

Expanding Opportunity on Staten Island's North Shore



Reimagining Empire Outlets and the Former New York Wheel



June 2026

The City Has Made a Lot of Progress on The North Shore in Recent Years

The **Staten Island North Shore Action Plan** was launched in 2023 under the leadership of Council Member Kamillah Hanks to:

- **Re-Energize, Center, and Reimagine** the North Shore
- Create 20 Acres of **Continuous Waterfront Open Space**
- Deliver \$400M+ Investments to Build the Foundation for a **Thriving Neighborhood Where People of All Incomes** Can Call Home



Construction along the Tompkinsville Esplanade.

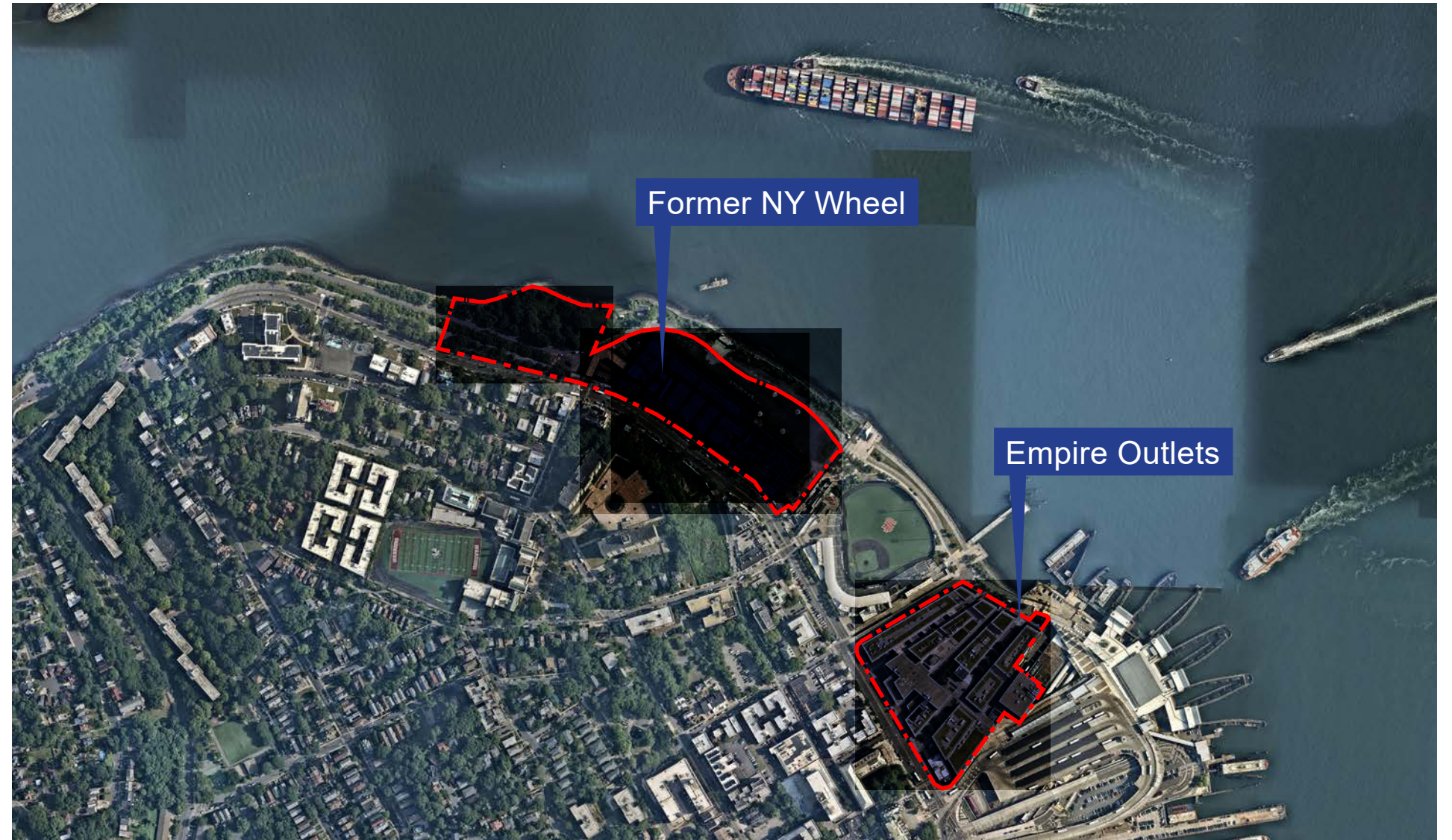
Two Large City-Owned Sites are Key Opportunities for Strengthening the North Shore Waterfront

In the past, the City invested heavily in tourism and outlet shopping at Empire Outlets and the former NY Wheel site.

After the pandemic and years of economic shifts, that approach hasn't worked.

After nearly 15 years, the City, NYCEDC, elected officials, and Staten Island residents all agree:

It's time for a new direction.



Empire Outlets and the former NY Wheel Site offer immense opportunity next to the St. George Ferry Terminal and SIUH Community Park.

The Sites Today: Empire Outlets

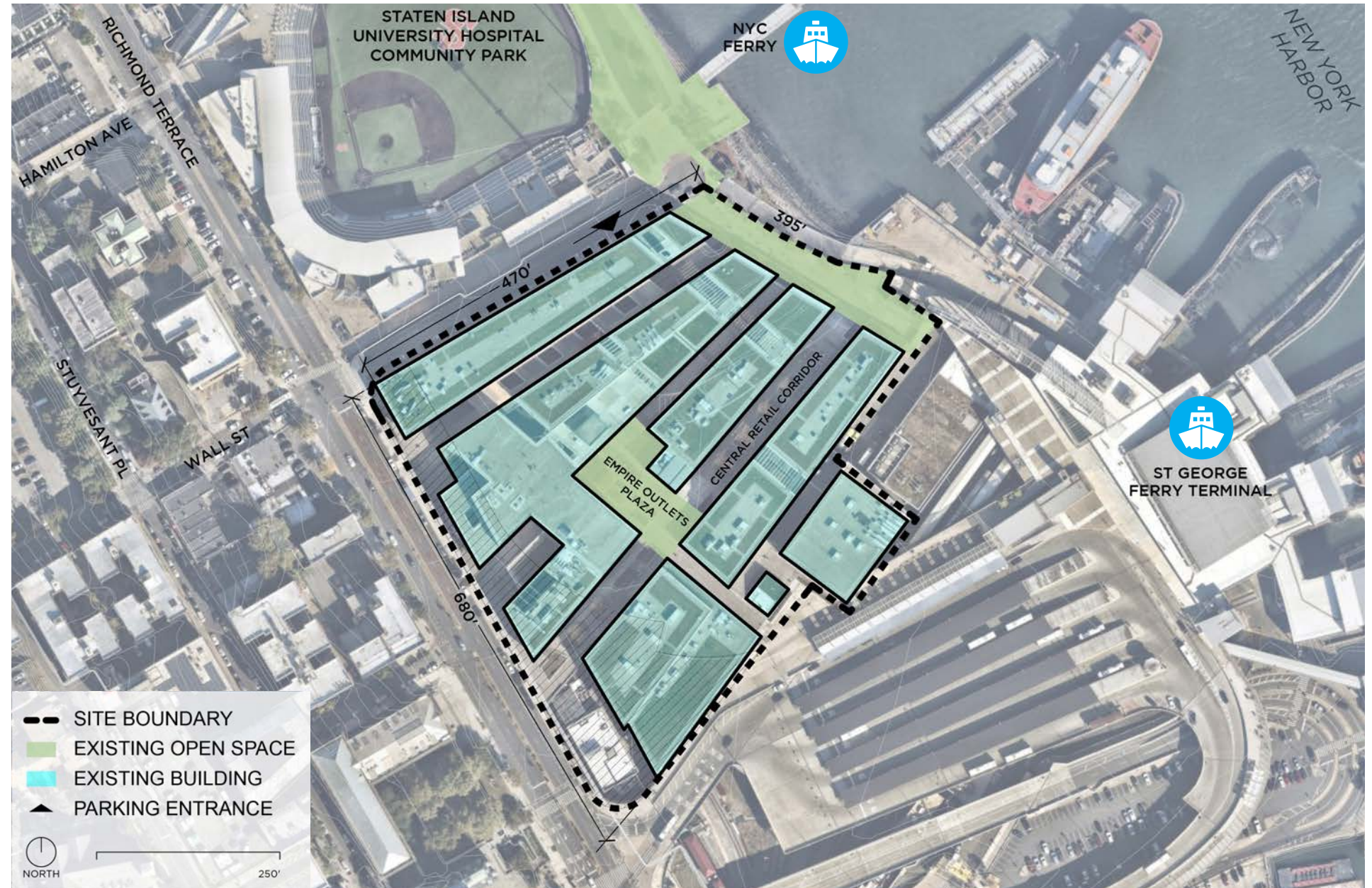
Opened in 2019 With 100 Retail Storefronts.

Opportunities

- Beautiful Waterfront Views
- Existing Public Open Space
- Easy Access to the Ferries, Buses and Rail
- A 1,250-Space Parking Garage

Challenges

- More Than Half the Storefronts Sit Empty
- Not Enough Daily Activity to Draw People Throughout the Day
- Few Shops that Serve the Everyday Needs of Local Residents
- Demolition would be extremely expensive



Site Plan

The Sites Today: Former NY Wheel

8+ Acre site with sweeping skyline views; planned as a 630ft ferris wheel before the project was cancelled.

Opportunities

- Beautiful Waterfront Views
- Nearly Complete Terminal Building
- Esplanade in Front to Finish in 2028
- 950-Space Parking Garage
- 3+ Acres Available for New Development

Challenges

- Difficult to Build on Existing Buildings
- Ferris Wheel Foundations
- DEP Utility Corridor Runs Along the Eastern Edge of the Site
- A Protected Transit Corridor Runs Along the Southern Edge of the Site



A Vision for the Future

The City and NYCEDC are preparing a rezoning to transform these sites by recentering Staten Islanders and their daily needs.

That means a **lively mixed-use waterfront** with:

- Up to **2,500 New Homes**
- **Expanded Public Open Space**
- **Neighborhood-Serving Stores**; and
- New Spaces for **Arts, Culture, and Community Life**



Conceptual rendering illustrating the future Empire Outlets and former New York Wheel site

Focused on Staten Islanders

Ferry and Transit-Oriented Development

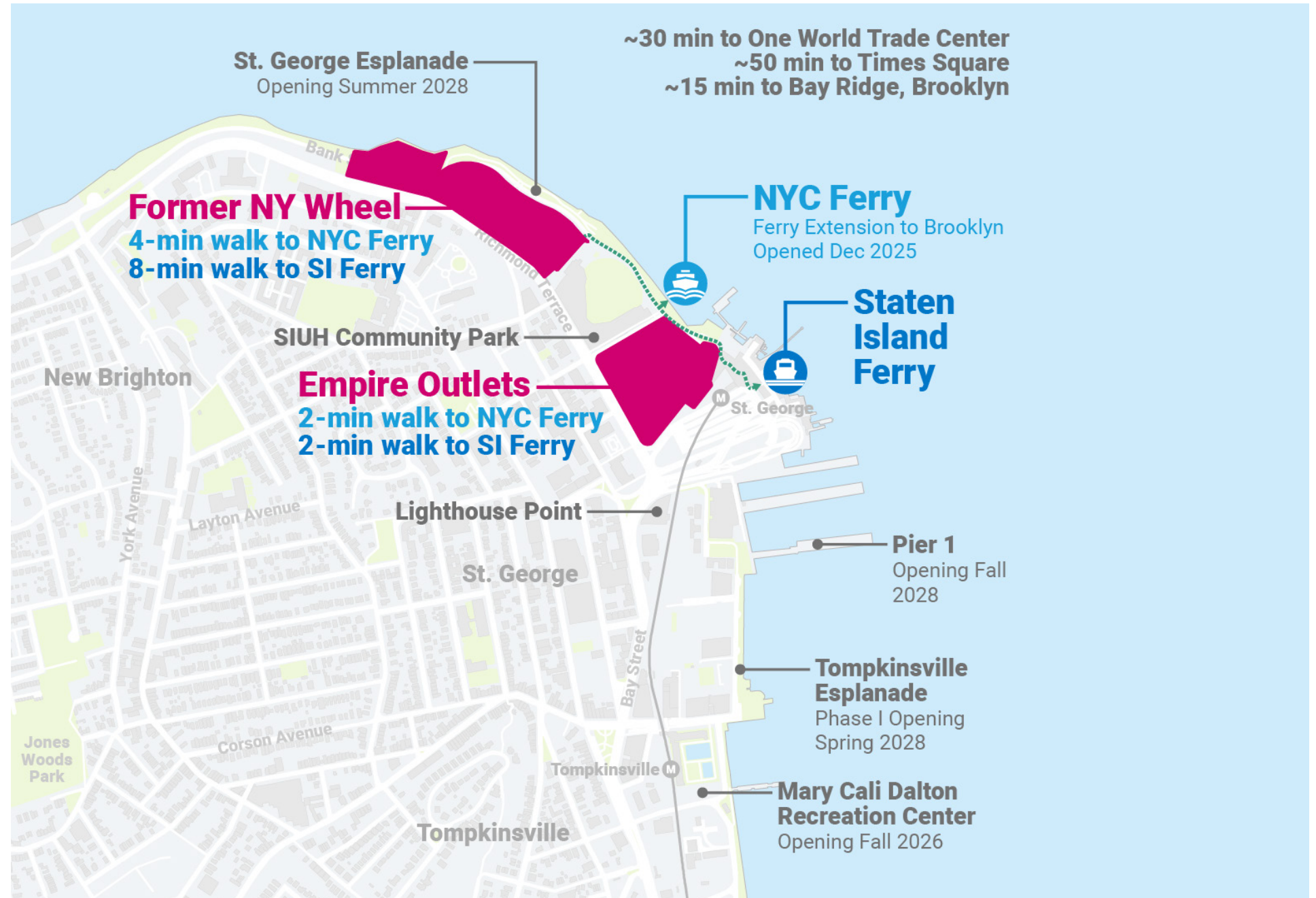
Provide **housing** affordable to a range of incomes **near transit** to reduce commute times, saving time and money.

Healthier, More Complete Communities

Improve **waterfront open space** and better connect residents **to daily necessities** through neighborhood-serving stores and community spaces.

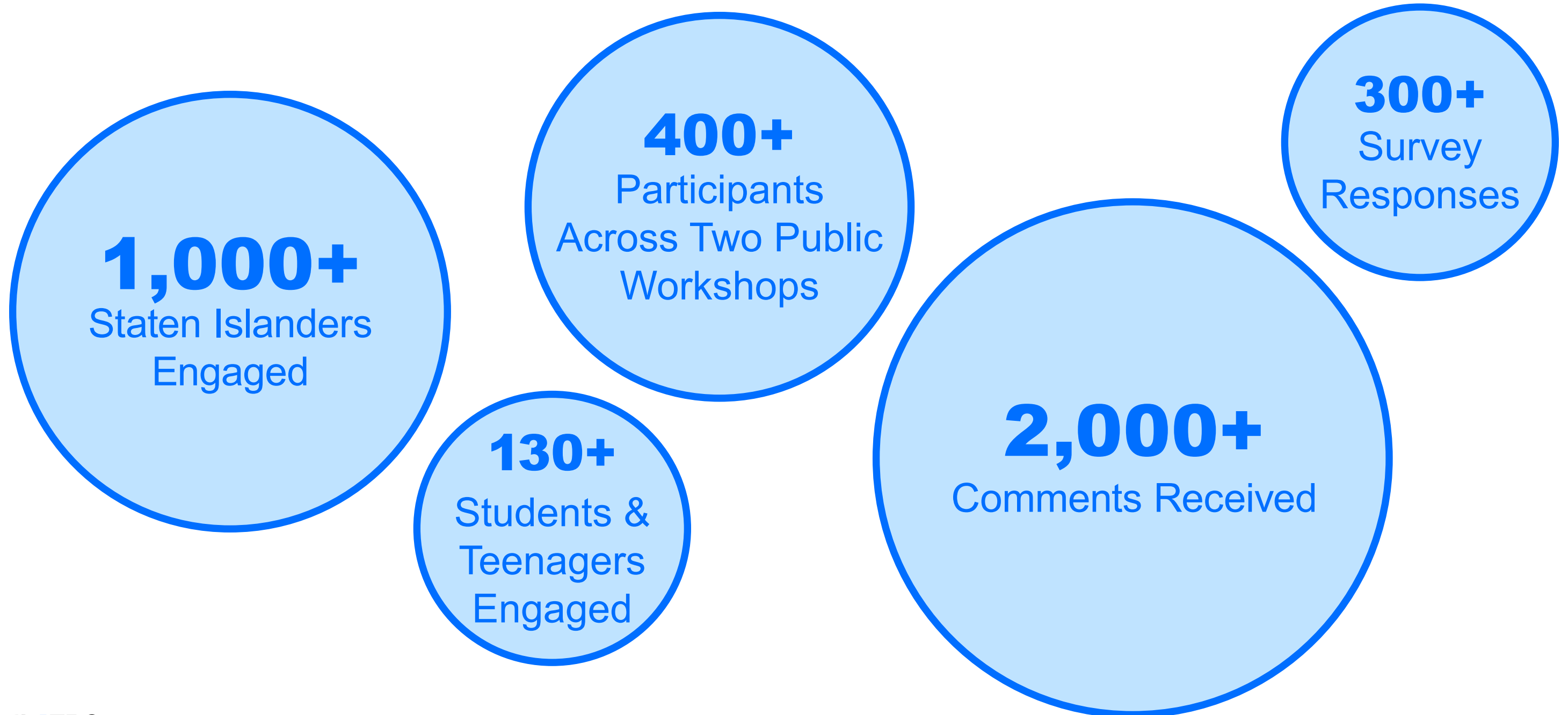
Promotes Arts and Culture

Create space for supporting local arts and culture, while celebrating the **North Shore's diversity**.



What We've Heard

Planning with Staten Islanders



Planning with Staten Islanders



Site Tour and Workshops with Local Youth



Tabling at Community Events



Public Workshop #1



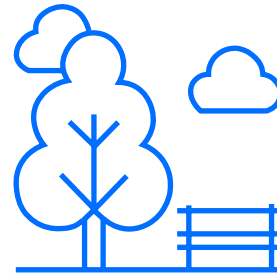
Public Workshop #2

Key Principles from Engagement



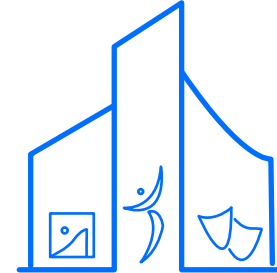
New Housing

New Housing Supporting Staten Islanders Across a Range of Income and Life Stages.



Expanded Open Spaces

With Safer, More Walkable Green Space and Improved Waterfront Access.



Cultural Spaces

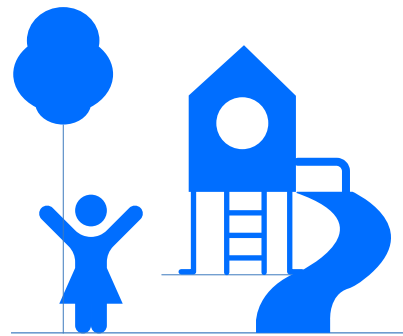
Spaces for Gathering, Performance, Culture, and the Arts.

Key Principles from Engagement



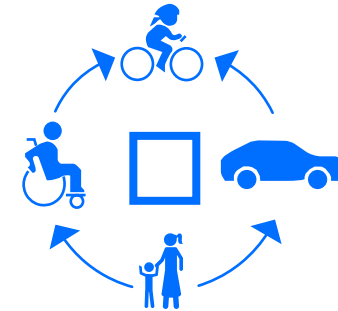
Neighborhood-Serving Retail

Shops and services that cater to resident needs (like grocery stores, dry cleaners, household goods, and urgent care).



Spaces for Young People

More Entertainment, Culture, and Recreation Including Playgrounds, Arcades, Sports Facilities, and Cultural Spaces.



Stronger & Safer Connections

Better Walking and Biking Connections to Ferries, Train, and Bus.

Achieving the Future Vision

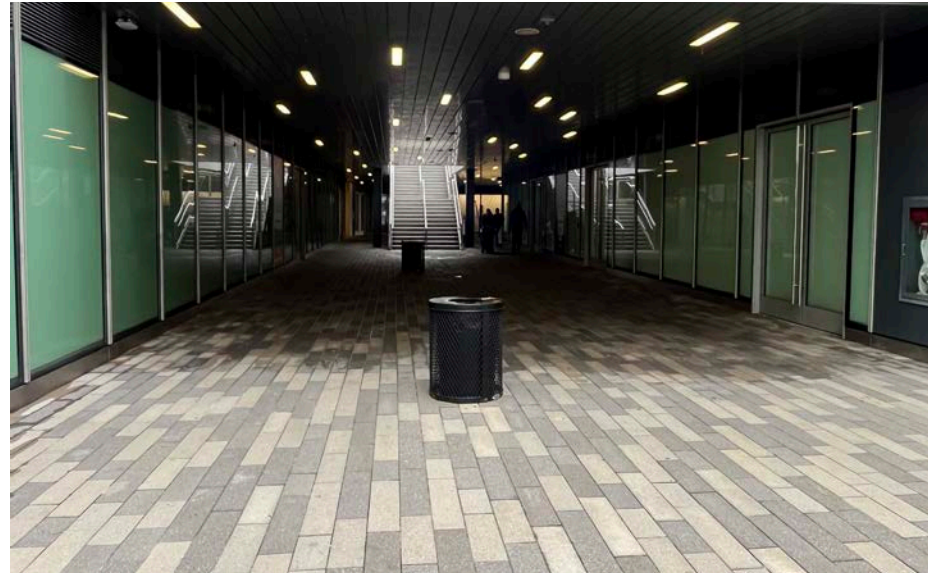
Why a Rezoning is Needed

The existing zoning and special permits are **extremely restrictive**, only allowing the sites to be used for a retail outlet mall and the previous plan at the former New York Wheel Site.

This **Tourist-Focused Vision No Longer Makes Sense.**

Today, the following uses are allowed:

- Clothing and Boutique Shops
- Hotel
- Restaurants and Bars
- Pharmacies
- Beauty Salons
- Large Ferris Wheel



Empire Outlets: Empty Stores at Lower Level



Empire Outlets: Empty Stores at Upper Level



Wheel Site: View Facing Northwest

How a Rezoning Would Help Achieve This Vision

The City is updating the land use rules for these sites to support neighborhood development by allowing:

- **New Homes**
- **Everyday Shops and Services**
(Like Cafes and Urgent Care Clinics)
- **Community Spaces** (Like Daycare Centers, Rec Centers, and Cultural Venues)
- Waterfront **Open Space** for Everyone



Conceptual rendering illustrating waterfront open space at the former NY Wheel



Conceptual rendering illustrating new homes, everyday shops, and community spaces at the Empire Outlets site

A Rezoning is Just the First Step

What the Rezoning Would Do:

A Rezoning Would Allow for a Wider Range of Community-Serving Uses and Create “Guard Rails” for the Sites Around Topics Like:

- Maximum Height and Density Ranges
- General Requirements for View Corridors, Waterfront Access & Open Space
- Broad Use Categories (Commercial and Residential)

Ultimately, the City Would Select a Developer to Bring the Vision to Life:

An Eventual Public Procurement for a Developer—But Not the Rezoning Itself—Would Determine What’s Brought to These Sites:

- Specific Commercial and Community Uses (e.g., a Grocery Store, Restaurant, or Performance Venue)
- Specific Unit Counts, Income Mix, and Heights of New Buildings

**Procurement is the process the City uses to select developers to build projects.*

Zoning Toolkit

The City and NYCEDC Aim to Achieve the Goals of the Vision Plan Through Different Zoning Tools & Approaches, Including:



Housing

Determine where new housing can go, how much, and how much of it would be affordable.



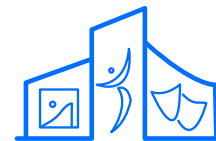
Local Shops + Jobs

Allow a wide range of shops and workplaces that serve neighborhood needs, not just tourists.



Open Space

Preserve existing open space and views. Create opportunities for new high-quality open spaces both inland and on the waterfront.



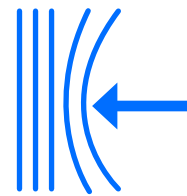
Community Spaces

Make room for venues and services that bring the community together, from space for art and culture to daycare.



Active Streets

Require ground-floor activity along key streets so walking feels safe and enjoyable.

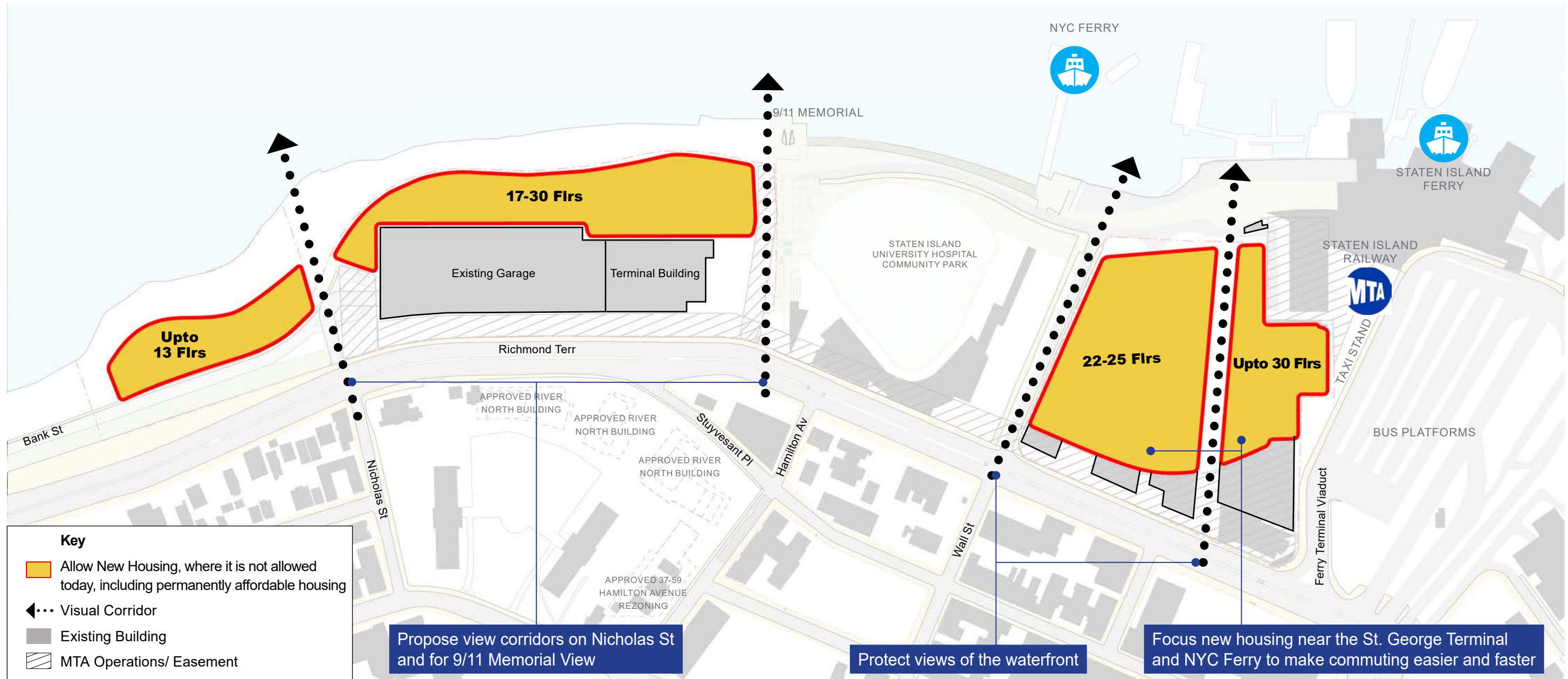


Resilience

Ensure that development meets modern, flood resilient, design standards.

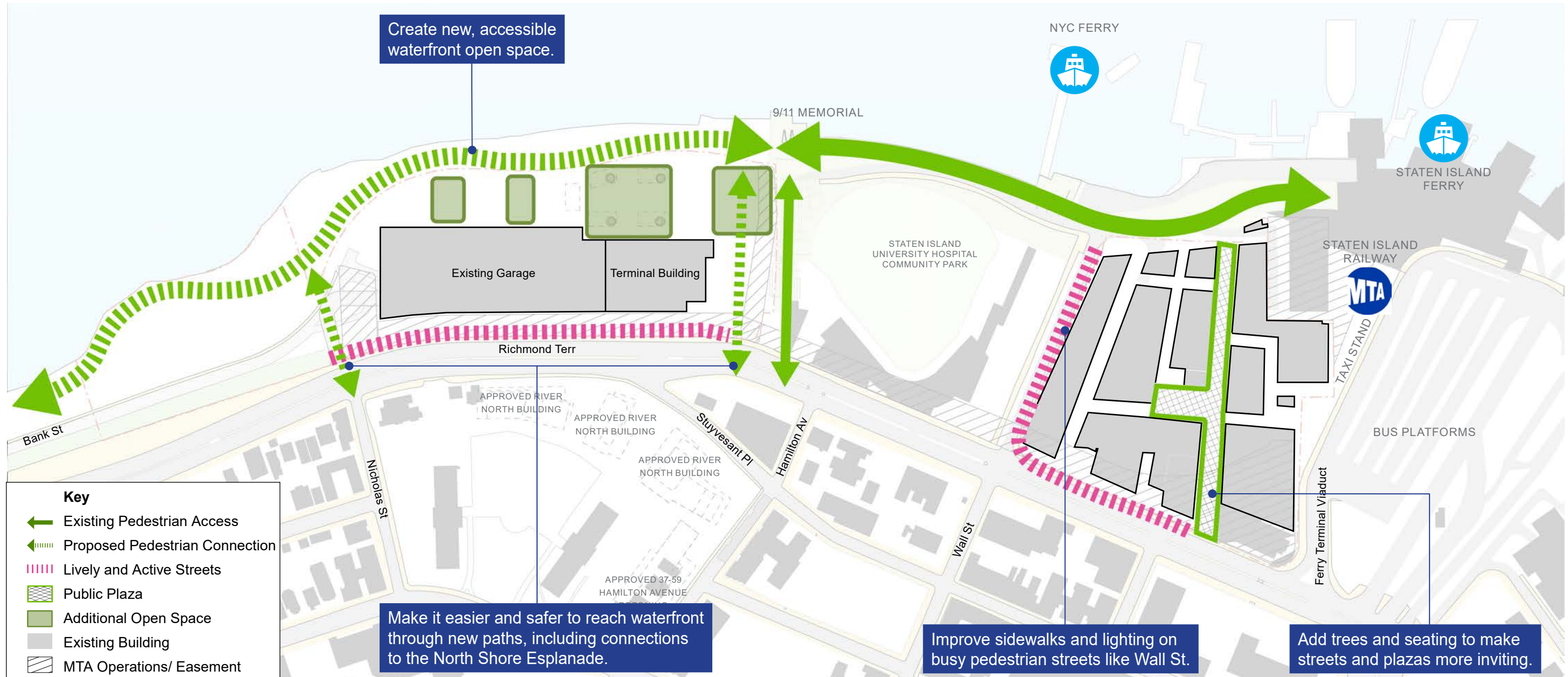
Zoning Strategies: Housing + Transit-Oriented Development

Create a Vibrant Mixed-Use Waterfront Neighborhood Anchored by New Affordable and Mixed-Income Housing.



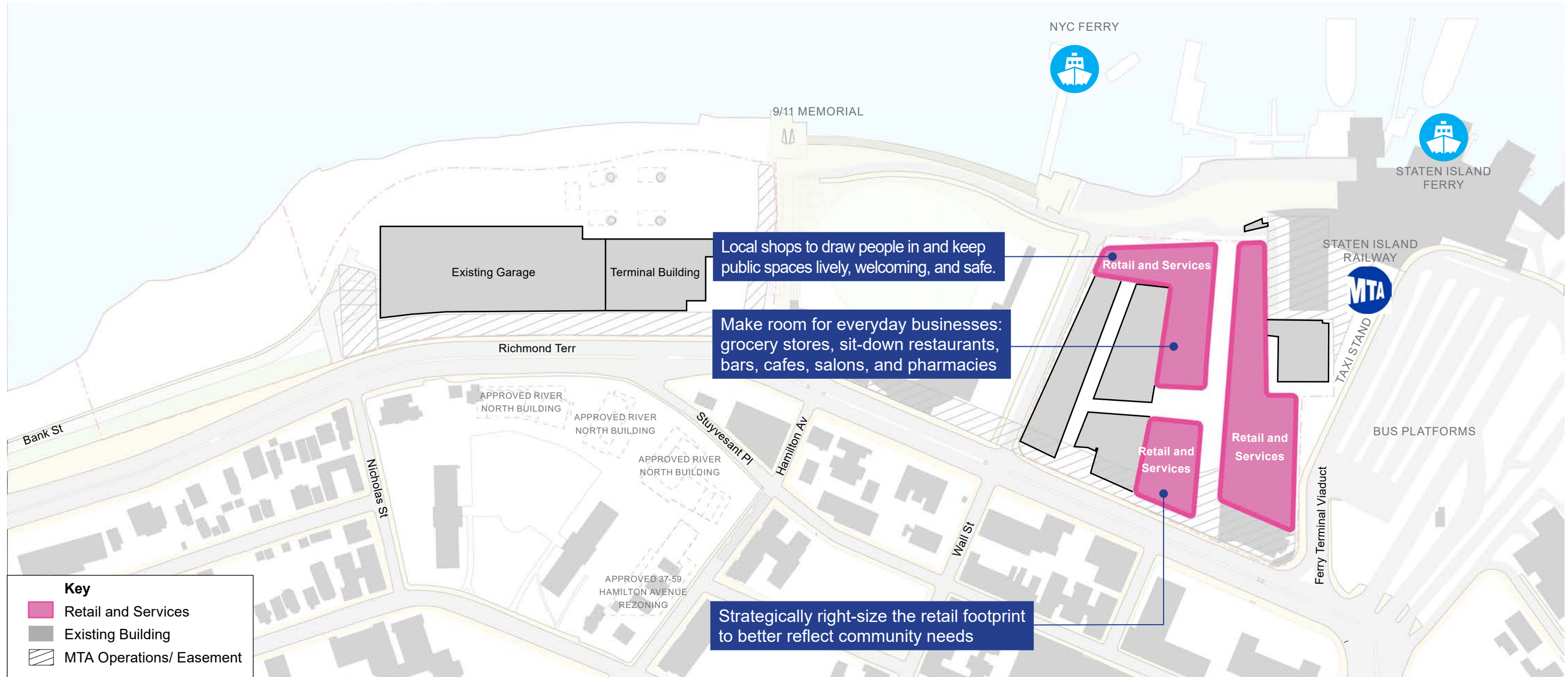
Zoning Strategies: Waterfront Open Space + Public Realm

Reclaim the waterfront for the public, with new esplanades and open, flexible recreational spaces for residents of all ages.



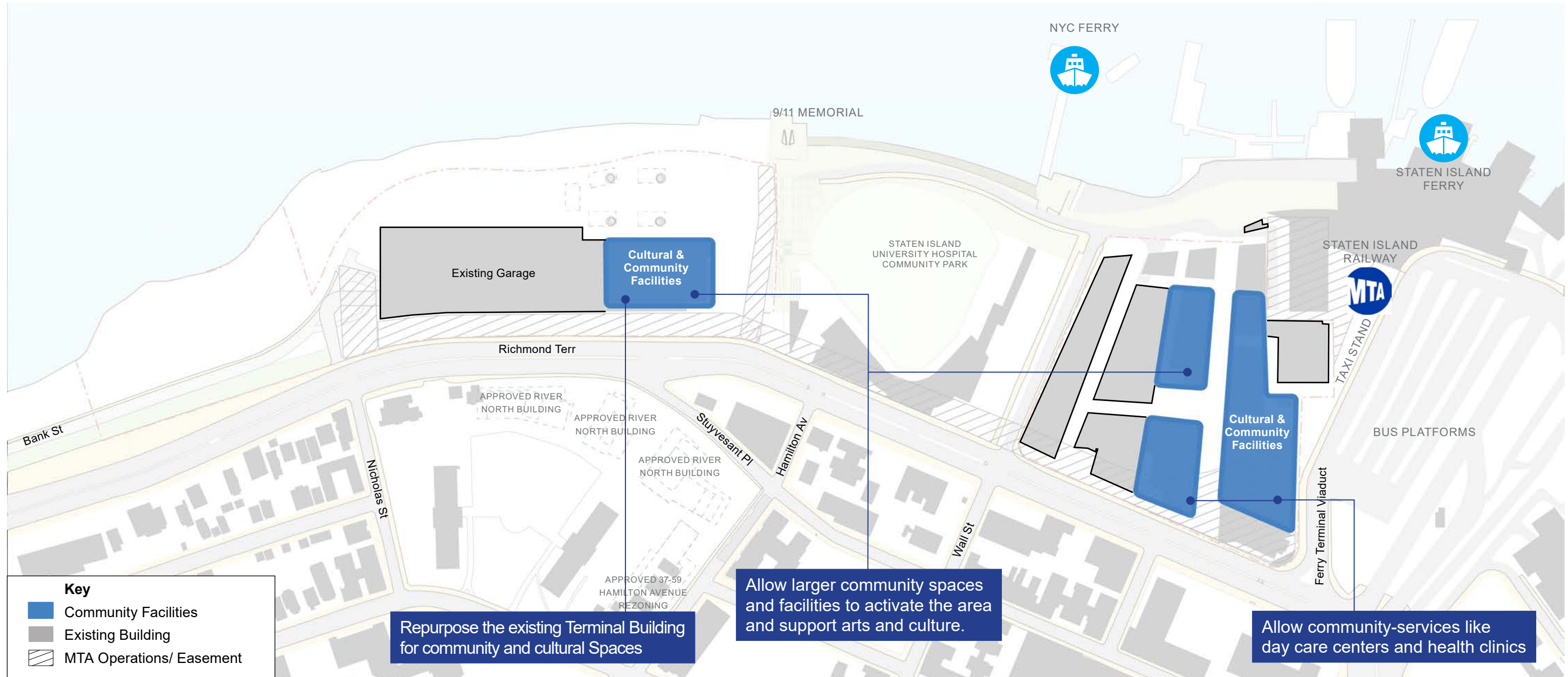
Zoning Strategies: Jobs + Neighborhood Retail

Create opportunities for new neighborhood-serving stores and jobs.



Zoning Strategies: Culture and Community-Serving Spaces

Create opportunities to celebrate the North Shore's rich culture and diversity.



Looking Ahead

What's Next?



Thank You!

Contact us: northshore@edc.nyc

Learn more: <https://edc.nyc/project/empire-outlets-former-new-york-wheel-site>