3.21 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the alternatives analysis is to examine reasonable alternatives to the proposed action that avoid or reduce action-related significant adverse impacts but which may still allow for the achievement of the stated goals and objectives of the proposed action. The proposed action would result in unmitigated significant adverse effects related to Community Facilities (e.g., day care facilities), Historic Resources, and Traffic (see Chapter 3.23, "Unavoidable Adverse Impacts). Three alternatives to the proposed action are considered: a No-Action Alternative, a No-Impact Alternative, and a Lower Density Alternative. It is worth noting that like the proposed action, the No-Action Alternative would result in a significant adverse impact to publicly funded day care facilities, as they would be overburdened with or without the proposed action; otherwise, the No-Action and No-Impact alternatives would not result in significant adverse impacts. The No-Action and No-Impact alternatives would not meet project goals, however, and therefore are not feasible alternatives to the proposed action. The Lower Density Alternative would result in significant adverse impacts to Community Facilities, Historic Resources and Traffic, similar to those impacts resulting from the proposed action.

In accordance with the Lower Concourse Rezoning and Related Actions Scoping Document, this chapter includes the analysis of the following alternatives:

No-Action (As-of-Right) Alternative
Consideration of a No-Action Alternative is required under CEQR. The No-Action (As-of- Right) Alternative examines future conditions within the proposed rezoning area but assumes the absence of the proposed action. This alternative provides a baseline for the evaluation of impacts associated with the proposed action. As such, description of the No-Action Alternative is included within each of the technical analysis areas covered in Chapters 3.1 to 3.20.

No-Impact Alternative
The No-Impact Alternative examines a scenario in which the density and program design of the proposed action is changed specifically to avoid the potential significant adverse impacts associated with the proposed action. The proposed action would result in potential significant impacts (identified in Chapters 3.1 to 3.20) related to traffic, air quality and noise as well as community facilities (day care facilities); all impacts except for the impact to day care and certain impacts associated with traffic would be mitigated with the proposed action. Traffic analyses indicate that there is no rezoning action that would result in no traffic impacts, and consequently, there is no feasible no-impact alternative, as described more fully in this chapter; consequently, the No-Impact Alternative would not meet the objectives of the proposed action and therefore would not be a feasible alternative to the proposed action.

Lower Density Alternative
Comments received during the public scoping process requested analysis of an alternative that would have additional commercial rezoning options along the Grand Concourse and retain, to a greater extent than the proposed action, the industrial character of blocks east of Park Avenue that would host mixed-use development under the proposed action. In response, a Lower Density Alternative has been identified that would replace the proposed C6-2A District on the Grand Concourse with a C4-4D District, maintain M1-2 zoning on three RWCDS projected sites east of Park Avenue, and allow an industrial use (Use Group 16C) on one waterfront site. This Lower Density Alternative would result in lower commercial floor area ratio (FAR) on the Grand Concourse than the proposed action, with the same allowable FAR for residential and community facility development as the proposed action. Lastly, the Lower Density Alternative would not permit residential development or conversions in the area between Canal Place and Rider Avenue between East 140th and East 142nd Streets, which would otherwise be zoned for mixed-use development under the proposed action. This area would remain zoned M1-2. The Lower Density Alternative would result in 276 fewer residential units than projected for the proposed action.

The full benefits of establishing a new mixed-use community with affordable housing and promoting contextual development on waterfront and upland blocks in the rezoning area would not be realized under the Lower Density Alternative to the extent that they would under the proposed action. Under the Lower Density Alternative, only three of four projected RWCDS sites facing the waterfront would be developed with mixed-use development.

Comparison of Alternatives

The development scenario implications of each alternative are summarized in Table 3.21-1 below and compared to the No-Action condition of the RWCDS for the 31 projected development sites identified in the proposed action. As shown in the table, the total net number of dwelling units and amount of projected development would vary with each of the identified alternatives. The RWCDS tables for the Lower Density Alternative are presented in Appendix C of this DEIS.

Table 3.21-1:
Alternatives Comparison of RWCDS Projected Development Site Developments Increment by Use

Alternative	Use/Intensity								
	Total DUs	Affordable DUs	Retail	Office	Hotel	Storage/ Manu-facturing	Park-land	Com-munity Facility	Vacant Land/ Building Area
Proposed Action	3,414	591	571,162	-598,351	164,285	-308,872	98,446	63,700	0
No-Action Alternative	2	0	106,358	598,351	0	404,372	0	90,589	93,142
No Impact Alternative	——	——	——	——	——	——	——	——	——
Lower Density Alternative	3,138	547	477,808	-494,351	108,460	-228,886*	98,446	63,700	0

*Not including a Con Ed Muster Center/Workout Station on RWCDS site #4.

For each of the technical areas presented in this DEIS, the anticipated effects of the proposed action are compared to those that would result from each of the alternatives. The purpose of this analysis, as set forth by the *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, is to provide decision makers with the opportunity to consider reasonable alternatives or planning scenarios that could achieve the goals and objectives of the proposed action and that could potentially reduce or eliminate significant adverse impacts identified in the DEIS.

3.21.1 NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Consideration of the No-Action Alternative mandated by CEQR provides the lead agency with an assessment of the consequences of not selecting the proposed action or any of the "Build" alternatives. As analyzed under "Future Without the Proposed Action" in Chapters 3.1 through 3.20, the No-Action Alternative also provides a baseline against which impacts of the proposed action may be compared.

The No-Action Alternative assumes that the proposed zoning changes and actions facilitating the redevelopment of multiple parcels within the proposed Lower Concourse rezoning area, as well as modifications to food store regulations in M1-4 Districts in Bronx Community District 1, would not be implemented. In addition, the No-Action Alternative assumes no zoning text amendments to establish the new Special Harlem River Waterfront District (SHRWD) and Harlem River Waterfront Access Plan (WAP); and no related amendments to the zoning map or zoning text to change underlying zoning districts to indicate SHRWD boundaries; no modification of food store regulations within M1-4 Districts in Community District 1, or promulgation of the Inclusionary Housing program in the proposed rezoning area. No amendments to

the City Map would be implemented to establish a park between the Harlem River and Exterior Street south of approximately East 146th Street and north of approximately East 144th Street. The No-Action Alternative would not require any discretionary actions.

Under the No-Action Alternative, existing zoning controls would remain in place. The rezoning area would experience some growth in commercial office and warehouse/manufacturing uses. The decline of industrial uses in the rezoning area would continue, resulting in a high degree of vacant and underutilized land and buildings. Development in the future without the proposed action is expected to consist primarily of automotive service, warehouse, and personal self-storage facilities, a continuation of recent development trends. In the absence of the proposed action, new development would not include new residential development, and the waterfront area would not be enhanced or upgraded.

As-of-right development would occur on 14 of the 31 projected development sites identified by DCP in the rezoning area under the No-Action Alternative. In total, the as-of-right development without the proposed action would consist of 1,195 square feet (sf) of retail space; 598,351 sf of office space; and 53,990 sf of community facility space along with a decrease of 128,254 sf of warehouse/manufacturing space. A total of 227 parking spaces would be expected to occur on 14 of the 31 RWCDS sites.

In addition to the projected development on 14 sites in the proposed rezoning area described above, there are ten known development sites in the vicinity of the proposed rezoning area that are expected to be developed in the No-Action Alternative independent of the proposed action. The ten development sites would result in 479 dwelling units and would also contain a total of 1,000,000 sf of retail floor area, 280,000 sf of community facility space and 2,617 parking spaces. The largest of these is the Gateway Center at Bronx Terminal Market retail development (now under construction) that will bring major new retail development and associated amenities to the formerly industrial portions of the South Bronx waterfront, just north of the proposed rezoning area. No construction of affordable housing would be anticipated in the rezoning area under the No-Action Alternative.

The effects of the No-Action Alternative are summarized below, according to each of the technical areas prescribed by CEQR, and they are compared to respective effects, if any, attributable to the proposed action.

Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy

Current land use trends and general development patterns within the rezoning area would continue under the No-Action Alternative. The area would remain mostly industrial in character with numerous vacant and underutilized buildings. Limited, discrete redevelopment which comprises recent growth trends would continue in

accordance with existing zoning. To date, there has been little development supporting an active street life character, nor has new housing development occurred within the rezoning area.

Certain benefits expected to result from the proposed action would be notable: the introduction of market-rate and affordable housing units to an area that has sufficient mass transit access; the activation of area streetscapes with mixed-use development, serving to enliven the area during day and evening hours; opening up access to the Harlem River; facilitating establishment of new food stores; and facilitating the redevelopment of vacant or underutilized lots. None of these benefits associated with the proposed action would be achieved under the No-Action Alternative.

As with the proposed action, no significant adverse land use, zoning or public policy impacts would be attributable to the No-Action Alternative. However, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the land use, zoning and public policy goals of the proposed actions and its SHRWD.

Socioeconomics

Future socioeconomic conditions with the No-Action Alternative would not include the substantial increase in the number of households and residential population that would otherwise result from the proposed action, specifically as a result of the mapping of mixed-use zoning districts. The creation of affordable housing through use of Inclusionary Housing would also not occur in the rezoning area under the No-Action Alternative.

Under the No-Action Alternative, the socioeconomic study area would experience a continuation of socioeconomic trends of the last decade. Development in the future without the proposed action is expected to consist of automotive service, warehouse, and personal self-storage facilities. In the RWCDS, DCP has identified 31 projected development sites within the rezoning area. Under the No Action Alternative, additional as-of-right development totaling 1,195 sf of retail space, 598,351 sf of office space, and 53,990 sf of community facility space would occur, along with a decrease of 128,254 sf of warehouse/manufacturing space. A total of 227 parking spaces would be expected to occur on 14 of the 31 RWCDS sites.

Incremental increases in commercial and residential rents and property values would not occur in the No-Action Alternative to the extent they would under the proposed action. The direct displacement of five residential units as a result of the proposed action would not occur under the No-Action Alternative, and low income households in unprotected units in the rezoning and socioeconomic primary study area would not be subject to indirect displacement pressures as a result of development generated by the proposed action.

With regard to business conditions the No-Action Alternative assumes the conversion of industrial and vacant space in the rezoning area to office space by 2018, a likely scenario given rising rents and a decrease in industrial employment in the area and citywide. An estimated 2,992 employees would be expected with the development of nearly 600,000 sf of office space under this alternative. This estimate, however, is based only on known or anticipated future commercial developments and does not account for continued decreases in manufacturing employment or continued growth in other employment sectors.

It is likely that manufacturing employment would continue to decrease under the No-Action Alternative as a result of RWCDS development in the rezoning area, and in the primary socioeconomic study area, similar to recent trends in the Bronx, which experienced an 18 percent decline in manufacturing employment between 1990 and 2000 and growth within the retail and services industries. Manufacturing and industrial employment in the project area is expected to be replaced with office-based employment in the services industries as well as retail employment. Direct and indirect business displacement effects would be lower than under the proposed action. Significant adverse impacts in these areas, as well as significant adverse impacts on specific industries, would not be anticipated.

With regard to housing and population levels under the No-Action Alternative, the socioeconomic study area is expected to gain approximately 2,577 housing units between 2008 and 2018 without the proposed action. This estimate is based on the number of building permits filed with the NYC Department of Buildings between 2000 and 2008 in the primary study area. Almost none of the projected growth would be anticipated to occur in the proposed action area. Of the 2,577 units, 479 will be constructed by the New York City Housing Development Corporation in four distinct projects that are either under construction currently, or closing on their construction loans by the end of 2008.

Assuming that these new units would have an average household size of 2.81 persons per household and that vacancy rates would remain at their 2000 levels, the 2,577 new units would be expected to house approximately 6,714 residents, bringing the total population in the socioeconomic study area to 71,671 in 2018.

As with the proposed action, no significant adverse socioeconomics impacts would be attributable to the No-Action Alternative. However, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the goals and objectives of the proposed actions.

Community Facilities and Services

Under the No-Action Alternative, it is anticipated that the community facilities study area will experience an incremental addition of 479 dwelling units that are expected to generate 187 new elementary students, 77 new intermediate school students, and 91 new

high school students. Elementary schools in this half-mile radius study area are expected to operate below capacity in 2018 absent the proposed action. Total elementary enrollment in the study area would be approximately 7,729, with a utilization rate of 89 percent. Overall, elementary schools in Community School District (CSD) 7 are expected to collectively operate at 82 percent capacity. Intermediate schools in the half-mile study area are expected to operate with an enrollment of 1,883 students, and at 52 percent capacity in 2018 absent the proposed action. This change in population would be relatively small and is not expected to overburden library services at either the Mott Haven or Melrose branch libraries. The projected No-Action development is expected to generate another 206 children under age six who would potentially be eligible for publicly funded day care. This would represent a nine percent increase in demand on day care centers within the study area, which are already operating at 103 percent of their capacity. In the No-Action Alternative, day care and Head Start centers within one mile of the study area would continue to operate above capacity, as they do in the existing condition.

The change in population would be relatively small and is not expected to overburden library services at either the Mott Haven or Melrose branch libraries. For health care services, there would be adequate capacity to support the existing population and the No-Action Alternative growth. The NYPD and FDNY would continue to adjust their allocation of personnel as needs arise.

In the No Action Alternative, the demand for publicly funded day care would continue to increase, and the shortfalls in the number of available slots would be exacerbated; otherwise, no significant adverse impact to community facilities and services would occur under this alternative. However, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the goals and objectives of the proposed actions.

Open Space

Under the No Action Alternative, the projected population increase of 5,073 residents plus the 1,641 additional residents associated with identified development projects completed by 2018 would add 6,714 new residents to the residential study area for a total population of 71,671 residents in 2018. There would be total worker population of 28,301 in the residential study area in 2018 under the No Action Alternative. Combining the 71,671 No Action residential population with the 28,301 No Action worker population would yield approximately 99,972 combined residents and workers within the residential study area.

Seven open space resources would be added to the existing inventory of publicly accessible open space within the residential study area in the No Action Alternative; three of the seven open spaces would be developed within the non-residential study area. Four of the seven open spaces would be associated with the new Yankee Stadium development project, one as a part of the Gateway Center project (to be developed by DPR), one as a part of the new Melrose Commons Site 5 residential project, and one as

part of the Mott Haven School Campus. All of the proposed parkland associated with the new Yankee Stadium development project would be completed prior to 2018. The new Yankee Stadium open spaces consist of the River Avenue pocket parks (#26 and #27), waterfront esplanade (#28), and the Harlem River waterfront public open space (#29). Both pocket parks are located outside of the non-residential study area. The Yankee Stadium development project also includes the development of two open spaces just outside the study area; a primarily active (though with some passive space) open spaces resource on the south side of 161st Street, the site of the existing stadium, and a portion of Macomb's Dam Park (existing) will be improved with active open space atop a parking garage.

The Gateway Center project would include a new waterfront open space resource (#30), to be constructed on Piers 4 and 5, just to the south of the Yankee Stadium open spaces at the northwest portion of the non-residential and residential study areas along the waterfront.

Melrose Commons Site 5 (#31) would be developed as part of the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area, which is expected to include 63 new dwelling units at the northeast portion of the residential study area; although neither would be open to the public on a regular basis, they are included here to facilitate a qualitative discussion of open space and are not included in the quantitative analysis of open space resources. The proposed Mott Haven School Campus (#32) would include an outdoor plaza and athletic fields on the east side of the campus. Both of these open space resources would be located outside the non-residential study area.

In the No-Action Alternative, the available active open space ratio in the residential study area would be 0.36 acres per 1,000 residents, an increase of 0.05 acres from existing conditions. The passive open space ratio for the residential study area would be 0.28 acres per 1,000 residents, or an increase of 0.02 acres over existing conditions. The recommended weighted average ratio would also increase to 0.40 acres per 1,000 combined resident and worker populations. The total open space ratio for residents in the No-Action Alternative is 0.64 acres per 1,000 residents in the residential study area and 0.22 acres per 1,000 residents in the non-residential study area. The recommended open space ratio is 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents and 0.15 acres of passive open space per 1,000 non-residents. The total open space acreage is less than the recommended for the residential study areas.

As with the proposed action, open space ratios would fall short of DCP goals. However, the open space assets that would be developed in the No-Action Alternative would provide a qualitative enhancement to open space resources in the study area, and as with the proposed action, the decline in open space ratios would be ameliorated by various open space resources located just outside the open space study area including the existing St. Mary's Park, Joyce Kilmer Park, and the replacement active open spaces associated with the Yankee Stadium development project. Ballfields proposed as a part of the Yankee Stadium development project would provide a new source of active open

space, and pedestrian paths and bikeways would connect to open space resources from beyond the study area. New passive open spaces developed as part of the Gateway Center, within the residential study area, would provide new passive recreational opportunities. These new passive open spaces would allow strolling and observation opportunities along the Harlem River, with new paths and benches situated within them. Nonetheless, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the goals and objectives of the proposed action.

Shadows

Anticipated developments under the No-Action Alternative that are relevant to the analysis of shadow impacts due to their light sensitive components include the open spaces associated with the Gateway Center at Bronx Terminal Market project, the Mott Haven School Campus, the Yankee Stadium project, and the Manhattan Waterfront Greenway. New shadows cast on shadow-sensitive resources under the No-Action Alternative by known developments would include incremental shadows on Macombs Dam Park and a newly proposed waterfront park north of East 149th Street that is to be constructed as a result of the four-story Gateway Center at Bronx Terminal Market retail development. However, these incremental shadows would not meet any of the criteria that would lead to a significant adverse shadow impact based on shadow coverage. Likewise, new development associated with the proposed action would result in no significant impacts related to shadow effects on sunlight sensitive resources.

As with the proposed action, no significant adverse shadows impacts would be attributable to the No-Action Alternative. However, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the goals and objectives of the proposed action.

Historic Resources

Under the No-Action Alternative, no historic resources would be directly affected by No-Action development on identified projected or potential RWCDS sites. However, some development as a result of new construction of other known educational, housing and retail facilities is expected to occur in the future without the action. The two major new construction projects are the Gateway Center at Bronx Terminal Market and the Mott Haven School Campus, both located to the north of the rezoning area. The development of the Gateway Center at Bronx Terminal Market will include the restoration and reuse of Building D, part of the former Terminal Market, and the complex's sole remaining historic resource.

Under the No-Action Alternative, none of these developments and conversions would directly affect listed or eligible historic resources. One historic resource, Public School 31, is located across the street and within 90 feet of RWCDS projected development site #7, which is expected to be developed in the future without the proposed action as classrooms and office space for Hostos Community College. As a listed New York City landmark, Public School 31 is subject to construction protection plans under *TPPN 10/88*

and therefore is not expected to be adversely affected by nearby construction. No additional historic resources are located either on, or within 90 feet of, projected development sites under the future without the proposed action. Therefore, the future without the proposed action would not be expected to cause inadvertent construction-related effects to historic resources through adjacent construction. Similarly, LPC has determined that the proposed action would not result in significant adverse effects to historic resources.

As with the proposed action, no significant adverse historic resources impacts would be attributable to the No-Action Alternative. However, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the goals and objectives of the proposed action.

Urban Design and Visual Resources

The non-residential RWCDS development projected under the No-Action Alternative would improve urban design conditions in the rezoning study area to the extent that it would replace vacant land and fill in certain gaps in the streetwall as RWCDS sites are built out. The built environment would become slightly more dense as a result of anticipated growth in the No-Action Alternative (e.g., without the proposed rezoning) and some vacant space in the rezoning study area would likely be reused. However, development that would occur in the future without the proposed action would not be part of an overall zoning strategy that seeks to create incentives for new mixed-use development and to balance new building form with the built scale and character of the area. Development within the rezoning study area from construction on RWCDS sites would likely continue to be characterized by single-use industrial and office development, and utilitarian self storage facilities that would not be expected to enhance urban design conditions, as opposed to the specific contextual envelopes that would be required for development on those sites under the proposed action. Industrial and office development along East 138th Street likely would not foster an active streetscape, and the development of industrial space on the Harlem River likely would not include public access or accommodation of view corridors.

Outside the rezoning area, planned parkland improvements will benefit urban design conditions with the addition of landscaping improvements, enhanced open space, and associated streetscape improvements. Three parkland projects are expected to occur by 2018 just north of the primary study area, in addition to the Bronx Terminal Market Waterfront Park. These include the River Avenue Pocket Parks project, with two parks proposed at the northeast and southeast corners of River Avenue and East 157th Street as part of the redevelopment of Yankee Stadium.

Other than the multiple blocks covered by the Gateway Center at Bronx Terminal Market project, changes of block form and arrangement are not anticipated area under the No-Action Alternative, and significant adverse impacts on natural features and topography are also not expected.

Significant adverse impacts to existing views of visual resources are not anticipated in the No-Action Alternative. Development of RWCDS sites is expected to enhance visual conditions in the rezoning area, replacing land now used for parking and underutilized sites with new, non-residential development.

Waterfront views of the Harlem River from public locations such as the Madison Avenue Bridge would not be obstructed, although industrial expansion on RWCDS Site #4 would increase the density of the Waterfront subarea, replacing partial views of the Harlem River from Exterior Street through privately owned vacant land with views of industrial or warehouse development. Views of the Harlem River waterfront from public places in the rezoning study area are expected to continue to be impeded by lack of access and fenced industrial uses west of Exterior Street.

The primary study area developments under the No-Action Alternative would also include site-specific visual improvements that are not anticipated to have substantial negative effects on views of visual resources. New waterfront parkland will provide opportunities for public access and waterfront views. Rehabilitation and reuse of Building D of the Bronx Terminal Market will improve visual conditions of this long-vacant building that is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. According to the *FEIS for the Gateway Center at Bronx Terminal Market* (New York City Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development and Rebuilding, December 7, 2005, CEQR #04DME017X), views from Exterior Street [in the southern portions of the urban design study area] to the Harlem River waterfront would be improved with the addition of public open space as a result of the Gateway Center project, and the Mott Haven School complex would visually enhance the streetscape by replacing a vacant lot with active use.

As with the proposed action, no significant adverse impacts to urban design would be attributable to the No-Action Alternative. However, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the goals and objectives of the proposed action.

Neighborhood Character

The No-Action alternative would not result in the benefits to neighborhood character associated with the proposed action, as it would not include beneficial mixed-use development, new public waterfront access, and changes to building envelopes and use placements that would relate new buildings to the existing context of the street. With respect to socioeconomic character, the No-Action Alternative would include a continuation of the trends that have resulted in the area being a largely underutilized industrial area with little residential population and limited economic growth. With respect to traffic, increased congestion and reductions in levels of service would be expected to be present at most intersections under the No Action scenario, and with that, the noise would be escalated as well, although the changes would not meet a perceptible level of difference given the relatively high ambient noise levels in the area created by highway and rail infrastructure.

As with the proposed action, no significant adverse impacts to neighborhood character would be attributable to the No-Action Alternative. However, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the goals and objectives of the proposed action.

Natural Resources

As the upland areas of the study area are generally urbanized and largely devoid of natural resources, future No-Action conditions within upland portions of the study area would not result in significant adverse impacts on the condition of natural resources. No substantial change in the Harlem River is expected to occur; failing bulkheads in the study area may undergo in-kind replacement or repair as waterfront sites are developed. Because the shoreline in the study area is composed of structural components that includes segments in poor to critical condition, it is likely that some of these areas will need to be rehabilitated in order to maintain the existing adjacent land uses, potentially requiring temporary disturbance of a very small area of shoreline aquatic habitat. Groundwater conditions and the status of the floodplain and coastal resources are not expected to change from existing conditions. With regard to wildlife, no change in the status of site utilization by wildlife is expected to occur. The occasional utilization of the rezoning area by transient avian species and the function of the Harlem River as a passage for aquatic species are expected to continue under the No-Action Alternative.

Under the No-Action Alternative, no development within wetland areas would occur. As a result of another no-action project, tidal wetland adjacent area disturbance is anticipated as a result of development of public open space to be developed on the waterfront north of East 149th Street related to the Gateway Center at Bronx Terminal Market retail development. According to the *Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Gateway Center at Bronx Terminal Market*, this off-site disturbance would include replacement of existing, disturbed and sparsely vegetated adjacent area with landscaped public open space, which would not be expected to have significant impacts, and which could have a beneficial ecological effect on the adjacent area. No changes to existing site conditions within the rezoning area as they relate to wetlands would occur under the No-Action Alternative.

As with the proposed action, no significant adverse impacts to Natural Resources would be attributable to the No-Action Alternative. However, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the goals and objectives of the proposed action.

Hazardous Materials

With the No-Action Alternative, as-of-right construction under current zoning would occur with less regulatory oversight than with the proposed action, such that residual contamination could potentially be encountered by construction workers or the general public. However, it may be assumed that all construction and required removal or

handling of hazardous materials would be conducted in accordance with applicable state and federal requirements, thereby minimizing the potential for exposure.

The proposed action would involve more sites that potentially have hazardous material issues that would otherwise remain undisturbed under the No-Action Alternative. However, as the proposed action contemplates the inclusion of (E) designations, the opportunity for increased exposure to hazardous materials would be foreclosed.

With the proposed (E) designations, development sites that may contain hazardous materials are required to perform subsurface investigations, tank removals, remediation, asbestos abatement, and prepare construction health and safety plans in accordance with a NYCDEP approved, site specific, Sampling and Remediation Work Plans. Under the No-Action Alternative, some of these requirements would be met through the applicable state and federal requirements as well as local laws regarding asbestos and lead paint abatement. Under the No-Action alternative, however, there would be no agreements between NYCDEP and the owning agency for the appropriate remediation of City-owned sites prior to development.

As with the proposed action, no significant adverse impacts to hazardous materials would be attributable to the No-Action Alternative. However, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the goals and objectives of the proposed action; furthermore, the proposed action would provide the DCP and NYCDEP greater involvement in development of certain properties to ensure the safe handling and disposal of hazardous materials.

Waterfront Revitalization Program

According to the *Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Gateway Center at Bronx Terminal Market* , development in the Coastal Zone associated with the Gateway Center at Bronx Terminal Market project and its associated off-site waterfront open space north of East 149th Street is expected to be consistent with the City's ten Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP) coastal policies and the WRP's guiding principles of maximizing benefits derived from economic development, environmental preservation, and the public use of the waterfront while minimizing conflicts among these objectives.

Existing zoning controls would remain in place in the rezoning area under the No-Action Alternative. In the No-Action RWCDS, DCP identified three projected development sites within the coastal zone portion of the rezoning area. By 2018, it is expected that the coastal zone would have new as-of-right development totaling approximately 395,000 square feet of office space and approximately 125,268 square feet of light industrial space on three sites. The coastal zone area would otherwise remain much the same in terms of its physical character and structural conditions. No waterfront access or amenity would be created within the rezoning area under the No-Action Alternative, whereas RWCDS developments under the proposed action would be

required to provide public access, and a change in the City Map would occur that would map new waterfront parkland.

As with the proposed action, no significant adverse impacts to the WRP would be attributable to the No-Action Alternative. However, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the goals and objectives of the proposed action; further, unlike the No-Action Alternative, the proposed action would create a new waterfront esplanade, thus revitalizing the waterfront in such a ways as to promote waterfront public access and views.

Infrastructure

In both the No-Action Alternative and the proposed action, anticipated growth in the proposed rezoning area would result in additional demand for water and increase wastewater production. Water consumption associated with the projected development sites would total approximately 442,200 gpd (0.44 mgd). This represents an increase from the existing conditions of approximately 89,600 gpd (0.09 mgd) or approximately 25 percent over the existing water demand for these projected development sites. Additional sanitary discharges to the Wards Island WPCP would be within the 53 mgd available capacity of the plant under the No-Action Alternative and the Wards Island WPCP would continue to operate within its 275 mgd design capacity. Stormwater runoff would continue to be collected and directed through the existing combined sewer system and then conveyed to the Wards Island WPCP for treatment. Assuming conservatively that there will be no changes to the size of the impermeable surface within the study area in the No-Action condition, no significant change in stormwater runoff would be expected. No significant change in the frequency or duration of CSO events would be expected as a result of development within the study area under the No-Action Alternative.

As with the proposed action, no significant adverse impacts to infrastructure would be attributable to the No-Action Alternative. However, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the goals and objectives of the proposed action.

Solid Waste and Sanitation Services

It is estimated that the 31 projected development sites would generate approximately 76 tons of solid waste per week under the No-Action Alternative. This is approximately two tons per week more than under existing conditions. The majority of the solid waste produced would be removed by private carters.

Although the development projected in the No-Action condition would increase the volumes of solid waste and recyclables generated, it would neither affect the delivery of these services, nor would it place a significant burden on the City's solid waste management services (both public and private) because the increase makes up less than 0.1 percent of the non-residential waste stream collected daily. In addition, the

proposed action would not conflict with, or require amendments to, the City's Solid Waste Management Plan. As with the proposed action, no significant adverse impacts to solid waste and sanitation services would be attributable to the No-Action Alternative. However, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the goals and objectives of the proposed action.

Energy

It is estimated that as-of-right development on 14 of the 31 projected development sites under the No-Action Alternative would use approximately 79,392 billion BTUs of energy annually, compared to an incremental increase of approximately 507.48 billion BTUs in annual energy use associated with the proposed action. This annual incremental demand on an hourly basis would represent a small fraction of the City's forecasted peak summer load of 13,085 MW in 2018, as well as an infinitesimal amount of the City's forecasted annual energy requirements for 2018, and – similar to the proposed action -- is therefore not expected to result in a significant additional load.

As with the proposed action, no significant adverse impacts to energy would be attributable to the No-Action Alternative. However, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the goals and objectives of the proposed action.

Traffic and Parking

Future 2018 traffic levels on study area roadways under the No-Action Alternative are expected to increase due to future development both within and outside the study area, as well as due to overall growth, although increases in traffic would be lower than future conditions with the proposed action. A background growth rate of 0.50 percent per year (as recommended by the *CEQR Technical Manual*) is projected for future traffic volumes, for a total increase in traffic due to general growth of 5.0 percent by 2018. Traffic generated by the residents of the 479 new dwelling units expected to be constructed within one-half-mile of the rezoning area would be included in this background growth. Some traffic projected to be generated by the Gateway Center at the Bronx Terminal Market project, the Mott Haven Campus development and the East 161st Street rezoning action would also be expected to use study area roadways. Traffic expected to be generated by RWCDS new development within the rezoning area would also add traffic to the local roadway network under the No-Action Alternative.

Roadway modifications are anticipated under the No-Action Alternative. Most of the improvements and modifications to study area roadways currently planned over the study horizon to 2018 focus on Exterior Street and the Major Deegan Expressway (MDE) as part improvements associated with the Gateway Center at the Bronx Terminal Market project, and through planned NYSDOT improvements to the MDE in the Lower Concourse study area. NYSDOT plans to rehabilitate and widen the MDE Viaduct (BIN 1-06680-9) and associated ramps between East 138th Street and the Macombs Dam Bridge, among other MDE improvements. Just outside of the rezoning area, NYSDOT's

bicycle program is adding a Class 2 bicycle lane on Willis Avenue. This action will result in the removal of a southbound lane on Willis Avenue from East 135th Street to Third Avenue. Future bicycle paths (Class 1) are proposed on Harlem River bridges and routes (Class 2) on East 149th, East 143rd, East 138th and Exterior Streets, Morris/Third Avenue, and Alexander Avenue, although final geometries have not been determined. Other roadway modifications have been proposed in the study area as part of mitigation measures for other projects, primarily though striping and signal timing changes.

Regarding traffic intersection Levels of Service (LOS), notable deteriorations in AM peak hour LOS in comparison to existing conditions area expected under the No-Action Alternative for 15 study area intersections compared to existing conditions, although not to the extent that would be expected with the proposed action. Notable deteriorations in LOS would be expected at 11 intersections in the PM peak hour period, and at two intersections in the Saturday peak hour.

With regard to parking resources, the utilization of both off-street and on-street parking facilities in the study area would increase under the No-Action Alternative due to the area's background growth (5.0 percent over existing demand by 2018). Additionally, as-of-right retail, office, warehouse/manufacturing and academic-related development will further increase daytime parking demand.

Midday parking demand in the study area is projected to increase by nearly 950 spaces, largely due to the projected development of nearly 600,000 square feet of office space, and approximately 300,000 square feet of manufacturing/warehouse and community facility space in the rezoning area by 2018. A shortfall of over 700 midday spaces is projected. Overnight, however, little increase in demand is anticipated as the development anticipated in the study area absent the proposed action would generate primarily weekday daytime parking demand.

In contrast to the proposed action, no unmitigatable significant adverse impacts to traffic would be attributable to the No-Action Alternative. However, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the goals and objectives of the proposed action.

Transit and Pedestrians

Transit and pedestrian projections for the No-Action Alternative are based on the application of a 0.50 percent annual background growth rate on existing volumes, projected over 10 years, plus the pedestrian and transit trips projected to be generated by the No Build projects, less any trips generated by displaced uses in the rezoning area.

With regard to future No-Action condition subway station operations, passenger volumes are expected to increase minimally at the 138th Street/Grand Concourse station, while levels of service would remain unchanged from existing conditions. However, passenger volumes are expected to increase appreciably at the 149th Street/Grand Concourse station by 2018 due to the additional development projected to occur within

this station's service area. Peak 15 minute passenger volumes are projected to increase by approximately 35 percent and 60 percent during the AM and PM peak hours. Levels of service are projected to deteriorate to LOS D and LOS C at the fare control turnstiles and during the AM and PM peak hours, respectively. Stairway levels of service are projected to remain at LOS A.

Although transit bus line haul operation passenger volumes are forecast to increase due to background growth and bus trips generated by specific developments under the No-Action Alternative, all routes are expected to remain under capacity at their peak load point.

Regarding street level pedestrian operations, all sidewalks are expected to continue to operate at LOS A or LOS B. However, the projected increase in pedestrian activity at the southwest corner of the intersection of East 149th Street with the Grand Concourse, which is largely due to trips to and from the subway station, would cause pedestrian space levels to deteriorate to LOS D during the midday peak hour. Likewise, operations of the west and south crosswalk would also operate at LOS D during the midday peak hour.

Conclusion

Unlike the proposed action that would change the zoning map applicable to the proposed rezoning area to include commercial districts, Special Mixed Use Districts, and conventional manufacturing districts, existing zoning controls would remain in place under the No-Action Alternative. The rezoning area would experience some growth in commercial office and warehouse/manufacturing uses and the decline of industrial uses in the rezoning area would continue. While the proposed action would allow new mixed-use development, residential conversions and affordable housing, development in the future under the No-Action Alternative would be expected to consist primarily of automotive service, warehouse, and personal self-storage facilities, a continuation of recent development trends. In the absence of the proposed action, new development would not include new residential development, and a vibrant, mixed-use community would not be created. The waterfront area would not be enhanced or upgraded; new open spaces along the waterfront would not be created.

The demand for publicly funded day care would continue to increase, and the shortfalls in the number of available slots would be exacerbated. There would be no potential for impacts to historic resources, as the North Side Board of Trade Building would not be adjacent to a development site or potentially affected by vibration or contextual alterations, unlike the proposed action. Traffic levels of service would continue to degrade. In sum, the No-Action Alternative would not meet the purpose and need of the proposed action, would still be subject to several similar types of impacts or reductions in levels of services, and would not result in the creation of a new, transit-oriented mixed-use community.

3.21.2 NO-IMPACT ALTERNATIVE

It is the City's practice to include, whenever feasible, a No-Impact alternative that avoids, without the need for mitigation, all significant environmental impacts of the proposed action. The No-Impact Alternative examines a scenario in which the density and program design of the proposed action is changed specifically to avoid the potential significant adverse impacts associated with the proposed action.

The proposed action would result in potential significant impacts (identified in Chapters 3.1 to 3.20) related to historic resources, traffic, and community facilities (publicly funded day care facilities). Significant adverse impact would remain unmitigated for impacts associated with traffic at three intersections, and one historic resource (North Side Board of Trade). Publicly funded day care facilities would continue to be overburdened, although offsets would occur based on a number of factors.

Traffic analysis has revealed that there is no rezoning alternative that would not result in traffic impacts. Traffic analyses indicate that a reduction in development program of 89 percent would eliminate traffic impacts during the AM peak period. However, this reduction would not be adequate to mitigate impacts for the midday analysis period; for that period, the development program of the proposed action would need to be reduced by 94 percent to avoid impacts. When tested for the PM peak hour, at the East 149th Street/River Street intersection, an increment of one additional vehicle would increase the delay by 3+ seconds for a LOS F movement (the NB Exterior Street left turn). According to CEQR procedure, because the delay in the No-Action condition was under 120 seconds, the "fewer-than-5-vehicle rule" does not apply, and therefore, the significant adverse impact cannot be avoided. Consequently, there is no "no impact" alternative, and this would therefore not be a feasible alternative to the proposed action.

To avoid the proposed action's direct impacts, construction under this alternative would have to be avoided on all projected RWCDS sites with the exception of only a relative small amount. Additionally, development on larger potential development sites in areas where the traffic network is constrained, such as along the waterfront, would have to be avoided.

A rezoning involving no new development for the proposed action area is not considered feasible given the number of projected development sites in the area. In addition, such an alternative would not address the goals and objectives of the proposed action. Therefore, for analysis purposes, a No-Impact Alternative is not feasible and is not analyzed in detail in the DEIS.

3.21.3 LOWER DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

Comments received during public scoping process requested analysis of an alternative that would have additional commercial rezoning options along the Grand Concourse and retain, to a greater extent than the proposed action, the industrial character of blocks

east of Park Avenue that would host mixed-use development under the proposed action. In response, a Lower Density Alternative has been identified that would replace the proposed C6-2A District on the Grand Concourse with a C4-4D District, maintain M1-2 zoning on three RWCDS projected sites east of Park Avenue, and allow an industrial use on one waterfront site. This Lower Density Alternative would result in a lower commercial floor area ratio (FAR) on the Grand Concourse than the proposed action, with an allowable FAR for residential and community facility development as the proposed action. Lastly, the Lower Density Alternative would not permit residential development or conversions on the area between Canal Place and Rider Avenue between East 140th and East 142nd Streets, which would otherwise be zoned for mixed-use development under the proposed action. This area would remain zoned M1-2. The Lower Density Alternative would result in 276 fewer residential units than projected for the proposed action.

Under the proposed action, the zoning on all or portions of four blocks generally located along the Grand Concourse south of East 144th Street, north of East 138th Street, and between Walton Avenue and the Metro-North Railroad right-of-way would change from M1-2 to C6-2A. The proposed C6-2A District would change the allowable uses in this area; it would facilitate new residential development with a maximum FAR of 7.2 and new commercial development with a maximum FAR of 6.0. All new development would be required to be built to the streetwall within a contextual envelope with a maximum height of 120 feet.

Similar to the proposed action, new development under this Lower Density Alternative would be required to build to the streetwall within a contextual envelope with a maximum building height of 120 feet. RWCDS site #16 would be the only site in the proposed C4-4D District to be developed differently compared to the proposed action, with a smaller amount of hotel development projected. In addition, RWCDS site #4 that is projected with residential/retail use under the proposed action would be a Con Ed Muster Center (Use Group 16C Vehicle Storage) under this alternative. Lastly, the Lower Density Alternative would not permit residential development or conversions on three RWCDS sites (#17, #28 and #29) between Canal Place and Rider Avenue between East 140th and East 142nd Streets, sites that would otherwise be zoned for mixed-use development under the proposed action. These three sites would retain their M1-2 zoning.

The benefits of establishing a new mixed-use community with affordable housing and promoting contextual development on waterfront and upland blocks in the rezoning area would not be realized under the Lower Density Alternative to the extent that it would under the proposed action. In fact, only three of four projected reasonable worst-case development scenario sites facing the waterfront would be developed with mixed-use development.

The proposed action would result in an incremental change between the No-Build and the Build scenarios on the 31 projected development sites of 3,414 dwelling units

(including 591 affordable units developed pursuant to the City's Inclusionary Housing Program), 571,162 sf of retail space, 164,285 sf of hotel space, 63,700 sf of community facility space, and 1,291 parking spaces. It would result in an incremental reduction of 598,351 sf of office space and 308,872 sf of industrial space.

Development of RWCDS sites under the Lower Density alternative would result in a reduction of development compared to the proposed action in the categories of retail, hotel, residential and industrial uses, while no change would result in the amount of projected community facility development. The Lower Density Alternative would result in an incremental change between the No-Build and the Build scenarios on projected development sites of 3,138 dwelling units (including 547 affordable units developed pursuant to the City's Inclusionary Housing Program), 477,808 sf of retail space, 108,460 sf of hotel space, and 63,700 sf of community facility space. It would result in an incremental reduction of 494,351 sf of office space and 228,886 sf of industrial space.

The resulting difference in projected C4-4D development along the lower Grand Concourse compared to C6-2 development under the proposed action would entail a lower density of development on RWCDS site #16. This site would be the only site in the C4-4D District expected to be built with a different program of development compared to the proposed action, with anticipated hotel development reduced from 164,285 sf of hotel development under the proposed action (with an increment of 18,215 sf of retail) to 108,460 sf of hotel development (and an incremental reduction in retail of 8,900 sf) under the Lower Density Alternative.

The Lower Density Alternative would result in a decrease in projected residential units of 276 units compared to the proposed action. Three sites between Canal Place and Rider Avenue would not be rezoned for M1-4/R6A mixed-use development but would instead remain zoned M1-2, precluding residential development (or residential conversions as under the proposed action). The remainder of the decrease in residential units would be from RWCDS site #4, which would be used for a Con Ed Muster Center under the Lower Density Alternative instead of high-rise mixed-use development with 177 dwelling units under the proposed action. The reasonable worst-case development scenario for the Lower Density alternative is included in Appendix C.

Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy

As with the proposed action, the Lower Density Alternative would not result in significant adverse land use impacts in the rezoning area or land use study area. Limiting commercial densities and permitted uses would result in lower density development on two RWCDS sites compared to the proposed action while projected residential conversions would not occur on three RWCDS sites. High-rise mixed-use development would be replaced with a low density utility use on one RWCDS site facing the waterfront.

Specifically, zoning regulations along the Grand Concourse would change from M1-2 to C4-4D in the area that is proposed for the C6-2A District under the proposed action. Similar to the proposed action, this alternative would facilitate new residential development with a maximum FAR of 7.2 and new community facility development with a maximum FAR of 6.5. However, the C4-4D District would have a lower maximum permitted commercial FAR of 3.4.

Projected development would be expected to differ under this alternative for one RWCDS site on the Grand Concourse. RWCDS site #16 would be developed with a smaller hotel, compared to the proposed action. Residential development in mixed-use buildings would not be expected under the Lower Density Alternative on one of the RWCDS sites on the waterfront (#4) and on three conversion sites between Canal Place and Rider Avenue, between East 140th and East 142nd Streets. This would result in less land use change on these three sites, which are currently zoned for manufacturing, preserving the jobs and industrial character associated with these sites. As a result, land use changes would be lower, with future development being more consistent with the existing uses of these properties that include industrial lofts. Land use benefits from the introduction of residential use on sites #17, #28 and #29 would also not occur. In particular, RWCDS sites #17 and #28, which face a new playground associated with PS 183, would be less compatible with the adjacent open space with no "eyes-on-the-park" or 24-hour activity facing this newly refurbished open space.

The Lower Density Alternative would result in an overall decrease of 276 projected residential units compared to the proposed action, which would constitute an eight percent decrease in projected future residential development overall compared to the proposed action. While this alternative would support one of the major objectives of the proposed action in terms of revitalizing the rezoning area with new mixed-use development, the goal of creating a round-the-clock, mixed-use neighborhood would be achieved to a lesser degree than under the proposed action, with the effects of this change being most pronounced in the immediate vicinity of the sites involved. One of four future projected mixed-use sites along the waterfront (site #4) would instead be used for a utility storage and staging area (the Con Ed Muster Center), reducing the beneficial land use effects of bringing residential use to the waterfront just north of the Madison Avenue Bridge. The conversion of this site to Vehicle Storage Establishment use or utility purposes (a base for Con Ed field workers, to gather for assignments, and to allow workers to gather for head counts) would be less compatible with the role and opportunities for the waterfront envisioned under the proposed action that includes new residential development with ground floor retail uses, with a waterfront esplanade. The adjacent parcels (RWCDS sites #32 and #33) are not projected for redevelopment under future conditions with the proposed action, although mixed-use development would potentially occur on these "potential" RWCDS sites after the ten year analysis period. While the use of RWCDS site #4 for utility vehicle storage and employee support use would not be expected to create significant adverse land use effects from noise, traffic, negative visual conditions, or other features affecting land use compatibility, the expected use of this site under this alternative would be less

compatible than the use of this site projected under the proposed action, with parked utility trucks expected and no coherent streetwall or building form matching other projected development on the waterfront. The Con Ed Muster Center would include parking for ten cars and 40 trucks, but no permanent structure**.**

As with the proposed action, no significant adverse impacts to land use would be attributable to the Lower Density Alternative.

Socioeconomics

Upward pressures on commercial and residential rents resulting from the proposed action would also be expected under this alternative. However, the Lower Density Alternative would not be expected to significantly alter trends in commercial real estate and housing affordability beyond those changes already expected as a result of the proposed action, or result in significant adverse indirect displacement of businesses and institutions not already identified as a result of the proposed action. The anticipated changes in development expected on five RWCDS sites would have a negligible impact on socioeconomic conditions within the socioeconomic study area, aside from very localized effects related to the replacement of proposed action residential development on four sites with non-residential uses that would generate primarily day-time worker economic activity. There would also be lower employment and spin-off economic benefits resulting from a considerably smaller hotel on site #16.

Community Facilities

With the Lower Density Alternative, the increment of additional population decreases by eight percent, or 276 units, compared to the proposed action. Overall, this would reduce demand on community facilities and services. As with the proposed action, this alternative would not result in a significant adverse impact on schools, libraries, health care services, or police or fire services. However, like the proposed action, and the No-Action Alternative as well, day care facilities would continue to be overburdened, although potential increases in demand for publicly funded day care slots would be offset by a number of factors. Private day care facilities and day care centers outside of the study area (e.g., closer to parent's place of work) are not included in the analysis in Chapter 3.3. Some of the increased day care demand would likely be offset by parents who might choose to take their children to day care centers outside of the study area (e.g., closer to work). Some of the Family Day Care Networks serve children residing in the study area could potentially absorb some of the demand. This new demand would also be considered in future ACS solicitations for contracted services. Finally, new capacity could potentially be developed as part of ACS's public-private partnership initiatives.

Open Space

Neither the proposed action nor the Lower Density Alternative would result in significant adverse open space impacts. Both future worker and residential population would decrease, slightly lowering residential demand for open space. With fewer residential units than the proposed action, this alternative would reduce residential demand for open space slightly compared to the proposed action. Like the proposed action, new waterfront open spaces would be created in the form of an esplanade and a waterfront park, but there would be slightly less new open space, as the waterfront esplanade would not be created. As with the proposed action, no significant adverse impacts to open space would be attributable to the Lower Density Alternative.

Shadows

The change in commercial FAR on some portions of the Grand Concourse would predominantly result in smaller hotel development on RWCDS site #16, and the replacement of a projected high-rise development on waterfront RWCDS site #4 with an open utility/vehicular storage use would lower the increment of additional shadows from projected new development under this alternative. However, as with the proposed action, no significant adverse impacts from shadowing would be attributable to the Lower Density Alternative.

Urban Design and Visual Resources

The C4-4D zoning on the Grand Concourse north of East 138th Street under the Lower Density Alternative would result in less dense commercial (hotel) development on one RWCDS site (#16) compared to the proposed action. The three projected sites between Canal Place and Rider Avenue are conversion sites under both the proposed action and the Lower Density Alternative, limiting any changes to urban design or visual resources from changes in proposed zoning. Under both the proposed action and this alternative, new development on the Grand Concourse would be expected to occur pursuant to contextual regulations requiring buildings to be built at or near the street line, with mid-rise, high coverage buildings. The replacement of projected mixed-use development on RWCDS site #4 expected under the proposed action with a utility-related use would detract from the continuity of anticipated mixed-use development on the waterfront. The presence of open storage associated with a utility use would result in a continuation of the underutilized appearance of the waterfront that has had a negative effect on urban design conditions within the waterfront subarea. Nonetheless, as with the proposed action, no significant adverse impacts to urban design would be attributable to the Lower Density Alternative.

Neighborhood Character

Neither the proposed action nor the Lower Density Alternative would result in significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character. Portions of the Grand

Concourse where a C4-4D District would replace the proposed action's C6-2A zoning would have lower amounts of commercial use under the Lower Density Alternative. The new development would have similar effects of revitalization and introduction of beneficial development bringing jobs and activity to an area that is now underutilized, given its location at the gateway to the borough and the Grand Concourse. With the exception of RWCDS site #4, although less dense, the form of anticipated development would be similar to the proposed action in that it would involve contextual building envelopes and appropriate height limits for the Grand Concourse. This alternative would also enhance the character of the Grand Concourse with uses that would activate the street environment. The anticipated Con Ed Muster Center on site #4 would detract from neighborhood character on the waterfront on a site that would otherwise be expected to be developed with mixed-use development with public waterfront access under the proposed action, although no significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character would be expected. For the two-block stretch west of Rider Avenue where no residential development would be permitted under this alternative, future neighborhood character would reflect the existing non-residential character of this area, without enlivening the surrounding streetscape on a round-the-clock basis through new mixed-use development.

Hazardous Materials

The Lower Density Alternative would have the same requirements for hazardous material remediation as would the proposed action, and (E) designations would be required. Therefore, as with the proposed action, no significant adverse impacts to hazardous materials would be attributable to the Lower Density Alternative.

Natural Resources

As the upland areas of the study area are generally urbanized and largely devoid of natural resources, the Lower Density Alternative within upland portions of the study area would not result in significant adverse impacts on the condition of natural resources. For the proposed action or the Lower Density Alternative, no substantial change in the Harlem River is expected to occur; failing bulkheads in the study area may undergo in-kind replacement or repair as waterfront sites are developed. Because the shoreline in the study area is composed of structural components that includes segments in poor to critical condition, it is likely that some of these areas will need to be rehabilitated in order to maintain the existing adjacent land uses, potentially requiring temporary disturbance of a very small area of shoreline aquatic habitat. Groundwater conditions and the status of the floodplain and coastal resources are not expected to change from existing conditions. With regard to wildlife, no change in the utilization of the rezoning area by wildlife is expected to occur. The occasional utilization of the rezoning area by transient avian species and the function of the Harlem River as a passage for aquatic species are expected to continue under the Lower Density Alternative. Therefore, as with the proposed action, no significant adverse impacts to natural resources would be attributable to the Lower Density Alternative.

Waterfront Revitalization Program

The only change in anticipated development in the Coastal Zone under the Lower Density Alternative compared to the proposed action would occur on RWCDS site #4. Mixed-use development with 177 residential units under the proposed action would be replaced under this alternative with a Con Ed Muster Center. This open storage and staging area would serve utility workers and would not involve substantial new construction. While there would be less physical development on this site, this use would be less compatible with the vision of the waterfront as a vibrant, mixed-use area. At this location, the proposed waterfront public walkway would back onto a utility-related use with no significant new structures and adjacent use comprise of vehicular storage as compared to new, high-rise mixed-use development under the proposed action. The incremental increase in shadows generated by RWCDS site #4 under the proposed action, although not constituting a significant adverse impact under the proposed action, would be avoided under this alternative. Like the proposed action, the Lower Density Alternative would not be expected to have significant adverse effects on resources within the Coastal Zone. It would also not be consistent with the goals of the proposed SHRWD, however, with regard to introducing mixed-use development on RWCDS site #4; therefore, in contrast to the proposed action, the Lower Density Alternative would prove less supportive of goals and objectives of the WRP.

Historic Resources

Under the Lower Density Alternative, new construction and site disturbance would occur on the same projected development sites as under the proposed action RWCDS, though at a lower density on several sites. Therefore, the same potential for disturbance of architectural resources on those sites would occur under this alternative. The one potentially eligible resource, the North Side Board of Trade building, is not directly protected through New York City Building Code or *TPPN 10/88,* and therefore, as with the proposed action, it could be adversely affected by the proposed action.

As with the proposed action, the potentially significant adverse impacts to historic resources could be avoided if the North Side Board of Trade building were to be calendared for consideration by the LPC.

Infrastructure

As a result of the reduced number of residential units and overall reduction in density of anticipated future development compared to the proposed action, the Lower Density Alternative would produce marginally less demand on the City's infrastructure for water demand and wastewater generation when compared to the proposed action, though neither the Lower Density Alternative nor the proposed action would result in significant adverse impacts to infrastructure.

Similar to the proposed action, the Lower Density Alternative is anticipated to generate an increase of approximately 9.6 cubic feet per second (cfs) of stormwater runoff over the No Action conditions. Although there may not be a specified requirement for increased detention associated with the proposed action itself, stormwater Best Management Practices and sustainable design features could be incorporated into future development. These would serve to decrease the potential for an increase to CSO frequency or duration to the Harlem River. Therefore, it is expected that there would be some reduction in uncontrolled runoff from private development sites in the future with the proposed actions.

Similar to the proposed action, it is concluded that the Lower Density Alternative would not result in significant adverse impacts to the local water supply, sanitary wastewater treatment, or stormwater management infrastructure systems.

Solid Waste and Sanitation Services

Demands on solid waste and sanitation would decrease to a minor extent under the Lower Density Alternative compared to the proposed action. The incremental decrease of solid waste generation with the Lower Density Alternative compared to the proposed action would be insignificant in light of the estimated 12,000 tons of residential and institutional refuse and recyclables collected by DSNY per day. As with the proposed action, no significant adverse solid waste/sanitation impacts would occur under the Lower Density Alternative.

Energy

As with the proposed action, energy demand would increase, but no significant adverse energy impacts would occur under the Lower Density Alternative.

Traffic and Parking

The Lower Density Alternative would generate fewer person and vehicle trips than the RWCDS of the Proposed Action. As indicated in Table 3.21-2, the Lower Density Alternative would generate between approximately 250 and 1,370 fewer person trips than the Proposed Action for specific analysis time periods. However, a significant portion of the difference in person trips is attributable to the lesser retail floor area of the Lower Density Alternative, a large proportion of which are walk trips. Therefore, the difference in vehicle trips generated by the Lower Density Alternative relative to the Proposed Action is less substantial in absolute volume and on a percentage basis and does not substantially reduce the number of significant traffic impacts identified in the study area under the Proposed Action. Specifically, for typical day conditions, the impact to the northbound approach at the intersection of East 138th Street and Willis Avenue during the PM peak hour would be eliminated. During the typical Saturday midday peak hour, no impacts would occur at the intersection of East 144th Street and Grand Concourse and mitigation would not be required during this time period.

Table 3.21-2: Peak Hour Travel Comparison
Lower Density Alternative with Proposed Action

Analysis Time Period	Proposed Action[1]	Lower Density Alternative[1]	Net Difference	Per cent Change
Person Trips				
AM	2796	2544	-252	-9.0%
Midday	8189	6823	-1366	-16.7%
PM	6088	5309	-779	-12.8%
Saturday Midday	6932	5965	-967	-13.9%
Vehicle Trips[2]				
AM	-37	-24	+13	+35.1%
Midday	189	166	-23	-12.2%
PM	287	271	-16	-5.6%
Saturday Midday	944	849	-95	-10.1%

[1]Total incremental change in person and vehicle trips compared to the No-Action condition
[2]Auto, taxi and truck combined

Like the proposed action, the Lower Density Alternative would result in some unavoidable traffic impacts on Yankee Game days. For all analyzed peak hours (weekday AM, midday and PM; Saturday midday; Game Day weekday PM; and Game Day Saturday midday), there would be unavoidable adverse impacts at East 149th Street, at Exterior Street and River Avenue. For weekday AM and Saturday midday there would be unavoidable adverse impacts at East 138th Street at Exterior Street, and for weekday PM and Saturday midday there would be unavoidable adverse impacts at East 135th Street at Madison Avenue.

Analysis indicated that no significant parking impacts would occur as a result of implementation of the Proposed Action. Slightly lower overnight parking demand in the study area could occur under the Lower Density Alternative due to the lower number of dwelling units projected by 2018 for this alternative.

Transit and Pedestrians

The lower person trips projected generated by the Lower Density Alternative, compared to the proposed action, could result in lower pedestrian volumes on certain pedestrian elements in the study area as well as a slightly lower volume of bus and subway passengers. As with the proposed action, no significant adverse impacts to transit or pedestrians would result from the Lower Density Alternative.

Air Quality

The Lower Density Alternative, like the proposed action, would not result in significant adverse impacts from mobile source pollution, and no violations of the National

Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) are predicted to occur with respect to mobile sources or parking facilities. Increases in diesel traffic that would be associated with the Lower Density Alternative would be slightly less than those of the proposed action, and the $PM_{2.5}$ screening results for the proposed action would still apply; significant $PM_{2.5}$ impacts would not occur with this alternative or the proposed action.

The Lower Density Alternative would require all except one of the (E) designations described for the proposed action to avoid significant adverse air quality impacts with respect to proposed HVAC systems. The (E) designation on Projected Site #4 would be eliminated since this site would no long have a building on it and therefore it would not affect adjacent sites #32 and #33. Projected Site #16 would still have potential to affect adjacent sites #51 and #52, and the (E) designation would still be required. Sites #26 and #28 would retain their M1-2 zoning and their building heights would be the same as under the proposed action (60 feet and 125 feet, respectively). However, buildings on those sites could still affect adjacent site #66 and Projected Site #17, respectively, and they would continue to require (E) designations. As with the proposed action, pollutant emissions from existing large residential and industrial sources would not result in any impacts under the Lower Density Alternative.

Noise

Compared to the proposed action, the changes with the Lower Density Alternative would be minor relative to their impact on noise, and are not expected to result in any significant increases in local ambient noise or doubling of traffic at any roadway or intersection such that a significant adverse impact would occur. With respect to the need for noise attenuation, the (E) designations would be the same as required for the proposed action, with the exception of Site #4, which would no longer establish residential noise-sensitive uses, and Sites #26 and #28, which would remain in manufacturing use. Site #17 would still require the same (E) designation for noise attenuation, as it would under the proposed action.

Construction Impacts

A decrease in duration and magnitude of construction activities would be expected on Sites #4 and #16 compared to the proposed action. Because of the lower amount of development anticipated, temporary construction disruptions would decrease when compared to the proposed action. Neither this alternative nor the proposed action would result in significant adverse impacts on air quality, noise, traffic, or transit during construction.

Public Health

The Lower Density Alternative would not result in significant adverse public health impacts, as it would not significantly impact the various technical areas that comprise public health, namely, air quality, hazardous materials, solid waste management, and

noise. Similar to the proposed action, the Lower Density Alternative would also incorporate the noise attenuation, air quality, and hazardous materials testing and remediation requirements due to the proposed (E) designations.

Mitigation

Mitigation or other protective measures applicable under the Lower Density Alternative would be similar to those that would be implemented with the proposed action for potential impacts associated with hazardous materials, traffic, and noise.

Regarding the potential for impacts associated with Hazardous Materials under the proposed action, the proposed action provides for the pre-emptive assignment of (E) designations as a means of offsetting any potential for significant adverse impacts associated with hazardous materials. (E) designations will be incorporated as part of the proposed action for all privately owned sites.

In addition to the privately owned sites, the proposed action would provide for the reuse of a 2.26-acre parcel adjacent to the north of projected development site #2 as a public park. Environmental concerns related to past and present usage of the site were identified for this site. The City is committed to completion of Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) for the park site. The Phase II ESA and testing protocols will be submitted for review and approval to the NYCDEP. Once the approved testing is completed, the City will complete the recommended remediation at the park site prior to the initiation of work. With these provisions in place, no significant adverse impacts are expected.

The proposed action would not result in significant adverse impacts related to noise. However, as part of the proposed action, (E) designations would be placed on the zoning map for all of the projected and potential development sites to avoid the potential for significant adverse noise impacts. Residential, commercial and community facility development on lots mapped with an (E) designation would be required to provide sufficient noise attenuation to maintain interior noise levels of 45 dBA or lower, and the proposed action would not result in significant adverse noise impacts. Similarly, (E) designations would be mapped for the Lower Density Alternative, resulting in effective noise attenuation.

Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

The Lower Density alternative would have some unavoidable adverse impacts, like those of the proposed action. As noted above, there would be unavoidable impact to publicly funded day care that would be offset by a number of factors, but there would be no other impacts to community facilities.

The one historic resource, the North Side Board of Trade building, is not directly protected, and therefore, as with the proposed action, it could be adversely affected by

the Lower Density Alternative. Therefore, this historic resource impact would be unavoidable.

Like the proposed action, the Lower Density Alternative would result in some unavoidable traffic impacts. For all analyzed peak hours (Weekday AM, Midday and PM; Saturday Midday; Game Day Weekday PM; and Game Day Saturday Midday), there would be unavoidable adverse impacts at East 149th Street, at Exterior Street and River Avenue. For Weekday AM and Saturday Midday, there would be unavoidable adverse impacts at East 138th Street at Exterior Street, and for Weekday PM and Saturday Midday, there would be unavoidable adverse impacts at East 135th Street at Madison Avenue.

Conclusion

The Lower Density Alternative would replace the proposed C6-2 District from the proposed action on the Grand Concourse north of East 138th Street with a proposed C4-4D District. In this area, it would facilitate new residential development with a maximum FAR of 7.2 and new community facility development with a maximum FAR of 6.5, similar to the proposed action. However, it would have a lower maximum permitted commercial FAR of 3.4. Similar to the proposed action, new development would be required to build along the streetwall within a contextual envelope with a maximum building height of 120 feet. In addition, this alternative would allow one industrial use on one waterfront site, resulting in the replacement of anticipated mixed-use development on RWCDS site #4 with reuse of this site as a Con Ed Muster Center. Lastly, this alternative would retain the manufacturing zoning between Canal Place and Rider Avenue between East 140th and East 142nd Streets. The Lower Density Alternative would result in a decrease in projected residential units of 276 units compared to the proposed action.

The only anticipated change resulting from the mapping of the C4-4D District under the Lower Density Alternative would be a decrease in the size of a projected hotel on RWCDS site #16, located on the east side of the Grand Concourse north of East 138th Street. The resulting lower density building on site #16 would still be compatible from a land use, urban design, and neighborhood character perspective, and would have lesser demands on infrastructure and utilities. The new construction would still adhere to contextual design principles.

The replacement of a high-rise mixed-use building on waterfront RWCDS site #4 with a utility use related to vehicular storage would support Con Ed field workers. While the utility use facing the waterfront would be less compatible with the surrounding future uses west of Exterior Street and would detract somewhat from the community character of the waterfront compared to conditions with the proposed action, no significant land use or neighborhood character impacts would be anticipated, although a segment of waterfront esplanade would not be created along site #4. Infrastructure, open space and other population-related effects would be similar to the proposed action. The

benefits of mixed-use development in terms of enlivening the streetscape with round-the-clock activity and introducing ground floor retail use would not occur on one of four of the RWCDS waterfront sites otherwise projected for mixed-use development under the proposed action. The benefits of establishing a new mixed-use community with affordable housing and promoting contextual development on waterfront and upland blocks in the rezoning area would not be realized under the Lower Density Alternative to the extent that it would under the proposed action. In fact, only three of four projected RWCDS sites facing the waterfront would be developed with mixed-use development.

The Lower Density Alternative would also retain the industrial character and functions of the Canal/Rider area, by eliminating the possibility of residential development on three RWCDS sites that would otherwise be expected to experience conversions for mixed-use development. This would retain industrial jobs associated with these sites, while precluding the reuse of these buildings for residential development. The Lower Density Alternative would not effectively avoid the significant adverse impacts that would be associated with the proposed action.