



# HARLEM AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND PITCH BOOK





**HISTORICAL ANALYSIS**



# 1609

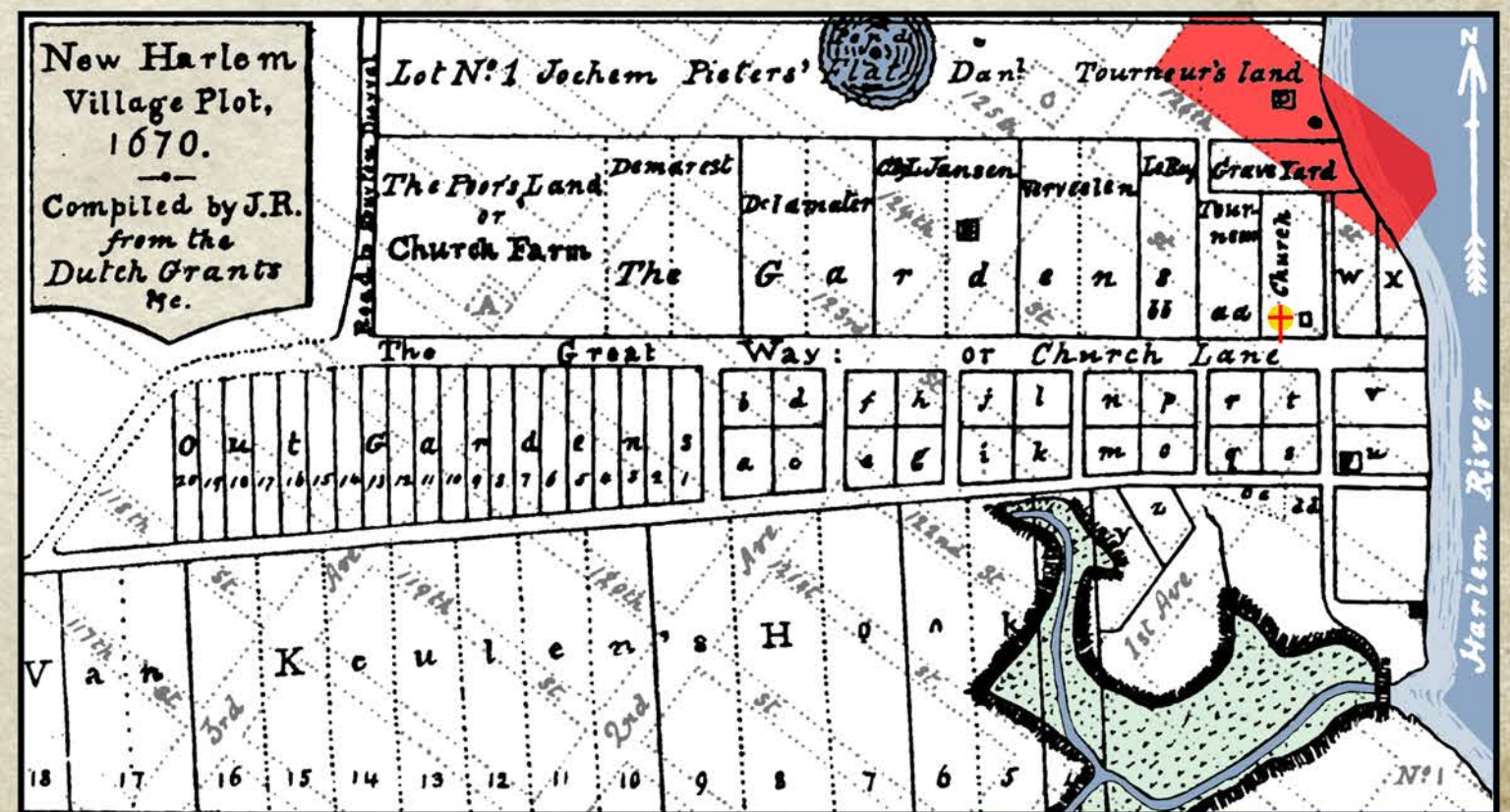
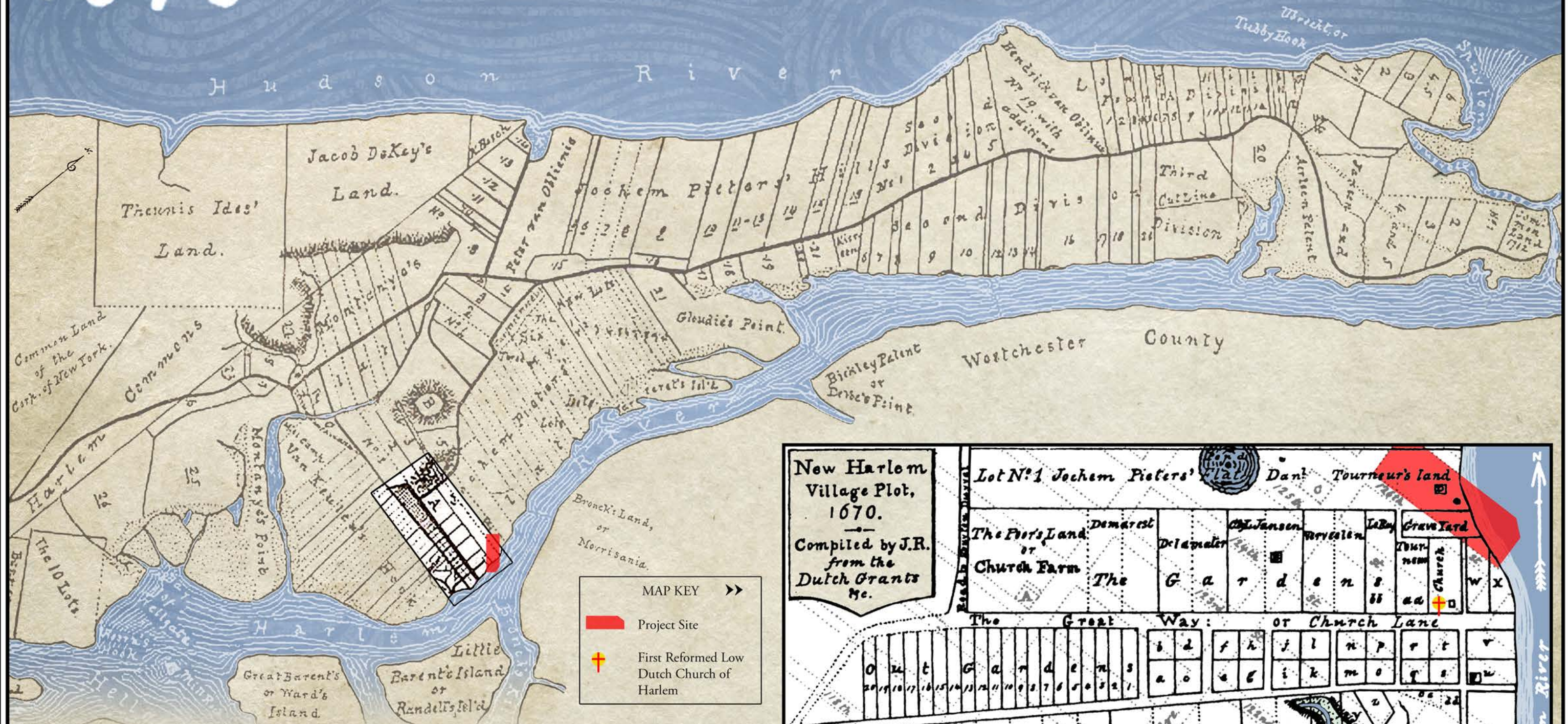


The project site (shown as a red rectangle) lies in an area near former flatlands called Muscoota by Native Americans. This area once stretched between the Harlem River and Morningside Heights, northwest of what were formerly the Harlem Creek and its bordering wetlands. Just two blocks southwest of the project site near East 124th Street there was a habitation site (shown as a red circle) set up along the shoreline of the Harlem River. Recovered artifacts such as arrowheads, flakes, and shell heaps indicate that this camp or village was an intermittently occupied site utilized for fishing and possibly a location for river landing and trading.





# 1670



The Dutch village of Nieuw Haarlem was founded on March 4, 1658. The First Reformed Low Dutch Church of Harlem, which is now the Elmendorf Reformed Church, erected its first edifice at the corner of what is presently East 125th Street and First Avenue. Starting in the mid 1660s, a quarter acre graveyard was dedicated to people of African descent who were "brought" to Harlem to build, construct and maintain its infrastructure. This burial ground is the first and only African cemetery in Harlem and the only known cemetery of its kind in Upper Manhattan. Even after the British assumed control of Manhattan Island in 1664, free and enslaved Africans continued to be interred there..



# 1782



The Harlem African Burial Ground became known as the “Negro Burying Ground” at least as early as 1771 and possibly as early as 1686. At some point, the burying ground became the final resting place for African-Americans from the wider community and not strictly from the Reformed Low Dutch Church of Harlem (RLDCH). Starting in 1776, the British made the city of New York its main political and military base of operations. The fighting, which ended in 1781 with Britain’s surrender at Yorktown, resulted in the destruction of Harlem’s church. The structure was later rebuilt in 1789.









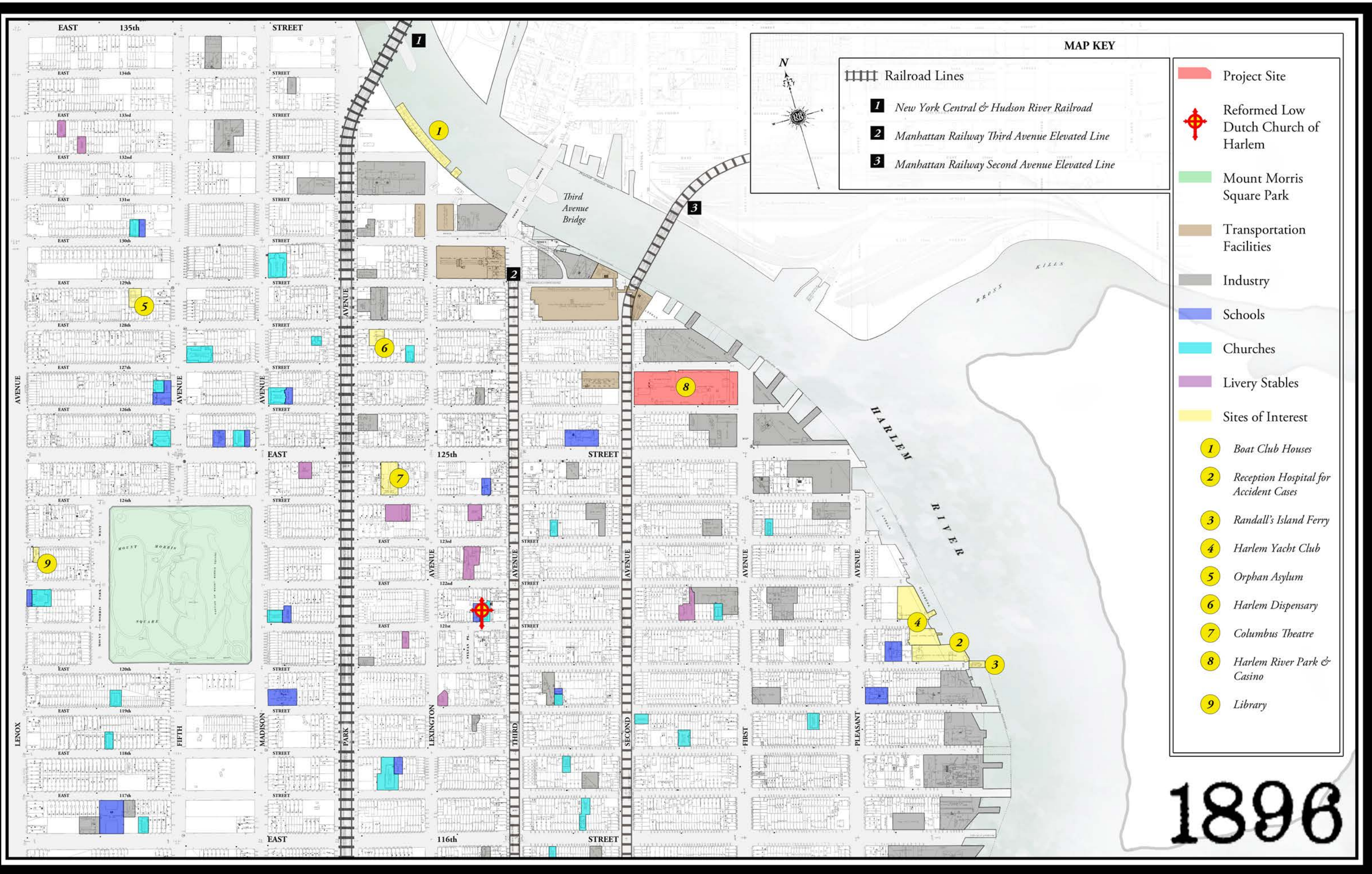
*Residence of Judge Ingraham, majority property owner of the project site.*

# 1820

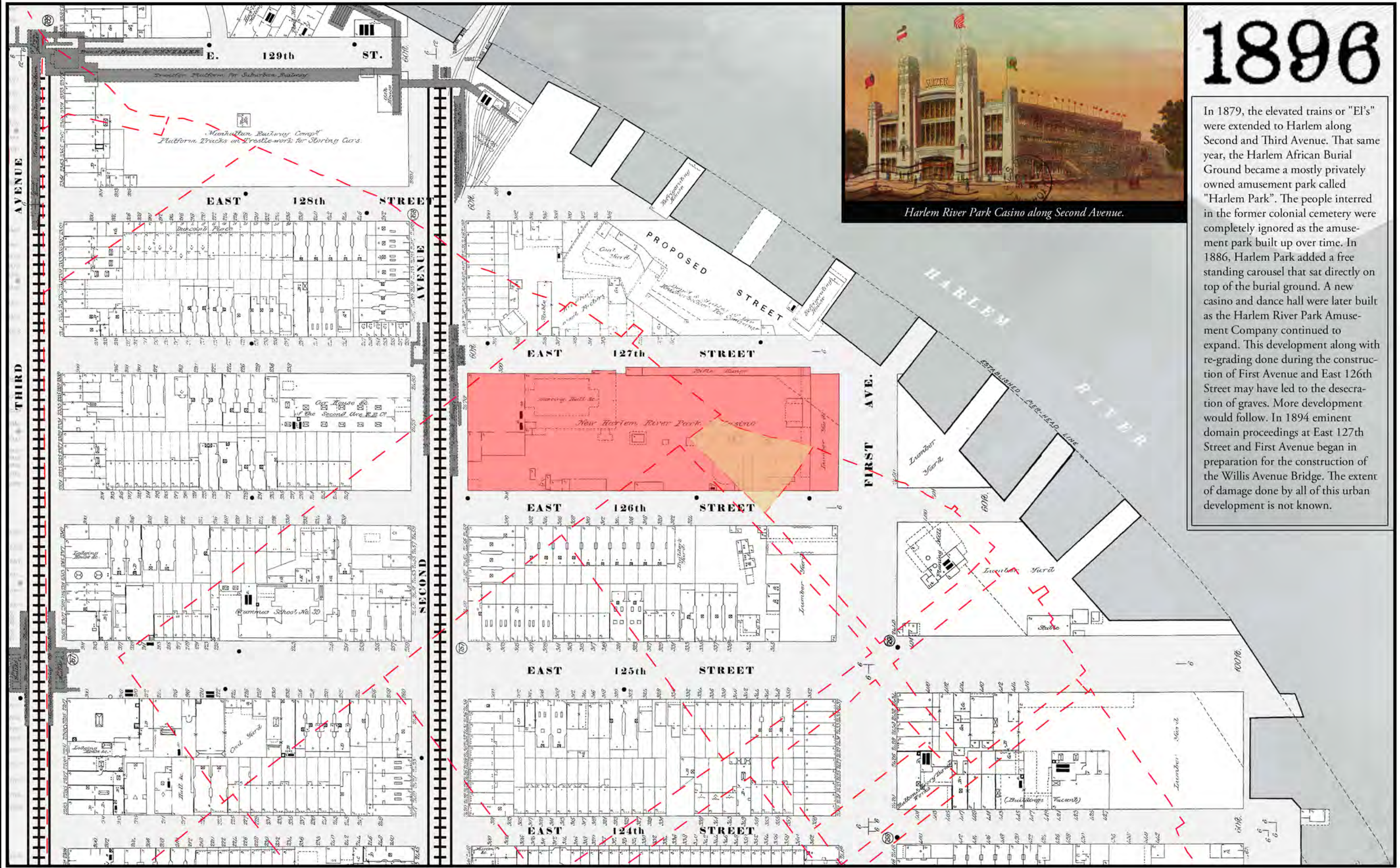
Between 1828 and 1845, the land encompassing the Harlem African Burial Ground was rented for private uses such as grazing pasture. In 1853, as the church confronted major financial crises, a resolution was adopted authorizing the sale of the “Negro Burying Ground”. The last recorded interment occurred in 1856 and by the following year the property was no longer recognized as a burial ground by the City of New York. During this period, Harlem began a dramatic transformation as its pastoral qualities gave way to the street grid first introduced in the 1811 Commissioners’ Plan. Although it would take decades to fully implement, the final effect would be a marked reorganization of the streets and properties within Harlem.

\* Although based on the widely published Randel Farm map of 1820, the boundaries of the Harlem African Burial Ground were set by cartographic convenience since other documentation points to a much larger cemetery.









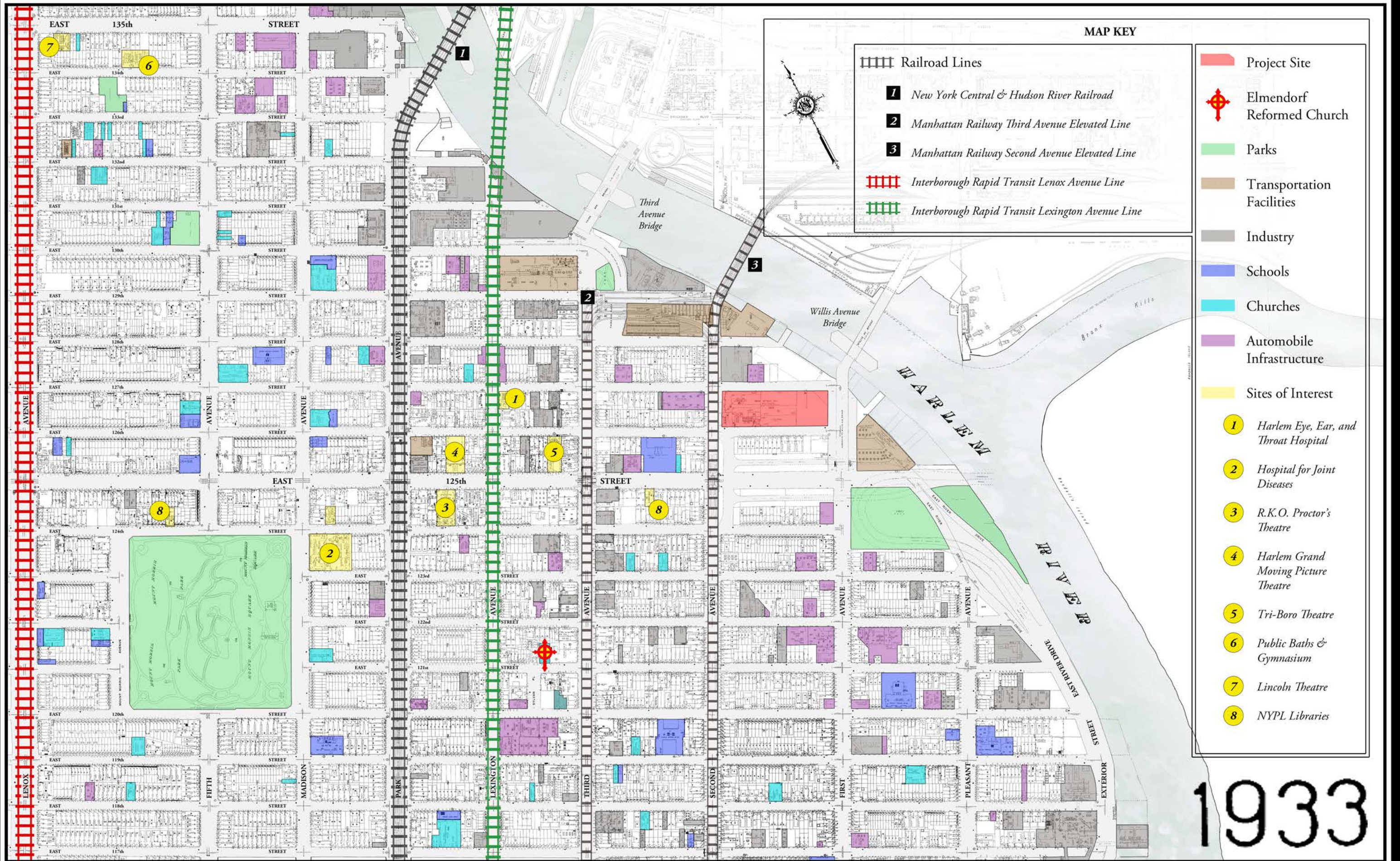
# 1896



Harlem River Park Casino along Second Avenue.

In 1879, the elevated trains or "El's" were extended to Harlem along Second and Third Avenue. That same year, the Harlem African Burial Ground became a mostly privately owned amusement park called "Harlem Park". The people interred in the former colonial cemetery were completely ignored as the amusement park built up over time. In 1886, Harlem Park added a free standing carousel that sat directly on top of the burial ground. A new casino and dance hall were later built as the Harlem River Park Amusement Company continued to expand. This development along with re-grading done during the construction of First Avenue and East 126th Street may have led to the desecration of graves. More development would follow. In 1894 eminent domain proceedings at East 127th Street and First Avenue began in preparation for the construction of the Willis Avenue Bridge. The extent of damage done by all of this urban development is not known.





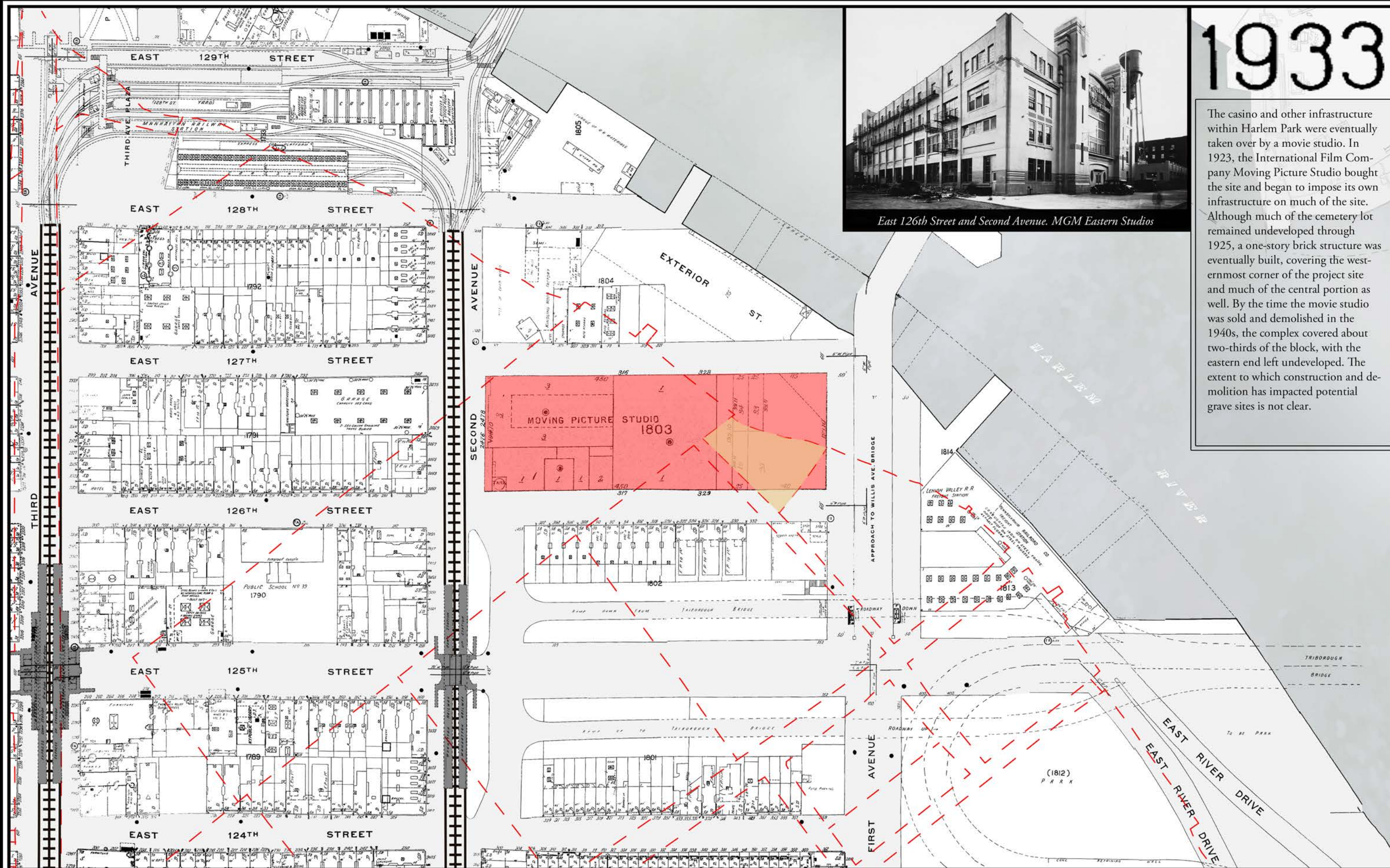


# 1933

The casino and other infrastructure within Harlem Park were eventually taken over by a movie studio. In 1923, the International Film Company Moving Picture Studio bought the site and began to impose its own infrastructure on much of the site. Although much of the cemetery lot remained undeveloped through 1925, a one-story brick structure was eventually built, covering the westernmost corner of the project site and much of the central portion as well. By the time the movie studio was sold and demolished in the 1940s, the complex covered about two-thirds of the block, with the eastern end left undeveloped. The extent to which construction and demolition has impacted potential grave sites is not clear.

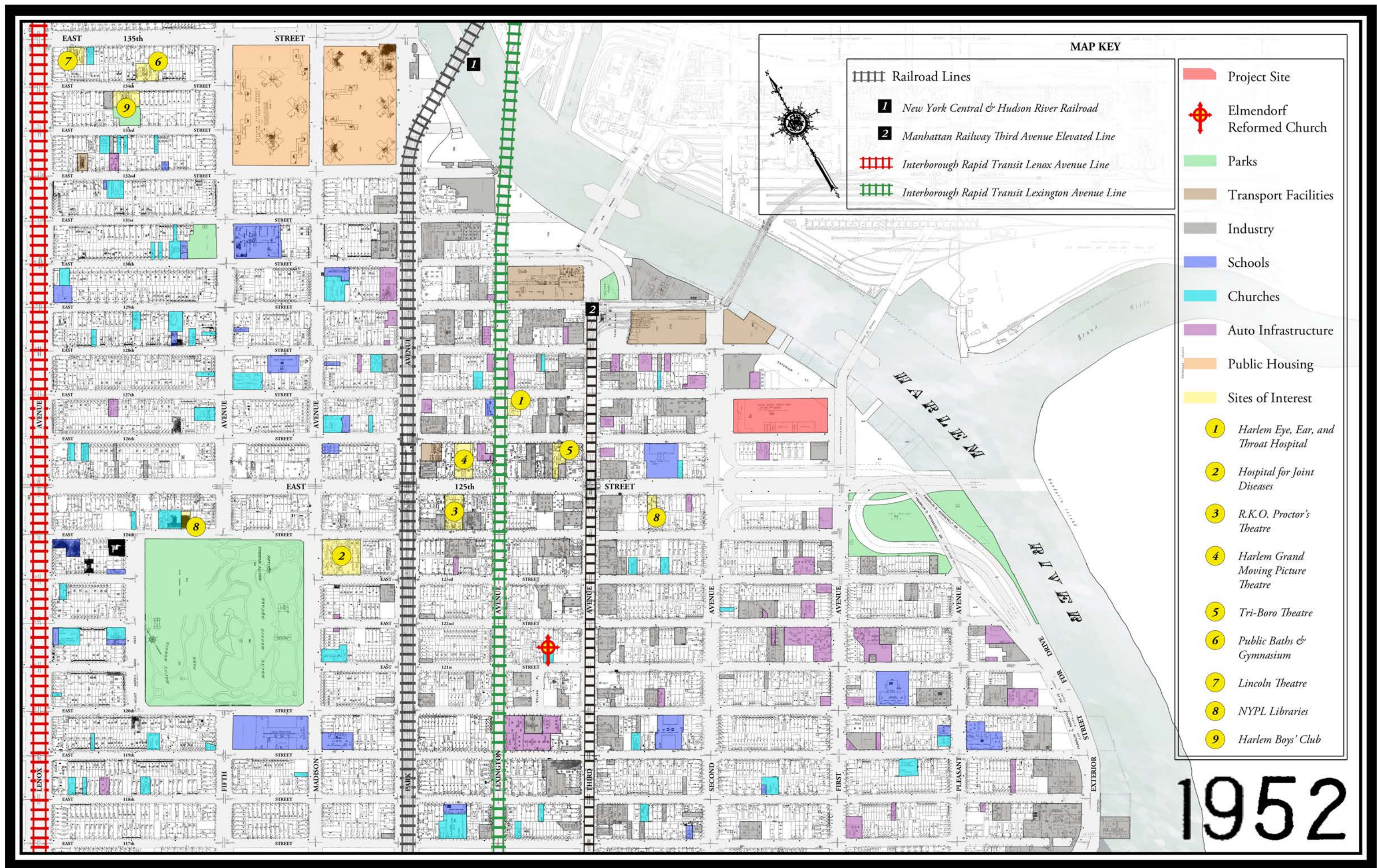


East 126th Street and Second Avenue. MGM Eastern Studios



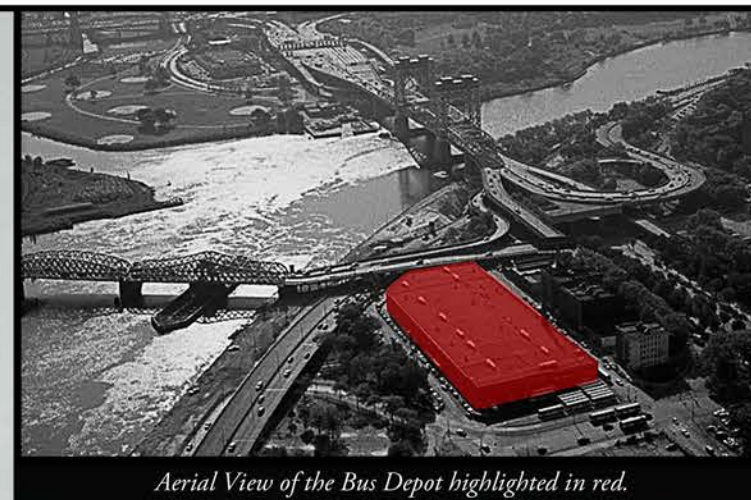
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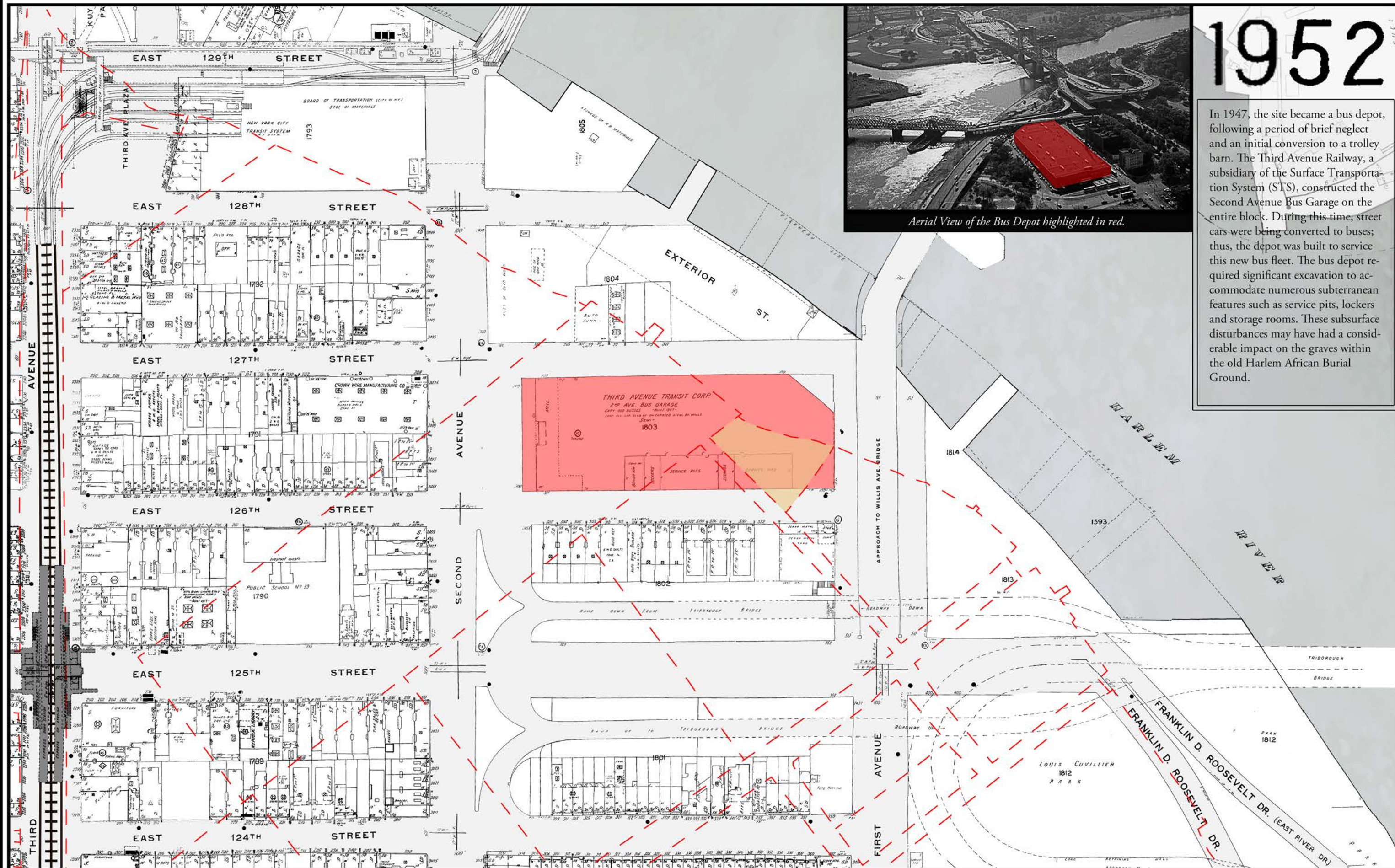


# 1952



*Aerial View of the Bus Depot highlighted in red.*

In 1947, the site became a bus depot, following a period of brief neglect and an initial conversion to a trolley barn. The Third Avenue Railway, a subsidiary of the Surface Transportation System (STS), constructed the Second Avenue Bus Garage on the entire block. During this time, street cars were being converted to buses; thus, the depot was built to service this new bus fleet. The bus depot required significant excavation to accommodate numerous subterranean features such as service pits, lockers and storage rooms. These subsurface disturbances may have had a considerable impact on the graves within the old Harlem African Burial Ground.



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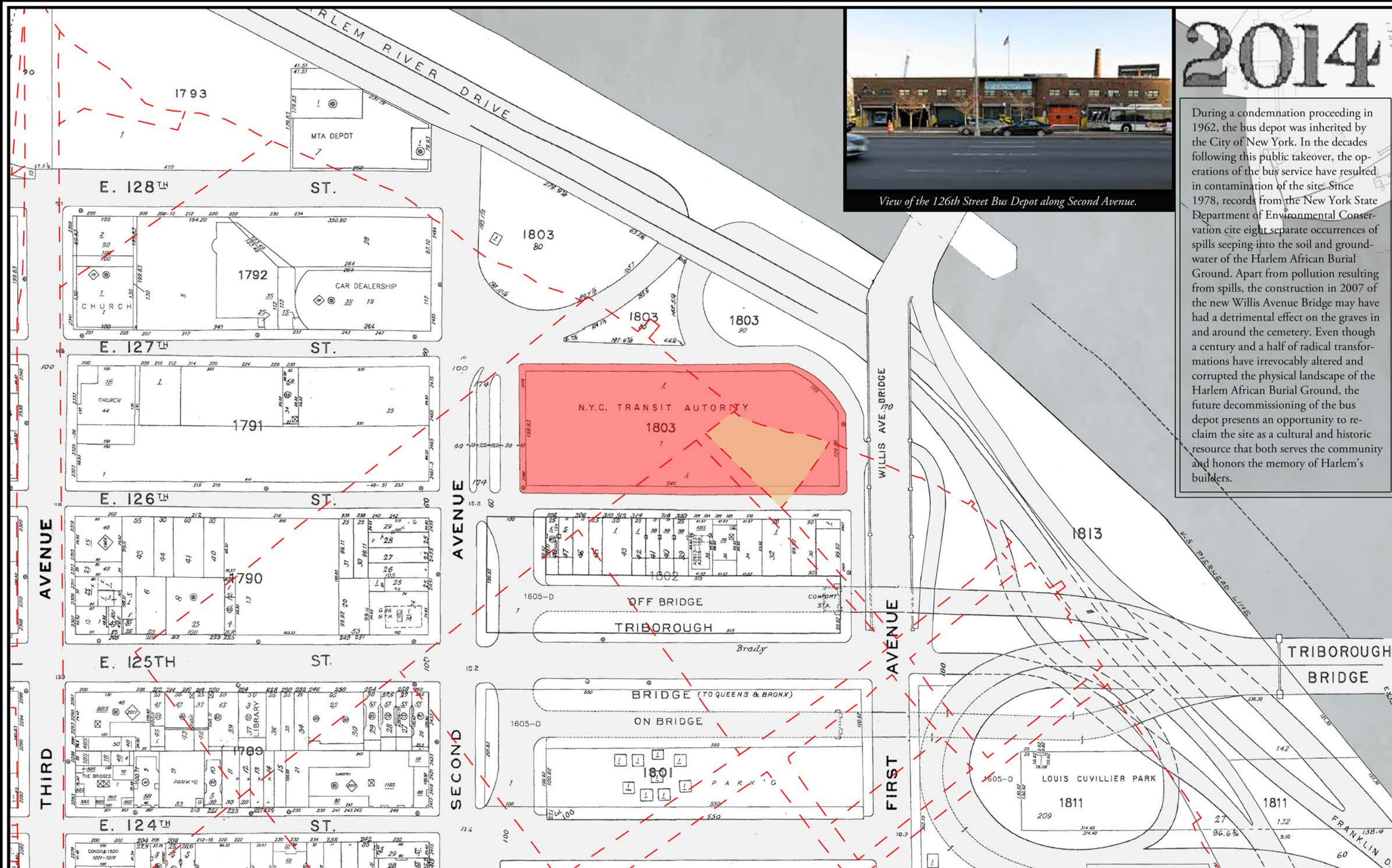


# 2014

During a condemnation proceeding in 1962, the bus depot was inherited by the City of New York. In the decades following this public takeover, the operations of the bus service have resulted in contamination of the site. Since 1978, records from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation cite eight separate occurrences of spills seeping into the soil and groundwater of the Harlem African Burial Ground. Apart from pollution resulting from spills, the construction in 2007 of the new Willis Avenue Bridge may have had a detrimental effect on the graves in and around the cemetery. Even though a century and a half of radical transformations have irrevocably altered and corrupted the physical landscape of the Harlem African Burial Ground, the future decommissioning of the bus depot presents an opportunity to reclaim the site as a cultural and historic resource that both serves the community and honors the memory of Harlem's builders.



View of the 126th Street Bus Depot along Second Avenue.



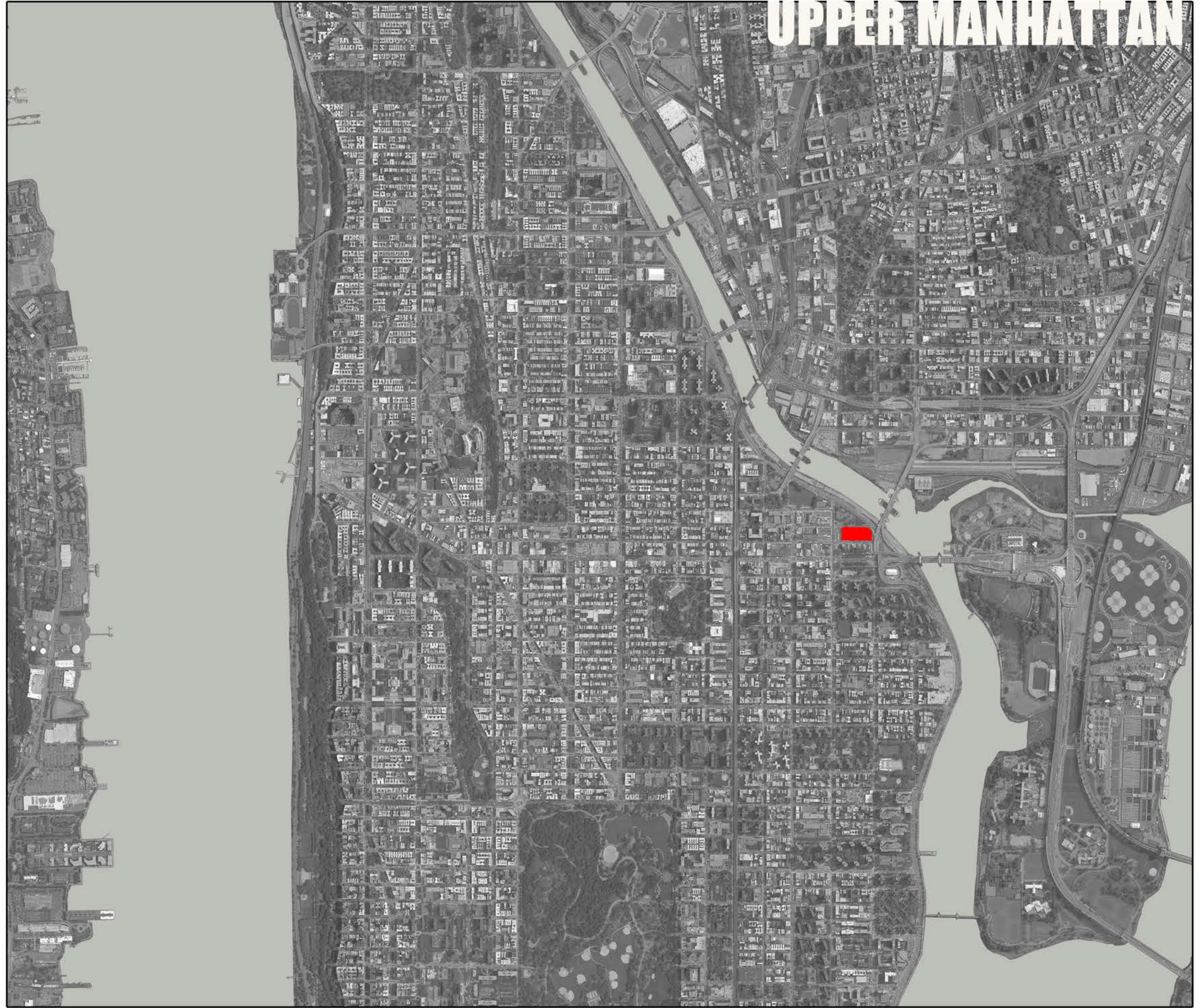
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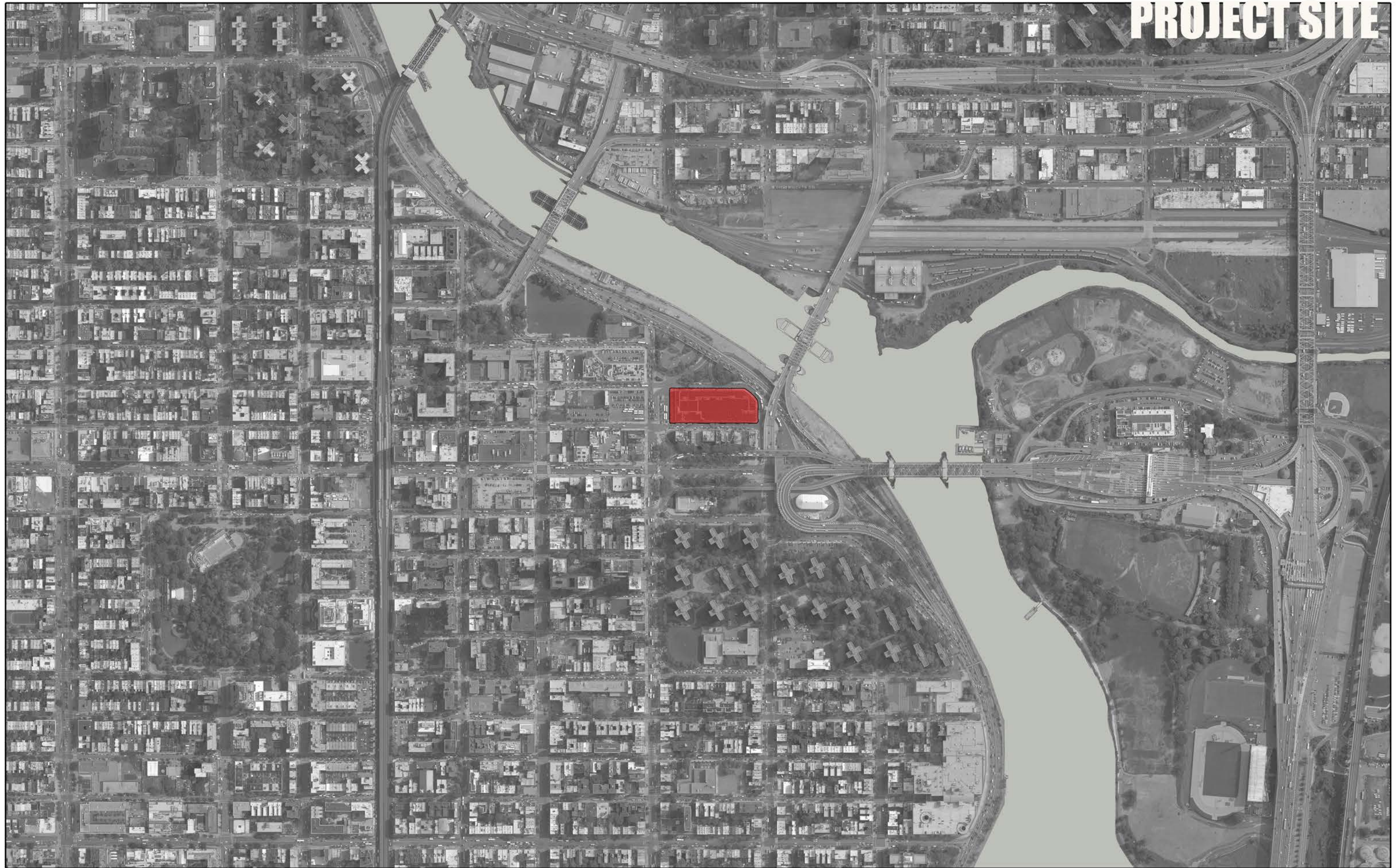
# SITE ANALYSIS





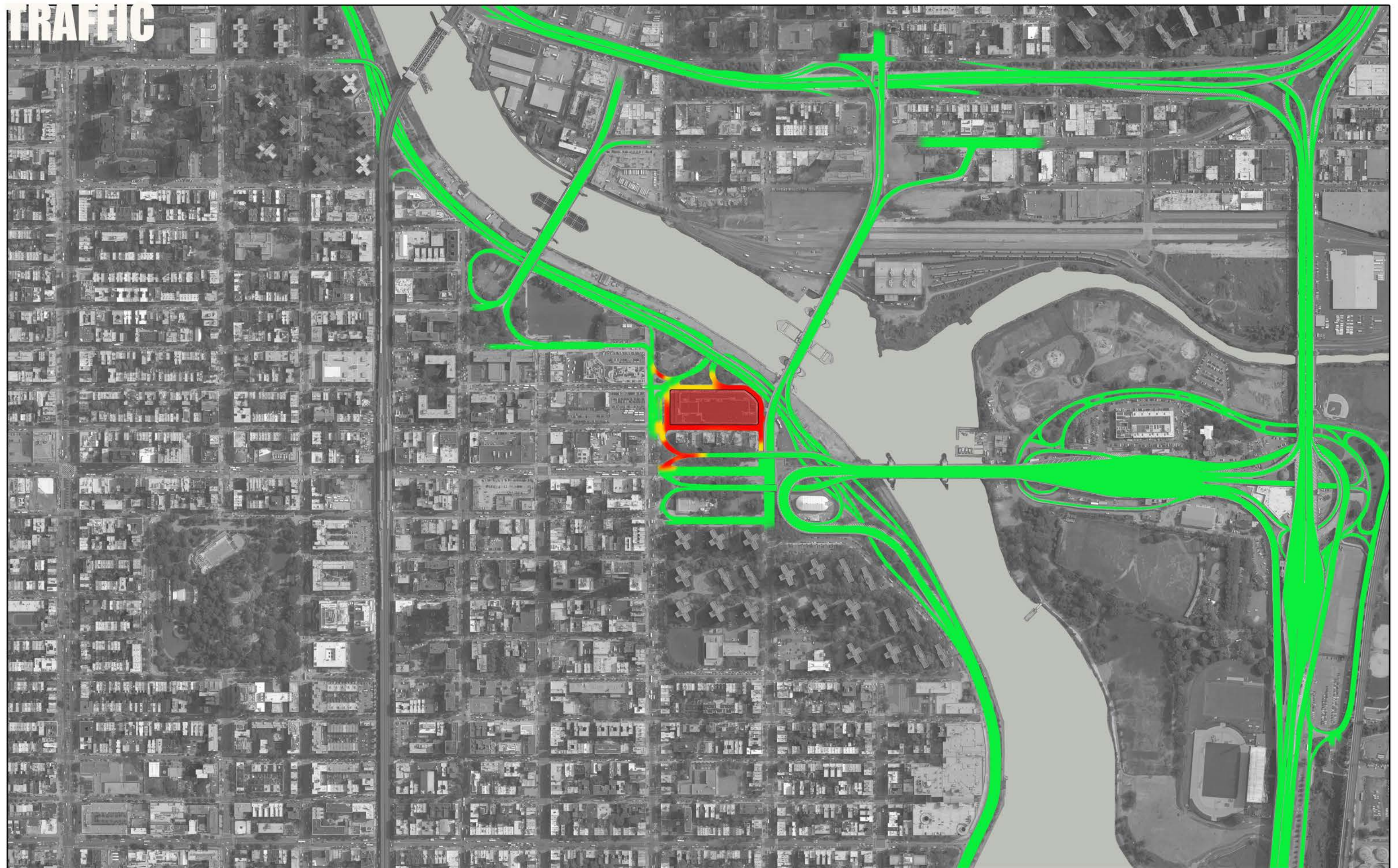


**PROJECT SITE**



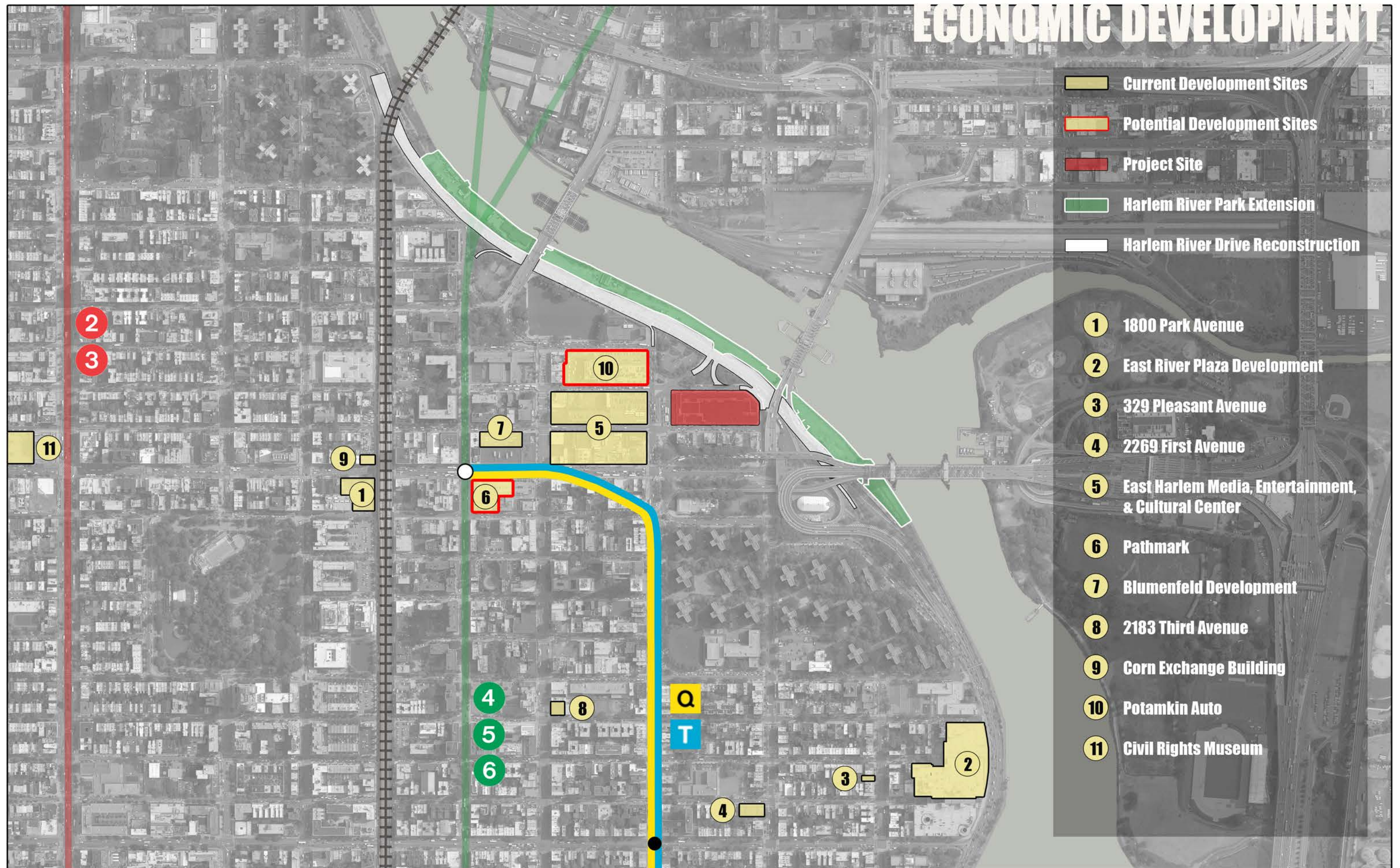


# TRAFFIC



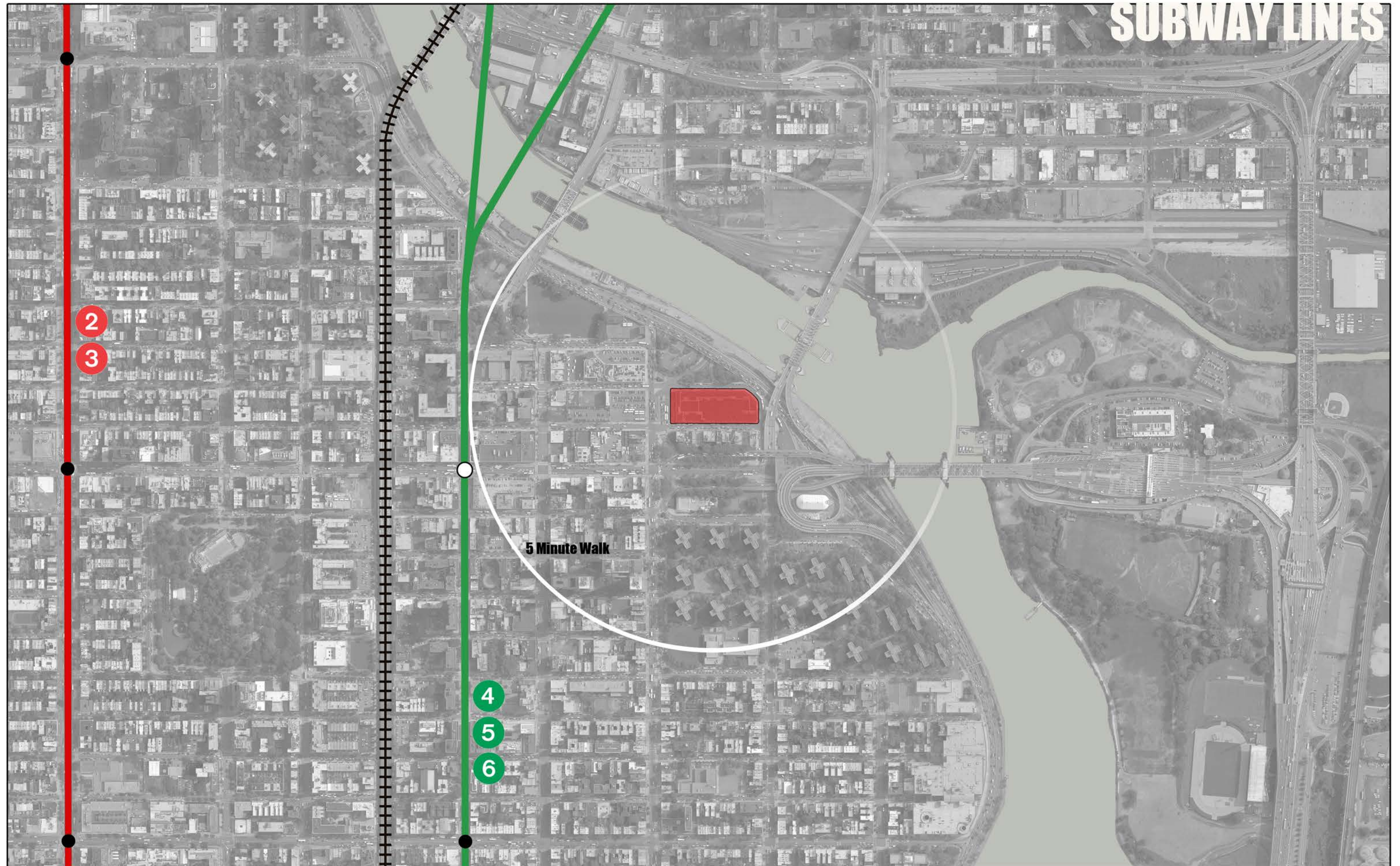


# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



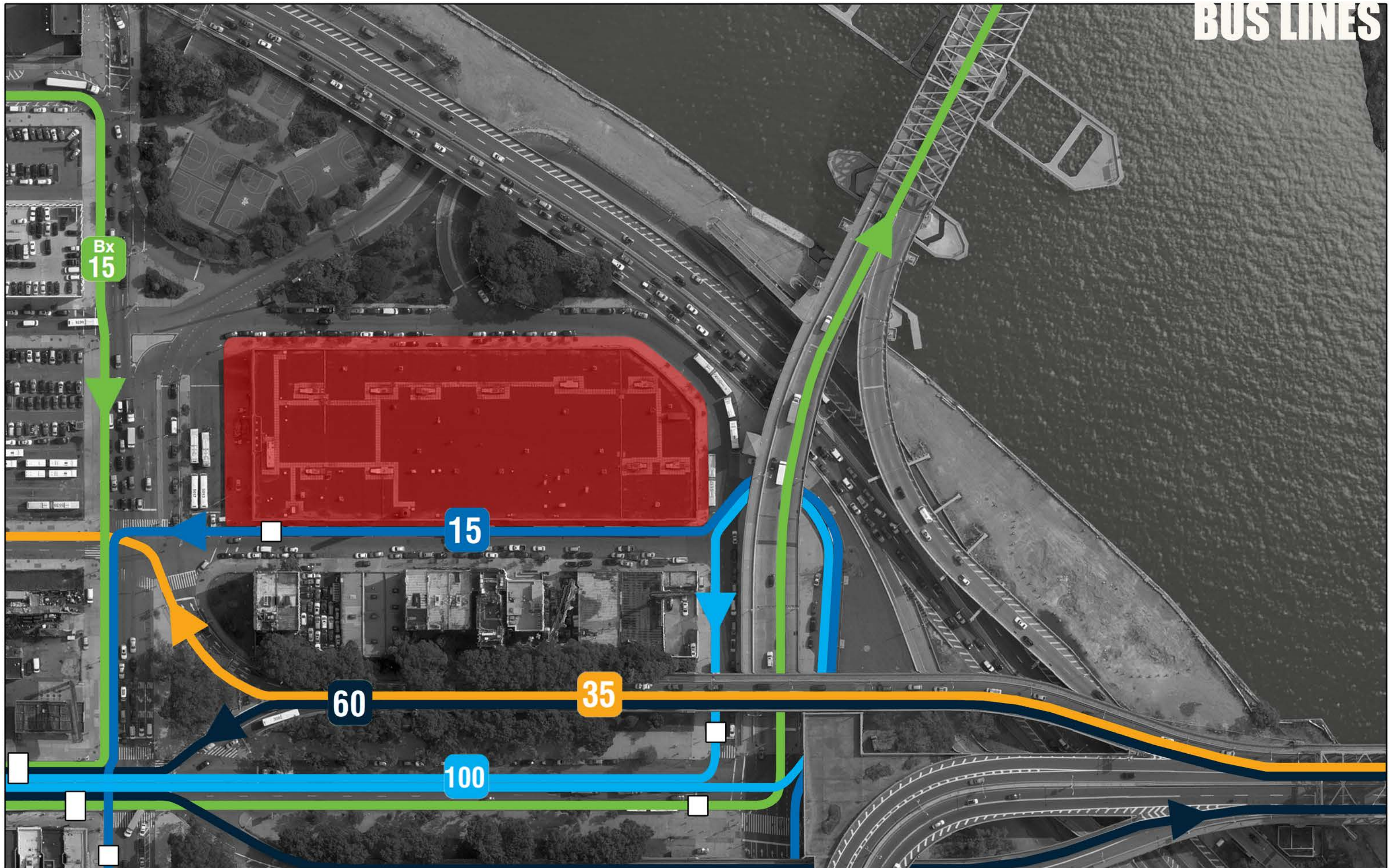


# SUBWAY LINES



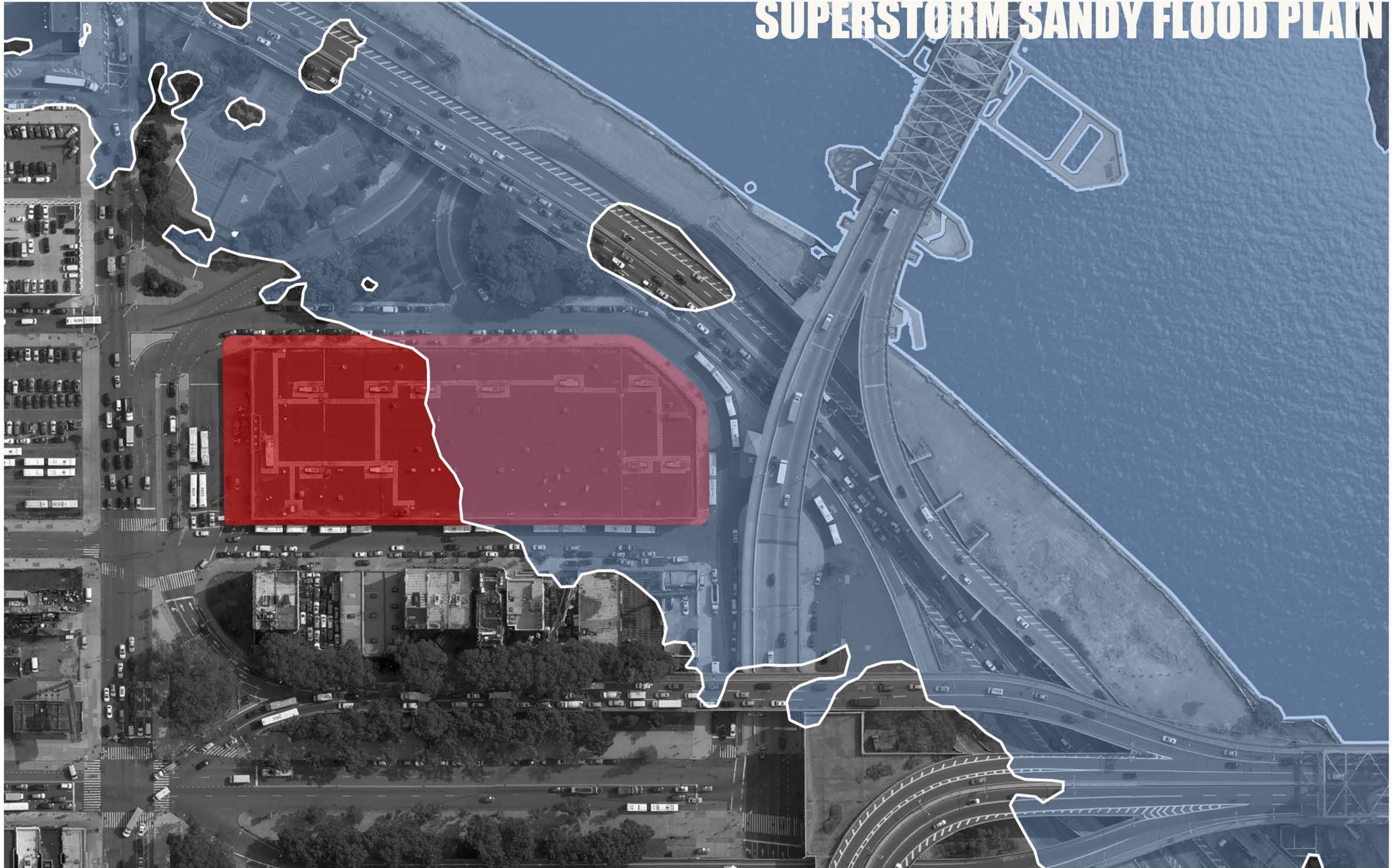


# BUS LINES

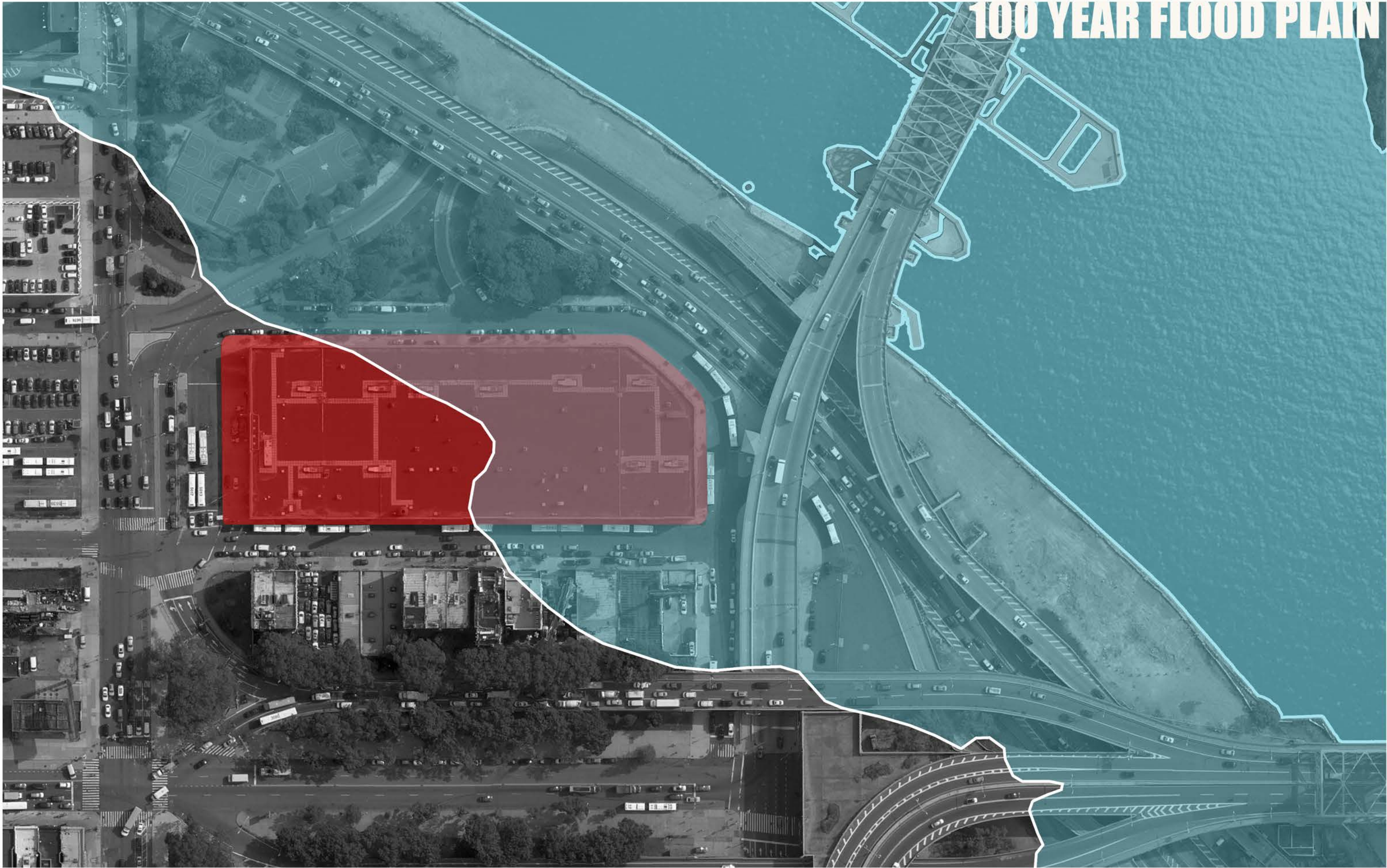




# SUPERSTORM SANDY FLOOD PLAIN

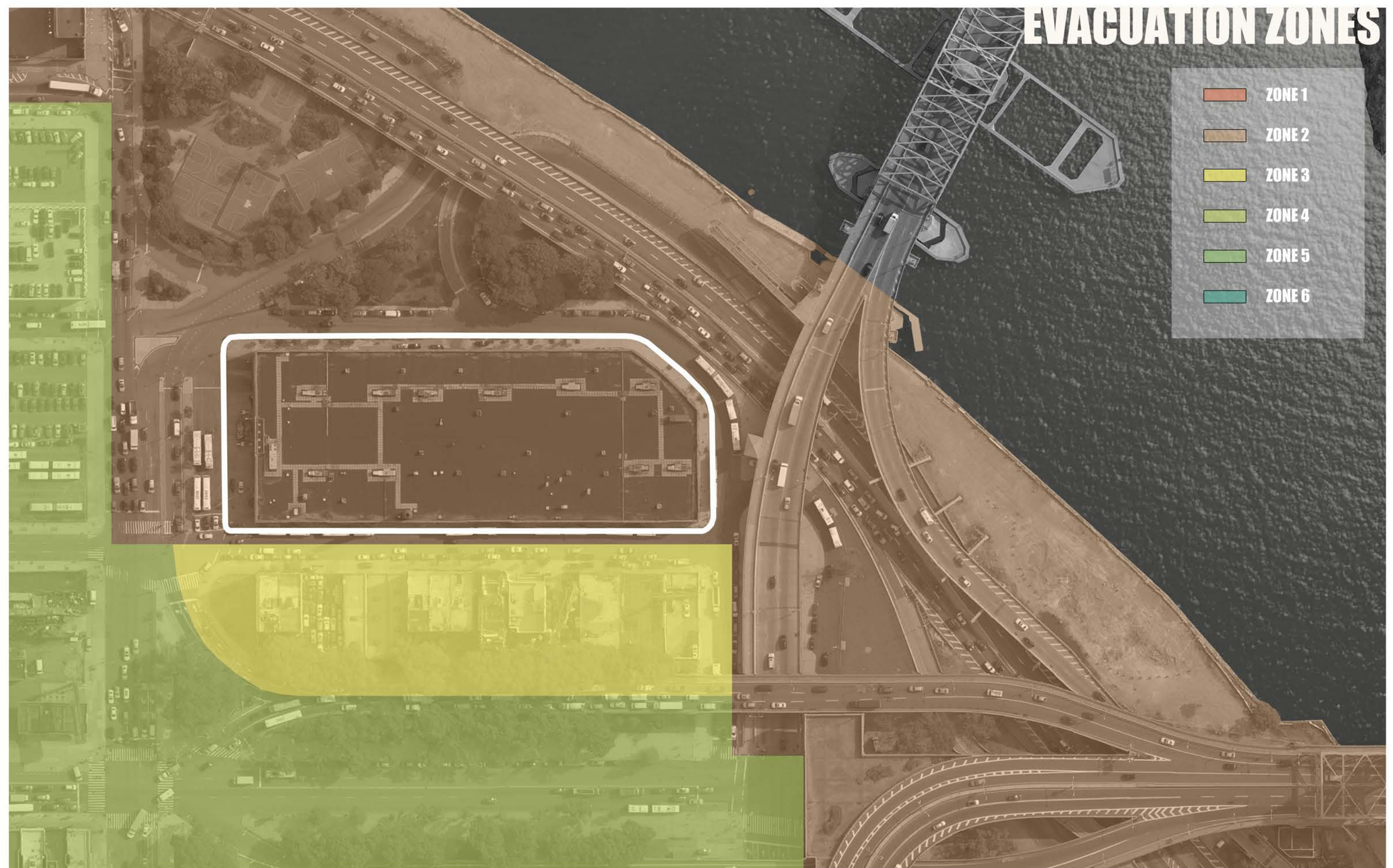
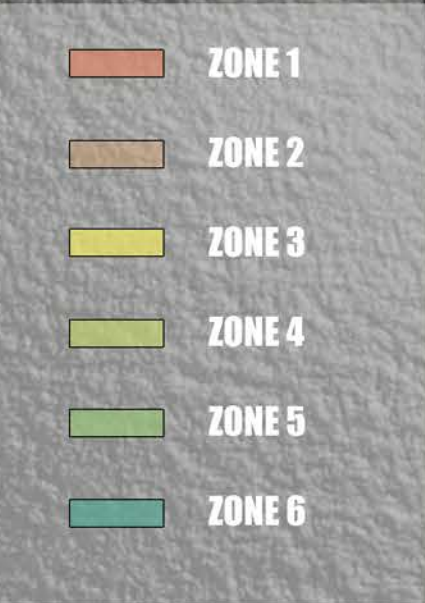








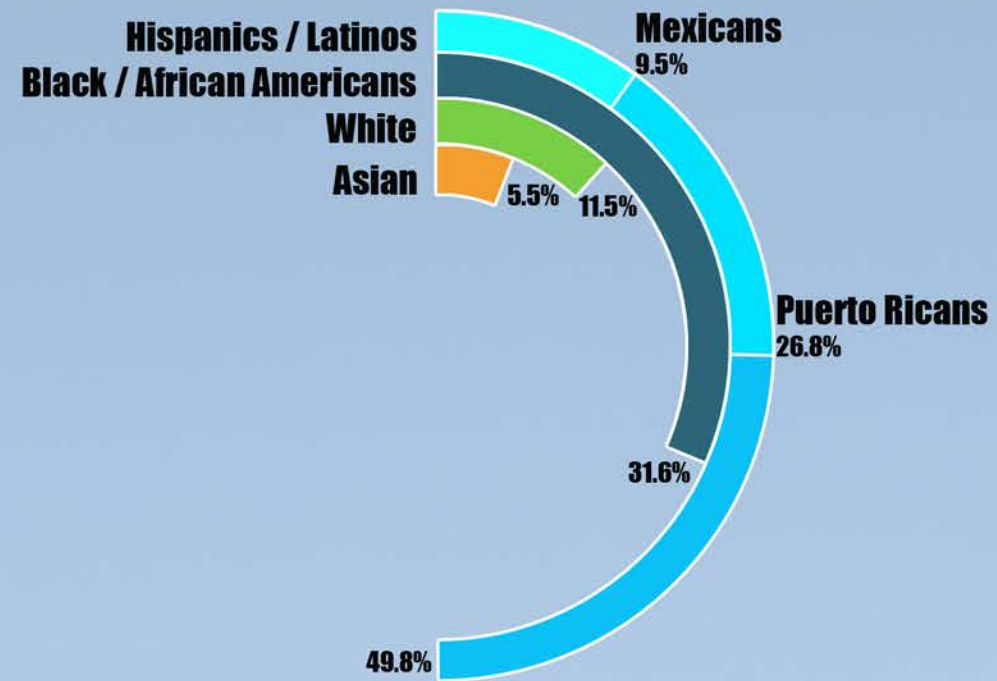
# EVACUATION ZONES







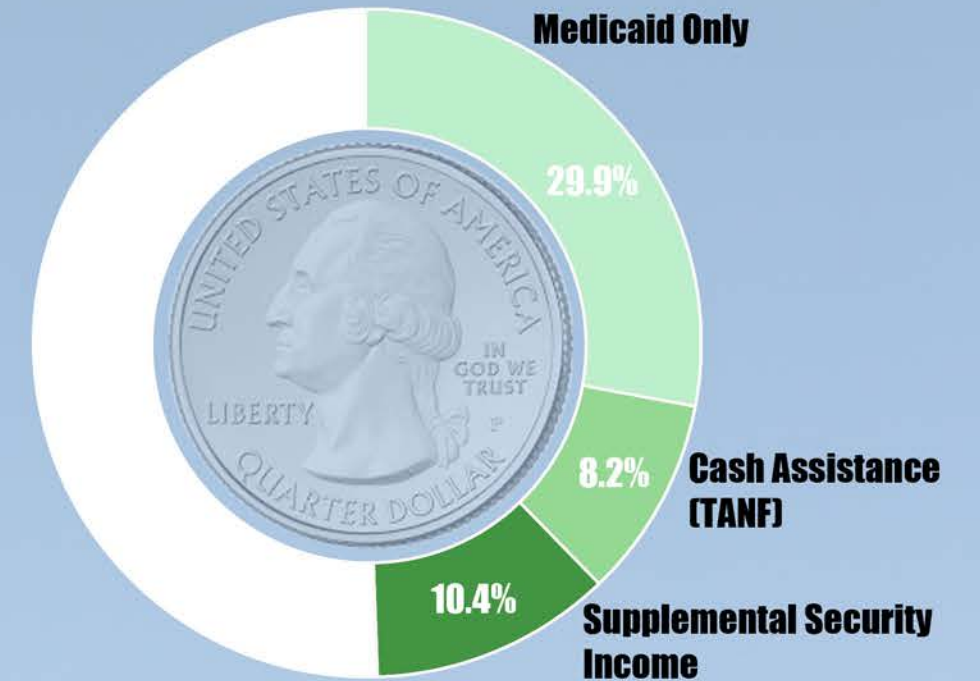
### RACE/ETHNICITY



### HOUSEHOLD INCOME PERCENTAGES



### INCOME SUPPORT PERCENTAGES

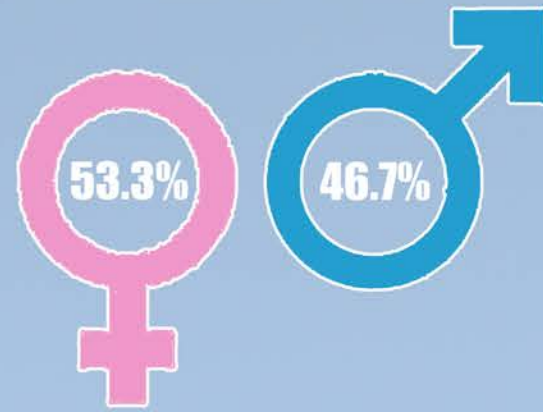


# COMMUNITY DISTRICT 11



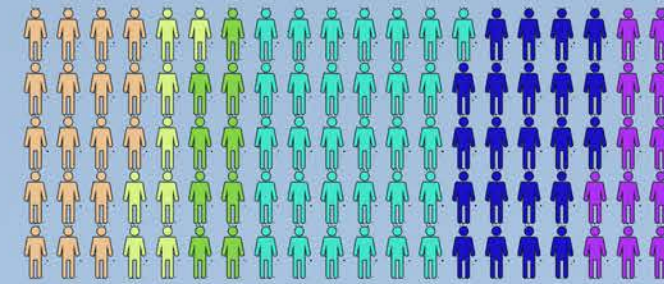


### GENDER PERCENTAGES



TOTAL POPULATION: **120,511**

### AGE BREAKDOWN

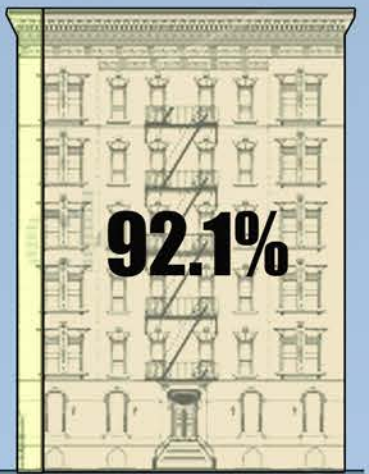


### HOUSEHOLDS



<b>Married Couple Family</b>	<b>20.1%</b>
with Children Under 18	10.1%
<b>Female Householder, No Husband</b>	<b>29.8%</b>
with Children Under 18	18.2%
<b>Male Householder, No Wife</b>	<b>5.9%</b>
with Children Under 18	2.6%
<b>Non-Family Household</b>	<b>44.2%</b>

### OCCUPIED HOUSING



**COMMUNITY DISTRICT 11**

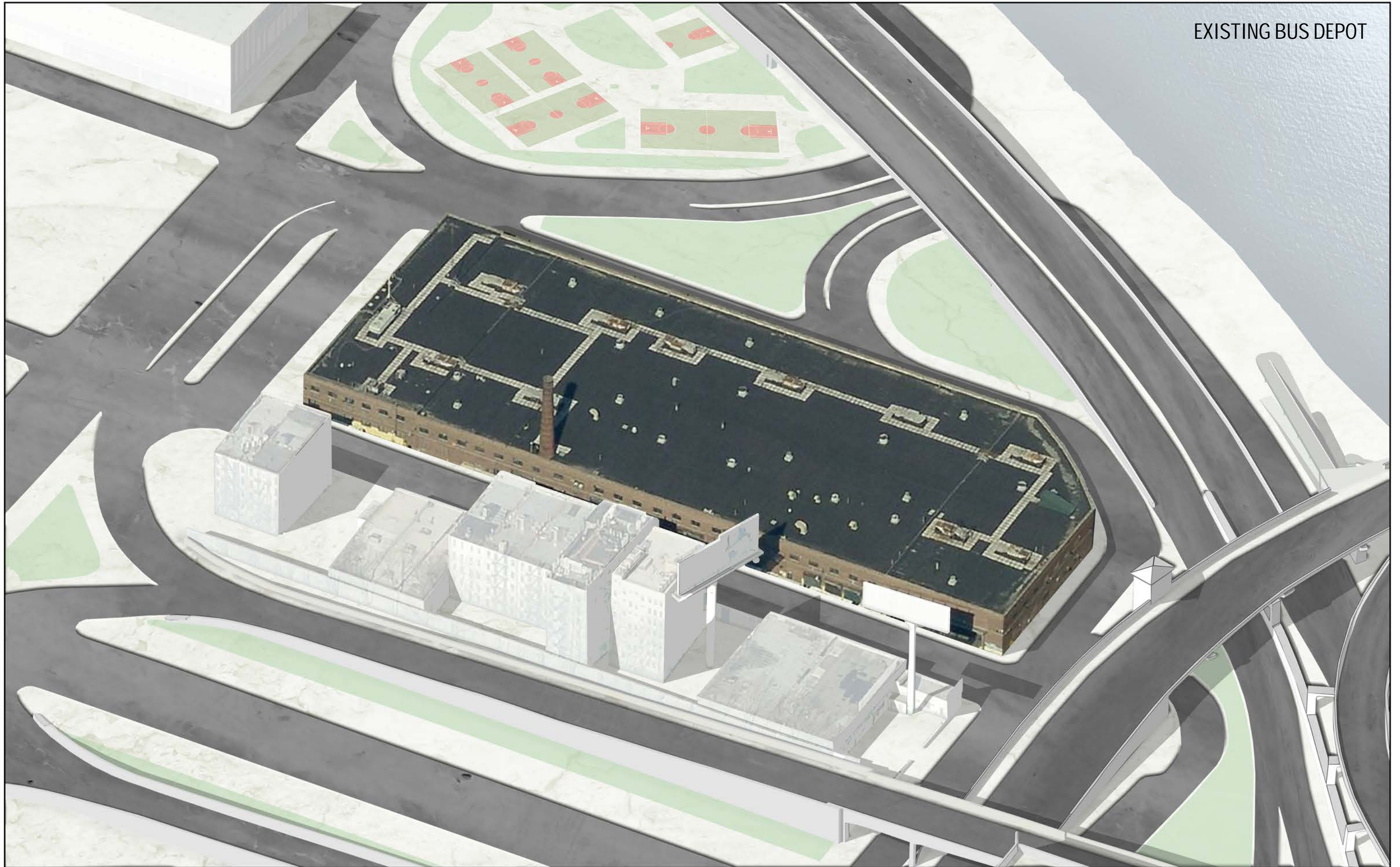




**DESIGN CONCEPT**



EXISTING BUS DEPOT













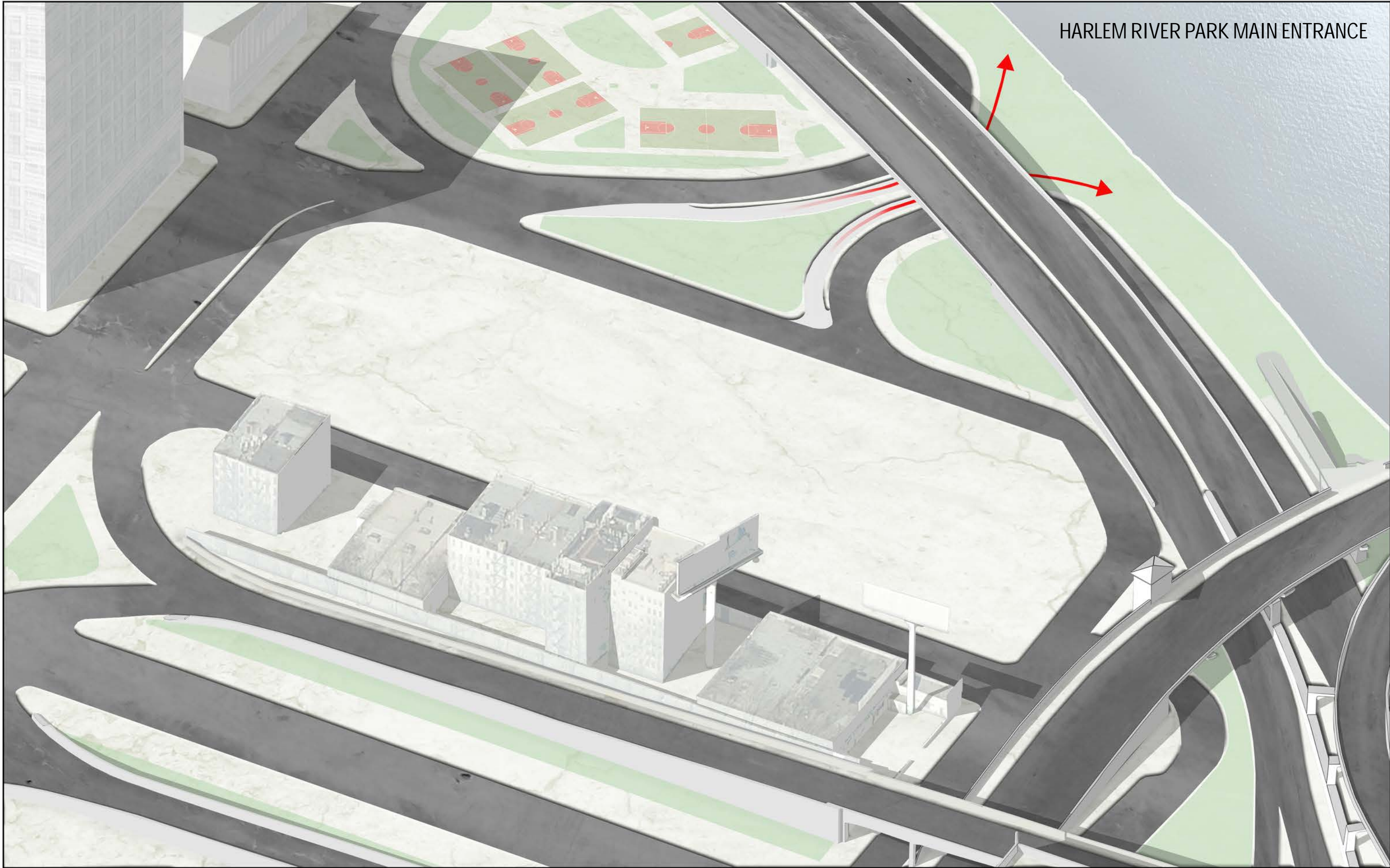
EAST HARLEM MEDIA, ENTERTAINMENT,  
& CULTURAL CENTER







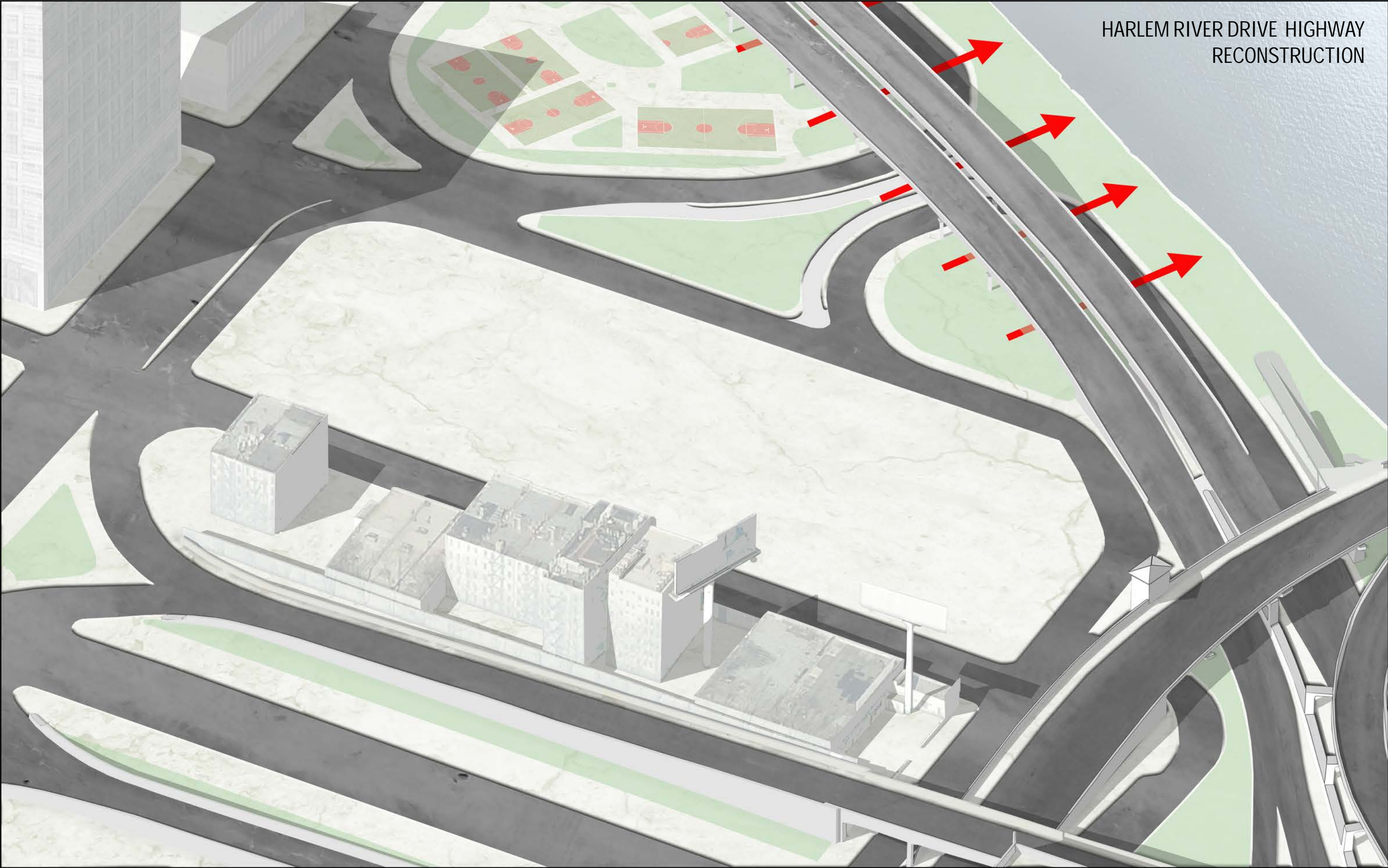




HARLEM RIVER PARK MAIN ENTRANCE



HARLEM RIVER DRIVE HIGHWAY  
RECONSTRUCTION

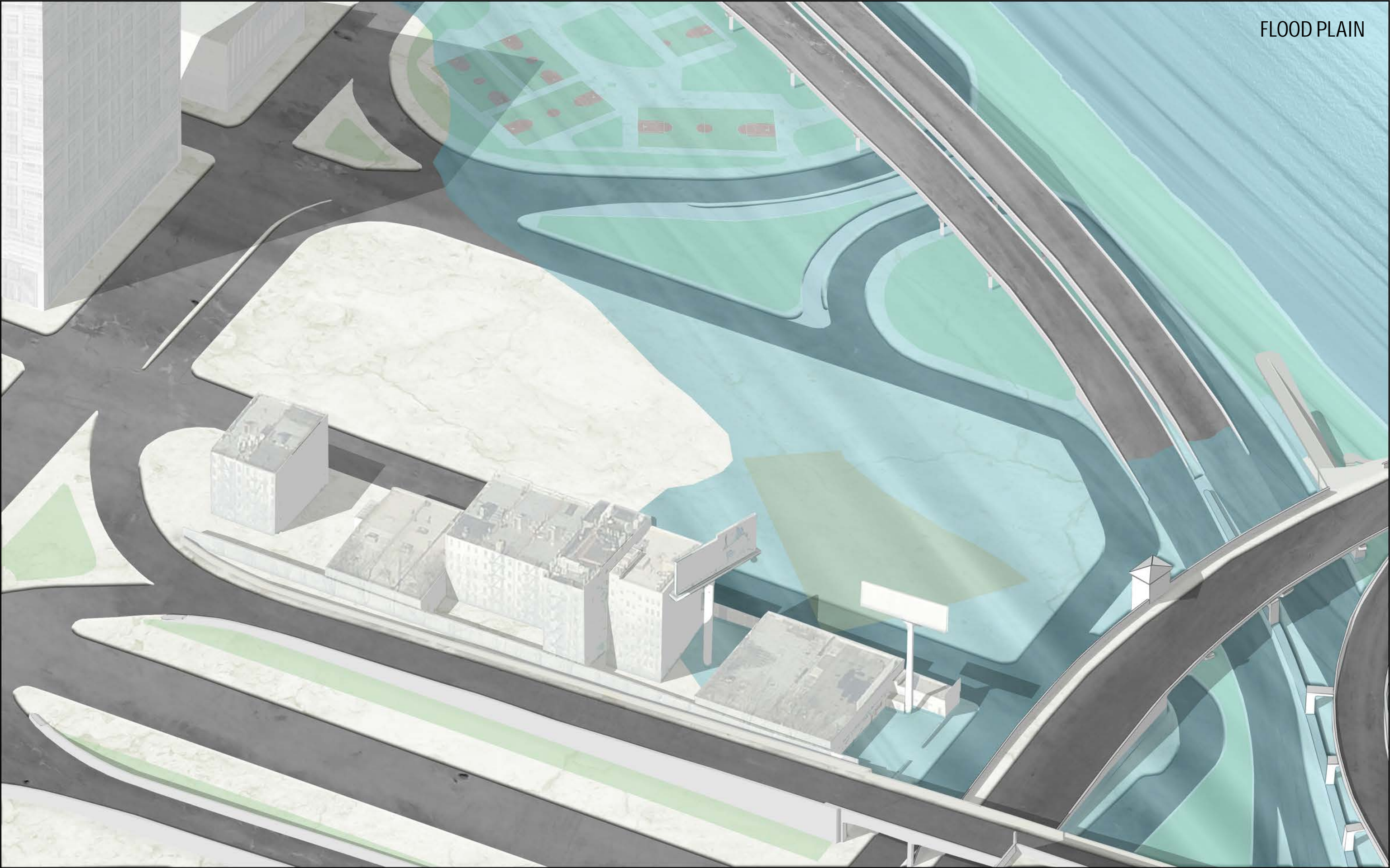




HARLEM AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND

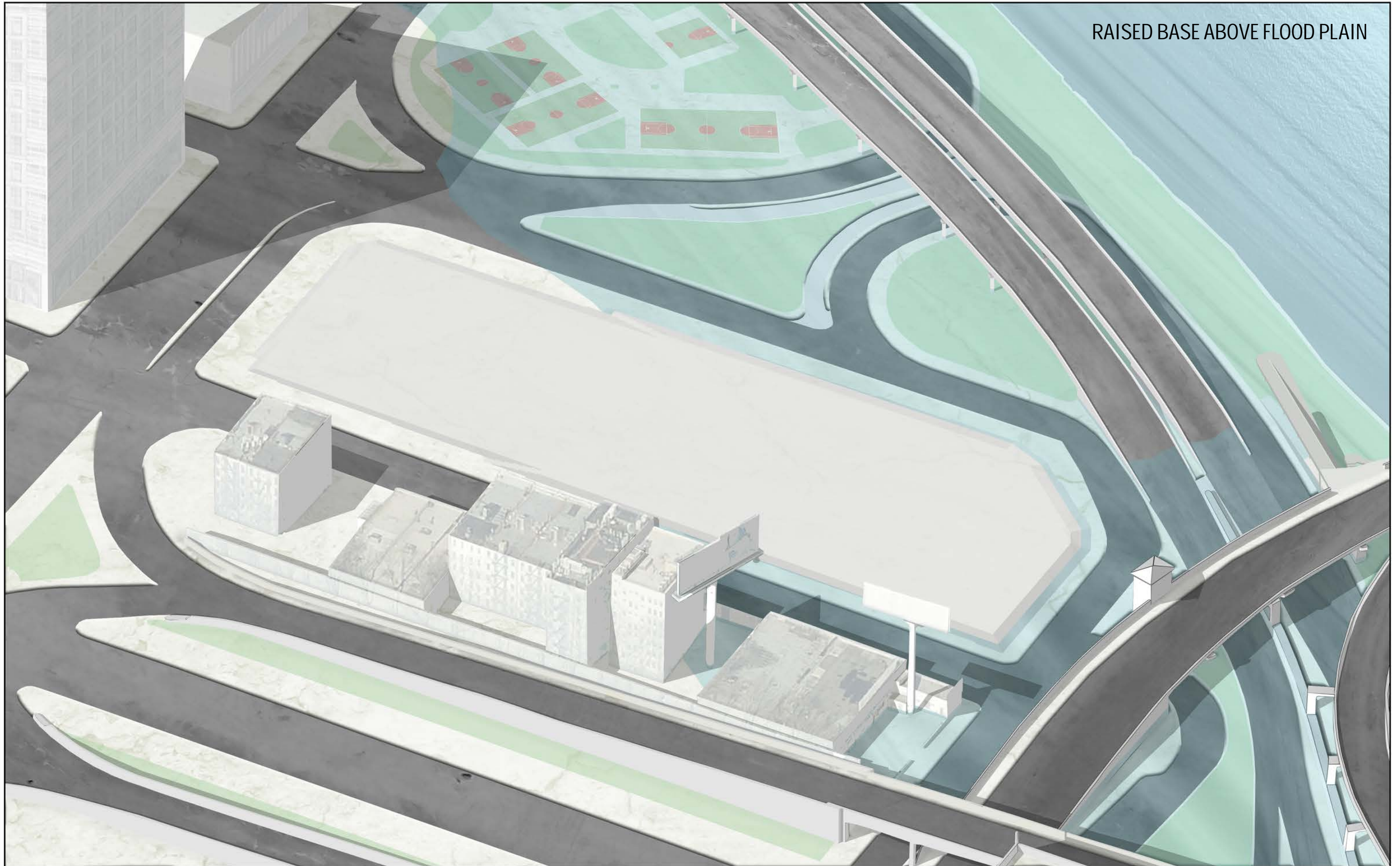








RAISED BASE ABOVE FLOOD PLAIN

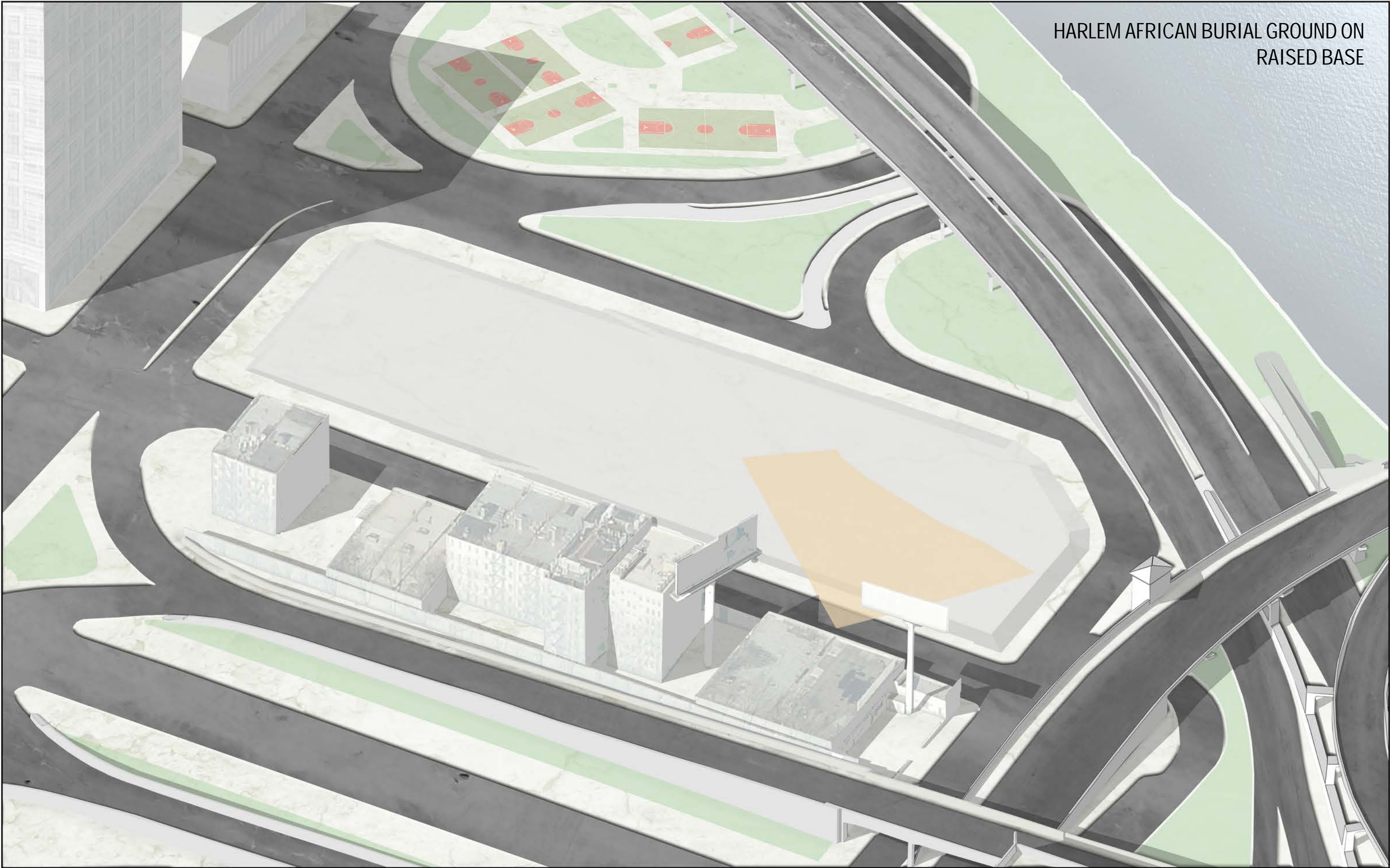








HARLEM AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND ON  
RAISED BASE



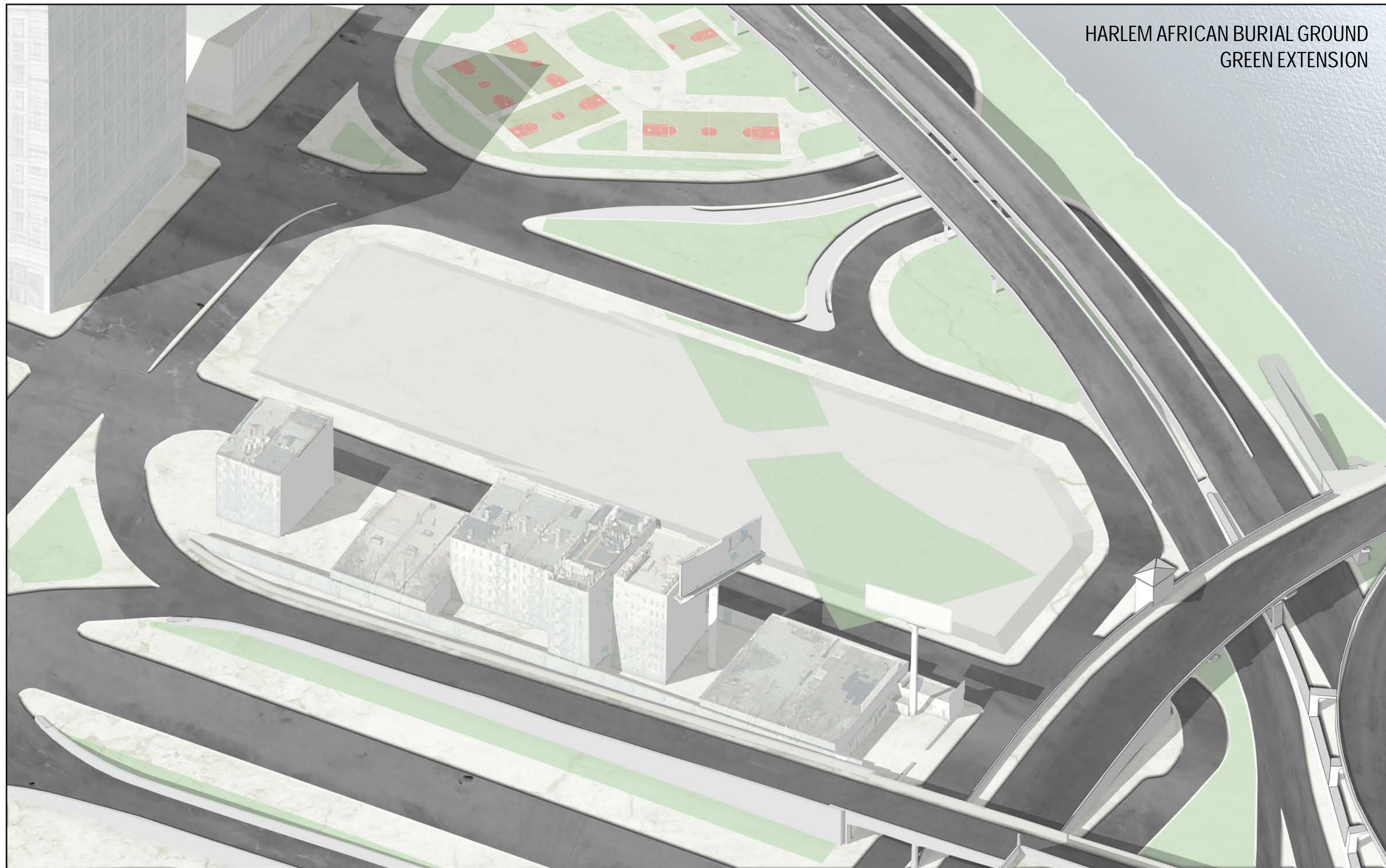


HARLEM AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND  
GREEN



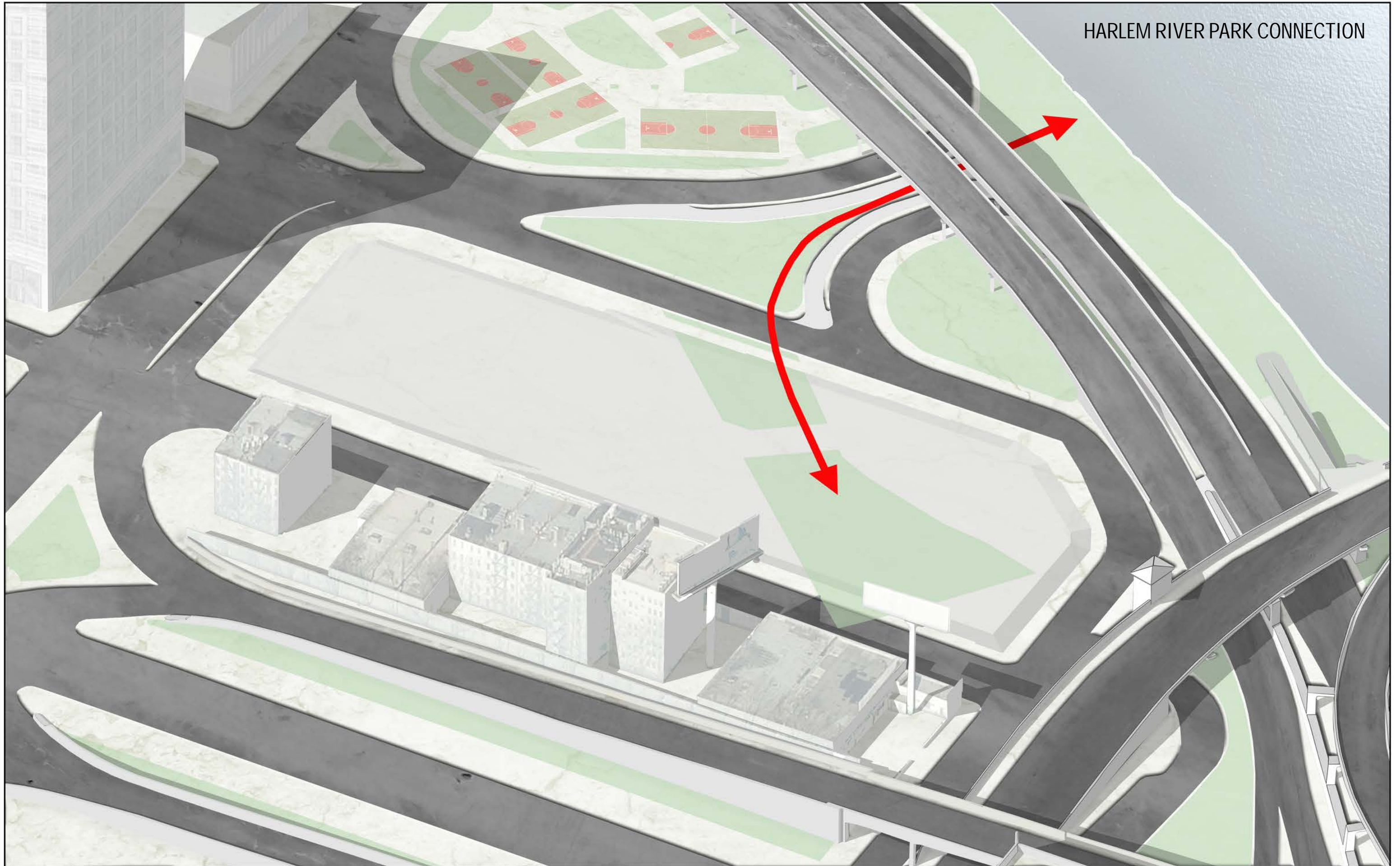


HARLEM AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND  
GREEN EXTENSION



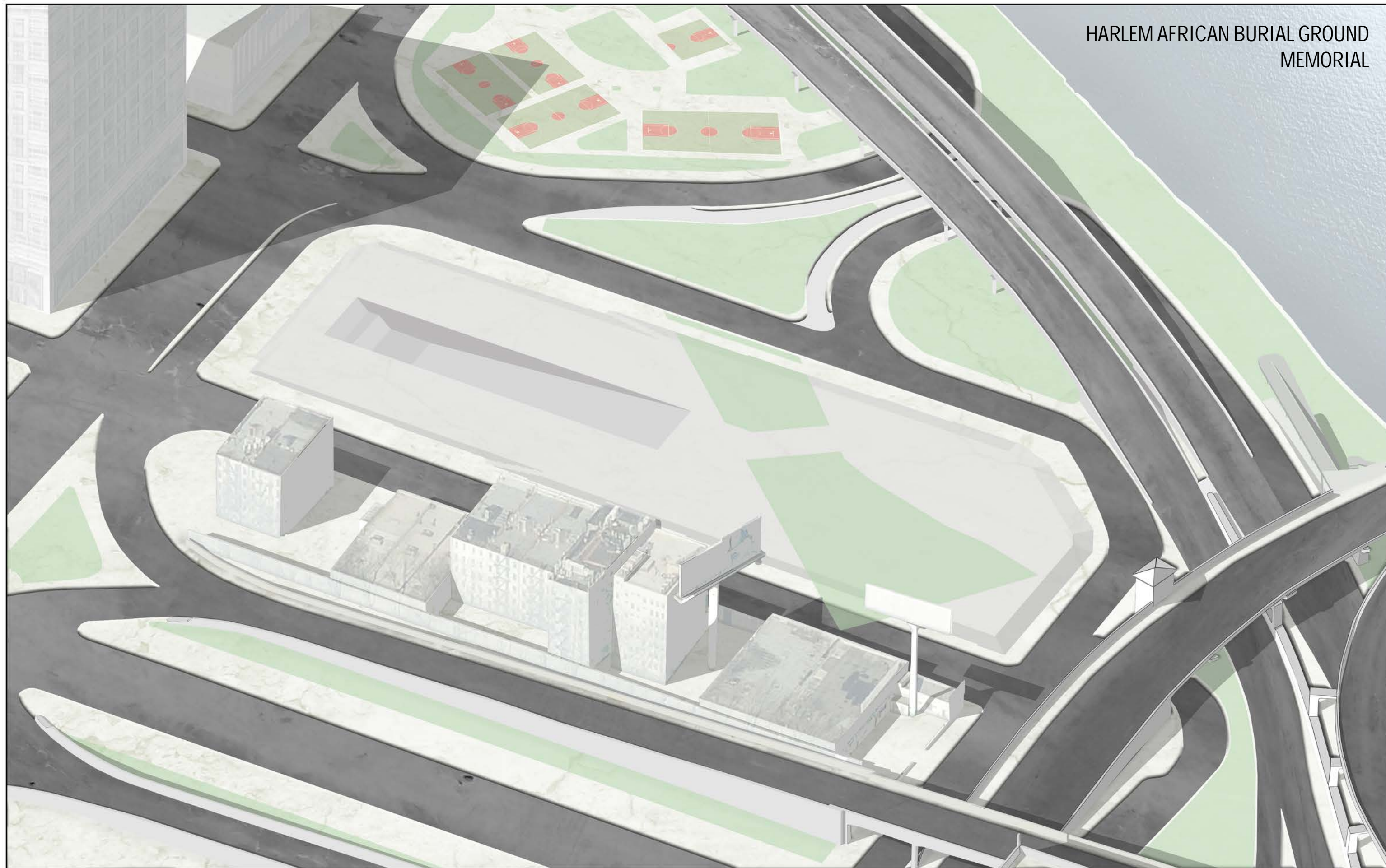


HARLEM RIVER PARK CONNECTION



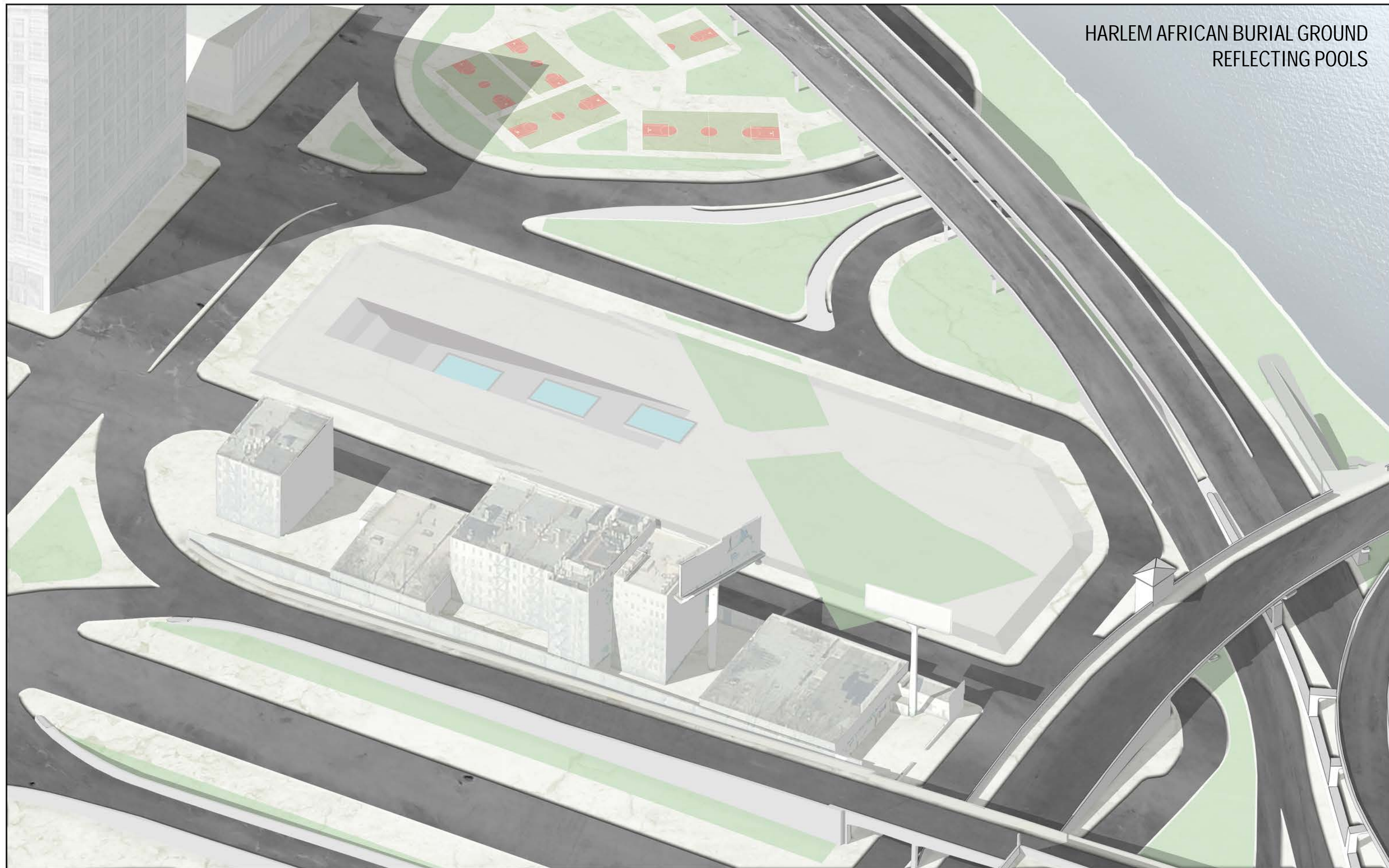


HARLEM AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND  
MEMORIAL



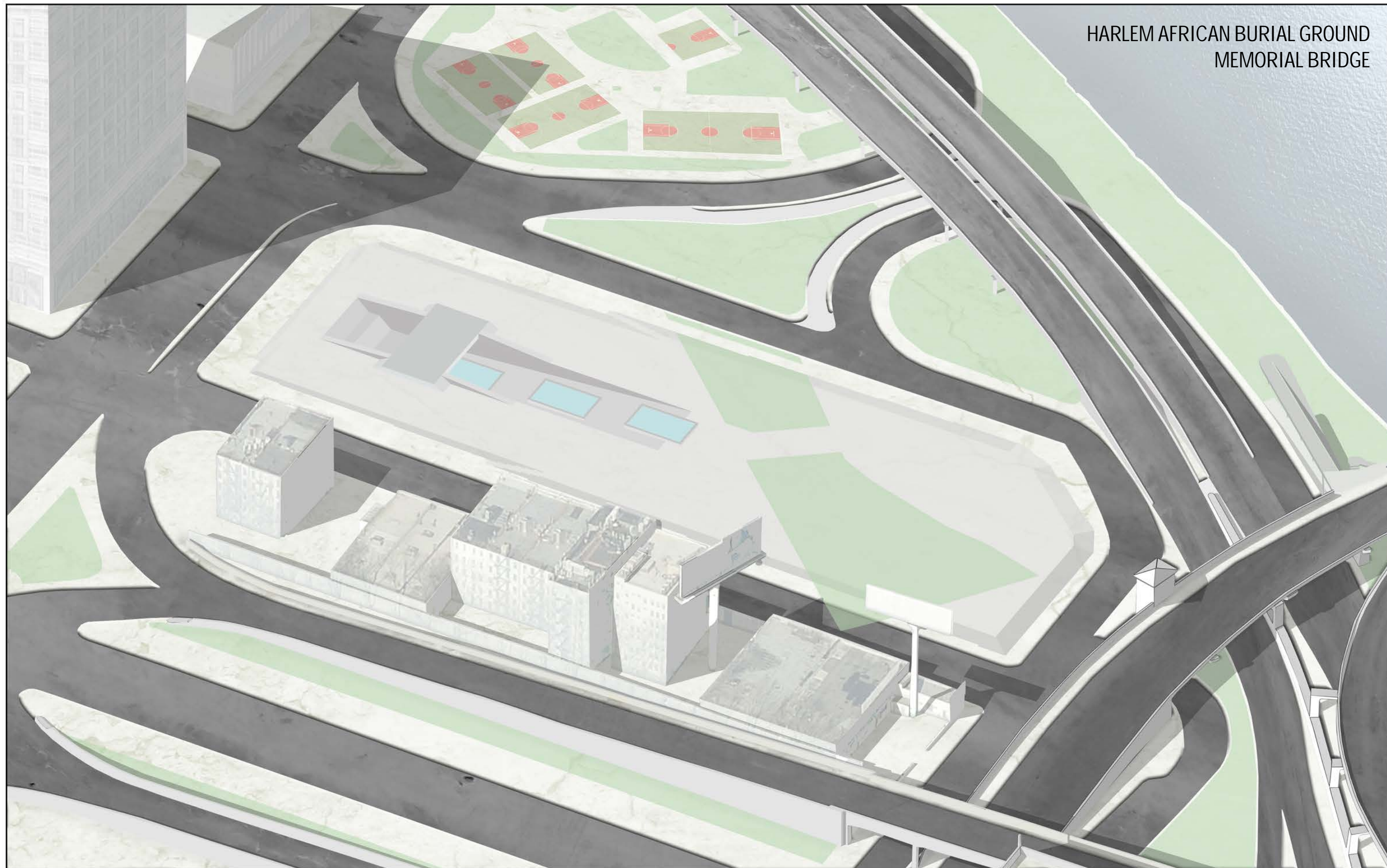


HARLEM AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND  
REFLECTING POOLS



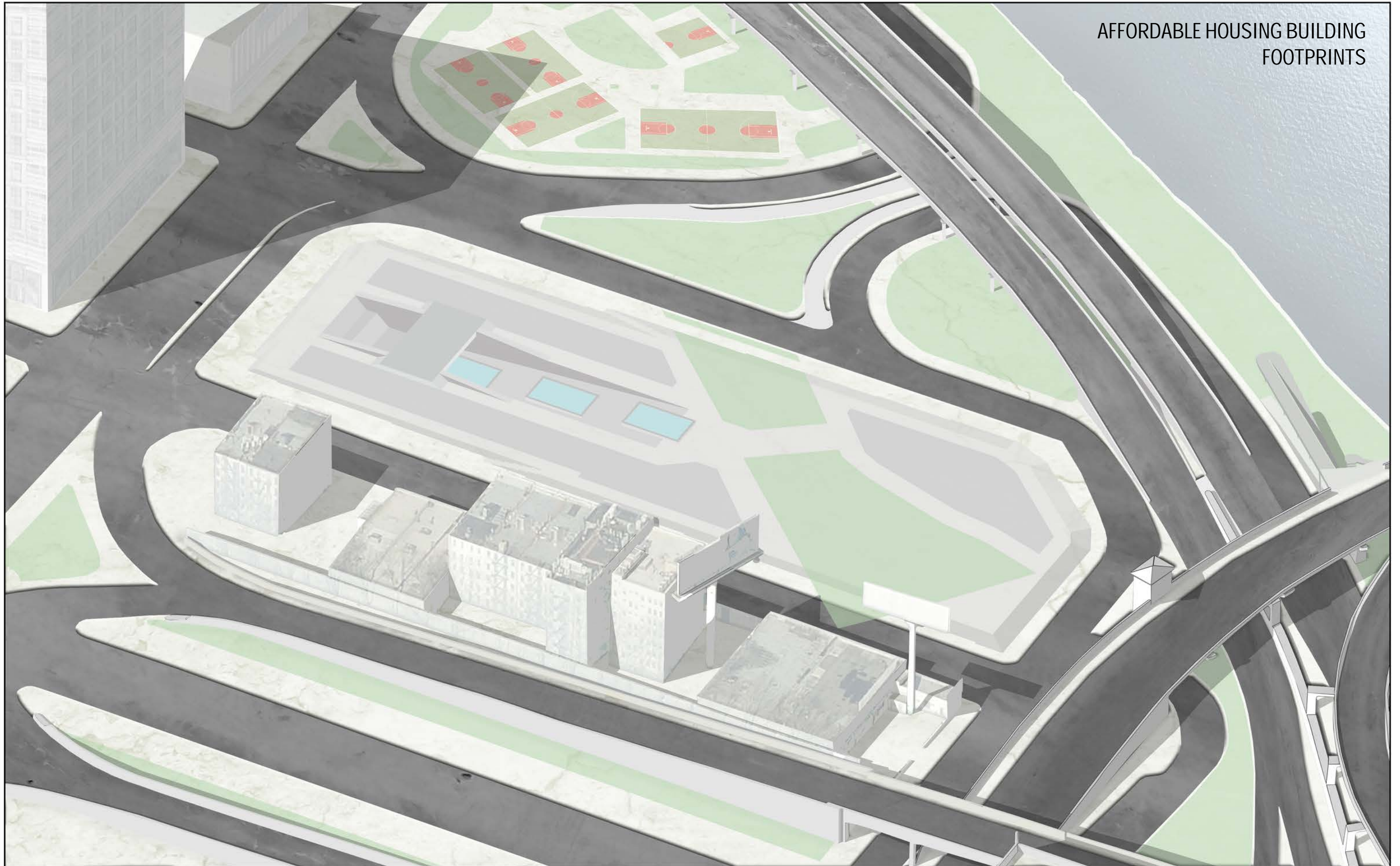


HARLEM AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND  
MEMORIAL BRIDGE



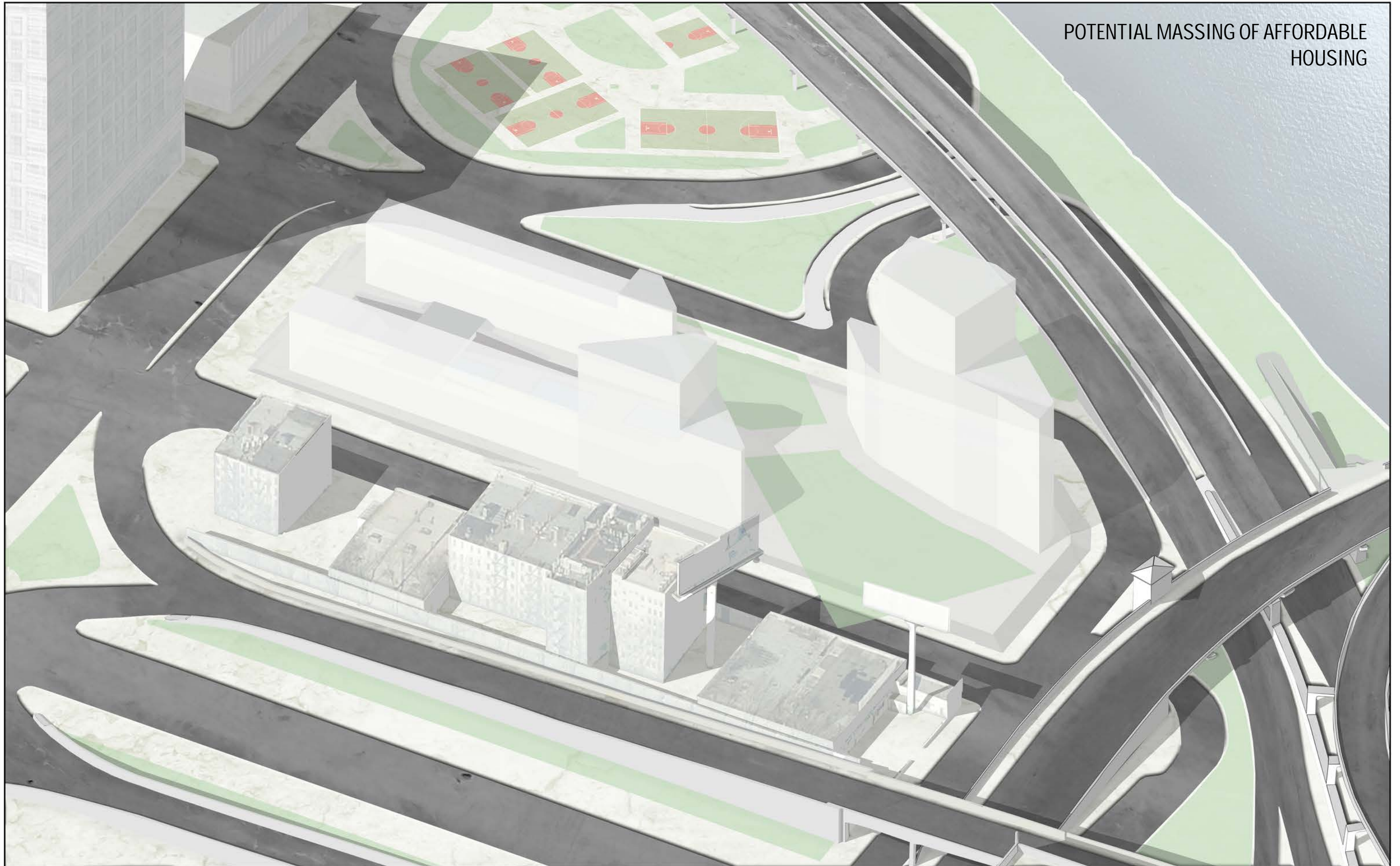


AFFORDABLE HOUSING BUILDING  
FOOTPRINTS

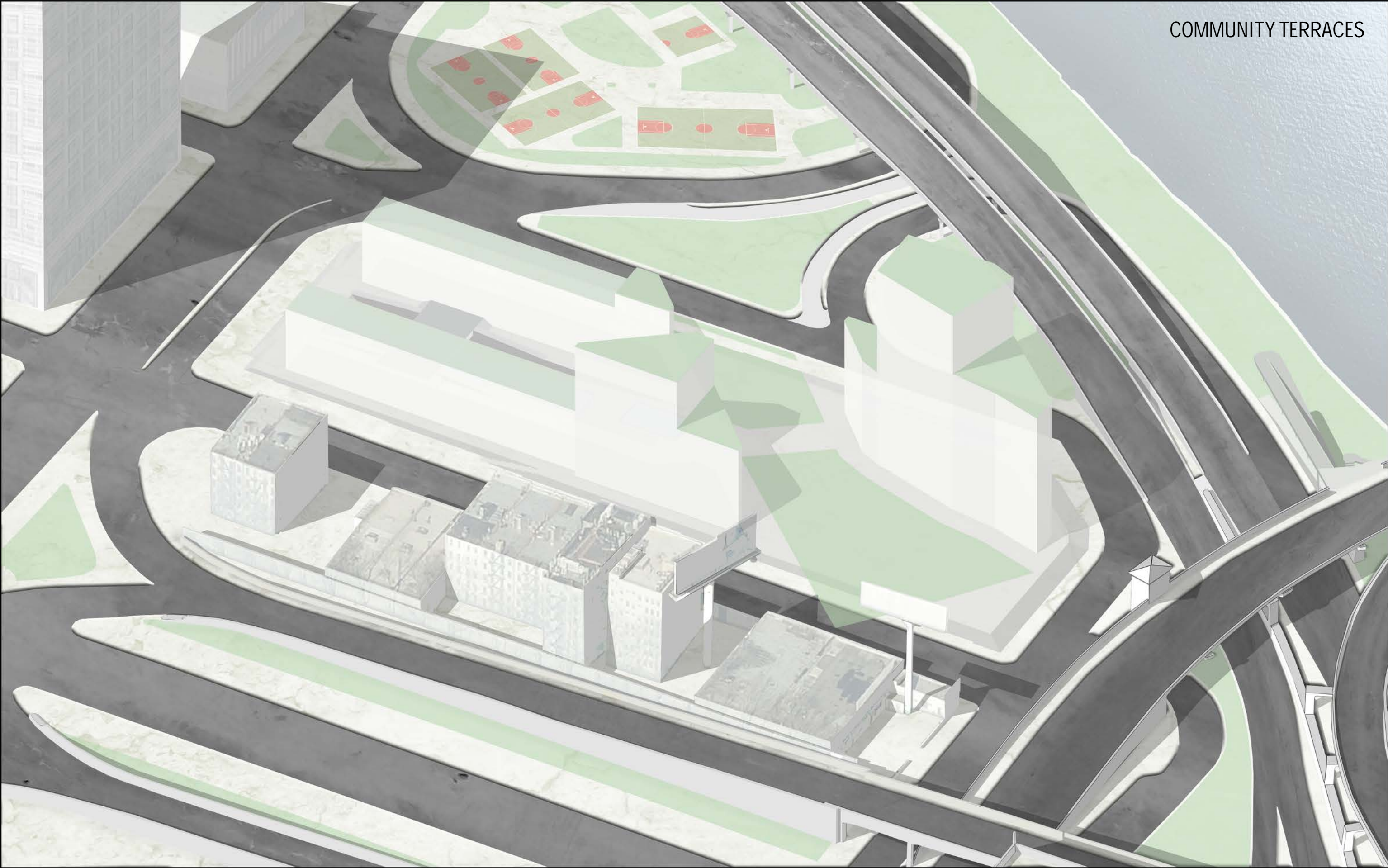




POTENTIAL MASSING OF AFFORDABLE  
HOUSING

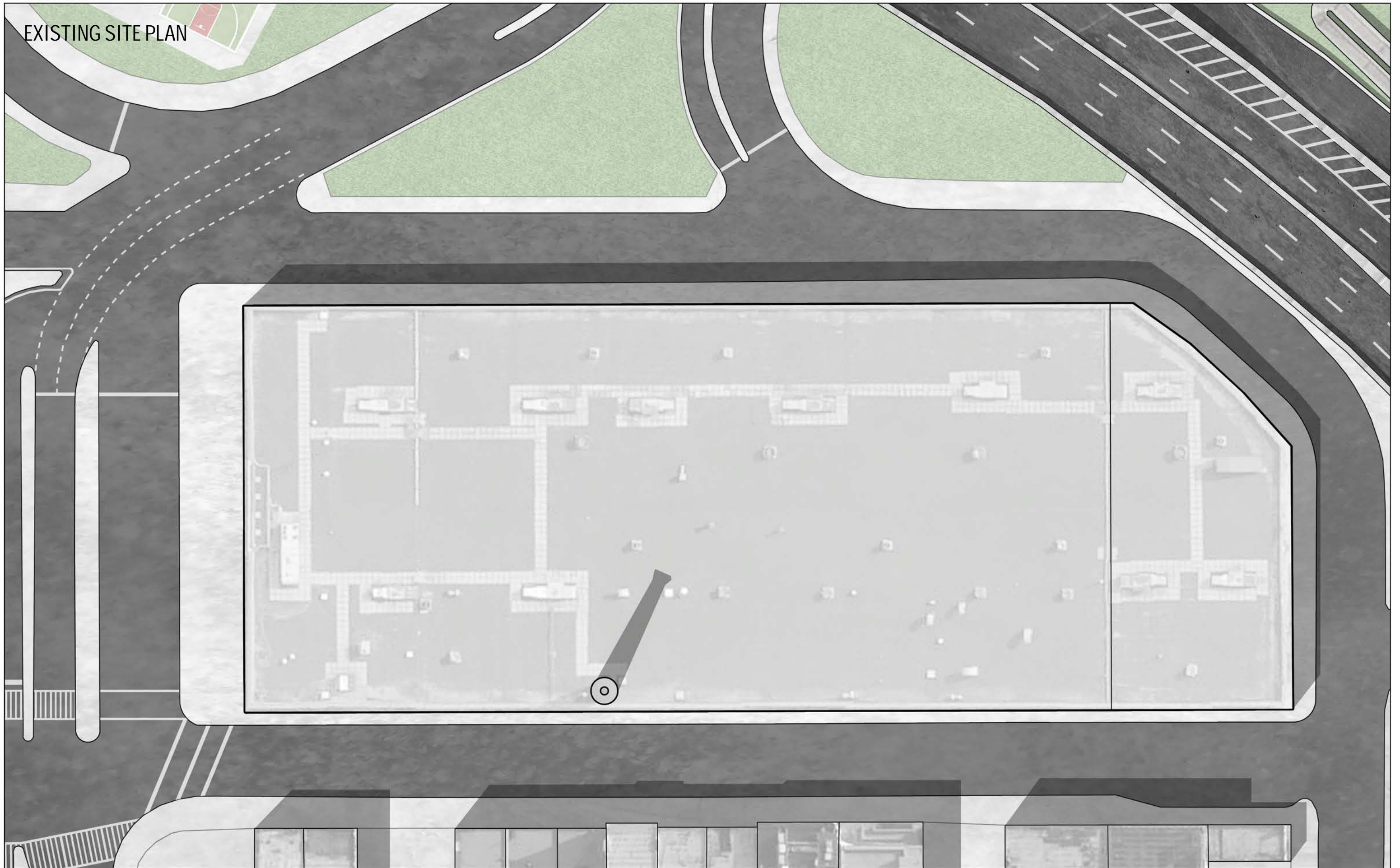






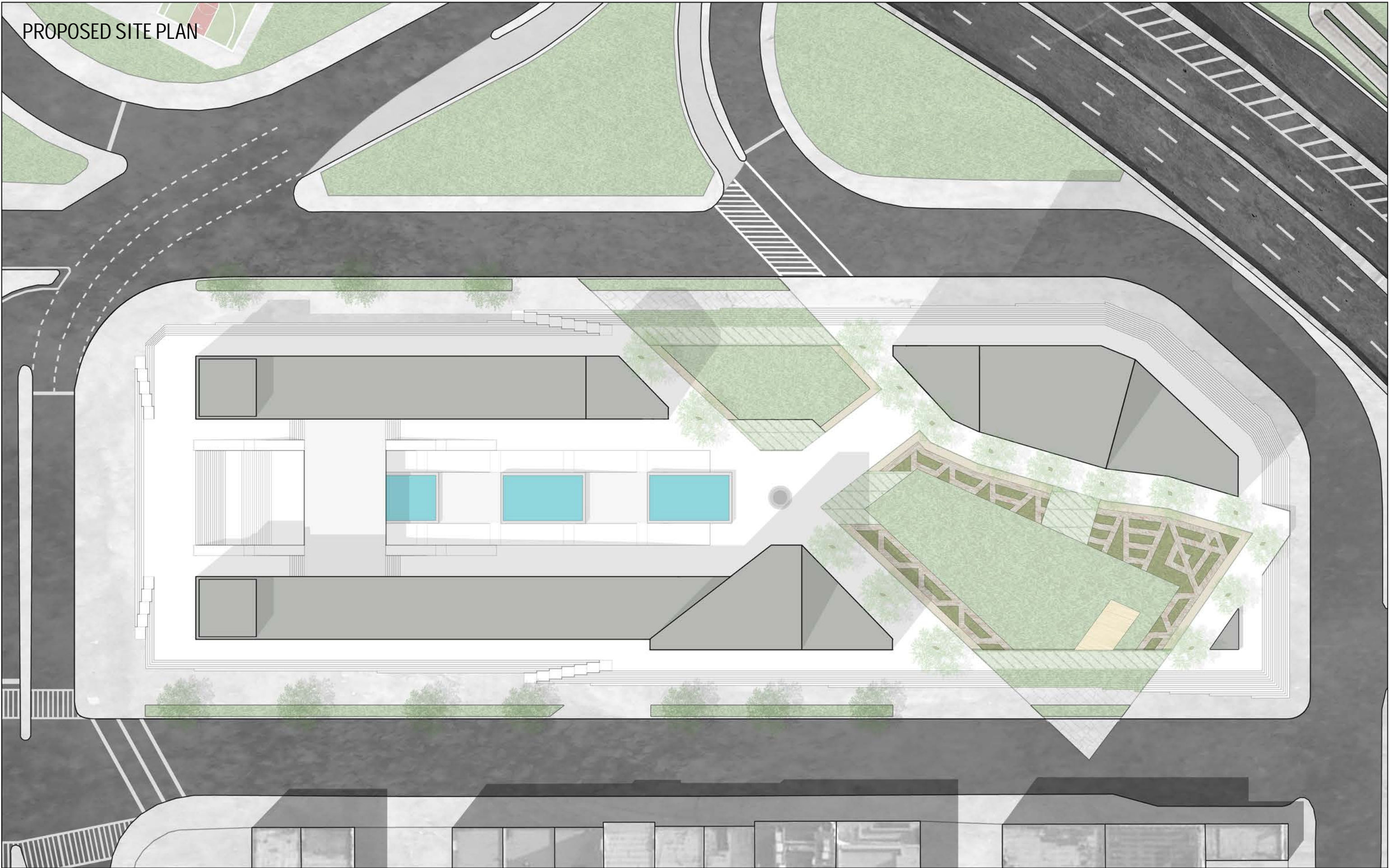


EXISTING SITE PLAN





PROPOSED SITE PLAN

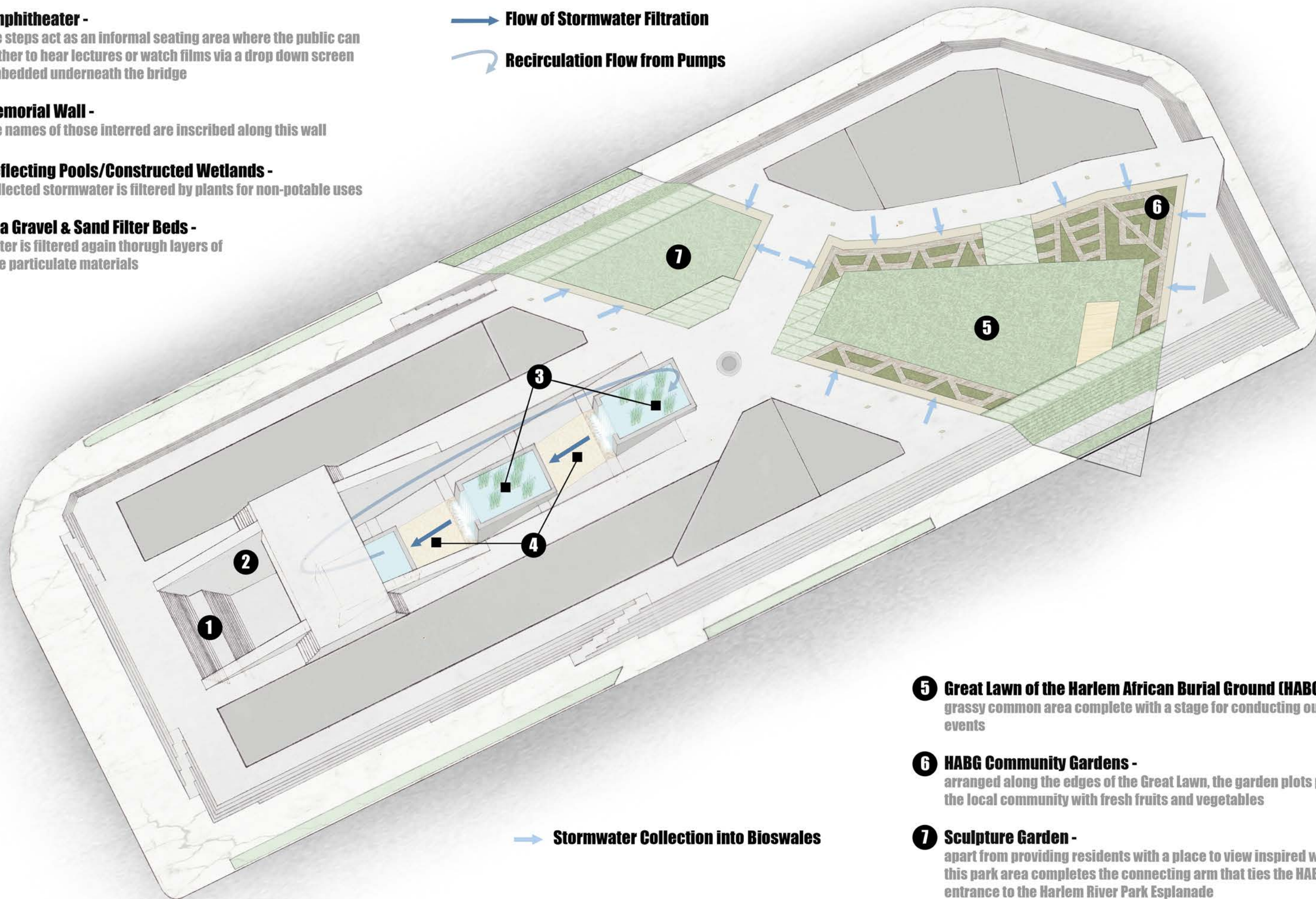




- 1 Amphitheater -**  
the steps act as an informal seating area where the public can gather to hear lectures or watch films via a drop down screen embedded underneath the bridge
- 2 Memorial Wall -**  
the names of those interred are inscribed along this wall
- 3 Reflecting Pools/Constructed Wetlands -**  
collected stormwater is filtered by plants for non-potable uses
- 4 Pea Gravel & Sand Filter Beds -**  
water is filtered again thorough layers of fine particulate materials

→ **Flow of Stormwater Filtration**

↻ **Recirculation Flow from Pumps**



- 5 Great Lawn of the Harlem African Burial Ground (HABG)-**  
grassy common area complete with a stage for conducting outdoor events
- 6 HABG Community Gardens -**  
arranged along the edges of the Great Lawn, the garden plots provide the local community with fresh fruits and vegetables
- 7 Sculpture Garden -**  
apart from providing residents with a place to view inspired works of art this park area completes the connecting arm that ties the HABG with the entrance to the Harlem River Park Esplanade

→ **Stormwater Collection into Bioswales**



“We were here before the mighty words of the Declaration of Independence were etched across the pages of history. Our forebears labored without wages. They made cotton 'king'. And yet out of a bottomless vitality, they continued to thrive and develop. If the cruelties of slavery could not stop us, the opposition we now face will surely fail. . . . Because the goal of America is freedom, abused and scorned tho' we may be, our destiny is tied up with America's destiny.”

— Martin Luther King Jr.

“If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters. This struggle may be a moral one; or it may be a physical one; or it may be both moral and physical; but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.”

— Frederick Douglass



## BRONZE SCULPTURAL RELIEFS DEPICTING AFRICAN SLAVES

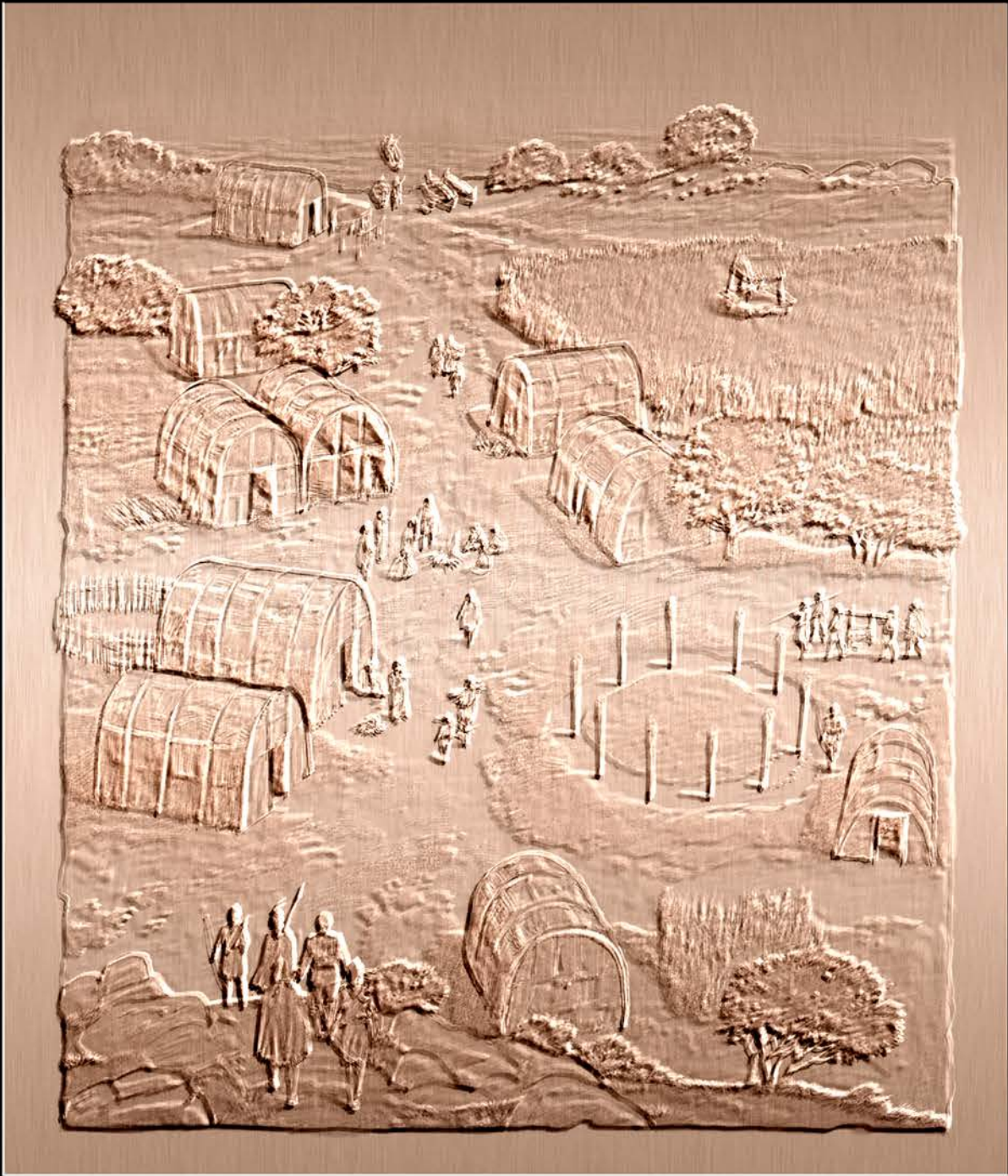








BRONZE SCULPTURAL RELIEFS DEPICTING NATIVE AMERICANS





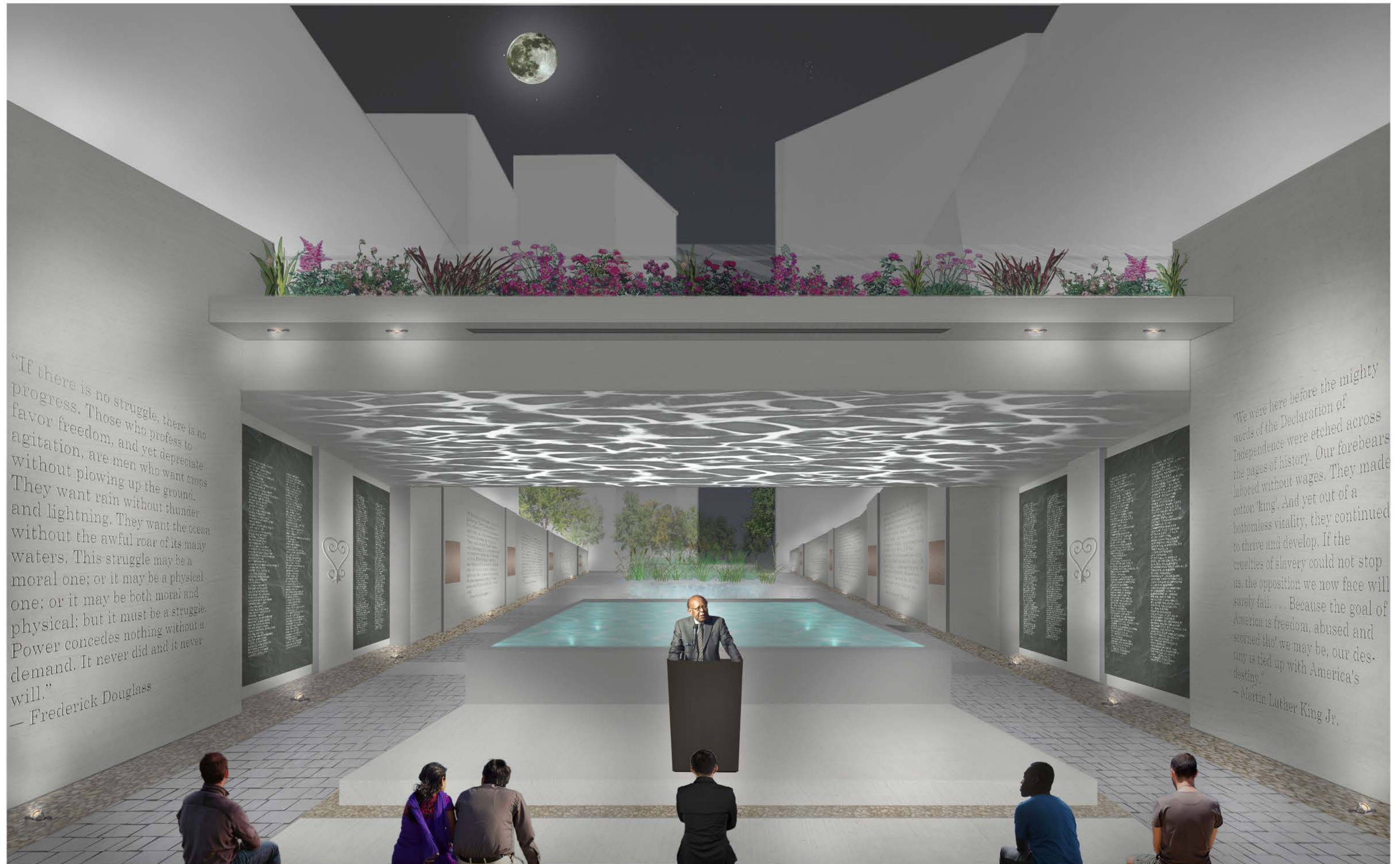




DAYTIME RENDERING OF THE HARLEM AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND MEMORIAL

















NIGHTTIME RENDERING OF THE HARLEM AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND LAWN & GARDENS

