

I. INTRODUCTION

This Design Report (DR) will serve to establish the scope of work and evaluate design alternatives for the proposed portion of the Bronx River Greenway from Westchester Avenue to East Tremont Avenue in the Bronx. Additionally, this report will identify the need for this portion of the Greenway, document the potential social, economic, and environmental impacts of each design alternative, and provide the environmental documentation needed to identify required permits, and to fulfill the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). The project will be constructed by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT). The DR will serve as the Department's decision making tool and to document the agency coordination and public hearing activities necessary for this project.

The primary intent of this project is to build a 1.8 km (1.14 mi) pathway and four bridges as a walkway and "Class I" bikeway between Westchester Avenue and East Tremont Avenue. It facilitates people walking, running, cycling, and skating for transportation, exercise, and recreation within its adjacent neighborhoods and regionally. This project will become a key link in New York City's Greenway and Bikeway networks in the Bronx – eventually becoming a key link between Manhattan and the continuation of the Bronx River Greenway in Westchester County. It may also become a link in the East Coast Greenway proposed from Florida to Maine. A discussion of the overall Greenway corridor is provided in the Local and Regional Land Use Plans Section of Chapter IV.B.3.r on Page IV-17.

Additionally, this project will enhance the Bronx River's natural qualities and public use by providing access to existing and proposed park amenities and enhancing the environment adjacent to the Bronx River. It will provide communities to the north of Westchester Avenue improved access to New York City Department of Parks and Recreation's (NYCDPR) planned bikeway at the current Concrete Plant Park, Soundview Park, Hunts Point Riverside Park, and future South Bronx Greenway links to Randalls Island and Manhattan. It will provide communities to the south of East Tremont Avenue (to include Manhattan in the future) improved access to West Farms, Bronx Park (including Bronx Zoo, Bronx Botanical Gardens), Pelham Greenway, Shoelace Park and future continuation of the Bronx River Greenway in Westchester County. This project will also result in improved access from nearby communities to Starlight Park.

Other public and environmental amenities proposed by this project include construction of walking paths, overlooks, play lawns, canoe docks, an amphitheater, seat walls, benches, picnic tables, planting, and wetland restoration.

The proposed Greenway contains three at-grade street crossings: 1) Westchester Avenue, 2) I-895 at East 177th Street, and 3) East Tremont Avenue. The Westchester Avenue crossing is at the southern end of the project and would also serve as a connection to the proposed multi-use path at the current Concrete Plant Park. The East Tremont Avenue crossing, at the north end of the project, will connect to the West Farms portion of the Greenway and a future northern continuation of the Bronx River Greenway corridor. Signalized mid-block crossings will be constructed at both the Westchester Avenue and East Tremont Avenue locations. In addition, traffic calming measures, pedestrian safety improvements, and the reconfiguration of the East 177th Street/Devoe Avenue/East Tremont Avenue intersection will provide safer pedestrian flow at the project entrances from surrounding neighborhoods

and schools. Intersection improvements are also proposed at the I-895/East 177th Street crossing to facilitate the safe interaction of non-motorized traffic with the high volume of vehicular traffic passing through this intersection to access the I-95 (Cross Bronx) and I-895 (Arthur Sheridan) Expressways. Access to the Greenway is also available at East 172nd Street through a ramp that will be constructed in the bed of the roadway.

This report is being prepared by the NYSDOT in accordance with the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) Part 15, Title 17 of the official Compilation of Codes, Rules and Regulations of New York State (17NYCRR Part 15). This project is being progressed as a SEQRA Non-Type II (EA) action due to the Right-of-Way takings required. This project is considered to be a NEPA Class II action (Categorical Exclusion with Documentation) under USDOT Regulations, 23 CFR 771.115(b). It will follow the process outlined in the NYSDOT Design Procedure Manual. The NYSDOT will act as lead agency and design approval will be granted by the Regional Director. Coordination with City of New York Parks and Recreation (NYCDPR), New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT), Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), and New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) will be required throughout the project development process.

The project will be funded using, Federal, State, and Local sources. New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) will assume maintenance responsibilities of all City Street portions of the project and the NYCDPR will assume maintenance responsibilities for the remainder of the Bronx River Greenway corridor once the project is completed. NYCDOT will be responsible for inspecting and performing any future capital improvements on the new multi-use path bridges.

This report will be distributed to Federal, State and local agencies for review and comment and at various locations throughout the community such as libraries, etc. It will also be made available for public review at the NYSDOT Regional Office in Long Island City. A notice of availability of this report will be published. An Eminent Domain Procedure Law (EDPL) hearing was held on May 19, 2005 at Public Schools 195/196/197, 1250 Ward Avenue, Bronx New York. Copies of the public hearing transcripts and comments are included in Appendix J of this report.

This Final Design Report prepared for this project will serve as documentation of the Determination of No Significant Effect (DONSE) and will serve as the basis for the final design of the project.

Requests for additional information or comments concerning this report should be forwarded to:

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