

4.0 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

4.1 SHOPPING PLAZA ALTERNATIVE

Under the shopping plaza alternative, the proposed schools would not be built and the proposed site would become a shopping plaza.

4.1.1 Land Use and Zoning

If the SCA does not construct the proposed Metropolitan Avenue School Campus, the project site could be developed under the applicable zoning into a shopping plaza. The shopping plaza would be considerably different in use than the surrounding residences. However, the site is located on the same superblock as the existing large-scale commercial businesses such as Sports Authority, Home Depot, and the Super Stop and Shop complex. These businesses are located on the opposite side of the berm occupied by the LIRR Rockaway Beach line's right-of-way and the LIRR Babylon line tracks. Therefore, a shopping plaza would be similar in use to newer developments in the area.

4.1.2 Community Facilities

Without the proposed school and taking into account the Department of Education's staff projections, following of the past few years, enrollment will continue to increase in the area. The shopping plaza alternative would most likely increase demand for community facilities such as police and fire services to patrol the site. In addition, there would be an increase in solid waste generation of 79 pounds per week per employee.

4.1.3 Neighborhood Character

As with the proposed project, the construction of a shopping plaza would affect the neighborhood's character through increased vehicular traffic on local streets and by introducing a commercial use into a predominately residential area.

4.1.4 Historic and Archeological Resources

This alternative would have the same impacts as the proposed project (see Section 3.4).

4.1.5 Urban Design and Aesthetics

This alternative would have similar impacts to urban design and aesthetics as the proposed project (see Section 3.5).

4.1.6 Infrastructure

4.1.6.1 Water Supply

Depending on the size of the shopping plaza, this alternative would have a similar or greater impact as the proposed project (see Section 3.6). A shopping plaza would use 0.17 gallons per day (gpd) per square foot, with an additional 0.17 gpd per square foot for air conditioning. The supply of water to New York City is sufficient to accommodate the growth in demand forecast into the next century. The City is implementing several conservation techniques which will reduce the daily levels of water consumption throughout the City.

4.1.6.2 Combined Sewer System

Depending again on the size of the shopping plaza, this alternative would have similar to greater impacts as the proposed project – a negligible increase to the Bowery Bay WPCP. A shopping plaza could generate 0.17 gpd of sanitary sewage per square foot. The City expects that the implementation of water conservation and flow reduction measures will result in a decline to the Bowery Bay WPCP's flow, improving conditions.

4.1.6.3 Gas

This alternative would have the same impacts as the proposed project (see Section 3.6).

4.1.7 Traffic and Transportation

4.1.7.1 Traffic

The shopping plaza alternative is likely to generate more traffic than the proposed project. In addition, while traffic associated with the proposed project would be concentrated around school hours, traffic generated by a shopping plaza is likely to be distributed more evenly throughout the day, with greater peaking in the evening rush hour. In addition, unlike the schools, the shopping plaza would have a significant Saturday peak. Therefore, the suggested traffic mitigations may not be sufficient to alleviate these impacts from a shopping plaza.

4.1.7.2 Parking

The shopping plaza alternative would most likely provide on-site parking. Therefore, since the proposed project would not provide parking, there should be less of an impact with the shopping plaza alternative on parking availability in the study area.

4.1.7.3 Pedestrians

This alternative would have similar or greater impacts than the proposed project (see Section 3.7).

4.1.7.4 Public Transportation

This alternative would have similar or greater impacts than the proposed project (see Section 3.7).

4.1.8 Air Quality

This alternative would have similar or greater impacts than the proposed project (see Section 3.8).

4.1.9 Noise

The noise impacts caused by increased traffic from the proposed project could be similar to or greater than those from the shopping plaza alternative. The impacts from the proposed school play area would not be relevant.

4.1.10 Soil and Groundwater

This alternative would have the same impacts as the proposed project (see Section 3.10).

4.1.11 Construction Impacts

This alternative would have the same impacts as the proposed project (see Section 3.11).

4.2 COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ALTERNATIVE AND THE PROPOSED ACTION

4.2.1 Shopping Plaza Alternative

The shopping plaza alternative is likely to result in greater traffic and noise impacts than the proposed project. However, there will not be any noise impacts from playgrounds, since the shopping plaza would not include any.