5. ALTERNATIVES

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) and State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), this chapter examines alternatives to the proposed East Fordham Road Rezoning, which includes zoning map and zoning text amendments affecting an approximately 12-block area within the Belmont neighborhood of Bronx Community District 6. As described in the CEQR Technical Manual, alternatives selected for consideration in an EIS are generally those which are feasible and have the potential to reduce, eliminate, or avoid adverse impacts of a proposed action while meeting some or all of the goals and objectives of this action.

The purpose of the alternatives analysis is to examine reasonable alternatives to the proposed action that avoid or reduce action-related significant adverse impacts and which may still allow for the achievement of the stated purpose and need, and goals and objectives of the proposed action. The significant adverse impacts resulting from the proposed action are related to traffic, transit and pedestrians. As identified in Chapter 2, "Transportation," of the DEIS, significant adverse impacts to traffic would occur at twelve intersections during specific periods. As discussed in the Transportation and Mitigation chapters, it appears that all significant adverse impacts are readily mitigated using standard mitigation measures, such as signal timing. However, between Draft and Final EIS, DOT will review the specific measures proposed for each intersection to confirm adequacy and feasibility of their implementation and recommend changes as necessary. If it is determined that a specific measure is not feasible at a particular location, DCP in consultation with DOT will explore other mitigation measures to mitigate impacts. However, if it is determined that other measures are not available to mitigate the identified impacts, either in part or in whole, the impact would be identified in the FEIS as unmitigable. If any impacts are determined to be unmitigatable between Draft and Final EIS, the feasibility of a No Unmitigated Impact Alternative will be explored and discussed in the FEIS.

Therefore, this chapter considers in detail the following two alternatives to the Proposed Action:

- A No-Action Alternative, which is mandated by CEQR and SEQRA, and is intended to provide the lead and involved agencies with an assessment of the expected environmental impacts of a no action on their part (i.e., no zoning changes);
- A Lower Density Alternative that considers a zoning district with less density, resulting in reduced residential development. In the Lower Density Alternative, the proposed C4-5D IH zoning district (5.6 FAR) along East Fordham Road would be replaced with an C4-4A IH zoning district (4.6 FAR).

NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

The No-Action Alternative examines future conditions within the proposed rezoning area, but assumes the absence of the Proposed Action (i.e., none of the discretionary approvals proposed as part of the

Proposed Action would be adopted). Under the No-Action Alternative, the existing zoning would remain in the area affected by the Proposed Action. The No-Action alternative includes the background growth from as-of-right development, which includes projected development from the recent Webster Avenue Rezoning (2011) and Third-Avenue Tremont Rezoning (2010), and preliminary trip generation results from the Kingsbridge Armory project. It is anticipated that the rezoning area would experience moderate growth in commercial and community facility uses by 2023. Five of the nine projected development sites would be redeveloped, or undergo conversion and/or enlargement in this alternative. There would be a total of approximately 538 gross-square feet (gsf) of commercial office space, approximately 84,057 gsf of local retail space, approximately 20,000 gsf of destination retail space, approximately 17,322 gsf of medical office space, and approximately 68,857 gsf of Fordham University science classroom space.

The technical chapters of the EIS have described the No-Action Alternative as "the Future Without the Proposed Action." The significant adverse impacts anticipated for the Proposed Action would not occur with the No-Action Alternative. However, as indicated in Chapter 2, "Transportation," under the No-Action Alternative the traffic conditions at the intersections that are significantly impacted under the proposed action would still be poor and in many cases would deteriorate, even absent the proposed action. Furthermore, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the goals of the Proposed Action. The benefits expected from the Proposed Action on land use, urban design, and neighborhood character would not be realized under this alternative. In addition, the No-Action Alternative would fall short of the objectives of the Proposed Action in creating an attractive gateway to the central Bronx by establishing height limits to unify the look and feel of the corridor, fostering private investment in the area, incentivizing permanently affordable housing, promoting mandatory active ground floor uses that will enhance the pedestrian experience, protecting neighborhood character and reinforcing the existing commercial character.

LOWER DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

A Lower Density Alternative to the proposed action was developed to determine whether the purpose and need established for the proposed action could be accomplished while avoiding the significant adverse impacts to traffic that have been identified. Under the Lower Density Alternative, the rezoning area would be mapped with a C4-4A zoning district instead of the C4-5D zoning district along East Fordham Road from Bathgate Avenue to Southern Boulevard. The C4-4A would reduce the maximum permitted FAR from 5.6 to 4.6 and would also reduce the maximum permitted building height from 100 feet to 80 feet.

Compared to the proposed action, the Lower Density Alternative was found to result in fewer trips generated over the No-Action condition. The Lower Density Alternative is expected to result in the same or a slightly fewer number of significant adverse traffic impacts than the proposed project, depending on the peak analysis hour. These impacts could be mitigated using the same mitigation measures identified for the proposed project.

The Lower Density Alternative would fall short of the objectives of the Proposed Action in creating an attractive gateway to the central Bronx. The Lower Density Alternative would have nearly a third fewer projected dwelling units and would have a third less local and destination retail and office space. Additionally, unlike the Proposed Action, the Lower Density Alternative does not mandate ground floor retail transparency or other urban design requirements that would unify the look and feel of the corridor. Overall, the Lower Density Alternative fails to provide the same level of incentive to foster private investment in mixed-use development and permanent affordable housing at the same time as failing to create a lively streetscape with active ground floor uses, which is at the heart of the Proposed Action developed with Community Board 6 and local elected officials. Therefore, compared to the proposed action, while the Lower Density Alternative would result in the same or slightly fewer significant, adverse traffic impacts, and the goals and objectives established for the proposed action would not be achieved to the same extent as under the proposed action.

TRANSPORTATION

The transportation trip generation was prepared based on a slightly smaller version of the development program than the proposed project. Based on the trip generation assumptions detailed in Chapter 2, "Transportation," the Reduced Density Alternative would generate 658, 1,582, and 1,311 person trips and 169, 286, and 244 vehicle trips during the weekday AM, midday, and PM peak hours, respectively. In comparison, the proposed project would generate up to approximately 2,531 peak hour person trips and 369 peak hour vehicle trips (see Table 2.5). As summarized in Tables 5.1 and 5.2, compared to the proposed project, Lower Density Alternative would yield up to approximately 949 fewer peak hour person trips and 83 fewer peak hour vehicle trips.

Table 4.1
Comparison of 2023 Build Person Trips by Mode
Lower Density Alternative vs. Proposed Project

Development Scenario	Auto		Taxi		Subway		Bus		Railroad		Walk Only		Total		Total
	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In+Out
AM Peak Hour															
Red. Density Alt.	114	54	13	10	35	66	33	50	6	8	126	143	327	331	658
Proposed Project	144	70	19	13	53	89	58	70	8	10	192	210	474	462	936
Difference	-30	-16	-6	-3	-18	-23	-25	-20	-2	-2	-66	-67	-147	-131	-278
MD Peak Hour															
Red. Density Alt.	176	163	29	27	64	68	68	72	8	7	440	460	785	797	1582
Proposed Project	211	196	41	39	98	101	122	126	9	9	780	799	1,261	1,270	2,531
Difference	-35	-33	-12	-12	-34	-33	-54	-54	-1	-2	-340	-339	-476	-473	-949
PM Peak Hour															
Red. Density Alt.	111	175	20	22	71	71	51	73	9	9	338	361	600	711	1311
Proposed Project	139	214	28	31	105	98	95	113	12	11	528	549	907	1,016	1,923
Difference	-28	-39	-8	-9	-34	-27	-44	-40	-3	-2	-190	-188	-307	-305	-612

Table 4.2
Comparison of 2023 Build Vehicle Trips by Mode
Lower Density Alternative vs. Proposed Project

Development Scenario	Auto		Taxi		Delivery		Total		Total
	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In+Out
AM Peak Hour									
Red. Density Alt.	88	39	16	16	5	5	109	60	169
Proposed Project	111	51	24	24	6	6	141	81	222

Difference	-23	-12	-8	-8	-1	-1	-32	-21	-53
MD Peak Hour									
Red. Density Alt.	102	104	36	36	4	4	142	144	286
Proposed Project	125	126	54	54	5	5	184	185	369
Difference	-23	-22	-18	-18	-1	-1	-42	-41	-83
PM Peak Hour									
Red. Density Alt.	61	125	28	28	1	1	90	154	244
Proposed Project	81	153	40	40	2	2	123	195	318
Difference	-20	-28	-12	-12	-1	-1	-33	-41	-74

With a reduction of 22 to 24 percent in project-generated peak hour vehicle trips, the Reduced Density Alternative is expected to result in the same or a slightly fewer number of significant adverse traffic impacts than the proposed project, depending on the peak analysis hour. These impacts could be mitigated using the same mitigation measures identified for the proposed project.

For transit, the Lower Density Alternative would result in a reduction of approximately 31, 39, and 35 percent in project-generated peak hour transit (subway and bus) trips during the AM, midday, and PM peak hours, respectively. No detailed subway analysis would be warrant based on the *CEQR Technical Manual* threshold of 200 subway trips during any peak hour. Nonetheless, the bus line-haul impacts predicted for the proposed project would likely still occur, requiring the same type of mitigation. For pedestrians, the significant adverse impact predicted for the proposed project would be of lesser magnitude with approximately 30, 37, and 32 percent lower project-generated peak hour person trips realized by the Lower Density Alternative during the AM, midday, and PM peak hours, respectively. This impact could be similarly addressed with the same measures recommended to mitigate the proposed project's significant adverse pedestrian impact.

PARKING

Under this alternative, there would be a decrease in midday parking demand of approximately 18 to 22 percent and a decrease in overnight parking demand of approximately 25 percent as compared to the proposed project. However, there would also be 60 fewer parking spaces provided. Under the proposed project, there would be a parking shortfall at sites C, E, F, and I, in excess demand of 98 spaces which in turn would create an on-street parking shortfall of 42 spaces during the weekday midday period. It is anticipated that the excess demand could be accommodated with a slightly longer walking distance beyond a ¼ mile radius of the project area. It can be assumed that a similar shortfall would occur under the Reduced Density Alternative and can also be accommodated slightly beyond the ¼ mile radius.