

APPENDIX E.3
ZONING BACKGROUND

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Zoning districts in New York City are grouped into three categories: residential, commercial, and manufacturing. Only residential and related institutional uses are permitted in residential districts; commercial (retail, office, etc.) and residential uses are permitted in most commercial districts; and manufacturing, wholesaling, and commercial uses are permitted in manufacturing districts. The specific types of uses (“use groups”) and density of development (in terms of the ratio of floor area to site area) in each district vary, depending on their location.

As shown in Table E-1, Manhattan’s East Side contains a range of zoning districts. Running through heavily developed residential neighborhoods as well as the city’s Central Business District (CBD), this area contains the city’s densest zoning districts as well as some medium-density residential districts, reserved for the midblocks and portions of the areas outside the commercial cores.

The City’s zoning code also promulgates Special Purpose Districts, which are intended to achieve specific planning and urban design objectives for a particular neighborhood or area, listed for the study area on Table E-2. The Special Lower Manhattan Mixed-Use District and the Special Transit Land Use District are of particular relevance to the proposed project. The Special Land Use Transit District was established in 1974 along Second Avenue to support construction of the Second Avenue Subway, ease pedestrian flows, provide light and air to underground transit facilities, encourage development that promotes needed pedestrian amenities, coordinate present and future relationship of land uses within the district, and conserve the value of land and buildings, thereby protecting the City’s tax revenues. The district is mapped on Second Avenue, where the future Second Avenue Subway Stations were to be located in the 1970s. Where practical, easements established as part of the Special Transit Land Use District would be used for station entrances. However, station entrances are not limited to the Special Transit Land Use District; they could also be located outside of the district, which is shaded in gray on the zoning maps for each neighborhood. Easements only exist where properties have been developed since the 1970s when the Special Transit Land Use District zoning was put in place, and have not been acquired in buildings existing before that time. NYCT has obtained several easements through existing buildings in the Special Transit Land Use District. The easements obtained are listed in Chapter 2.

The Special Lower Manhattan District was created in 1998 to simplify and consolidate the overlapping complex regulations previously governing Lower Manhattan, foster the reuse of existing underused commercial buildings, allow the area to grow while reinforcing its historic character, promote the orderly growth of the waterfront area, and facilitate the change to a mixed-use community. The special district also recognizes the area’s historic street grid (which is a designated New York City Landmark District), by instituting special height and setback controls created to control development. The Lower Manhattan District incorporates several subdistricts, aimed to reflect local conditions, including the South Street Seaport Subdistrict, which was originally created in 1972 as the South Street Seaport District, with the intent of ensuring that the Seaport area remains a neighborhood of small historic buildings.

**Table E.3-1
Zoning Designations in Eastern Manhattan**

Zoning District (see accompanying zoning maps)	Permitted Uses/Bulk
<i>Residential Districts</i>	Commercial and manufacturing use prohibited; community facility permitted
R7, R7-1, R7-2, R7-3	Medium-density residential and community facility
R8	Medium-density residential and community facility
R9, R9-1	High-density residential and community facility
R10	Highest-density residential and community facility
<i>Commercial Districts</i>	<i>Residential and community facility use permitted. Commercial districts can be mapped as zoning districts or as overlays in residential districts. Commercial overlays permit low-density development of commercial uses.</i>
C1-2, C1-6	Low-density neighborhood shopping. Low- to medium-density residential and community facility
C1-7, C1-8	Low-density neighborhood shopping. Medium- to high-density residential and community facility
C1-9	Low-density neighborhood shopping. High-density residential and community facility use
C1-5, C2-2, C2-5	Low-density neighborhood shopping/services. Residential and community facility use based on surrounding residential district
C2-7, C2-8	Low-density neighborhood shopping/services. Medium- to high-density residential and community facility use
C4-4, C4-5, C4-6	Medium-density general commercial (such as department stores, theaters). Low- to medium-density residential and community facility
C4-6	Medium-density general commercial. High-density residential and community facility
C4-7	High-density general commercial, residential, and community facility.
C5-1	Medium-density restricted central commercial (for retail and offices). High-density residential and community facility
C5-2, C5-2.5, C5-3, C5-5	High density restricted central commercial district intended for retail and large offices. High-density residential, community facility
C6-1, C6-2, C6-3	Medium-density general central commercial outside CBD. Low- to medium-density residential and community facility
C6-4, C6-6, C6-9	High-density general central commercial intended for CBD, allowing medium- to high-bulk offices. High-density residential, community facility
C6-5.5	High-density general central commercial district, intended for Special Midtown District, allowing high-bulk offices
C8-3, C8-4	Low-density general service/warehouse, medium-density community facility. No residential use permitted
<i>Manufacturing Districts</i>	<i>Residential use prohibited (except in M1-5M districts)</i>
M1-1, M1-2, M1-4	Low-density light industrial uses (high performance) and certain community facilities
M1-3, M1-5	Medium-density light industrial uses (high performance) and certain community facilities. (Conversion of nonresidential to residential permitted in M1-5M)
M2-1, M2-3	Low-density general industrial uses (medium performance), most commercial uses
M2-2	Medium-density general industrial uses (medium performance), most commercial uses
M3-1, M3-2	Low-density heavy industrial (low performance)
Source: Zoning Resolution of the City of New York.	

**Table E.3-2
Special Purpose Districts in Neighborhood Zones**

Zoning District Designation (see accompanying zoning maps)	Special Purpose District
BPC	Special Battery Park City District
G	Special Greenwich Street Development District
LI	Special Little Italy District
LM	Special Lower Manhattan Mixed-Use District
MiD	Special Midtown District
MP	Special Madison Avenue Preservation District
PI	Special Park Improvement District
S	Special South Street Seaport Development District
TA	Special Transit Land Use District
U	Special United Nations Development District
US	Special Union Square District
Source: Zoning Resolution of the City of New York.	