



WAGNER



Interborough Express

Public Realm Assessment & Planning Opportunities

NYMTC 9/11 Memorial Fellowship 2024-2025

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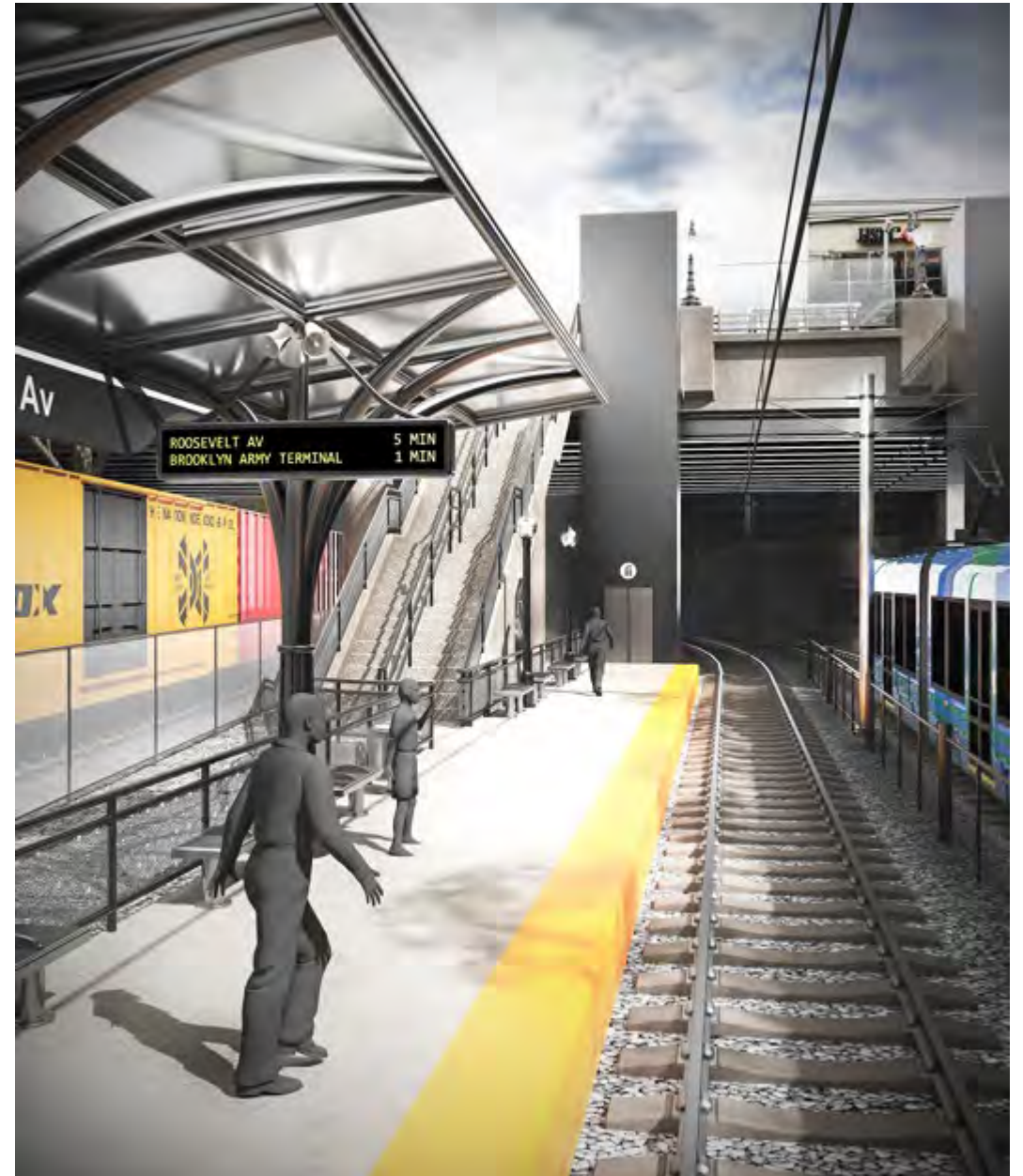
Acknowledgements

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Outline

1. IBX Background
2. Precedent Analysis
3. Data Analysis / Existing Conditions
4. Workshops
5. Site Visits
6. Typology Development
7. Public Realm
Recommendations and Toolkit



Background

- **14-mile** underutilized freight rail corridor in Brooklyn and Queens (LIRR Bay Ridge Branch and CSX Fremont Secondary)
- MTA completed PEL Study in 2024, recommending **light rail** as chosen mode
- **19 stations** planned with **transfers to 17 subway lines**
- Area surrounding the corridor is home to **900,000 people** and **260,000 jobs**
- **\$2.75 billion** of funding approved in the 2025–2029 MTA Capital Plan
- The MTA recently announced that engineering firms **Jacobs and HDR** have been selected as design consultants



DCP Approach

Planning Objectives and Rationale (DCP)

**Housing
growth**

**Reconnecting
neighborhoods**

**Supporting
industry and
job growth**

**Public realm
and street
safety**

**Climate
resilience**

Public Realm Themes (UD)

Access

How do riders get to the station from the street?

Connectivity

How do people transfer or connect to other modes?

Open/Public Space

Where are opportunities for additional open space?

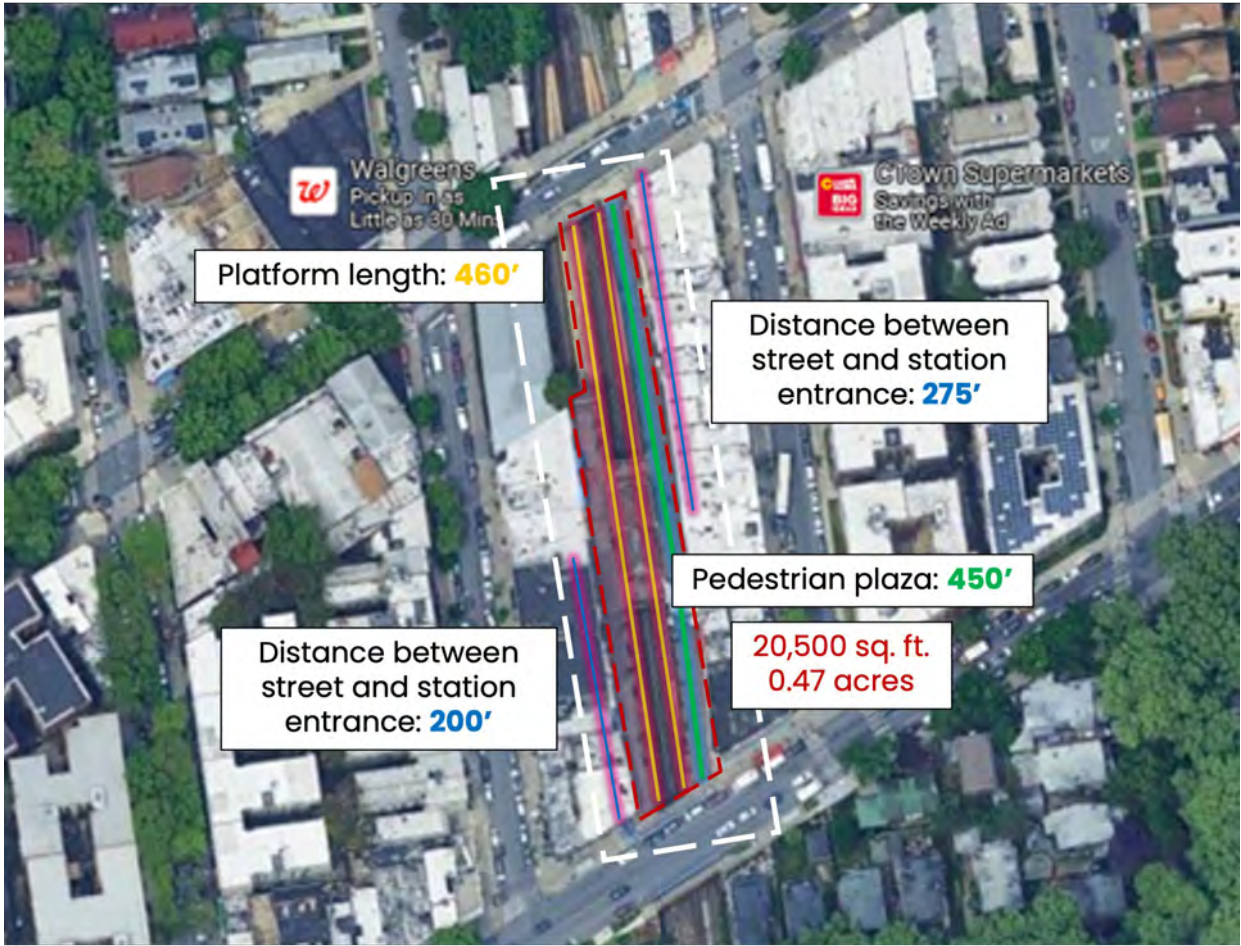
Adjacency

How does the station area support nearby land uses?

Precedent Analysis



Precedent Analysis Example – Newkirk Plaza Station (Brooklyn, NY)



Existing Conditions Analysis

Data



Land use

City ownership

Vacant sites

Bike routes

Pedestrian crashes

Transit routes

Flood risk

Other

Community District Needs Assessment

Land use applicants and projects

Streetscape and public realm

Conditions along the Line

Within ½ mile of the proposed station areas:

Opportunity for public realm improvements within city-owned properties

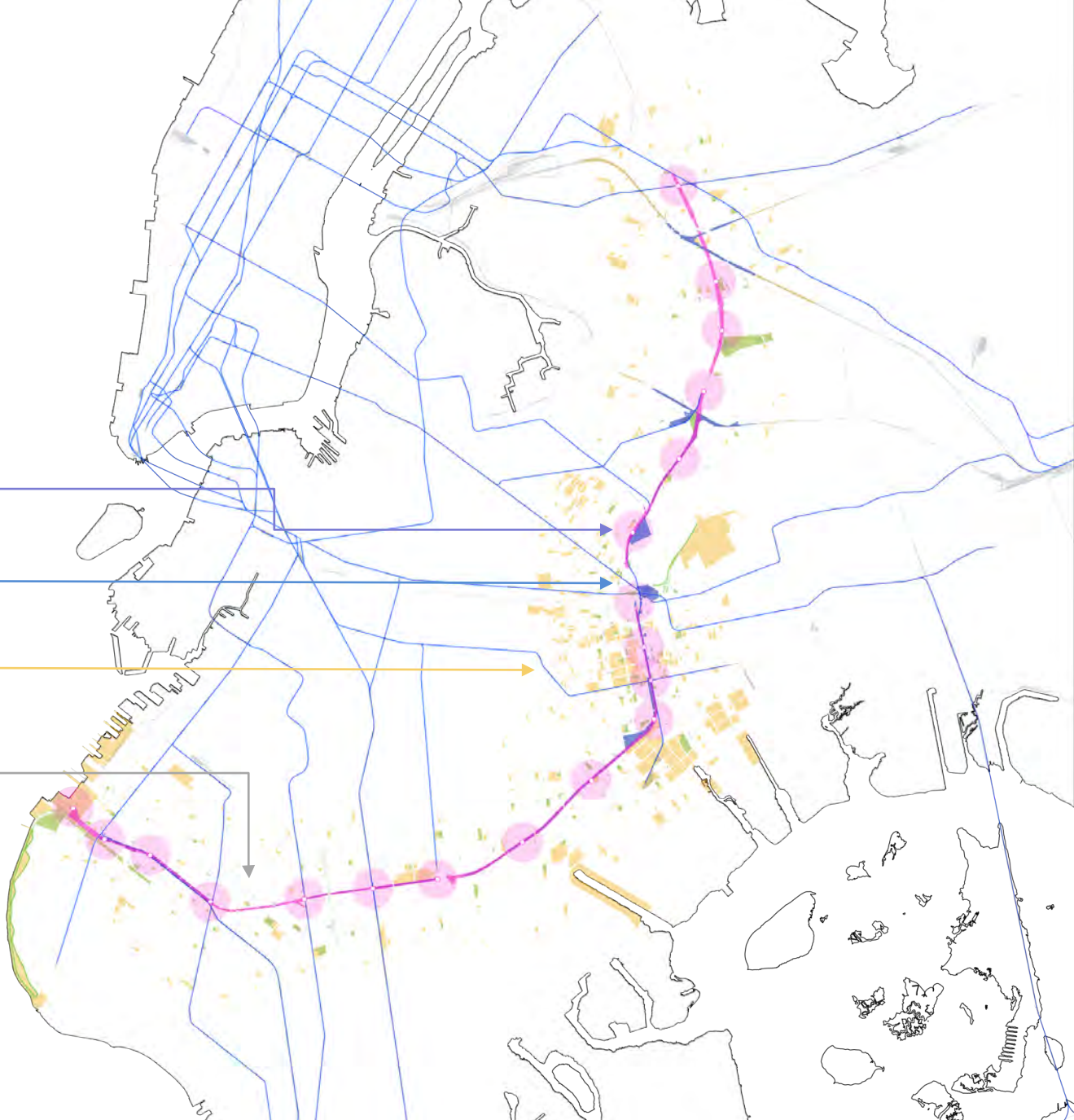
Opportunity to improve multimodal connections

Some areas have greater city-owned land available for improvements

Vacant land can be used for housing



- Station Locations
- IBX – MTA Properties for route of freight line
- MTA owned Properties
- City Owned Properties (other)
- Parks
- Vacant lots (very small in scale reference of image, defer to shared Carto Map)
- Subway Lines
- Other Rail Lines



Workshops



Example drawing: McDonald Avenue



Site Visits



Site of future Roosevelt Avenue Station



Existing New Utrecht Avenue Station



61st Street, near 8th Avenue Station



Site of future Atlantic Avenue Station



Site of future Myrtle Avenue Station



Streetscape near Metropolitan Avenue Station

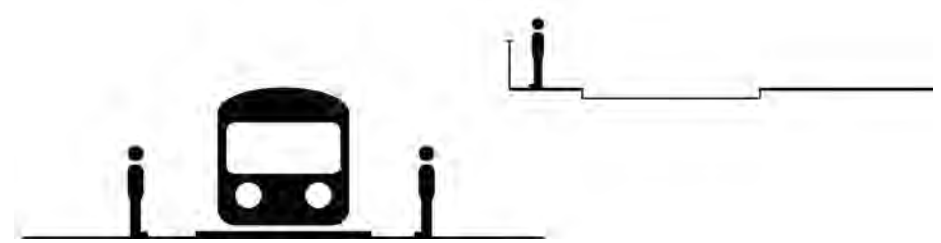
Typology Development



Station Typologies

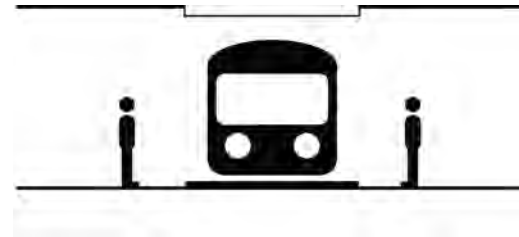
Open cut

Rail line is currently located within a cut, indentation to the surrounding context or topography and is supported by a gradual incline of topography and planting or retaining wall



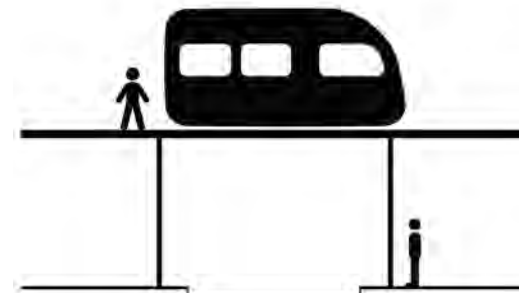
Below grade

Rail line is currently located below another structure, roadway or bridge



Above grade

Rail line is currently located within an embankment or elevated structure to the surrounding context



Station Area Typologies



Anchor Station

- High density residential (R5-R7)
- Transit interchange – high ridership
- High pedestrian activity
- Mixed land use

Industrial Center

- Primarily industrial (within or close to IBZ)
- Freight movement near station
- Mostly impervious
- Less pedestrian movement

Neighborhood Center

- Medium-high density (R5, R6)
- Mixed use
- Near commercial corridor
- Close to CBD area
- High pedestrian activity

Mid-Density Connector

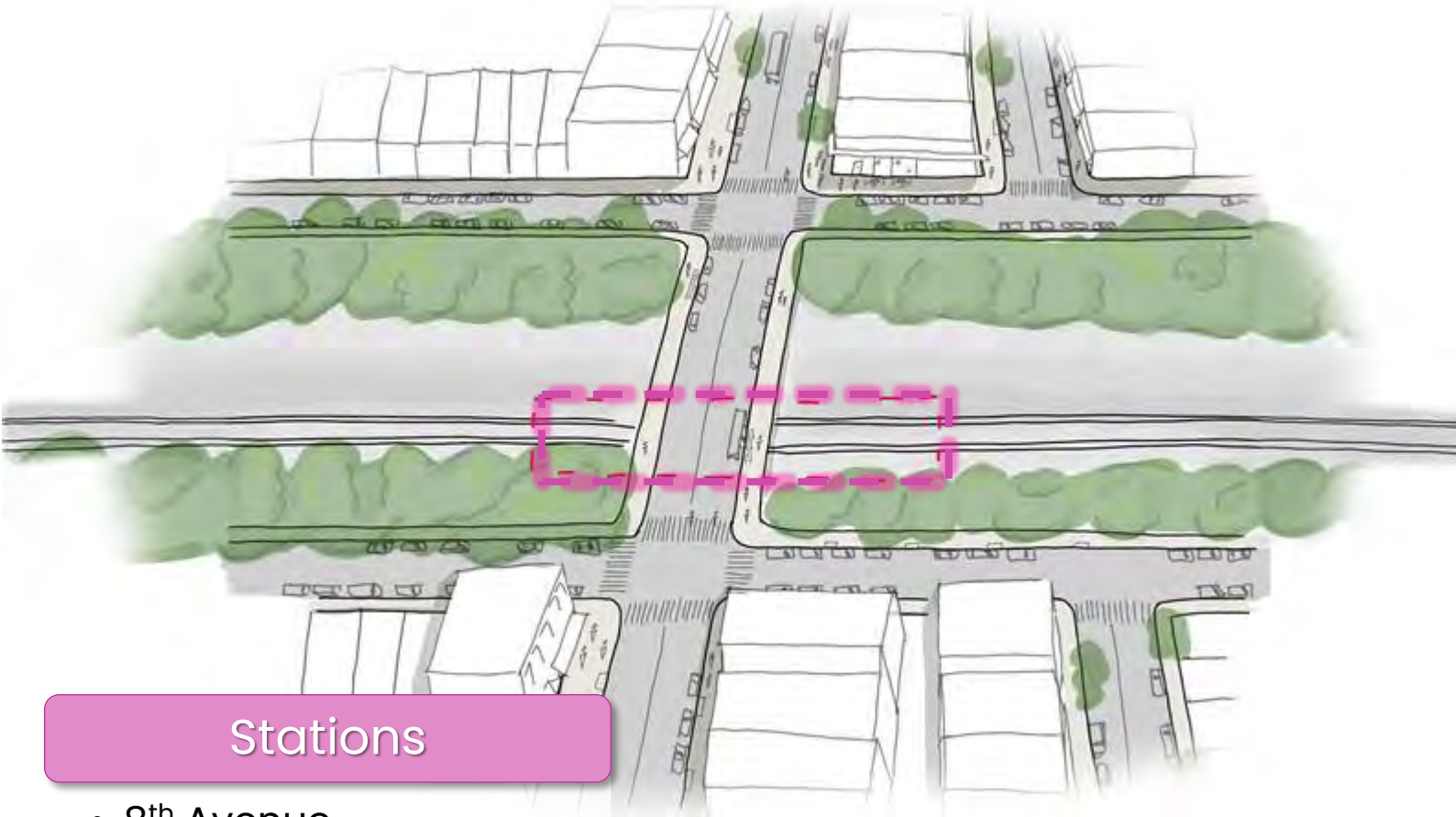
- Primarily residential
- Medium density (R6)
- Some commercial overlay; occasional ground floor commercial
- Existing transit access (maybe underutilized)

Low-Density Connector

- Primarily residential
- Low density (mostly R4 and below)
- Large low-scale commercial (mall, big box)
- Auto oriented; few transit connections and bike lanes

Station Area Typology Example

Neighborhood Center



Stations

- 8th Avenue
- New Utrecht Avenue
- Myrtle Avenue
- Flatbush Avenue

Challenges

- Transfers between different station conditions (e.g., elevated-cut)
- Key corridor high pedestrian activity; sidewalks may be insufficient
- Lack of greening on commercial/main streets
- Higher development pressure; need to integrate new and existing development

Opportunities

- Situate station entrances near anchor points/nodes
- High potential for additional transit supportive land uses
- Capping opportunities for additional public space
- Remove parking to extend sidewalks
- Add bus lanes and amenities

McDonald Avenue

Opportunities

MTA properties have more depth within IBX right-of-way to explore and address public realm needs: intermodal service connection, accessibility, sustainability

- **Prioritize a central platform**
- **Widen sidewalk** below elevated rail line, create public plaza with ADA accessible elevator adjacent to future station
- Create interconnected **greenway with pedestrian and bike access**; safer access for students going to/from schools; residents from transit/retail corridors
- **Reconnect streets**: bridge 19th Ave to **improve vehicular movement**, alleviate McDonald Ave traffic
- **Create a public plaza**: improve safe pedestrian access from low-density neighborhood streets to the west



Next Steps

- Public realm recommendations and toolkit for MTA
- Toolkit for DCP Borough Planners and Designers
- Interagency implementation strategies for public realm improvements (DCP, MTA, NYC DOT, NYC DPR, etc.)
- Potential for zoning changes to support **DCP's Strategic Objectives**



Thanks!

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