# Chapter 17: Alternatives

## A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers the No Action Alternative and alternative(s) that would avoid or reduce the significant adverse impacts of the proposed Lenox Hill Hospital (LHH) Redevelopment project (the Proposed Project) to the extent practicable.

As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," Lenox Hill Hospital (the Applicant) is requesting a series of discretionary actions from the City Planning Commission (CPC) to facilitate the enlargement and modernization of the existing LHH on Block 1411, Lots 1 and 113 (Projected Development Site 1), bounded by Park and Lexington Avenues and East 76th and East 77th Streets in Manhattan. The Proposed Project would include a new building fronting on Lexington Avenue, as well as additions and modifications to portions of the existing hospital complex on Projected Development Site 1 and connections between the new hospital building and the renovated buildings. Two building envelopes are proposed, each of which would accommodate the Proposed Project's program. Envelope 1 would include a new approximately 771,000-gross-square-foot (gsf) building on Lexington Avenue and 56,000 gsf of additions to the existing hospital. Envelope 2 would include a new approximately 867,000-gsf building and 8,000 gsf of additions to the existing hospital. With the existing buildings to remain, the overall gross floor area of the Proposed Project on Projected Development Site 1 would be approximately 1.4 million gsf with either envelope. The program, project population (staff, patients, visitors), site access, zoning actions, and construction duration would be the same for both Envelope 1 and Envelope 2.

This Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) also considers the as-of-right development of a building with hospital support functions at 111-115 East 77th Street between Lexington and Park Avenues (Block 1412, Lots 9, 10, and 11) (Projected Development Site 1a) as part of the Proposed Project. It would be connected to Projected Development Site 1 by a utility tunnel under East 77th Street. In addition, the Applicant proposes to provide improvements to the 77th Street subway station of the Lexington Avenue (No. 6) line, providing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access to the downtown platform and improving sidewalk conditions in the immediate area.

Where relevant to the technical area being analyzed, this chapter provides separate consideration for Envelopes 1 and 2.

### PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

*NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE*

The No Action Alternative is the "Future without the Proposed Actions," or "No Action condition," as described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," and analyzed in Chapters 2 through 15.

With the No Action Alternative, the hospital complex will remain in its current form, with most ambulatory uses on the main hospital block (Projected Development Site 1) relocating to other facilities, including Projected Development Site 1a. Approximately 650 daily patients, 944 daily

visitors, and 257 staff members will be relocated (see Table 1-1) to facilities beyond the Project Site, including Northwell's as-of-right Third Avenue project, which is currently under development. In the No Action Alternative, these relocations will make approximately 13,500 square feet (sf) within the existing hospital available to convert a limited number of double-bedded rooms to single-bedded rooms (no change in the total number of beds) and will allow for reconfiguration of certain suboptimal spaces. However, the majority of the rooms will remain double-bedded, the operating rooms (ORs) and emergency department (ED) will remain undersized, ambulances will still be parked and double-parked along East 77th Street, and longer trucks will still extend out of the loading dock onto the sidewalk and East 76th Street. Under the No Action Alternative, the Applicant may redevelop Projected Development Site 1a, but the No Action Alternative in this analysis conservatively assumes that buildings on Projected Development Site 1a will continue to be used as-is, other than the above-mentioned relocations from the main hospital complex on Projected Development Site 1.

Without the discretionary actions needed to facilitate the enlargement and modernization of the existing LHH complex, the No Action Alternative would fall short of the Proposed Project in advancing public policy goals such as One NYC's goal for growth in emerging fields, promoting access to health care, and modernizing key infrastructure. It would be less supportive of the New York Works' goal of expanding new job opportunities in the life sciences and healthcare industry and of the City's LifeSci NYC efforts to redevelop space for advancing healthcare and meeting the growing needs of New Yorkers. In terms of community facilities and services, it would not provide any of the benefits of the Proposed Project, including 475 new and renovated single-bedded rooms, 30 state-of-the-art ORs, 48 ED treatment positions, a new entrance and lobby for the Mother-Baby Hospital, internal ambulance access, additional truck docks that are adequately sized and allow separation of clean and soiled material, and improved subway access to the downtown subway platform at East 77th Street. The No Action Alternative would not significantly upgrade the facilities of LHH nor enhance its ability to treat its patients. The No Action Alternative would not create 339 new jobs at the hospital. The No Action Alternative would not affect existing urban design and visual resources, but it also would not create a new hospital building with a major entrance in glass façade on Lexington Avenue, nor would it make other streetscape improvements.

The No Action Alternative would avoid the significant adverse shadow impacts and the temporary significant adverse construction noise impacts that would be expected to occur with the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2.

*NO SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACT ALTERNATIVE*

The 2021 *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual* requires that alternatives be considered that would avoid or reduce the potential significant adverse impacts—in this case caused by shadows and temporary construction noise. As described in Chapter 4, "Shadows," the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2 would cause significant adverse shadow impacts to the publicly accessible garden owned and maintained by the Eighth Church of Christ, Scientist, on the north side of East 77th Street. Therefore, additional shadow sensitivity studies were conducted to identify an alternative version of the Proposed Project that would not cause significant adverse shadow impacts to the garden. The analysis concluded, for reasons detailed below, that virtually any development on Projected Development Sites 1 or 1a that would be taller than the existing buildings would cause significant adverse shadow impacts on the March 21/September 21 analysis day. Therefore, significant adverse shadow impacts to the church garden

would be unavoidable and no alternative that would avoid a significant adverse shadow impact and meet the Proposed Project's purpose and need exists.

In order to completely avoid the significant adverse construction noise impacts identified in Chapter 16, "Construction," construction of the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2 would have to be restricted in such a manner so as to occur neither on the same block, nor within one block of any noise receptors, which would require elimination of the proposed rezoning in the vicinity of these sensitive receptors. This would severely limit any additional development and would not allow the Proposed Project to achieve its goals and objectives.

Mitigation measures have been identified for temporary noise impacts during construction. However, there is no alternative that would avoid a significant adverse temporary construction noise impact and produce a project that would satisfy the goals and objectives of the Proposed Project.

## B. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Absent approvals for the Proposed Project (the No Action Alternative), it would be impossible for LHH to undergo the proposed enlargement and modernization. Although most ambulatory services would be moved to other facilities, including the new building being constructed as-of-right on Third Avenue, the inpatient facilities and services would need to continue to occupy the existing buildings on the two Projected Development Sites.

In the No Action Alternative, the number of inpatient beds would not be increased from 450 to 475; of the 450 beds, only approximately 172 would be in single-bedded rooms. Twenty-five new ORs sized for advanced equipment, technology, surgical procedures, and larger surgical teams would not be built, and the five existing ORs would not be improved. The number of ED treatment positions would not be increased from 34 to 48, and the ED would not be expanded to approximately 41,500 sf. Further, the No Action Alternative would not provide the 339 new jobs created by the Proposed Project (see Chapter 1, "Project Description," Table 1-1).

Patients arriving by ambulance would still be transported from the curb across the sidewalk and into the hospital. There would continue to be too few truck docks and those docks would be too short for the trucks already coming to the hospital. Finally, subway access at the southwest corner of East 77th Street and Lexington Avenue would not be improved to provide a new and wider stairway, nor would it provide ADA access via a new elevator, a new ramp within the building line, or the expanded street level pedestrian circulation space that would result from these subway improvements.

### LAND USE, ZONING AND PUBLIC POLICY

The No Action Alternative, like the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2 , would be compatible with existing land use in the surrounding area and would not result in any significant adverse impacts to land use, zoning, or public policy. The No Action Alternative would not result in any substantial changes in the land use on Projected Development Site 1, as it would continue the existing hospital uses with no plans for the vacant rowhouses on Lexington Avenue at East 76th Street. The No Action Alternative would not require any modifications or changes to any zoning regulations, and as in existing conditions, none of the existing buildings on Projected Development Site 1 would comply with the current zoning district designations, other than the small four-story brownstones at the corner of Lexington Avenue and East 76th Street. In addition, the No Action Alternative would fall short of the Proposed Project in terms of advancing

OneNYC's goal for growth in emerging fields, promoting access to health care, and modernizing key infrastructure. It would be less supportive of New York Works' goal of expanding new job opportunities in the life sciences and healthcare industry, and of the City's LifeSci NYC efforts to redevelop space for advancing healthcare to meet the growing needs of New Yorkers.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The No Action Alternative would not improve LHH, as it would not provide 475 single-bedded rooms, 30 state-of-the-art ORs, 48 treatment positions in the ED, internal ambulance access, additional truck docks that are adequately sized and allow separation of clean and soiled material, and improved subway access for patients, staff, and everyone using the downtown platform at East 77th Street. It would not provide a new Mother-Baby Hospital entrance on Park Avenue, but rather would continue to present a series of blank facades to Park Avenue. The No Action Alternative would continue to serve patients within existing facilities, but unlike the Proposed Project, it would not provide significant improvements to LHH to expand state-of-the-art services and benefits to the community.

## SHADOWS

As compared to the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2, the No Action Alternative would not increase shadows and would avoid the significant adverse shadow impacts on the Eighth Church of Christ, Scientist garden at 103 East 77th Street.

## OPEN SPACE

The No Action Alternative would not cast any new shadows. Unlike the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2, it would not increase shadows on the Eighth Church of Christ, Scientist garden at 103 East 77th Street. As is the case with the Proposed Project, it would not displace or alter any open space and would not have a significant adverse open space impact. It would not bring any potential new users to the church garden, and it could continue to be used as intended for quiet relaxation and contemplation. The shadows would not increase in the church garden in the No Action Alternative, there would not be any significant adverse open space impacts.

## HISTORIC RESOURCES

As is the case with the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2, the No Action Alternative would not result in any significant adverse impacts to historic or cultural resources on the Projected Development Sites since there are no architectural resources on either site. Since there would be no construction in the No Action Alternative, there would be no need for Construction Protection Plans for the buildings in the Upper East Side Historic District within 90 feet of the Projected Development Sites or for the St. Jean Baptiste Church.

Neither the No Action Alternative nor the Proposed Project would result in any significant adverse visual or contextual impacts on architectural resources in the study area. While the Proposed Project would change the context of some nearby architectural resources, it would not cause any architectural resource to become a different visual entity or isolate an architectural resource from its setting or visual relationships with the streetscape, or otherwise impact the resource's visual prominence. The No Action Alternative would not involve any new construction, and, therefore, would not have the potential to result in construction-related impacts to architectural resources,

nor would it obstruct public views to historic architectural resources or result in any adverse contextual changes to nearby architectural resources.

## URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

In the No Action Alternative, it is assumed that the existing hospital complex would remain in its current form without any new construction. As there would be no changes to the exterior of the hospital complex in the No Action Alternative, there would be no effects on the urban design of the Projected Development Sites.

By contrast to the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2, in the No Action Alternative, there would be no new hospital pavilion standing approximately 395 to 436 feet (21 to 26 stories) tall with a glass-walled lobby fronting on Lexington Avenue, nor would there be an expanded sidewalk on Lexington Avenue. There would be no new weather protected stairway and elevator for access to the subway inside the building line, and the existing subway stairway would remain in the sidewalk along East 77th Street. There would be no ambulance bay on East 77th Street, and patients would have to be transported across the sidewalk to reach the emergency entrance. Ambulances would still double-park on the street, causing traffic congestion. On Park Avenue, there would be no new Mother-Baby Hospital entrance, and on East 76th Street, there would be no new truck docks long enough to accommodate larger trucks within the hospital buildings on Projected Development Site 1. Longer trucks in the existing docks would continue to extend onto the sidewalk and, in some cases, into the street.

The aging hospital buildings on Projected Development Site 1 would remain in place along with the two vacant brownstones on Lexington Avenue at East 76th Street. There would be no improvements to the streetscapes on any side of Projected Development Site 1 and no improved connectivity and access to the subway station.

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

In the No Action Alternative, there would be no major demolition and excavation on either Projected Development Site. There would be no requirement for a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment to identify potential sources of contamination and there would be no requirement for a Phase II Subsurface Investigation and subsequent Remedial Action Plan/Construction Health and Safety Plan developed in consultation with the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Neither the Proposed Project with Envelope 1 or Envelope 2 nor the No Action Alternative would result in any significant adverse impact with respect to hazardous materials.

## WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

As compared to the Proposed Project with either Envelope 2 or Envelope 2, there would be a reduction in patients, visitors, and staff with the No Action Alternative; therefore, sanitary sewage generation on Projected Development Site 1 would be less in the No Action Alternative as compared with the Proposed Project. The buildings on Projected Development Site 1a would continue in their current use as hospital support space, and there would be no change to sanitary sewage generation on that site in the No Action Alternative; there would be a similar reduction in sanitary discharge to the Wards Island Wastewater Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF), which would continue to operate within its design capacity.

For both the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2 and the No Action Alternative, there would be no changes to the surface area of the Project Site (Projected Development Sites 1 and 1a), as it would remain fully covered by rooftop area.

The Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2 would result in minor incremental increases in demand for water and treatment of sewage; however, neither the Proposed Project nor the No Action Alternative would result in significant adverse impacts on the City's water and sewer infrastructure.

## TRANSPORTATION

As described above, in the No Action Alternative, no LHH buildings would be demolished or redeveloped; however, LHH would relocate most ambulatory services to ancillary sites. Therefore, compared to existing conditions, the No Action Alternative would result in a net decrease in peak hour vehicle, transit, and pedestrian trips. Similarly, the No Action Alternative would result in fewer Project Site generated trips as compared to the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2. As is the case for the Proposed Project, the No Action Alternative would not cause any significant adverse transportation impacts.

### *TRAFFIC*

The No Action Alternative would result in 43, 17, and 43 fewer vehicle trips during the weekday AM, midday, and PM peak hours, respectively, as compared to the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2. As is the case for the Proposed Project, the No Action Alternative would not cause any significant adverse impacts on traffic.

### *PARKING*

The *CEQR Technical Manual* states that if a quantified traffic analysis is not required, an assessment of parking supply and utilization is also not warranted. Therefore, as a result of the conclusions described above for traffic, an on- and off-street parking analysis is not required, and the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2 would not result in any significant adverse parking impacts.

### *TRANSIT*

The No Action Alternative would result in 107, 4, and 112 fewer person trips by subway during the weekday AM, midday, and PM peak hours, respectively, as compared to the Proposed Project. Therefore, as is the case for the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2, the No Action Alternative would not cause any significant adverse subway impacts.

The No Action Alternative would result in 23, 3, and 24 fewer person trips by bus during the weekday AM, midday, and PM peak hours, respectively, as compared to the Proposed Project. As is the case for the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2, the No Action Alternative would not cause any significant adverse bus impacts.

### *PEDESTRIANS*

The No Action Alternative would result in 186, 105, and 199 fewer pedestrian trips during the weekday AM, midday, and PM peak hours, respectively, as compared to the Proposed Project. As is the case for the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2, the No Action Alternative would not cause any significant adverse pedestrian impacts.

## AIR QUALITY

As is the case for the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2, the No Action Alternative would not result in any significant adverse impacts to mobile source air quality. The No Action Alternative would not generate any new traffic; however, even the Proposed Project's projected maximum hourly incremental increase in traffic would not exceed the *CEQR Technical Manual* carbon monoxide (CO) screening, nor would it exceed the particulate matter (PM) emissions screening threshold discussed in Chapter 17, Sections 210 and 311, of the *CEQR Technical Manual*.

In the No Action Alternative, the energy for heating and processing steam and hot water needs would continue to be supplied by the Con Edison steam system (except for the LHH kitchen, which uses natural gas). No changes to existing laboratory spaces would be anticipated with the No Action Alternative. The analysis of potential gas-fired kitchen equipment associated with the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2 determined that no significant adverse air quality impacts would occur, which would be the same in the No Action Alternative.

## GREENHOUSE GASES AND CLIMATE CHANGE

As compared with the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2, the No Action Alternative would not require consideration of greenhouse gas (GHG) and climate change. In general, emissions associated with the No Action Alternative are expected to decrease in the future as the building would be covered under Local Law 97's carbon intensity limits and as New York State and New York City (NYC) target 100 percent renewable electricity; however, the No Action Alternative would not be required to achieve the energy efficiency requirements of the NYC Building Code and the 2020 Energy Conservation Code of New York State (2020 ECCNYS), which substantially increased the stringency of the building energy efficiency requirements and adopted the ASHRAE 90.1-2016 standard as a benchmark to align with the NYS Energy Code 2020 developed by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA).

With no new construction for the No Action Alternative, there would be none of the GHG emissions associated with construction of the Proposed Project, including direct emissions and upstream emissions associated with construction materials.

The No Action Alternative would align with other GHG goals by virtue of its proximity to public transportation. However, it would not be required to align with the City's emissions reduction goals, as defined in the *CEQR Technical Manual*.

## NOISE

As with the Proposed Project, there would be no significant adverse operational noise impacts in the No Action Alternative, as neither alternative would generate sufficient traffic to cause a significant mobile source noise impact.

## PUBLIC HEALTH

As with the Proposed Project, the No Action Alternative would not result in unmitigated significant adverse impacts in the areas of air quality, water quality, hazardous materials, or operational noise. Compared with the Proposed Project, the No Action Alternative would not result in unmitigated temporary significant adverse noise impacts on the façades of two residential buildings and various portions of LHH on Projected Development Site 1.

### NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

As with the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2, the No Action Alternative would not result in significant adverse impacts to land use, zoning, and public policy; open space; urban design and visual resources; transportation; or noise. However, the No Action Alternative would not result in the benefits of the Proposed Project, such as the activation of the streetscape, the strengthening of an existing neighborhood community facility institution, and access improvements to the local subway station.

### CONSTRUCTION NOISE

The No Action Alternative would avoid the significant adverse temporary construction noise impacts that would occur with the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2.

## C. NO SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACT ALTERNATIVE

### SHADOWS

*CEQR* requires that alternatives be considered that would avoid or reduce the potential significant adverse impacts. As described in detail in Chapter 4, "Shadows," the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2 would cause significant adverse shadow impacts to the publicly accessible garden owned and maintained by the Eighth Church of Christ, Scientist, on the north side of East 77th Street. Therefore, additional shadow sensitivity studies were conducted to identify an alternative to avoid or reduce significant adverse shadow impacts to the garden. As described below, the analysis concluded that virtually any development on Projected Development Sites 1 or 1a that would be taller than the existing buildings would cause significant adverse shadow impacts on the March 21/September 21 analysis day. Therefore, the significant adverse shadow impacts to the church garden would be unavoidable.

*REDUCTION IN HEIGHT ON PROJECTED DEVELOPMENT SITE 1*

Even if the new building on Projected Development Site 1 were reduced to a height of approximately 236 feet, which would only include an approximately 50-foot (approximately 3 hospital stories) increase in height above the tallest existing hospital buildings (Lachman and Main), the shadow increment would fall on portions of the garden between 11:00 AM and 3:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) and would eliminate all the remaining sun on the garden for an hour and 35 minutes during that period. In addition to this significant reduction in available sunlight for users of the garden in the middle of the day, the canopies of certain trees that already receive substandard amounts of direct sunlight (1 to 2 hours) would lose an additional 1 to 1.5 hours of shadow, reducing their total direct sunlight to a half-hour or less. Another tree canopy would receive 3.5 hours of sunlight rather than 4.5 hours. These reductions would likely significantly affect the health of the trees.

Consequently, given the above data, the additional shadow studies concluded that any potential development on Projected Development Site 1 that would result in a structure even marginally taller than the existing hospital would cause significant adverse shadow impacts to the church garden on the March 21/September 21 analysis dates. Further, the above analysis results assumed no redevelopment of Projected Development Site 1a.

The garden, a narrow space surrounded by multi-story buildings, does not receive much direct sunlight over the course of the March 21/September 21 representative date under existing

conditions, and some areas of the tree canopy and ground level plantings receive substandard sunlight. Therefore, virtually any non-negligible additional shadow would be expected to cause significant impacts to the trees and plantings.

*REDUCTION IN HEIGHT ON PROJECTED DEVELOPMENT SITE 1A*

The as-of-right building that is assumed for Projected Development Site 1a, adjacent to the church garden, would be 35 feet taller than the existing buildings. Any increase in height on Projected Development Site 1a would cast an incremental shadow on the church garden. As shown in Figures 4-7, 4-8, 4-13, 4-14, and 4-15 in Chapter 4, "Shadows," which show shadows falling to the west, the as-of-right building would cast significant shadows on the garden.

Additional shadow studies were conducted that assumed only Projected Development Site 1a would be redeveloped while Projected Development Site 1 remained as-is, and these concluded that the incremental shadow from the 35-foot height increase would fall on portions of the garden for three and a half hours (10:50 AM to 2:20 PM EDT), eliminating almost all of the direct sunlight between 12:30 PM and 1:00 PM EDT. Further, the incremental shadow would fall on the tree canopies for three hours, reducing their total duration of direct sunlight from between 4 and 6 hours to between 1 and 3 hours, likely significantly affecting the health of those trees.

The analysis concluded that any new building on Projected Development Site 1a with a maximum height even marginally taller than the existing buildings, irrespective of redevelopment on Projected Development Site 1, would result in significant adverse shadow impacts to the church garden.

As noted above regarding Projected Development Site 1, on the fall and early spring representative dates when shadows are of moderate length, surrounding buildings block a substantial amount of direct sunlight for much of the day under existing conditions, and virtually any non-negligible additional shadow would be expected to cause significant impacts to the trees and plantings as well as the user experience.

Therefore, a reduction in height on Projected Development Site 1a to avoid a shadow impact would have to be shorter than the as-of-right building, and a building that is smaller than an as-of-right development would not be logical and would not fulfill the Proposed Project's purpose and need.

**CONSTRUCTION NOISE**

Construction activity for the Proposed Project with either Envelope 1 or Envelope 2 is expected to follow the requirements of the NYC Noise Control Code. However, the implementation of these measures, as well as additional source and path controls beyond the NYC regulations committed for the construction of the Proposed Project, would not eliminate the identified temporary significant adverse construction noise impacts predicted to occur during hours when the loudest pieces of construction equipment are in use. In order to completely avoid significant adverse construction noise impacts, project-generated construction would have to be restricted in such a manner so as to occur neither on the same block nor within one block of any noise receptors, which would require elimination of the proposed rezoning in the vicinity of these sensitive receptors. This would severely limit achievable development density and the Proposed Actions' goals and objectives. Therefore, no reasonable alternative could be developed to avoid the temporary unmitigated construction-period noise impact without substantially compromising the Proposed Project's stated goals. ✷