunity to develop a part of the Pilgrim Hospital grounds into a functional intermodal and carload yard and recent planning efforts have identified the site as the primary Long Island rail freight facility.

Although large sites other than Pilgrim have not been identified, other rail development opportunities could exist on smaller parcels. Freight operations on the Long Island Rail Road in the past have included traditional boxcar and flatcar loading and unloading operations at facilities called team tracks. In some cases this type of operation is still carried on successfully by the New York and Atlantic Railway.

Reports prepared by the Freight Department of the LIRR, which is no longer in operation, concluded that transload operations for bulk products were feasible at many of the locations they examined, with modest improvements to lighting, paving, and security. While many of these locations are currently being utilized for LIRR maintenance-of-way (MOW) operations, some freight operations may be possible. The discussion of specific sites in the following section highlights some of these locations.

## 2. Lower Hudson Valley

### A. SEARCH METHODOLOGY

Field reconnaissance was conducted. County planning staff from Westchester County provided input.

### B. DISCUSSION

No large sites were found in the Mid-Hudson South area for a large yard. The former General Motors plant in Tarrytown, a former rail customer, is being redeveloped into a mixed-use residential and commercial complex. Croton West Yard is currently being used as a rail yard serving the Hudson Valley and the Bronx. There are rail customers along the Hudson Line, however, these customer locations use private sidings.

There are locations along the Harlem Line where freight operations are conducted in close proximity to maintenance-of-way operations, including Mount Vernon. However, Metro North stores a large number of MOW vehicles and supplies at that location. In addition, this location is inappropriate due to poor access to the highway system.

## 3. New York City

### A. SEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of searching for sites in New York City, a more complex methodology was used because of New York City's density, complex geography and greater number of potential candidate sites. Since there is a multitude of parcels it was necessary to eliminate those sites that did not meet minimal criteria. The criteria used were:

1. Access to highway (≤1 mile)
2. Land zoned commercial or industrial
3. Parcels of two acres or more
4. Land adjacent to rail line

The Transportation Division staff of NYC Department of City Planning conducted a preliminary site search of the New York City real estate database, using their geographic information system software. The staff arrayed the sites against the criteria above producing a smaller list of potential sites (see Appendix III—Site Maps)

### B. DISCUSSION

The resulting short list of 62 sites was further reviewed for current ownership and activity. Not all of the remaining parcels were adequate based on ownership and current usage. The remaining sites, i.e. those in this report, were held aside for a field visit. A

separate effort was made to determine where multiple parcels could be grouped together to form a larger site. Field visits were then made to sites in Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens. Staten Island was not included since it was scanned previously under NYC Economic Development Corporation's work. The Proctor and Gamble site, adjacent to Howland Hook, was one such location. In addition, Arlington Yard has been rehabilitated and is ready for use once the rail connection to New Jersey is made.

# V FIELD RECONNAISSANCE

*Maps for each site are available in Appendix III—Site Maps of this report.*

## 1. Long Island

Site visits were made to several small sites where small numbers of rail cars could be loaded or unloaded, depending on the type of commodity carried. It may be possible to use these sites for bulk transfer type operations. Road access to these sites was mixed with some having good access on major arterials and others having less than optimal access. The sites listed below are possible sites. The sites that are checked were visited.

### A. PORT JEFFERSON BRANCH

☐ **St. James**

Acreage Unknown

Ownership could be MTA LIRR since it is along the railroad right of way.

(No Picture Available)

There is currently no freight facility at this site. It does not appear as if there would be adequate property at this site to conduct either intermodal or bulk transfer operations.

☐ **Setauket**

Acreage Unknown

Mixed, Private Ownership

(No Photo Available)

This is an existing industrial site including an aggregate plant as well as a number of other buildings. The site does not have significant open space for intermodal or bulk reload use. There is evidence of a former rail siding that apparently served the aggregate business. Access to the site is via Comsewogue Road.

## B. MAIN LINE

### ☐ Farmingdale

Acreage Unknown

Private Ownership

(No Photo Available)

This site is currently occupied by several commercial or industrial companies. Previous occupants used rail service with individual siding. A bumping block currently obstructs the site's primary track, preventing service. The site does not include necessary space for intermodal or bulk transfer operations. Carload service maybe possible if a customer can be identified.

### ☑ Yaphank

3 acres

**Figure 1: Yaphank site—possible expansion. Currently used for transload.**

There is rail freight in the area at Georgia Pacific's wood products location. There may be some opportunity to the left of the passing siding.

☑ **Calverton**

10 acres

(No Photo Available)

There is a siding leading into and through the former Navy facility. It is anticipated that carload operations will be conducted along the siding in the site, however, the proposed Pilgrim facility is close by and may preclude the need for a major yard.

## C. MONTAUK DIVISION

- ☐ **Freeport**
- ☐ **Rockeville Centre**
- ☐ **Bay Shore**
- ☑ **Islip**

2 acres
(No Photo Available)

The team track currently has a freight customer. It has about an eight car capacity.

- ☑ **Sayville**

3 acres

**Figure 2: Sayville site—Joint MOW/freight use. Not large enough for yard.**

LIRR maintenance-of-way forces utilize at least part of the site. The site is currently jointly used by both maintenance of way and freight.

## ☑ Patchogue

0.5 acres

**Figure 3: Patchogue site—Currently used for freight. Not large enough for yard.**

The team track has about a nine car capacity.

## ☑ Eastport

5 acres

**Figure 4: Eastport site—Currently used for freight. Not large enough for yard**

LIRR maintenance-of-way forces utilize the site periodically.

☑ **Speonk**

2 acres

**Figure 5: Speonk site—Small site. Currently used for carload freight.**

The siding at Speonk appears to be short and not able to hold more than the number of cars that appear in the photo.

☐ **South Hampton**
☐ **Hampton Bays**

## 2. Mid Hudson South

Locations are limited to the Hudson Line since that is the line that freight trains use to enter the east of Hudson area. Site visits were made to various areas.

- **Yonkers Industrial Area**

  CSX may be the owner of this parcel. Highway access may be problematical. Current users include a rail car manufacturer.

- **Croton West Yard**

  There may be an expansion possibility at this site. It should be analyzed further for the type of commodities that could be handled and whether it would be operationally possible.

## 3. New York City

### A. BROOKLYN

A field visit was made to the Brooklyn Terminal Market area and Bushwick.

☑ **Brooklyn Terminal Market**

30 acres

(Photo Not Available)

Several parcels, mixed ownership

Firms that receive and distribute produce and related products dominate the Brooklyn Terminal Market area. Although there are parcels of large size present it was found that the activity was too great to allow for additional use. However, it is possible additional carload rail activity can take place in the area now occupied by the rail siding. However, the site is not appropriate for a major freight yard.

☑ **Bushwick**

> 22 acres in total

Several parcels, private ownership,

**Figure 6: Bushwick site—Hemmed-in by industrial buildings. Not useful for yard.**

A field visit was made to Bushwick because it currently has rail served businesses and various parcels were of a large size. The area does not appear to be conducive as a rail yard due to the physical restrictions set by surrounding active industrial uses. The surrounding land uses restrict the expansion of the site.

## B BRONX

Several areas were visited.

☑ **Cross Bronx and Sheridan expressways.**

Acreage Not Available

2 parcels, bordered by the Cross Bronx and Sheridan expressways, are publicly owned.

**Figure 7: Cross Bronx/Sheridan site—Not appropriate for yard. Currently used for transit purposes.**

This site was found to include new construction, a NYCTA bus depot and training center. There did not appear to be significant remaining unused acreage. The rail line, Amtrak's Northeast Corridor, bisects the parcels. This site is within a 2 mile radius of the Oak Point Yard. This site did not appear to be useful for freight operations due to the future operation of the bus maintenance facility which occupies most of the site and the close proximity of the Oak Point Yard which itself may have the potential for expansion.

☑ **Van Nest**

>5.25 acres

3 parcels, mixed ownership

Located along Northeast Corridor adjacent to East Tremont Avenue

**Figure 8: Van Nest site—Occupied by Con Ed. Do not consider further.**

This area is highly active with Con Edison as a primary occupant. The site also contains a catering hall. The site is fully utilized and thus not available for freight use.

### ☑ University Heights Bridge

Acreage Not Available

Unknown ownership

**Figure 9: University Heights Bridge site—Occupied. Possible transload.**

Located just south of the University Heights Bridge (Fordham Road) along the west side of the right of way, this site is occupied by what appears to be an auto repossession business. A search of the real estate files did not reveal the existence or owner of this parcel. This site could be useful as a transload facility.

## ☑ Highbridge

Acreage Not Available

**Figure 10: Highbridge site—Occupied. Possible transload.**

The second parcel, north of Highbridge, also along the west side of the right of way is occupied by what appears to be a metal fabrication business. The site could be useful as a transload facility. A search of the real estate files did not reveal the existence or owner of this parcel.

### ☑ Mott Haven

10 acres

2 parcels, mixed ownership

Former site of New York Central coach yards

**Figure 11: Mott Haven site—Possible conflicts with commuter rail highway access.**

This site is former railroad property. It appears to be an adequate size for a yard, however its configuration should be subjected to the scrutiny of a yard designer and its impact on MTA-Metro North Railroad passenger operations determined.

## ☑ Oak Point Yard Vicinity

44 acres in total

1 parcel, private ownership

Property adjacent to Oak Point Yard

**Figure 12: Oak Point Yard Site (east view)—possible expansion.**

Portions of this site comprise the Oak Point Yard, the location of rail activities of CSX Transportation. There appear to be undeveloped and currently unused pieces. Identifying the current owner of the unused portions has been difficult. The unused portion appears to be excellent for an addition to the existing yard or a separate yard. At one time this former railroad property was sold to the private sector (Britestar,) although this could not be confirmed using the New York City real estate database. This site has the potential to serve additional freight needs due to its apparent ability to expand and its location adjacent to existing rail freight use.

**Figure 13: Oak Point Yard Site (west view)—possible expansion**

## C. QUEENS

Several sites were visited.

### ☑ Phelps Dodge

27+ acres in total

1 parcel, private ownership

Former property of Phelps Dodge

**Figure 14: Phelps Dodge site—Appropriate for large yard. Environmental mitigation needed.**

This site appears to be excellent as a potential rail freight facility. The site has been cleared. There are extensive ground contamination issues from past manufacturing processes. Of all the sites examined this one is superior as it exceeds the selection criteria. In its favor is nearby highway access, a location in an industrial area, and juxtaposition to a lightly used passenger and freight line. The current status, as of 9/18/02, is that the Galasso Trucking Company has purchased an option to buy the land.

### ☑ Former Heinz Plant

>7 acres in total

3 parcels, mixed ownership

**Figure 15: Former Heinz Plant site—size appropriate to yard. No current use for most of site.**

This site is located in Glendale at the junction of the Montauk Division and the former Rockaway Beach Branch. The area is located in the northeast quadrant of the junction. The property is interesting due to its proximity to two rail lines and what appears to be a property shaped to conform to those rail lines. This would indicate it is also shaped properly for a rail yard. The site is largely cleared of all obstructions. The sole evidence of previous use is the internal roads still in existence. At one time there was a rail connection from the east along the Montauk Division to the north along the Rockaway Beach Branch. There is evidence of this track in place. It is unclear how large the total property is. The NYCDCP database only includes the acreage for one parcel. One parcel is currently occupied by NYCDOT. Union Turnpike, Woodhaven Boulevard and Metropolitan Avenue are nearby for truck access.

This site warrants further investigation for its ability to accommodate a modern freight operation and the area roadways to handle trucks.

☑ **Flushing**

~30 acres in total

5 parcels, private ownership

(Photo Not Available)

This site is located in Flushing just east of the Van Wyck Expressway and is bisected by the Long Island Rail Road. Home Depot and other commercial establishments currently occupy the southern piece. The northern section comprises about 16 acres and is occupied by a number of warehouses. College Point Boulevard is on the eastern border of this section. Although highway access is adequate, siting a major yard at this location would be problematic because of the high level of commercial and travel activity in area. In addition, limited main line tracks and intense passenger rail service are issues. The site should not be evaluated further.

☑ **Springfield Gardens**

23 total acres

2 parcels, private ownership

(Photo Not Available)

Bordered by Merrick Road, Springfield Boulevard, and Belknap Street, this site is bisected by the LIRR's Atlantic Branch. A supermarket, home improvement retailer and active warehouses occupy the site. The site should not be evaluated further because of limiting land uses.

☑ **Long Island City**

Acreage Not Available

Several parcels, mixed ownership

(Photo Not Available)

There are several components to this area. Amtrak's northeast corridor and the LIRR main line traverse the area. Component One comprises, in part, the former Railway Express property. Although no longer used for that purpose, there seems to be some activity at the site. Component Two is occupied by Home Depot, among other active users. This site would not appear to be desirable for a freight facility due to intense active Amtrak and New Jersey Transit passenger train movements, both in service and yard moves.

☑ **Maspeth**

~ 3 acres

Several parcels, public ownership

**Figure 16: Maspeth site (east view)—low rail freight use. Possible expansion for rail freight.**

**Figure 17: Maspeth site (west view)—low rail freight use. Possible expansion for rail freight.**

This yard is currently used at what appear to be low levels. It is the site of a yard that had been used by the LIRR for freight. The site has excellent access to the Montauk Branch of the LIRR and good highway access. This site could prove to be useful for additional reload or cross dock operations.

### ☑ Blissville

~ 2 acres

One parcel, public ownership

(Photo Not Available)

The site, a former rail freight yard, is located in Long Island City along the Montauk Division. This site has, in previous LIRR Freight Department reports, been identified as a potential bulk transfer facility. Blissville has the potential to become an additional reload, cross dock or team track facility.

# VI RECOMMENDATIONS

The demand for rail freight services will increase over the coming years along with economic growth. This increased demand will require a greater number of facilities to absorb and process larger numbers of rail traffic.

A limited number of sites are available and some should be subjected to further investigation for their applicability for freight use. This study recommends that the region should protect prime locations, such as the former Phelps Dodge site, which is currently in private hands and is an essential component to other rail freight plans. Sites such as the Heinz site in Queens should also be investigated. In the case of those locations where important data are missing, that information should be obtained and the sites reevaluated.

Due to the paucity of land for rail purposes, planners and decision makers will need to be creative in fashioning an expanded rail freight network. For example, opportunities may arise in small size parcels such as former team track locations. These locations should be preserved as needed for freight purposes. In addition, Long Island sites currently used for LIRR maintenance of way operations should be explored for joint freight/MOW operations. The need for a rail banking program at the state or regional level should also be explored.

Other issues, such as adding main line track, adding new switches or restoring old ones, weight restrictions, height limitations and operating windows all require further discussion and eventual resolution. The aforementioned improvements should be evaluated in conjunction with the capacity of the rail freight system's yards.

# APPENDIX I—CARRIER INTERVIEWS

## 1. Background

The Rail Freight Yard Requirements/Land Assessment for East of the Hudson Area of Downstate New York conducted by NYMTC was undertaken in response to concerns about the scarcity of suitable land for railroad use, and its constraint on the potential growth of rail freight volume easy of the Hudson River. These concerns were expressed at meetings of the Council, the East of Hudson Rail Freight Task Force and other public forums.

This assessment is a pioneering effort that begins to define the needs and requirements, by:

- Focusing on the near, 3-5 year term;
- Identifying plots of land with active and non-active physical connections that could be put into use quickly at a low cost;
- Identifying large plots of land very near or adjacent to rail lines that warrant further investigation and possible land banking; and
- Incorporating the response of the carriers operating freight services east of Hudson.

Follow-up activities, described below, were conducted in response to the request of several Task Force members. The objective of these activities was to vet the results of the report with participating railroads so as to obtain an “operating” point of view.

## 2. Interview Summaries

Upon completion of the Basic Land Inventory, NYMTC staff, with the assistance of the East of Hudson Rail Freight Operations Task Force staff, interviewed three of the five railroads providing freight services in the east of Hudson area. One of the five carriers was selected for a site tour.

The three carriers interviewed were the Canadian Pacific Railway, CSX Transportation, and the New York and Atlantic Railway. The site tour was on the Providence and Worcester Railroad.

Senior managers at the three carriers were asked to review the "draft inventory" and comment on the practicality of the properties identified from a near term and long term perspective. Near term was roughly defined as a doubling of volume along current car

type/commodity patterns in three to five years. Long term was defined as a volume increase in the range forecasted by the "Cross Harbor Major Investment Study."

## A. CANADIAN PACIFIC (CP)

The CP is one of the seven mega-railroads serving North America. It is the newest rail operator east of the Hudson and enters the area from the north via trackage rights on the Hudson Line and its extensions to the CSX Oak Point Yard and interchange with the NYA at Fresh Pond, on geographic Long Island.

Though Canadian Pacific is a large full service company, it enters the area through its Delaware and Hudson subsidiary and has a service pattern and flexibility more commonly found on regional railroads.

The CP manager interviewed believed the "Inventory" fairly represented land available for rail freight use and that the company did not feel its near term market goals would be constrained due to a lack of land. The company had overcome what appeared to be a land constraint with the lease of the 65th street yard in Brooklyn.

During the interview, the CP representative expressed concern that volume growth in the Bronx could be constrained by a lack of land for a reload facility and/or capacity overloads at Oak Point Yard caused by a lack of land for expansion. Another concern was for traffic forwarded to the NYA. He hoped that a way would be found to put the Pilgrim State Rail Freight Facility into service soon.

## B. CSX TRANSPORTATION (CSX)

CSX is the third largest private railroad system in North America with lines serving nearly all of the major markets in the United States East of the Mississippi River. It acquired Conrail's rail freight franchise in the Downstate Area of New York/East of the Hudson in 1999, and has since doubled the volume of rail freight.

CSX hauls most of the rail freight moved in and out of the region and is currently the primary link connecting rail freight users on geographic Long Island with the North American rail network.

Operationally, CSX routes East of Hudson cars thru Selkirk Yard in Upstate New York then via its Hudson Line to Oak Point Yard. Rail freight users in the Bronx, Westchester, Southwestern Connecticut and the New York and Atlantic Railway are serviced from Oak Point Yard.

Train and service characteristics on the CSX East of the Hudson are closer to the US standard of longer trains and fewer but chunkier pick-up and delivery points such as the

Hunts Point Produce Terminal and the Fresh Pond Interchange. As the primary trunk line carrier CSX does more car classification than the other carriers in the area.

The CSX official interviewed had reviewed the “Assessment” and thought it was a good portrayal of the current situation. He said CSX could double its volume without running into a land constraint.

He further noted that Oak Point Yard frequently reached capacity levels and when that happened CSX used Croton West Yard thirty miles away as a backup facility to relieve the pressure and open up the system, if volume continued to grow Oak Point Yard would have to be expanded and the cost of acquiring land could become a stumbling block and possibly a restraint on growth.

Space for marketing activities appears to be sufficient at present, but if the lease for the "Big Apple" Flour Reload Facility at Hunts Point is not renewed at a reasonable rate the operator may have to find a new, currently undetermined, location. The Bronx Terminal Market, the nearest suitable site, doesn't want a "reload facility".

**C. NEW YORK AND ATLANTIC (NYA)**

The New York and Atlantic Railway (NYA) took over marketing and management of rail freight services on the Long Island Rail Road in May 1997 under a 20-year franchise. In the four years since, the NYA management team has substantially increased volume and reversed a 25-year decline in freight volume.

Except for very short linkages to the North American rail system provided by the NY Cross Harbor Railroad, CP and CSX, NYA is the sole provider of rail freight services on geographic Long Island. They operate a rail car distribution network 125 miles long from one end of Long Island to the other end in four counties that produce a significant Gross Domestic Product.

The NYA operates on a platform shared with several hundred fast moving commuter trains. Freight trains must sprint and hopscotch between and around commuter trains reliably and safely to deliver and pick-up freight.

In this intense, no elbow room operating arena, land and its location, size and nature of access is critical. It sets the limit on traffic growth.

NYA senior management felt that the assessment was complete but offered few new sites to consider. They said that the many smaller three to four acre sites were useful and customers for those sites are vigorously pursued, but that the smaller sites offered only limited opportunity. Increasing the use of smaller sites also increases the interaction with

LIRR passenger trains and requires that more space be set aside for car storage, sorting and other operating support work nearby.

Additionally, they have found that the smaller sites are mainly attractive to small volume users with low storage requirements and quick mobile non-mechanized loading/unloading techniques. Commodities such as lumber require storage space not possible at four- and five-acre sites.

The NYA managers interviewed believe that the establishment of several larger reload sites along its network would greatly improve the chances for traffic growth and truck diversions. They thought in particular, that the Blissville Yard, Phelps Dodge, Pilgrim State, Grumman/Bethpage and Sayville Yard have in single, but dispersed, locations the acreage needed to increase rail freight volume and operate within an active commuter railroad.

The NYA management team is hoping the public programs now underway to establish rail freight facilities at Phelps Dodge and Pilgrim State will be accelerated. The team believes early use of Pilgrim State would release substantial terminal capacity for rail use.

# APPENDIX II—SITE TOUR

## 1. Providence and Worcester (P&W)

The Providence and Worcester Railroad is one of North America's first regional railroads and pioneered the modern idea of a small regionally-oriented low-cost railroad.

Centered primarily in central and southeastern New England, the P&W has in recent years extended its service into southwestern Connecticut and downstate New York/East of the Hudson. In southwestern Connecticut, the railroad services freight users on two former Conrail lines, South Norwalk-Danbury and Devon-Derby Jct. The downstate New York connection is provided by two unit trains per week of aggregates. They operate from Tifton, Connecticut, to Fresh Pond Jct. in Queens. At Fresh Pond, the trains are handed over to the New York and Atlantic Railway for delivery to a customer on Long Island. The trains move between New Haven and Fresh Pond Jct. via CSX trackage rights.

Regular carload traffic is interlined to the New York and Atlantic by way of a haulage arrangement with the CSX.

The P&W moves more tonnage along the I-95 Corridor between New York City and Providence, Rhode Island than any other railroad and has successfully developed operating techniques that have enabled it to attract customers along Amtrak's high speed Northeast Corridor Line between New Haven and Providence. Each freight siding on that line is active.

A field visit was made to survey the facilities that are served by the Providence and Worcester Railroad Company in Worcester. These facilities are relatively small in comparison with Class One railroad operations. However, the volume of traffic handled is surprisingly high. The scarcity and expense of land in the NYMTC area made the constraint of space here compelling.

The project team visited the following four facilities, all in the Worcester, Massachusetts area.

### A. SOUTHBRIDGE YARD-PORT OF WORCESTER

The Southbridge Yard is particularly interesting because of the number and variety of operations conducted there. Located (see photo) in the heart of the city, Southbridge is home to three distinct types of operations conducted on about 15 acres. First, there is the bulk transfer operation (150 cars/year). Second, the yard handles a container on flatcar

(COFC) operation. This business contributes 10,000 containers each year. Third, the yard also has a hazardous material operation. This operation entails the transloading of PCB contaminated soil. The material is trucked into a specially designed building which is equipped with a chute, which funnels the material directly into gondolas (1500 cars/year).

**Figure 18: Southbridge Yard (P&W RR)—Worcester, Massachusetts**

## B. WISER AVENUE YARD

Wiser Avenue Yard is an intermodal facility operating on about 25 to 30 acres. It handles approximately 70,000 containers annually. The yard is operated by Intransit.

## C. GREENWOOD YARD

Greenwood serves the bulk transfer business. The facility is about two miles long and 250 feet wide and accommodates about 400 cars (see photo). There is apron space between each pair of tracks, enabling trucks to navigate to the car from which they take product. The facility fits into the profile of a four track main line right of way.

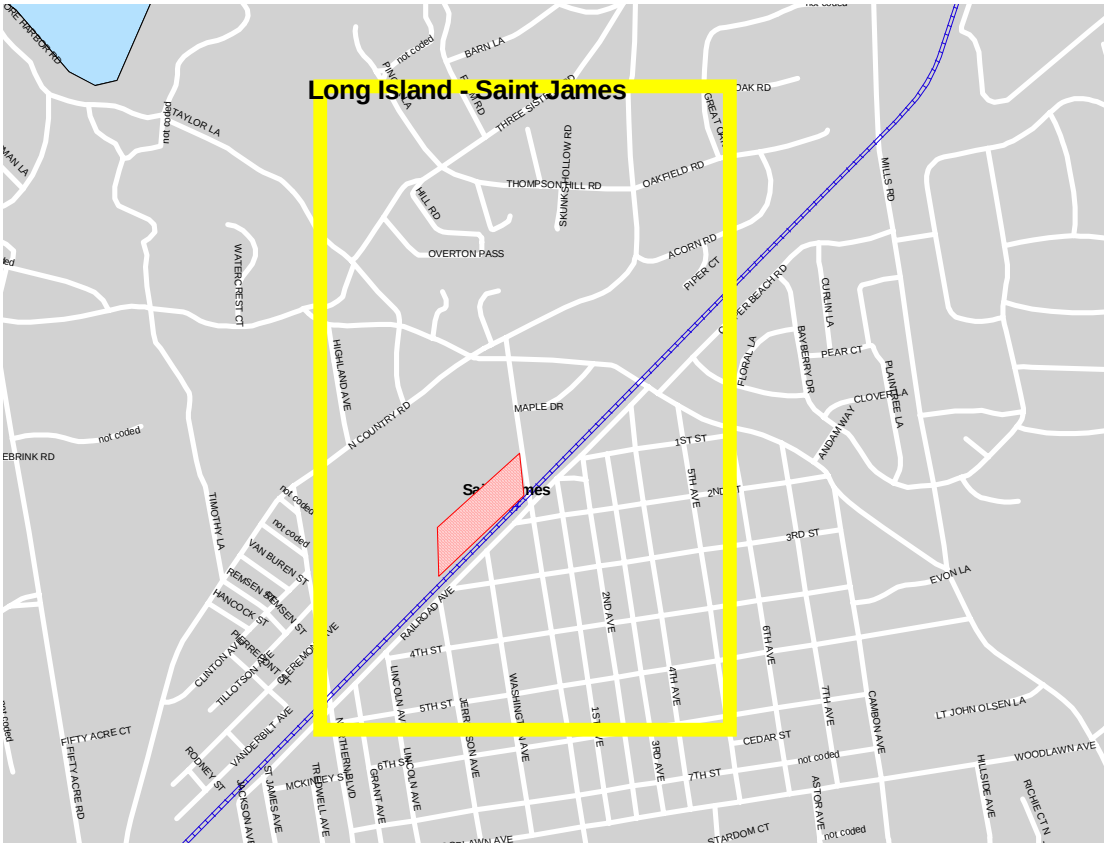
**Figure 19: Greenwood Yard (P&W RR)—Worcester, Massachusetts.**

## D. KANSAS STREET YARD

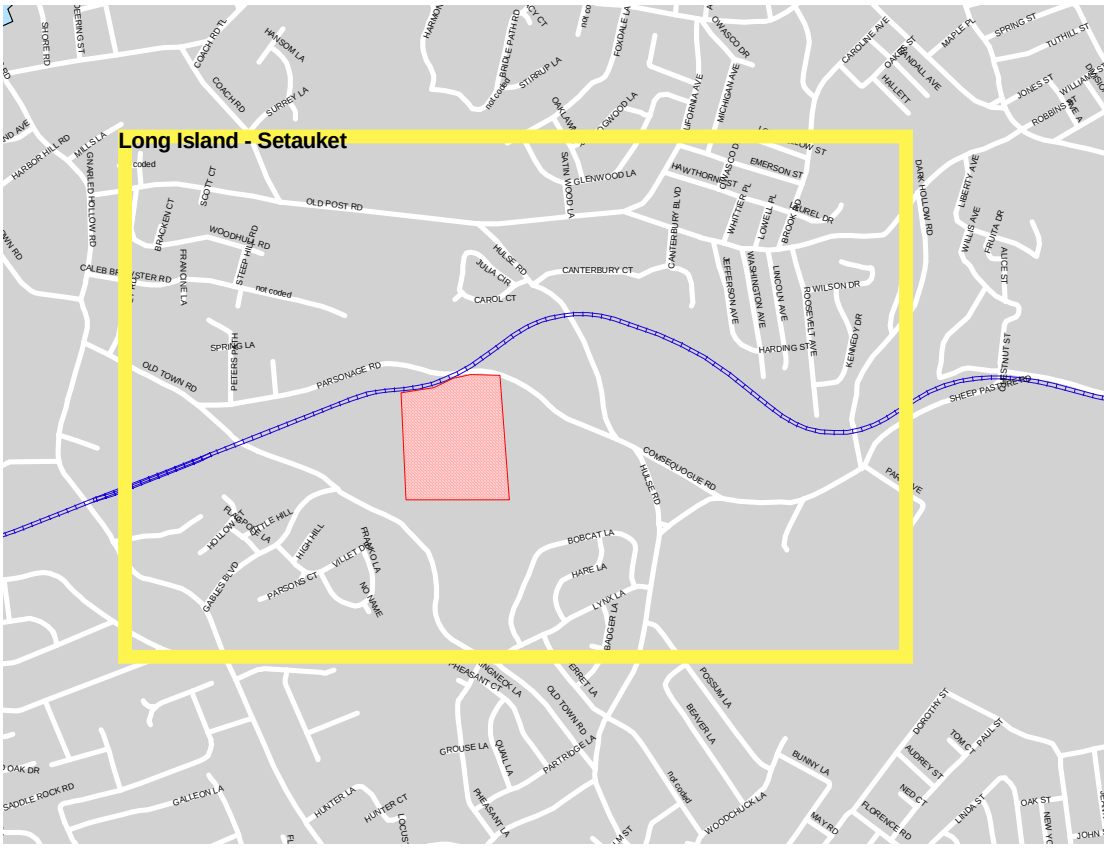
This is the smallest of each of the facilities, approximately 2 to 3 acres, currently handles 250 carloads per year. Commodities are primarily petroleum products and plastics.

# APPENDIX III—SITE MAPS

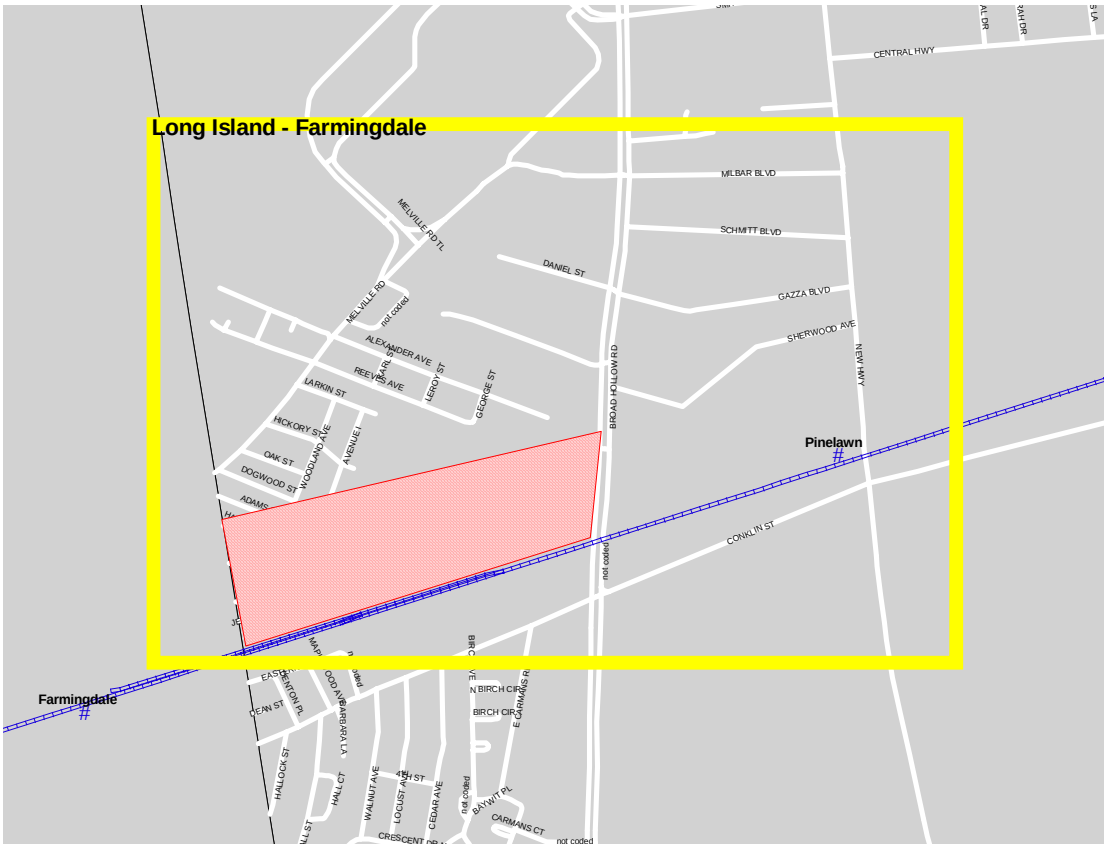
## 1. Long Island



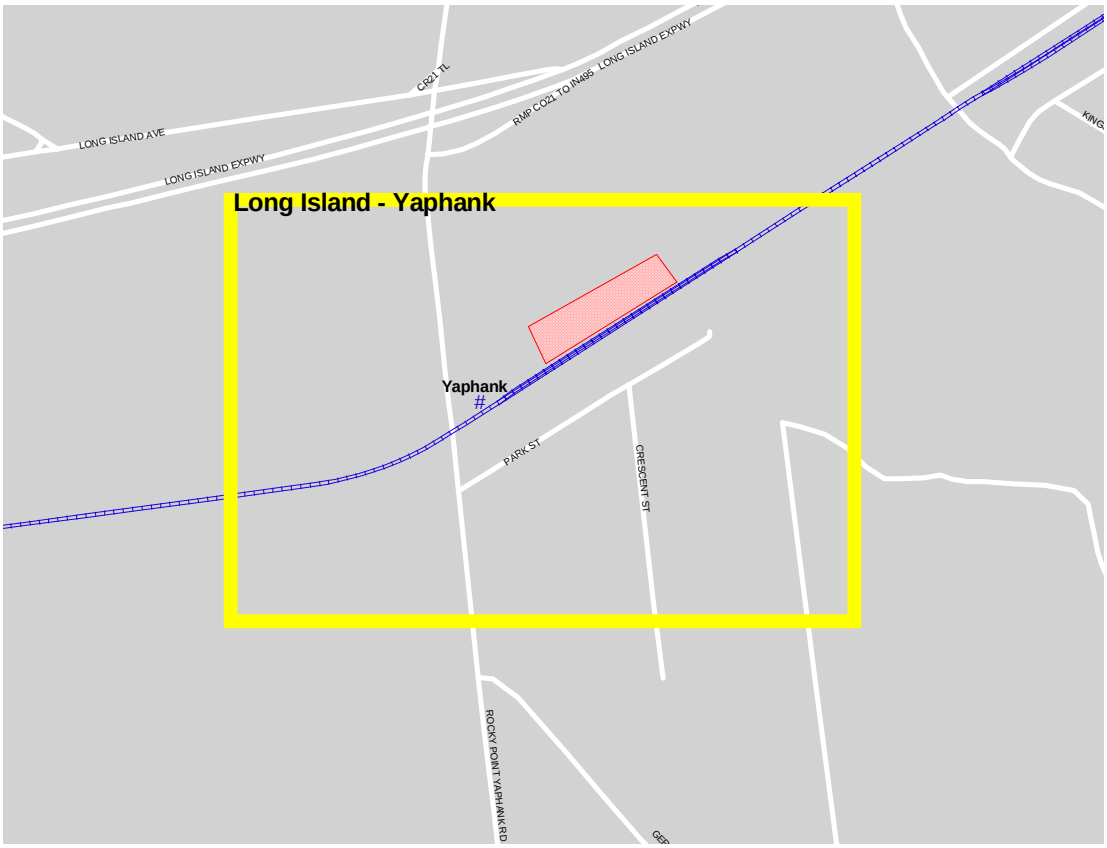

**Map 1: St. James**



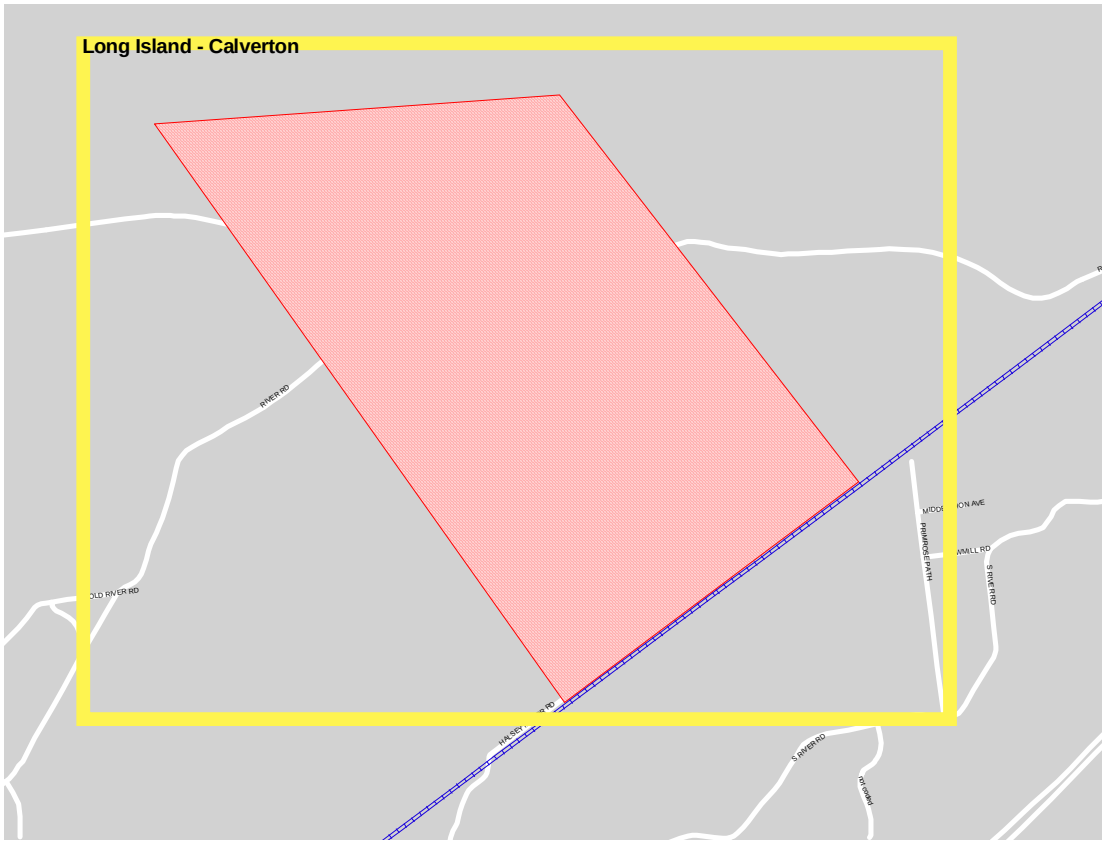

**Map 2: Setauket**




**Map 3: Farmingdale**

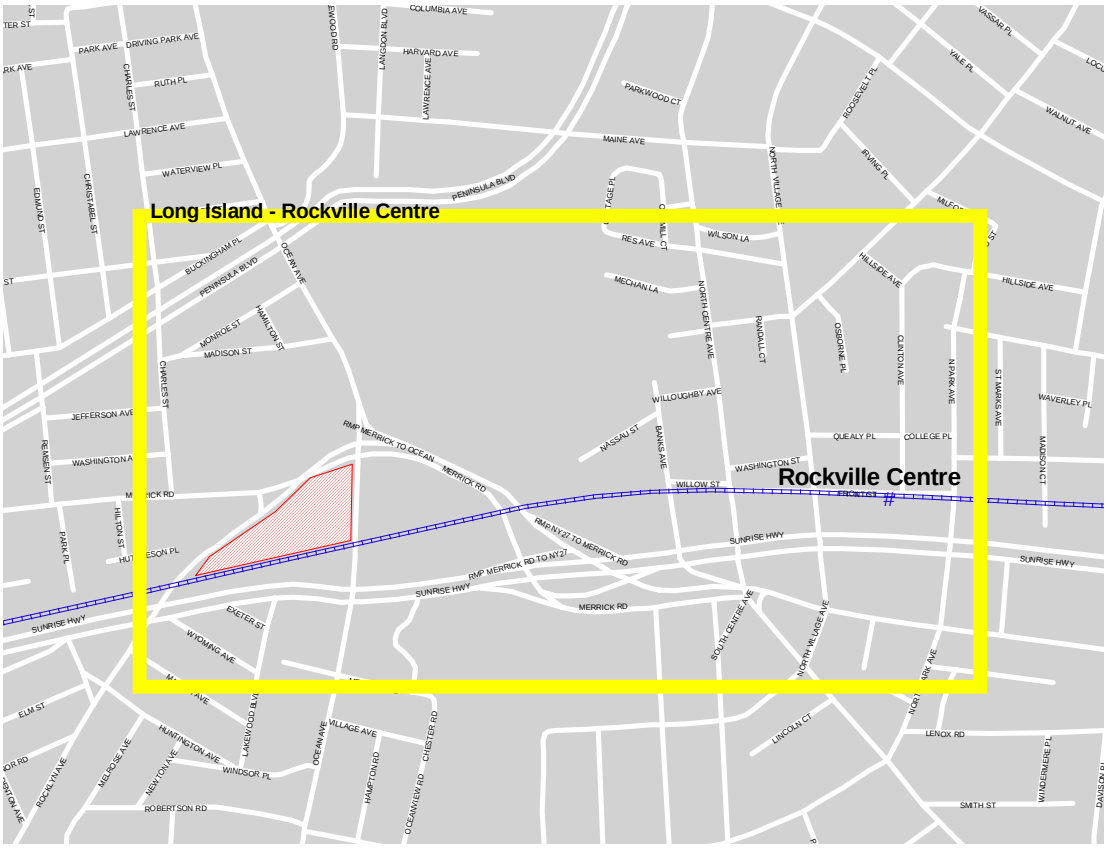



**Map 4: Yaphank**

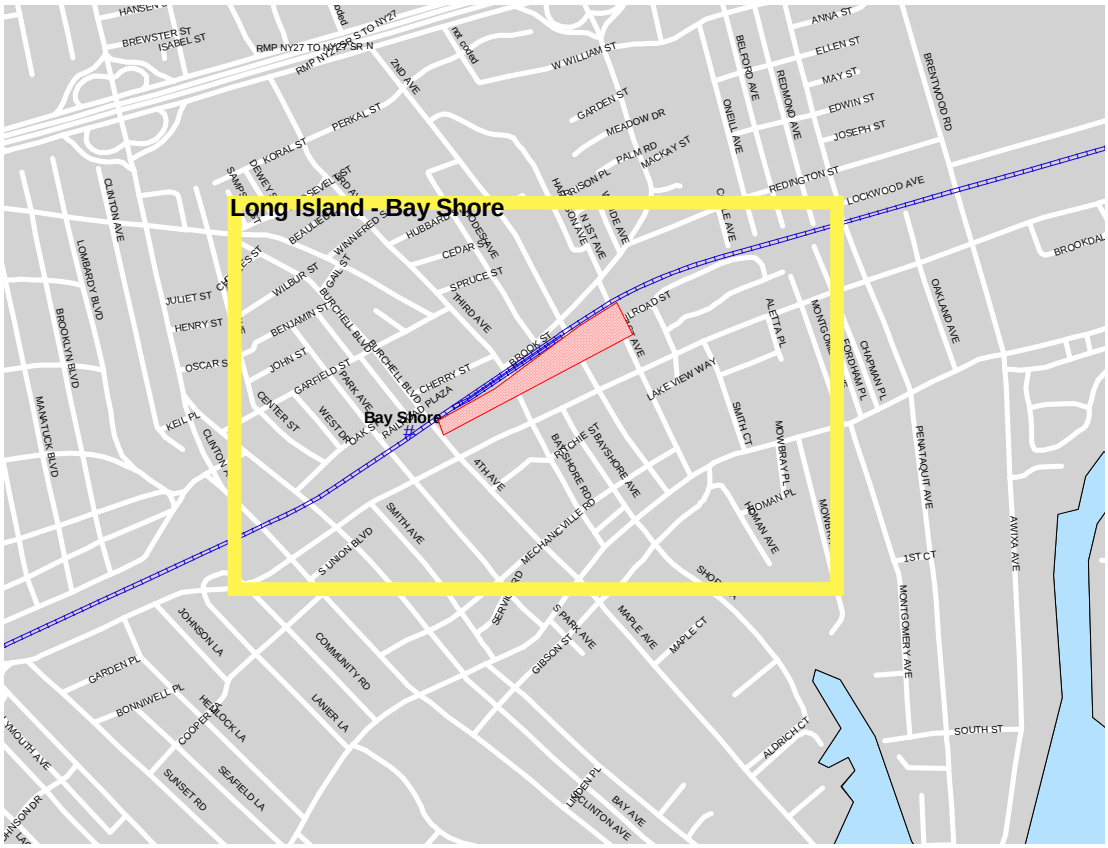



**Map 5: Calverton**

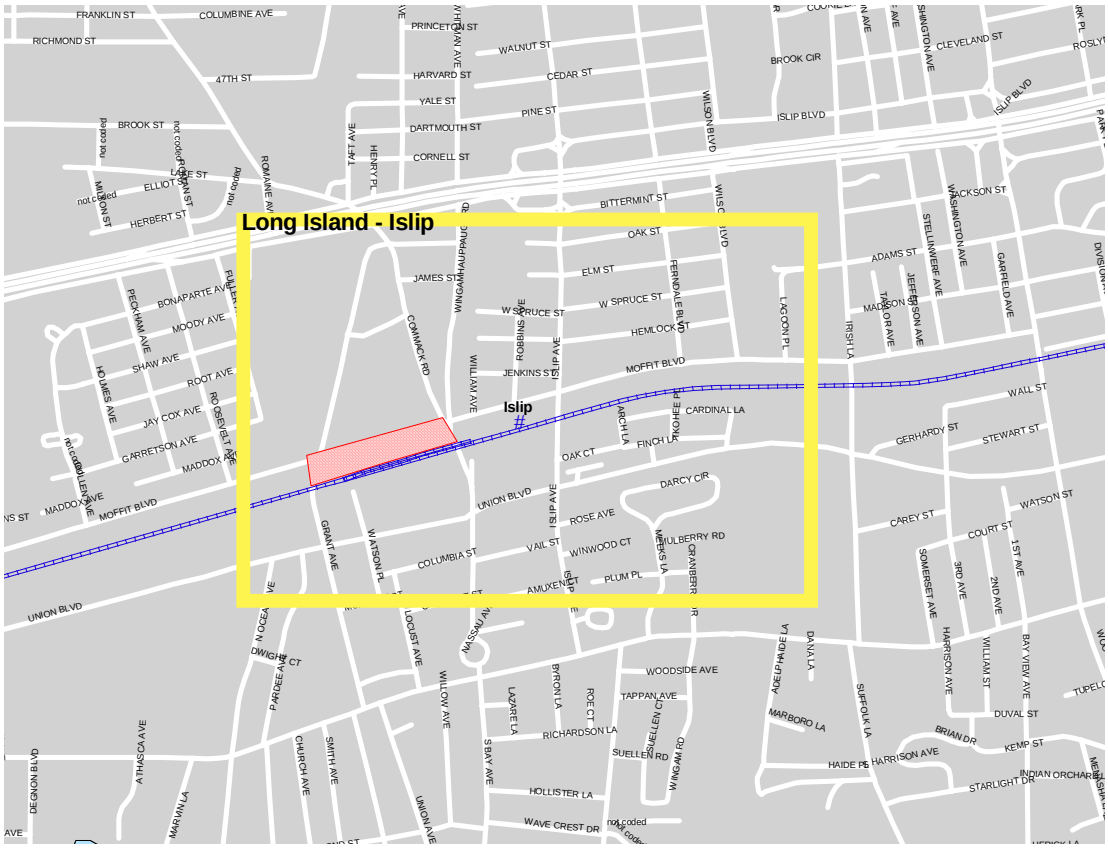

**Map 6: Freeport**



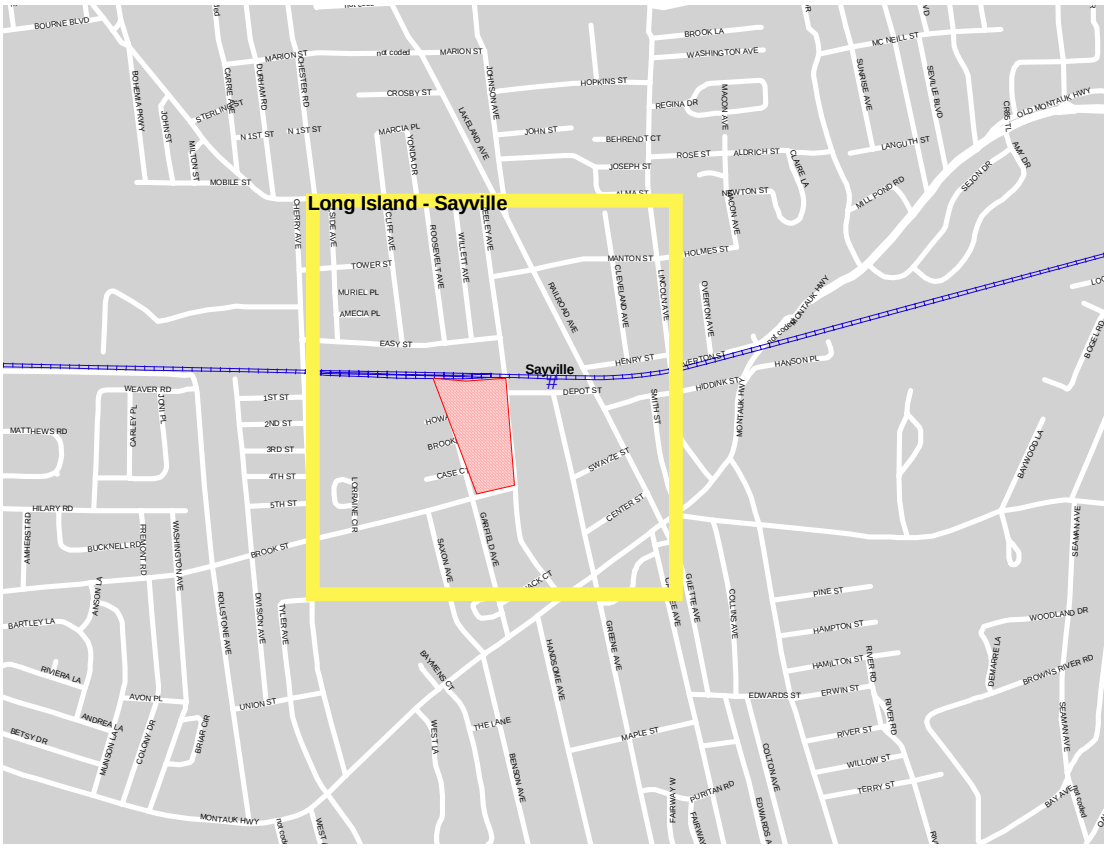

**Map 7: Rockville Centre**



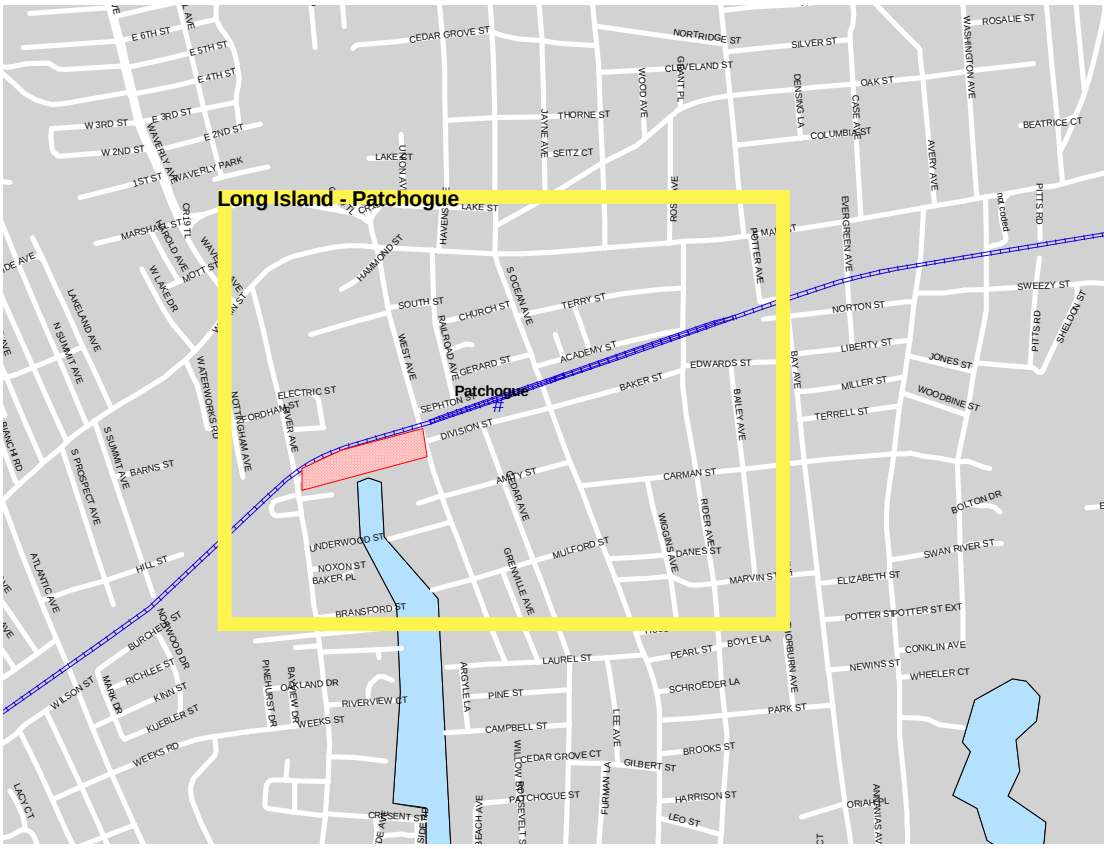

**Map 8: Bay Shore**


Long Island - Islip
Islip
FRANKLIN ST
COLUMBINE AVE
RICHMOND ST
47TH ST
BROOK ST
ELLIOT ST
HERBERT ST
PRINCETON ST
WALNUT ST
HARVARD ST
CEDAR ST
YALE ST
PINE ST
DARTMOUTH ST
CORNELL ST
BITTERMINT ST
OAK ST
ELM ST
JAMES ST
W SPRUCE ST
HEMLOCK ST
MOFFIT BLVD
JENKINS ST
CARDINAL LA
FINCH LA
ARCH LA
OAK CT
DARCY CIR
UNION BLVD
ROSE AVE
VAIL ST
WINWOOD CT
COLUMBIA ST
PLUM PL
MULBERRY RD
WOODSIDE AVE
TAPPAN AVE
RICHARDSON LA
SUELLEN RD
HOLLISTER LA
WAVE CREST DR
BONAPARTE AVE
MOODY AVE
SHAW AVE
ROOT AVE
JAY COX AVE
GARRETSON AVE
MADDOX AVE
HOLMES AVE
ROMAINE AVE
HENRY PL
WILLIAM AVE
ISLIP AVE
COMMACK RD
GRANT AVE
WATSON PL
LOCUST AVE
WILLOW AVE
SMITH AVE
CHURCH AVE
S BAY AVE
UNION AVE
DWIGHT CT
PARGEE AVE CT
ATHASCA AVE
MARWIN LA
DEGNON BLVD
BYRON LA
ROE CT
LAZARE LA
ADELPHI DR
DANA LA
MARBORO LA
SUFFOLK LA
HAIDE PL
HARRISON AVE
BRIAN DR
KEMP ST
DUVAL ST
STARLIGHT DR
INDIAN ORCHARD
WILLIAM ST
BAY VIEW AVE
HARRISON AVE
SOMERSET AVE
3RD AVE
2ND AVE
1ST AVE
COURT ST
WATSON ST
CAREY ST
GERHARDY ST
STEWART ST
WALL ST
ADAMS ST
JACKSON ST
WASHINGTON AVE
STELLMWERF AVE
GARFIELD AVE
TAYLOR AVE
JEFFERSON AVE
MADISON AVE
IRISH LA
FERNDALE BLVD
LACONI PL
WILSON BLVD
ISLIP BLVD
BROOK CIR
CLEVELAND ST
not coded

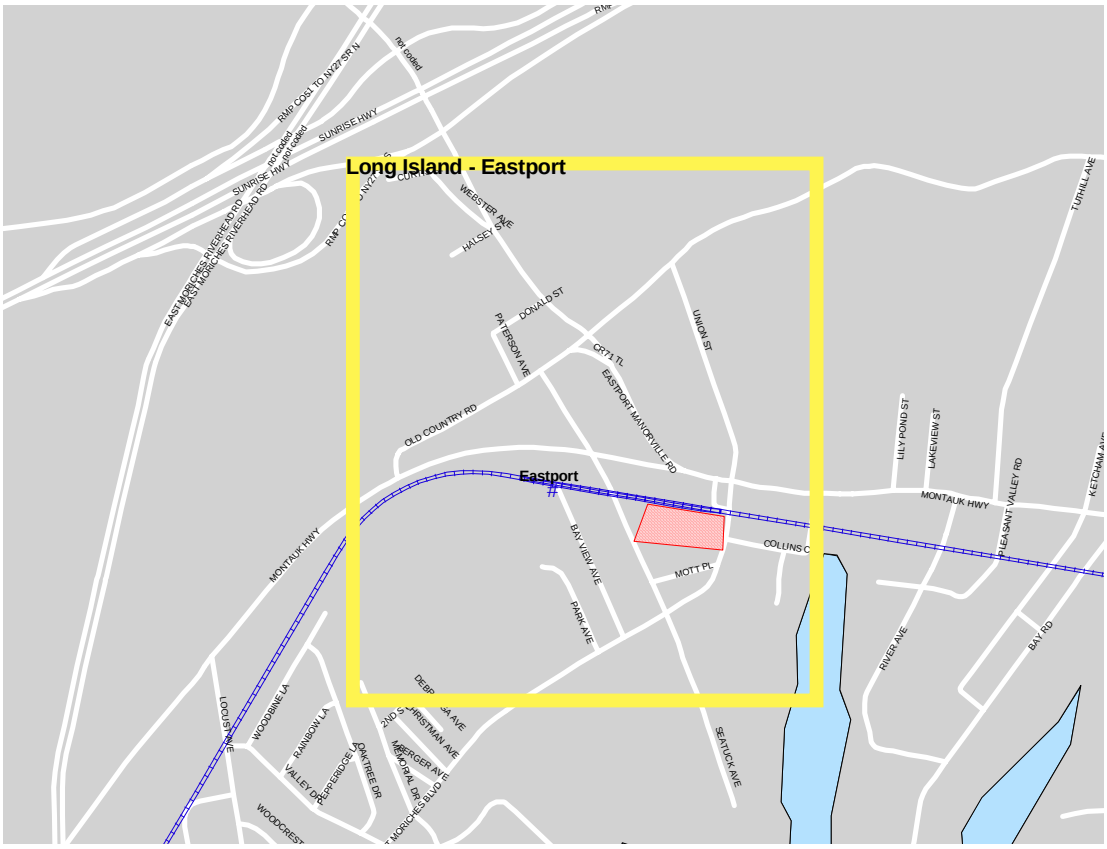
**Map 9: Islip**



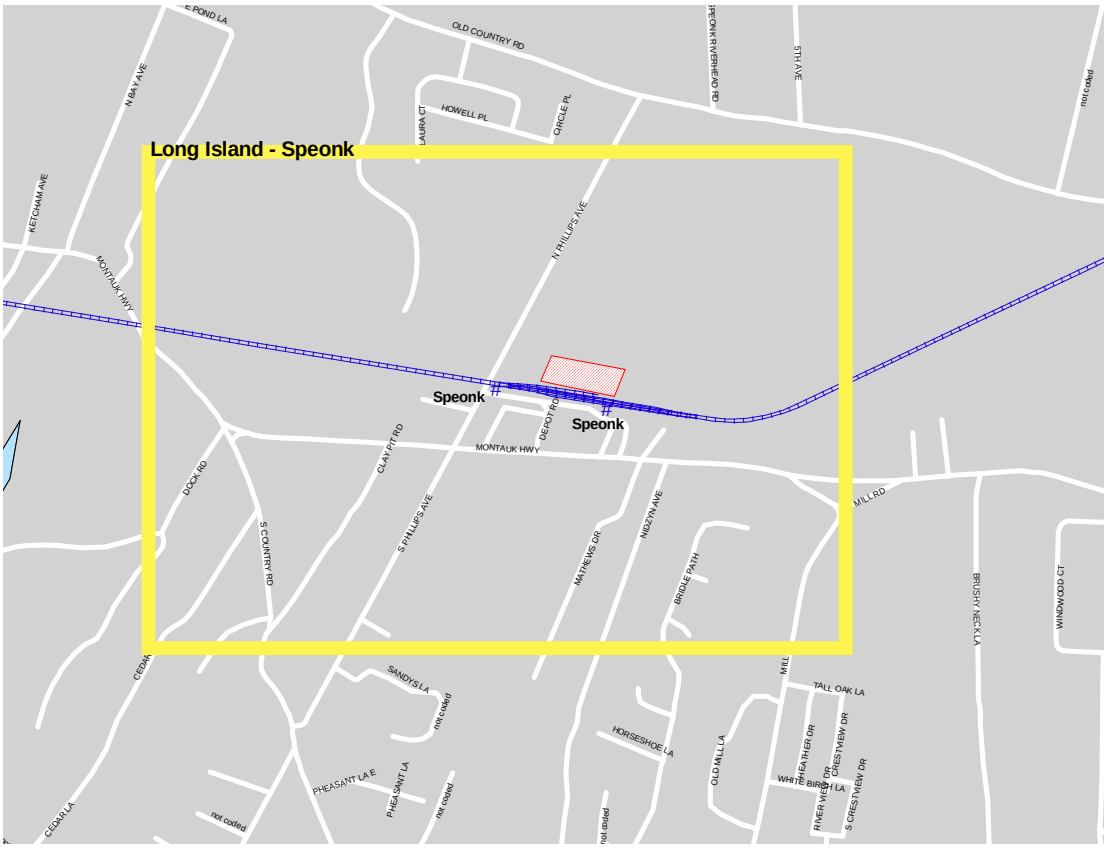

**Map 10: Sayville**



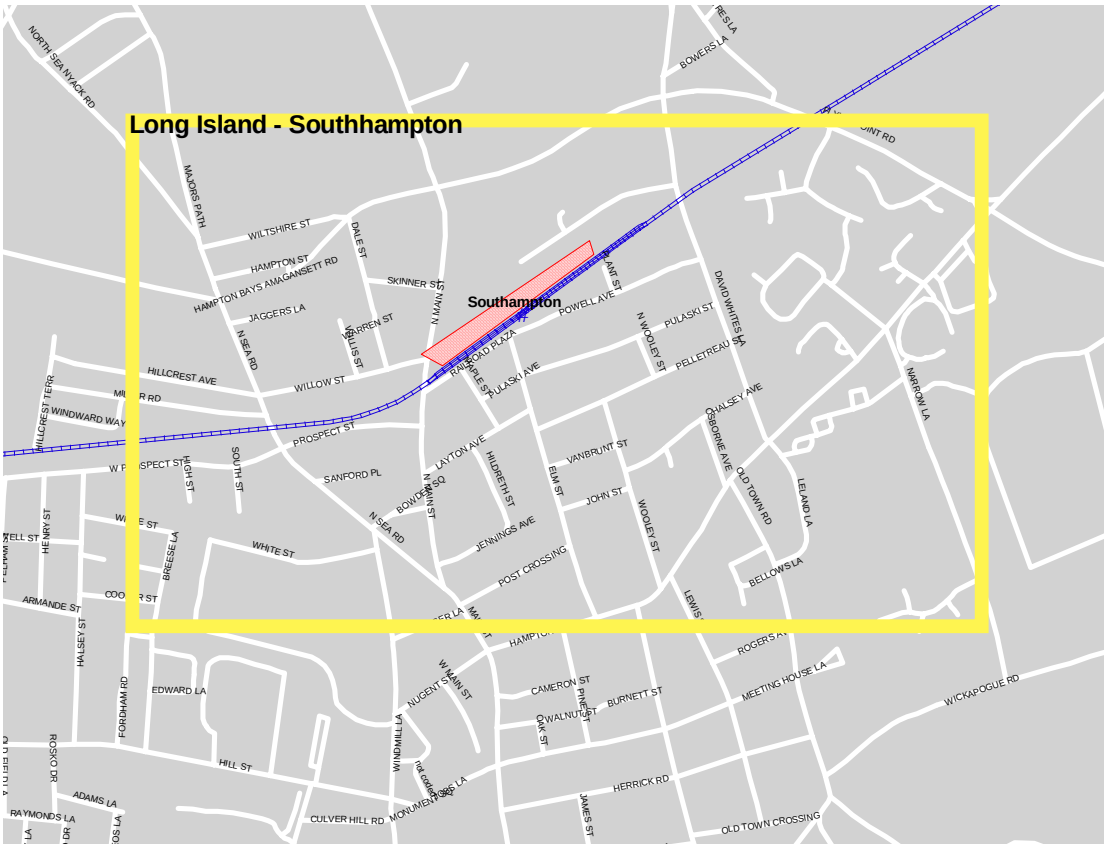

**Map 11: Patchogue**



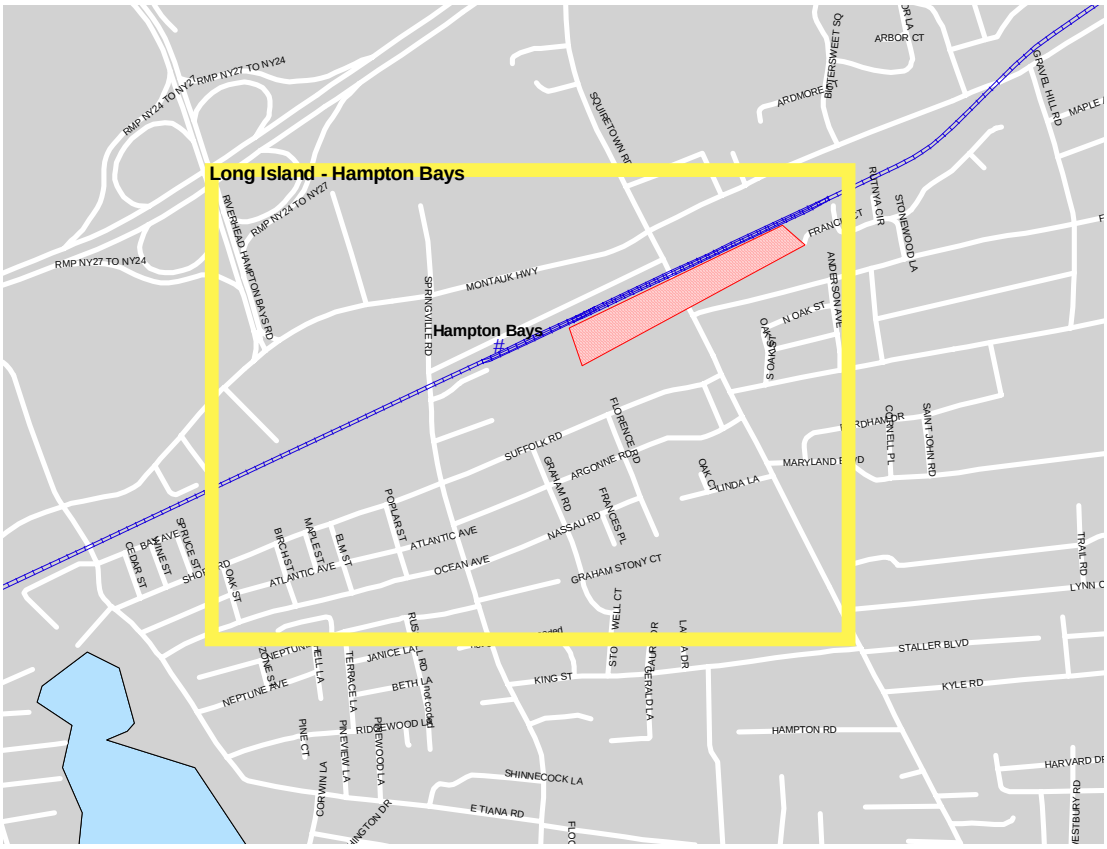

**Map 12: Eastport**




**Map 13: Speonk**

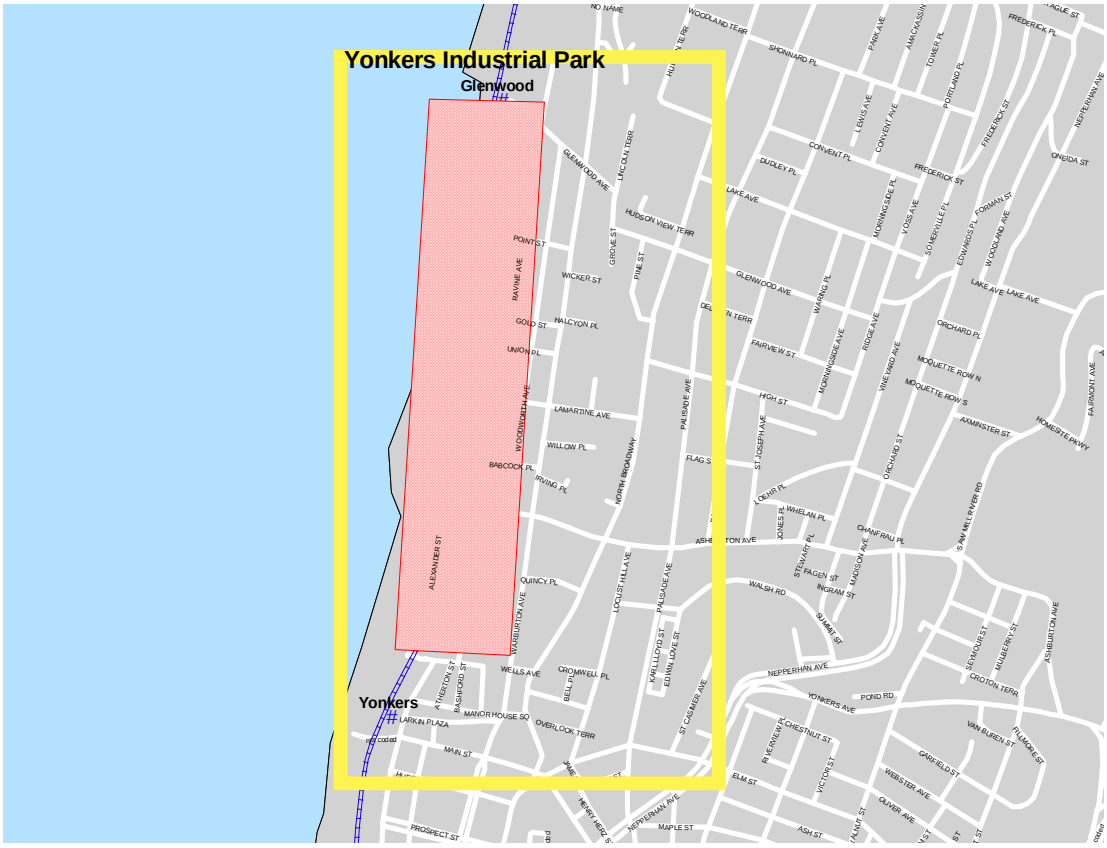



**Map 14: Southhampton**




**Map 15: Hampton Bays**

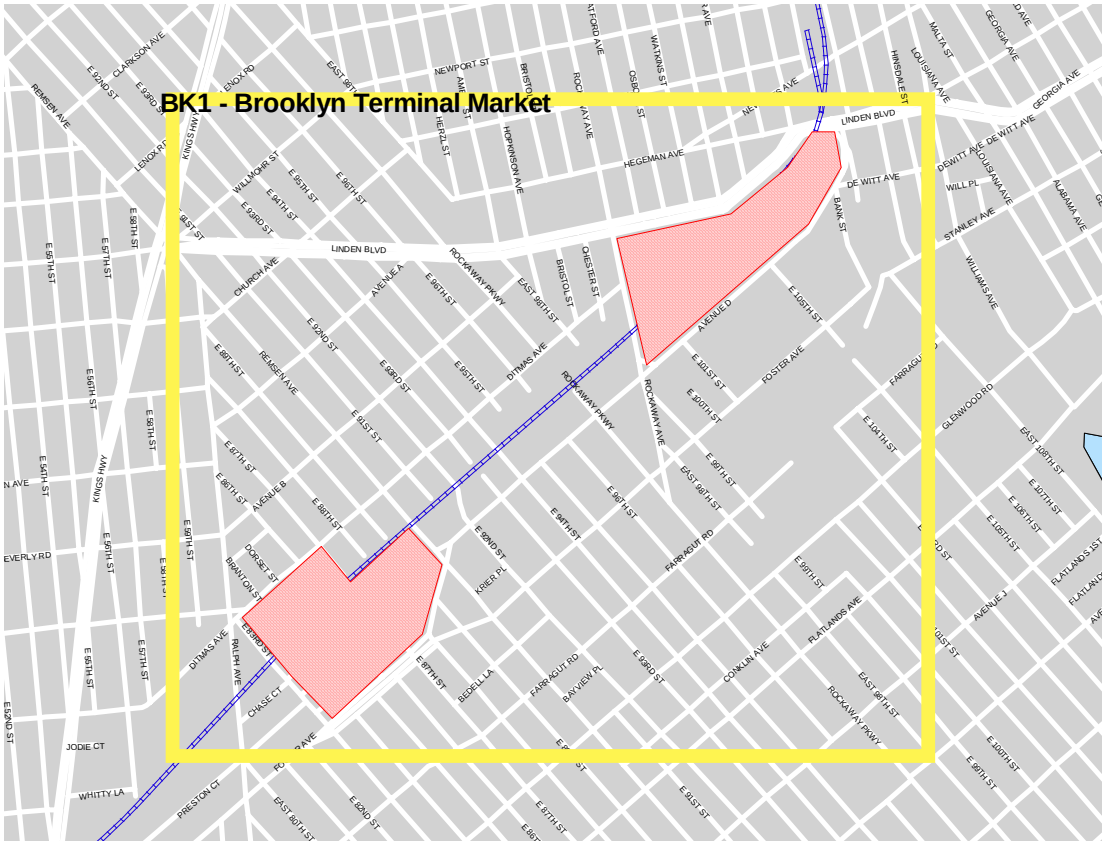
## 2. Mid Hudson South (Westchester County)



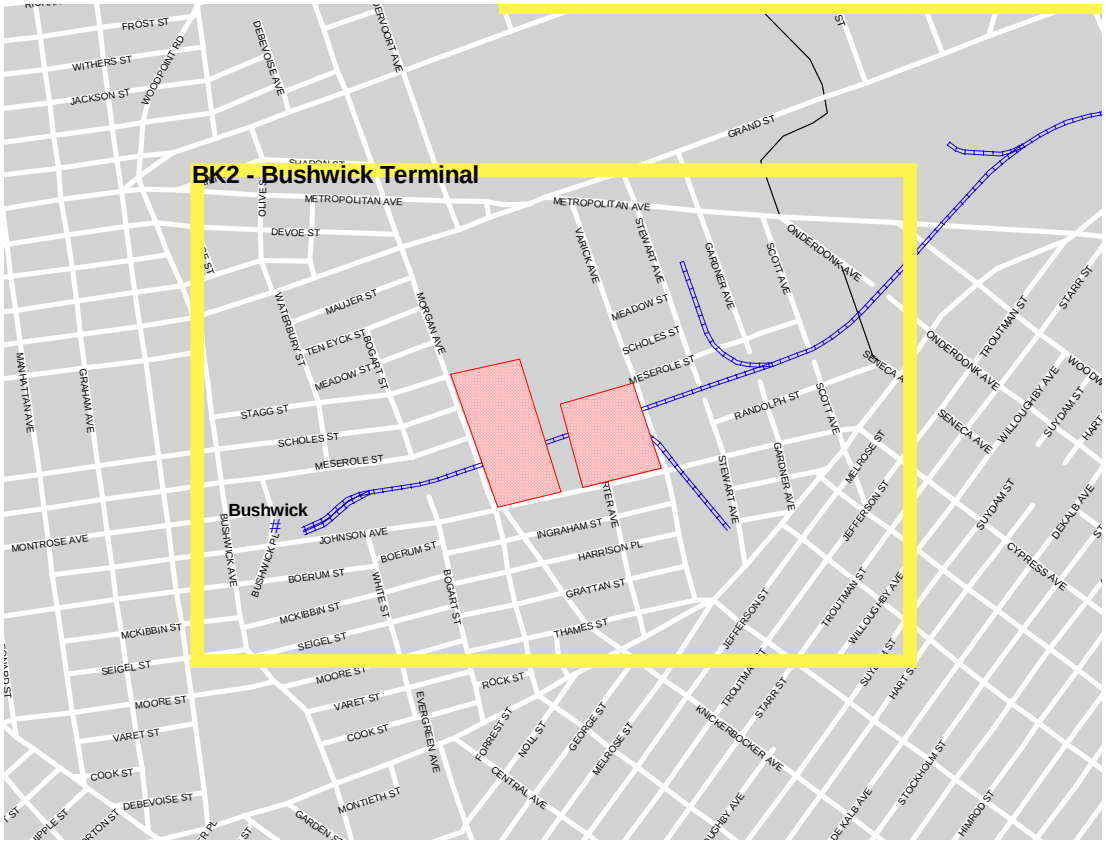

**Map 16: Yonkers Industrial Area**


**Map 17: Croton West Yard**

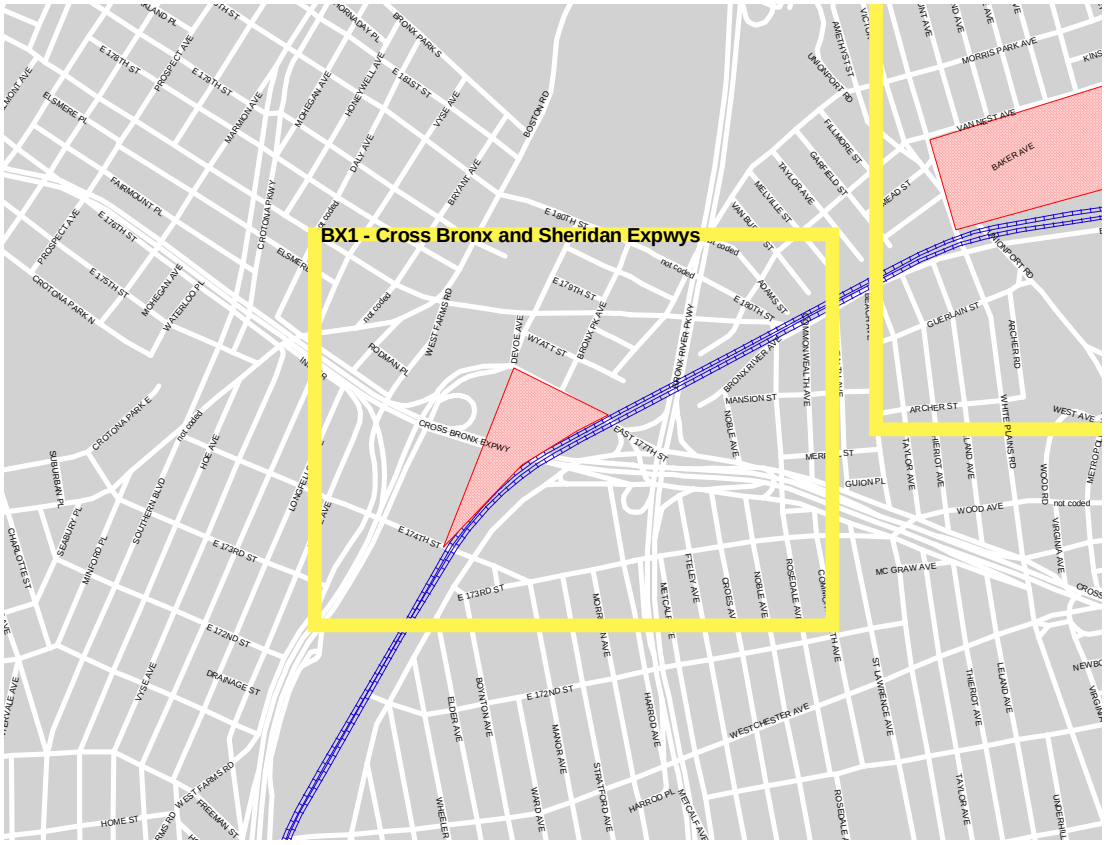
## 3. New York City



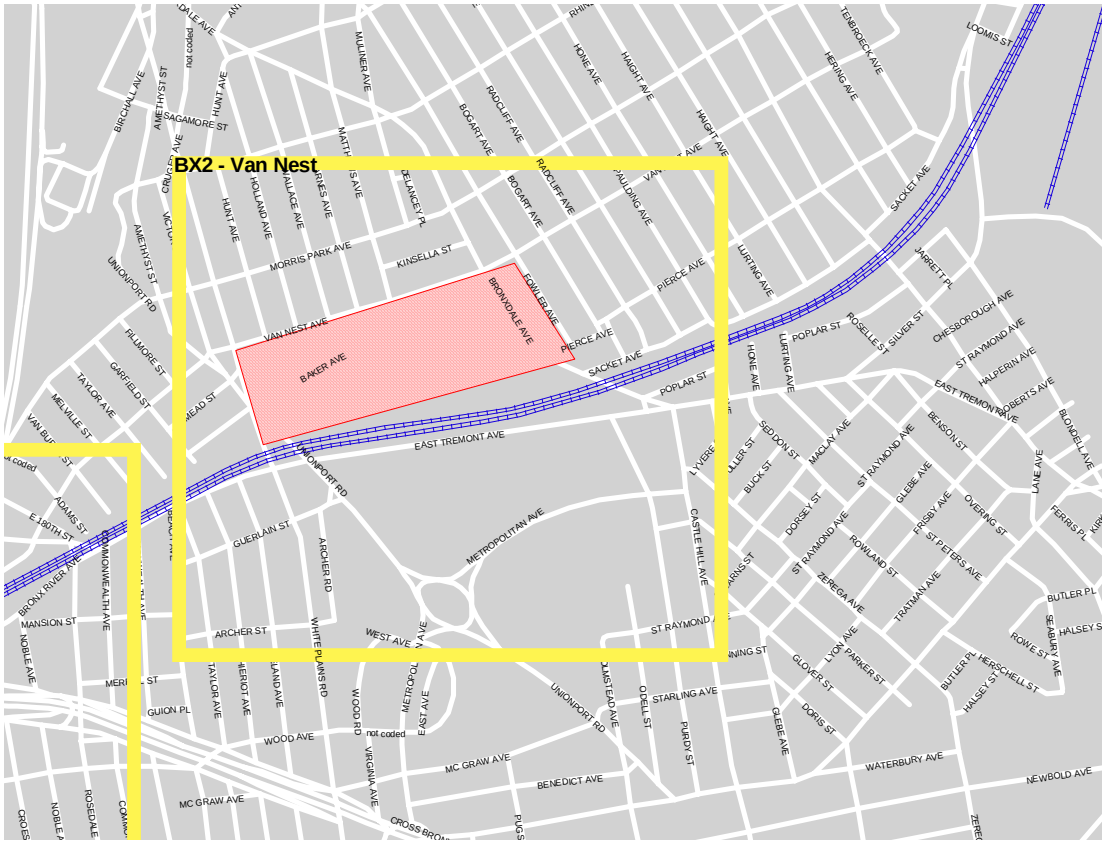

**Map 18: Brooklyn Terminal Market**



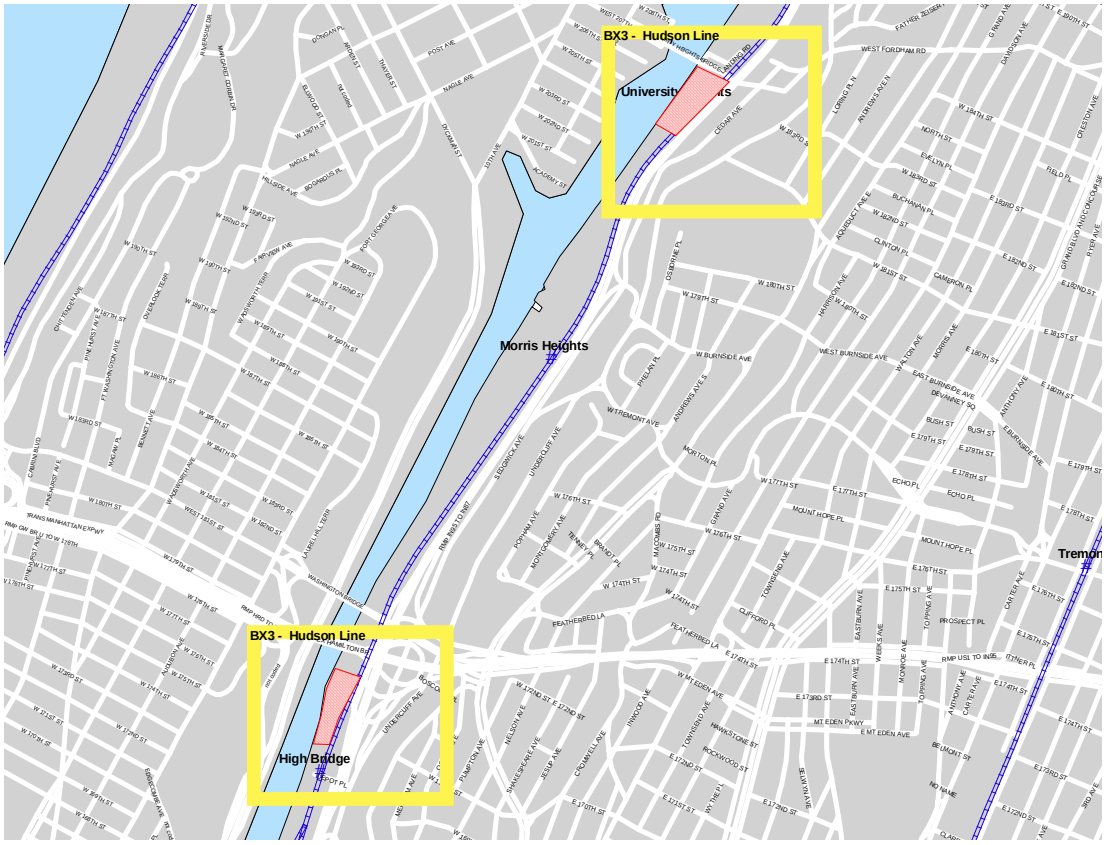

**Map 19: Bushwick**



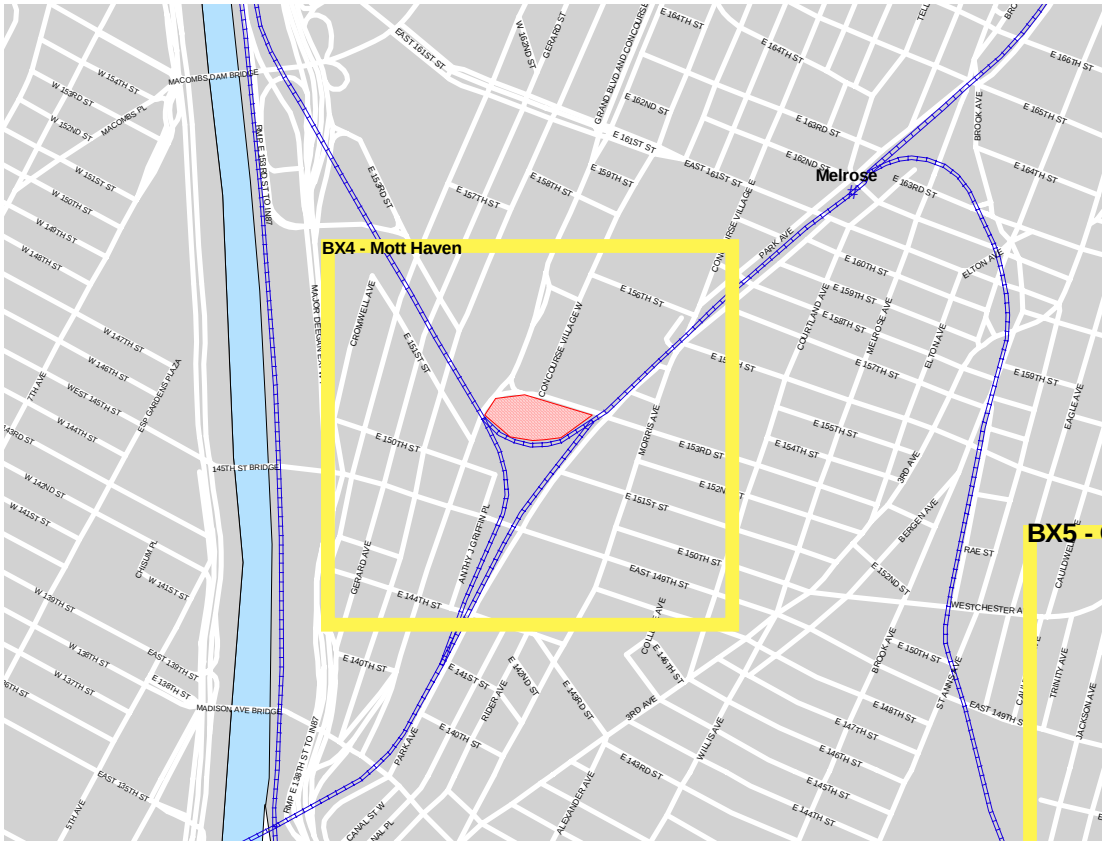

**Map 20: Cross Bronx and Sheridan Expressways**



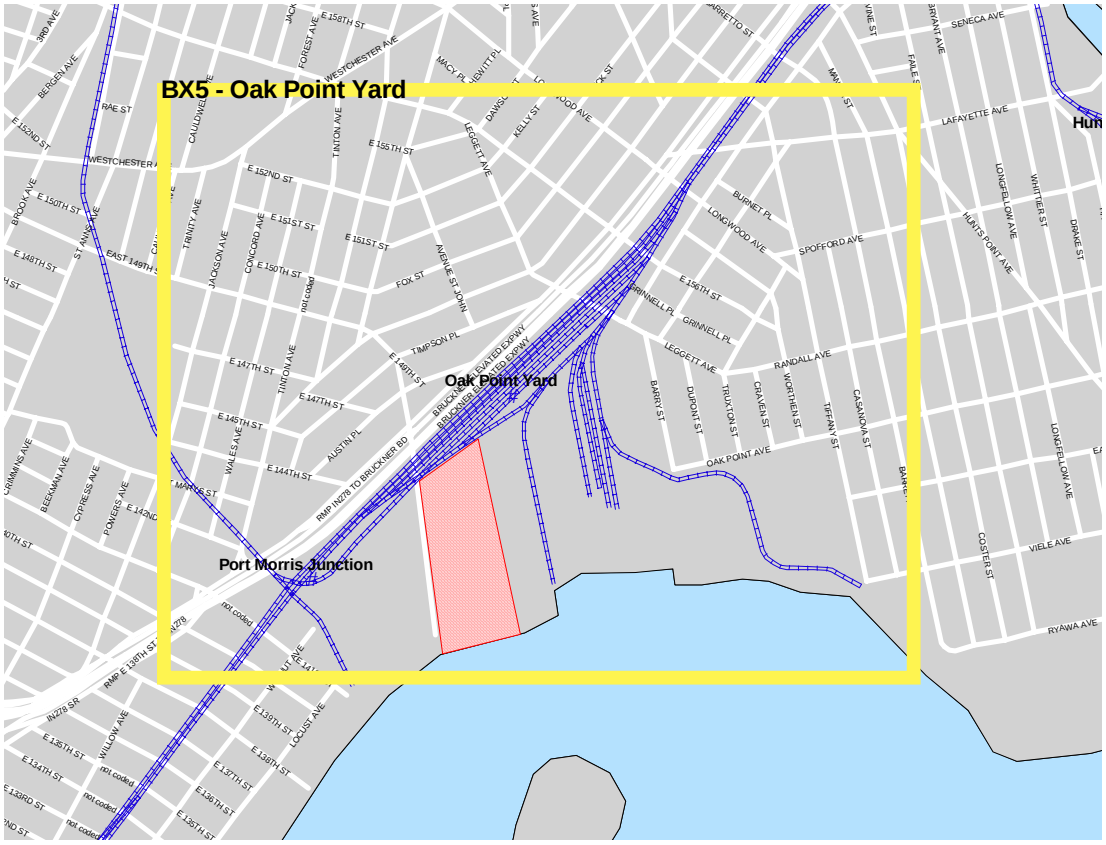

**Map 21: Van Nest**



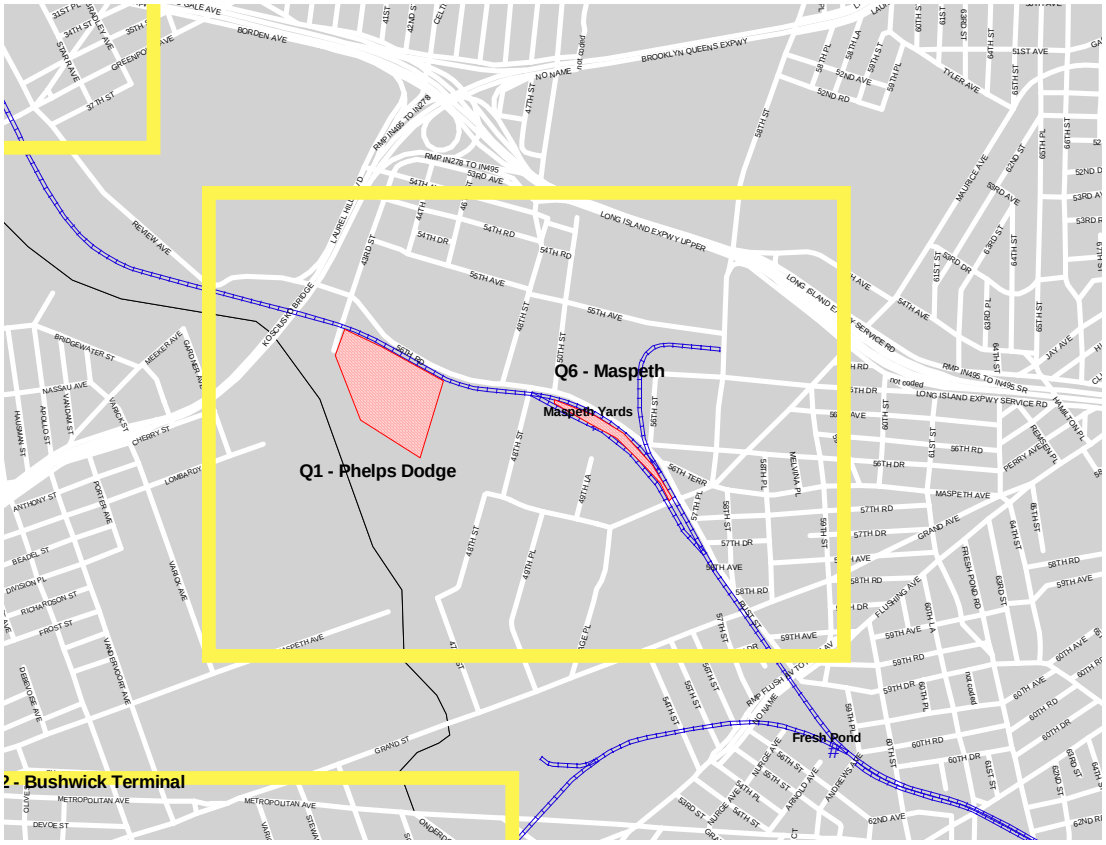

**Map 22: University Heights Bridge and Highbridge**



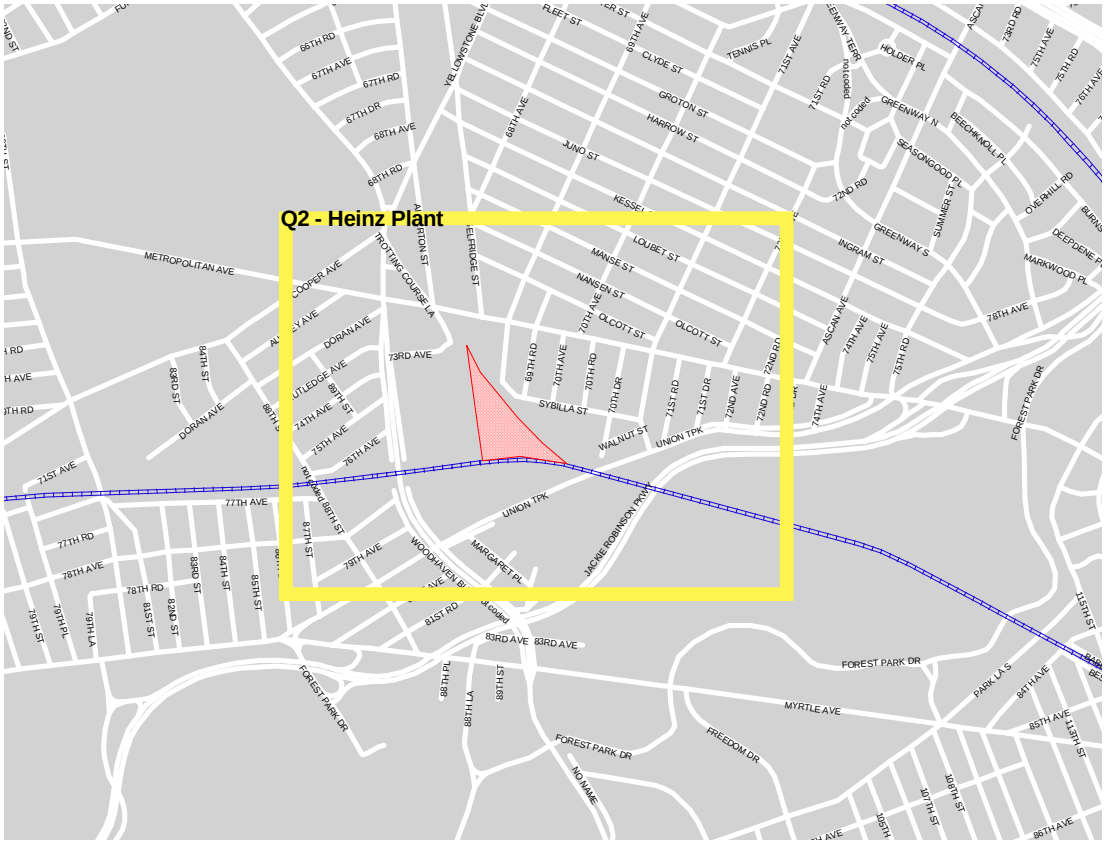

**Map 23: Mott Haven**



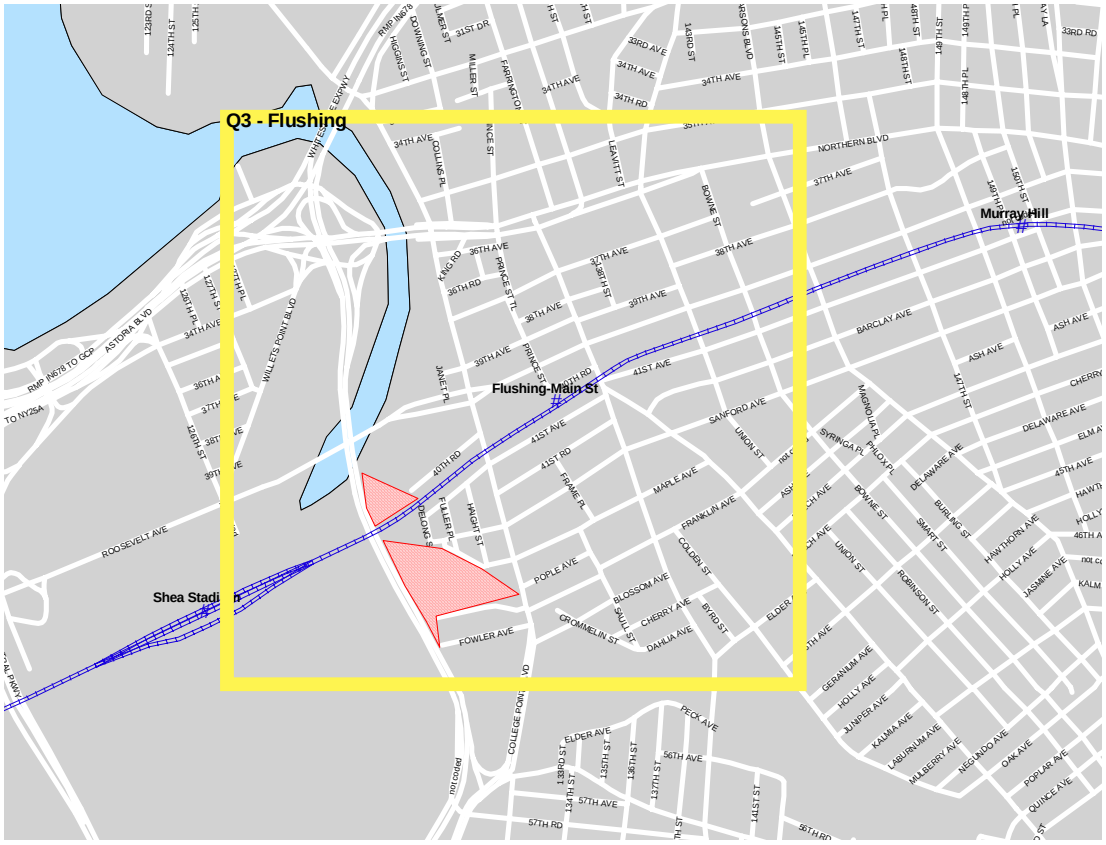

**Map 24: Oak Point Yard**



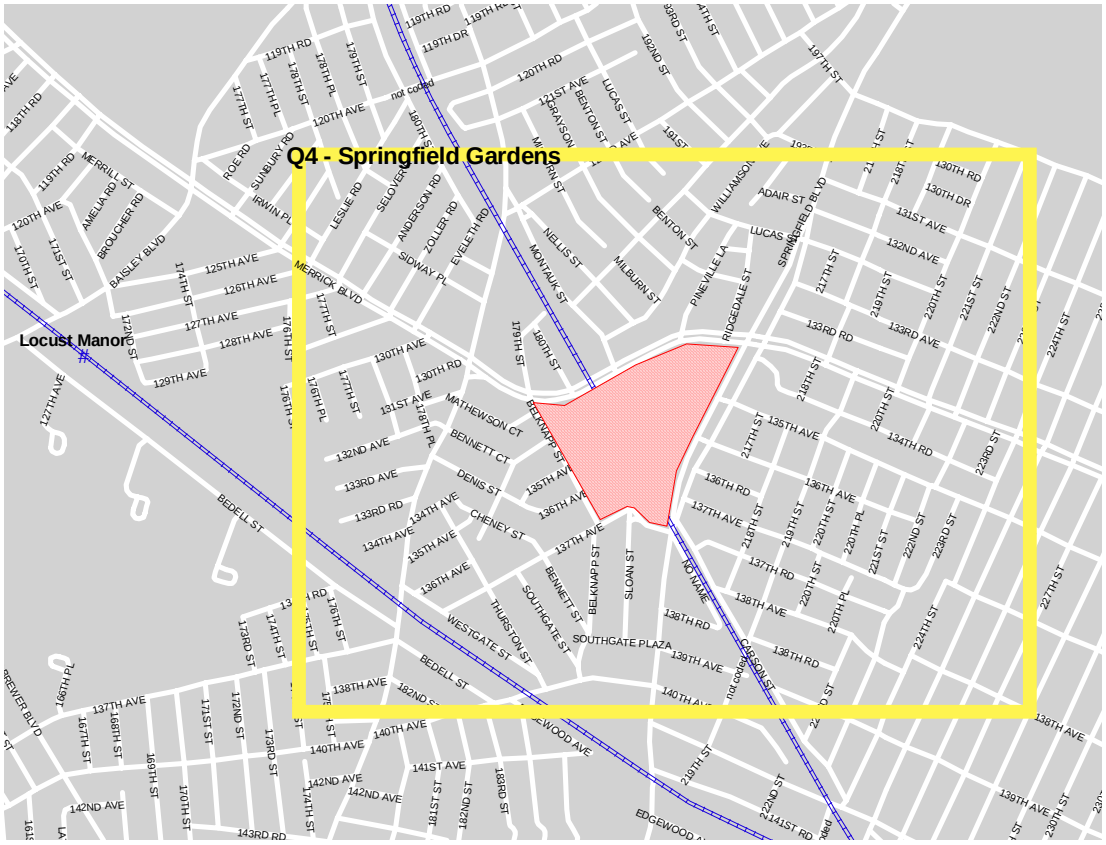

**Map 25: Phelps Dodge and Maspeth**



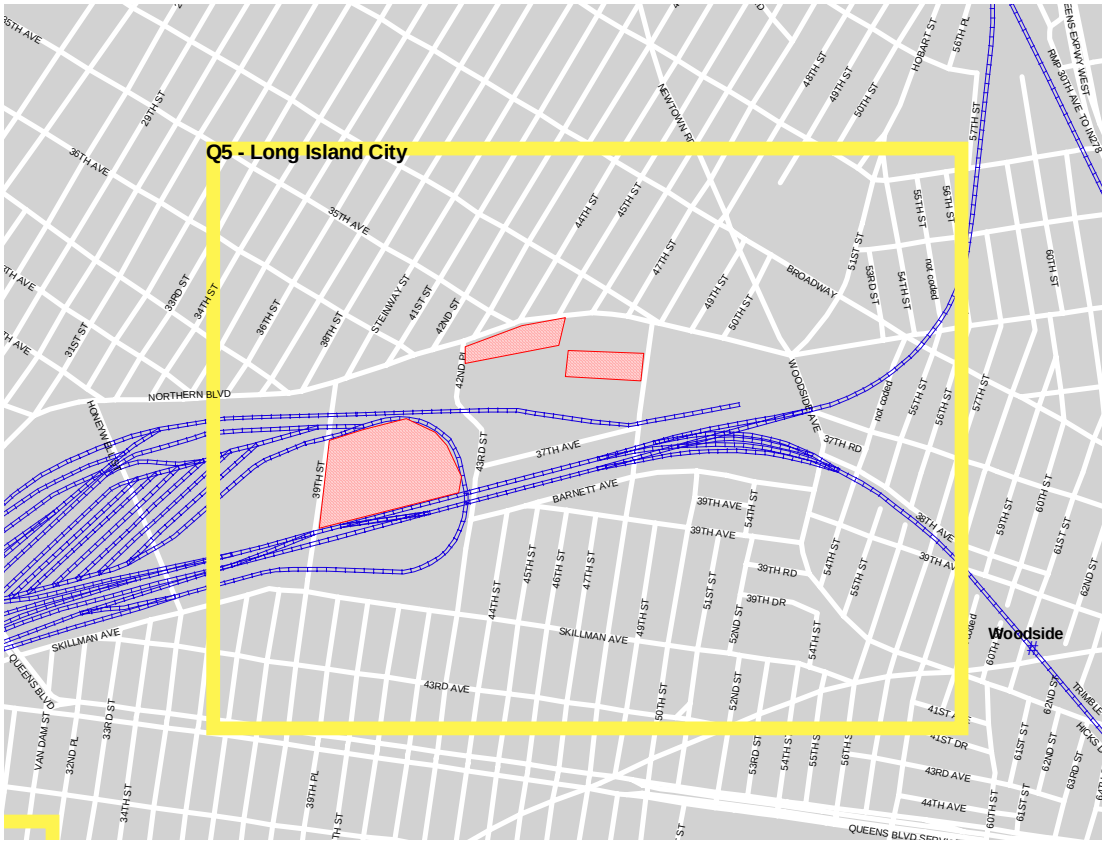

**Map 26: Former Heinz Plant**



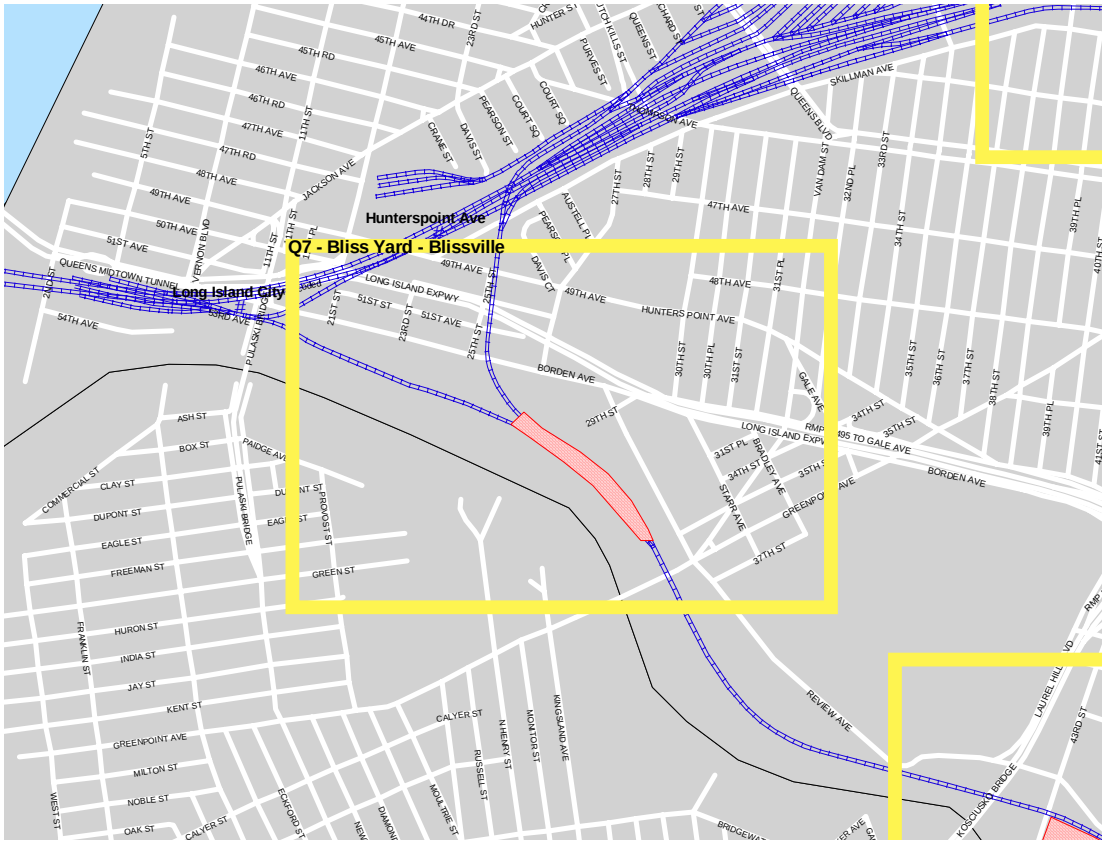

**Map 27: Flushing**




**Map 28: Springfield Gardens**




**Map 29: Long Island City**




**Map 30: Blissville**

# APPENDIX IV—SUMMARY OF SITE CHARACTERISTICS

| *ID* | *Location* | *Highway Access* | *Rail Access* | *Zoning* | *Parcel Size (acres)* | *Conclusions* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | St. James | ☐ | ☑ | ☑ | 2 | Small site—possible carload or transload use |
| 2 | Setauket | ☐ | ☑ | ☑ | n/a | Small site—possible carload use |
| 3 | Farmingdale | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | n/a | Small site—possible carload or transload use |
| 4 | Yaphank | ☑ | ☑ | ☐ | 3 | Currently used for transload. Expansion possible. |
| 5 | Calverton | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 10 | Useful for carload and transload. Undergoing industrial redevelopment (rail use). |
| 6 | Freeport | ☑ | ☑ | ☐ | 1.4 | Small site—possible carload or reload use |
| 7 | Rockville Centre | ☑ | ☑ | ☐ | n/a | Small site—possible carload use |
| 8 | Bay Shore | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 2 | Small site—possible carload use |
| 9 | Islip | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 2 | Active freight use—not large enough for yard |
| 10 | Sayville | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 3 | Joint MOW/freight use. Not large enough for yard |
| 11 | Patchogue | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 0.5 | Currently used for freight. Not large enough for yard. |
| 12 | Eastport | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 5 | Currently used for freight. Not large enough for yard. |
| 13 | Speonk | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 2 | Small site—currently used for carload freight |
| 14 | Yonkers Industrial Area | ☐ | ☑ | ☑ | n/a | Not large enough for yard. Highway access possible issue. |
| 15 | Croton West Yard | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 0 | Active current rail freight use. Explore for expansion. |
| 16 | Brooklyn Terminal Market | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 30 | Not appropriate for major yard. Possible expanded carload activity. |
| 17 | Bushwick | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 22 | Hemmed-in by industrial buildings. Not useful for yard. |
| 18 | Cross Bronx/Sheridan | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 0 | Not appropriate for yard. Currently used for transit purposes. |
| 19 | Van Nest | ☑ | ☐ | ☑ | 5.3 | Sit is occupied by Con Ed. Do not consider further. |
| 20 | Highbridge | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | n/a | Site occupied—possible transload |

# APPENDIX IV—SUMMARY OF SITE CHARACTERISTICS

| *ID* | *Location* | *Highway Access* | *Rail Access* | *Zoning* | *Parcel Size (acres)* | *Conclusions* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 21 | University Heights Bridge | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | n/a | Site occupied—possible transload |
| 22 | Mott Haven | ☐ | ☑ | ☑ | 10 | Explore conflicts with commuter rail highway access issues |
| 23 | Oak Point Yard Vicinity | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 44 | Expansion possibly for existing yard. |
| 24 | Phelps Dodge | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 35 | Appropriate for large yard. Environmental mitigation needed—private ownership |
| 25 | Former Heinz Plant | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 7 | Size appropriate to yard. No current use for most of site. |
| 26 | Flushing | ☑ | ☐ | ☑ | 30 | Existing active use of site. Intensively used adjacent commuter rail |
| 27 | Springfield Gardens | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 23 | Current active commercial and industrial use. No space for rail. |
| 28 | Long Island City | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | n/a | Intensively used for commercial purposes. Very active intercity and comm. rail. |
| 29 | Maspeth | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 3 | Low rail freight use—possible expansion for rail freight |
| 30 | Blissville | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | 2.4 | Possible transload, cross dock or team track use |

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