3.25 IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

Resources, both natural and man-made, would be expended in the construction, renovation, reuse and operation of developments projected to occur as a result of the proposed action. These resources include the building materials used during construction or renovation; energy in the form of gas and electricity consumed during construction and operation of buildings by various mechanical and processing systems; and the human effort required to develop, construct, renovate, and operate various elements of projected and potential developments. These elements are considered irretrievably committed because their use for some other purpose would be highly unlikely.

The proposed action is expected to result in approximately 3,416 dwelling units; 589,250 square feet of local retail space, 88,000 square feet of grocery store space, and 164,285 square feet of hotel space (combined for a total of 841,535 square feet of commercial space); 95,500 square feet of warehouse/manufacturing space; and 154,289 square feet of community facility space on the 31 projected development sites. This would result in a net change in development between the Future No-Action and Future With-Action scenarios at these 31 projected development sites of 3,414 dwelling units (591 of which would be affordable housing units); 571,162 square feet of new retail space and 164,285 square feet of new hotel space (combined for a total of 735,447 square feet of commercial space); 63,700 square feet of community facility space; a decrease of 598,351 square feet of office space; and a decrease of 308,872 square feet of warehouse/manufacturing space. As a result, the proposed rezoning and related actions would require the irreversible and irretrievable commitment of energy, construction materials, human effort, and funds. As indicated in Chapter 3.14, "Energy," it is estimated that the 31 projected development sites would generate a net increase in energy consumption of approximately 507.48 billion BTUs in annual energy use compared to Future No-Action conditions.

Although the proposed action would result in a net increase in open space, establishment of a significant visual connection to the Harlem River along the length of the waterfront, and a wider variety of land uses, the land use changes associated with the development of the proposed Lower Concourse Rezoning and Related Actions may also be considered a resource loss. Projected and potential development under the proposed action constitutes a long-term commitment of sites as land resources, thereby rendering land use for other purposes infeasible. Further, funds committed to the design, construction/renovation, and operation of projected or potential developments under the proposed action are not available for other projects.

The proposed action constitutes an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of the project sites as a land resource. These commitments of land resources and materials are weighed against the public purpose and benefits of the proposed action, which are to provide a substantial amount of open space, residential, and commercial development in

an area with significant transportation infrastructure to support development. It would replace uses consisting of storage/manufacturing space, vacant parcels, and generally underutilized land, and revitalize the surrounding community with new residential and commercial development that would be compatible with residential and mixed-use development in surrounding neighborhoods.