

**A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter first considers a No Build Alternative to the proposed project (the Build Alternative) and compares the environmental conditions and impacts under the proposed project with conditions under this alternative. Under the No Build Alternative, the proposed school facility would not be built and the land would remain undeveloped. The chapter then discusses a hypothetical As-of-Right (AOR) Alternative, under which the project site would be developed with approximately 1,738 new residential units in accordance with its R8 zoning. Overall, it is expected that this alternative would have similar impacts to the Build Alternative. As with the Build Alternative, the AOR Alternative would not result in significant adverse impacts to land use, zoning, and community character; historic resources; urban design and visual resources; shadows; air quality; noise; soil and groundwater conditions; infrastructure; and construction. As compared with the Build Alternative, the AOR Alternative would likely result in greater shadow effects than the proposed project. Although the AOR Alternative would have lesser effects on traffic, transit, and pedestrians than the proposed project would, it would not include mitigation measures. By comparison, the proposed project includes mitigation measures to address significant adverse traffic, transit, and pedestrian impacts at all but one intersection.

**B. NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE**

Under this alternative, the proposed school facility would not be constructed. The project area would remain in its current state—as an undeveloped property depressed below street level. As with the proposed project, this alternative would not result in adverse impacts to land use, zoning, and community character, parking, transit, air quality, noise, and soil and groundwater conditions, infrastructure and energy, or natural resources. Unlike the proposed project, no additional traffic trips would be generated and therefore, no adverse impacts to the following intersections would occur: Grand Concourse at East 161st Street during the AM and PM peak hours; East 161st Street at Concourse Village East/Morris Avenue during the AM peak hour; Grand Concourse at East 153rd Street during the AM and PM peak hours; Morris Avenue at East 149th Street during the AM and PM peak hours; and East 153rd Street at Concourse Village West during the AM and PM peak hours. In addition, no pedestrian impacts would occur at the south crosswalk of East 161st Street and Concourse Village West, or the east crosswalk of East 149th Street and Grand Concourse.

**LAND USE, ZONING AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER**

Under this alternative, the project area would remain in its current state. No new school facility would be constructed. Like the proposed project, there would be no significant adverse land use, zoning, or community character impacts. However, the No Build Alternative, unlike the proposed project, would not provide for much needed new school facilities, and there would be no increase in activity on the project site.

## **HISTORIC RESOURCES**

Under this alternative, the project would remain in its current undeveloped state. Like the proposed project, there would be no significant adverse impacts to known or potential architectural resources within the study area. As the site would not be disturbed, there would be no potential to disturb the pre-contact archaeological resources that could potentially be on-site.

## **URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES**

The urban design and visual character of the project area would remain unchanged under the No Build Alternative. This alternative would not create a new school facility. The project area would retain its existing appearance as an undeveloped lot depressed below street level. Neither this alternative nor the Build Alternative would result in any significant adverse impacts to urban design and visual resources.

## **SHADOWS**

Under this alternative, there would be no new development on the project site and therefore there would be no incremental changes to shadows cast from the site. However, the proposed project would not result in any significant adverse shadow impacts.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

In the No Build Alternative, there would be no new students, staff, or teachers traveling to the site, and the significant adverse traffic impacts would not occur at Grand Concourse at East 161st Street during the AM and PM peak hours; East 161st Street at Concourse Village East/Morris Avenue during the AM peak hour; Grand Concourse at East 153rd Street during the AM and PM peak hours; Morris Avenue at East 149th Street during the AM and PM peak hours; and East 153rd Street at Concourse Village West during the AM and PM peak hours and no pedestrian impacts would occur at the south crosswalk of East 161st Street and Concourse Village West, or the east crosswalk of East 149th Street and Grand Concourse. However, as described in Chapter 15, "Mitigation," the traffic and pedestrian impacts with the proposed project could all be mitigated, with the exception of the intersection of East 153rd Street and Concourse Village West, where the traffic impacts would remain unmitigated during both the AM and PM peak hours.

## **AIR QUALITY**

Neither the No Build nor the Build Alternative would result in any significant adverse impacts on air quality or violations of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). As with the Build Alternative, the No Build Alternative would not result in exceedances of carbon monoxide (CO) standards at this location.

## **NOISE**

With this alternative, the slight increase in noise resulting from the proposed project would not occur; however, the proposed project would not result in any significant adverse noise impacts.

## **SOIL AND GROUNDWATER**

With the No Build Alternative, no significant change is anticipated to take place in the project area. However, it would remain contaminated and would not be remediated as with the proposed project.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENERGY**

As no development would occur on the project site there would be no additional water or energy used at the site, or wastewater or solid waste generated at the site. Like the proposed project, the No Build Alternative would have no significant adverse infrastructure impacts.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

Under the No Build Alternative, it is assumed that there would be no change to the use of the project site. The vegetation community should continue to develop and mature and provide habitat to wildlife. However, the proposed project would not result in any significant adverse impacts to terrestrial natural resources, wetlands, aquatic resources, endangered species, threatened species, or species of special concern.

## **CONSTRUCTION**

The No Build Alternative would avoid the temporary construction impacts attributable to the proposed project. However, in addition to being relatively short-term, the construction impacts of the proposed project would be addressed (e.g., through dust-control measures and adherence to noise regulations). The No Build Alternative would avoid the increase in truck traffic and construction-related noise, but would not provide the much needed new school facilities.

## **C. AS-OF-RIGHT RESIDENTIAL ALTERNATIVE**

Hypothetically, under this alternative, the project site would be developed as of right in accordance with its R8 zoning. The project site is approximately 288,803 square feet. With an allowable FAR of 6.02 for residential development, the project site could be developed with a maximum of approximately 1,738,594 zoning square feet (zsf) of development. Assuming a dwelling unit size of 1,000 zsf per unit, the project site could be developed with approximately 1,738 new residential dwelling units.

Overall, it is expected that this alternative would have similar impacts to the Build Alternative. As with the Build Alternative, the AOR Alternative would not result in significant adverse impacts to land use, zoning, and community character; historic resources; urban design and visual resources; shadows; air quality; noise; soil and groundwater conditions; infrastructure; and construction. As compared with the Build Alternative, the AOR Alternative would likely result in greater shadow effects than the proposed project. In addition, although the AOR Alternative would have lesser effects on traffic, transit, and pedestrians than the proposed project would, it would not include mitigation measures. By comparison, the proposed project includes mitigation measures to address all significant adverse traffic, transit, and pedestrian impacts, except for the intersection of East 153rd Street and Concourse Village West, where the traffic impacts would remain unmitigated during both the AM and PM peak hours.

## **LAND USE, ZONING AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER**

Under the AOR Residential Alternative, it is assumed that the project site would be developed in conformance with existing R8 zoning, resulting in approximately 1,738 residential dwelling units. R8 is the highest density residential district in the Bronx and allows a maximum FAR of 6.02. Residential buildings in R8 districts can range from mid-rise, eight- to 10-story buildings, to much taller, narrower buildings set back from the street on large zoning lots. This alternative would be consistent with the current land uses in the study area, primarily the high-rise residential buildings in the surrounding area and the nearby city park. Like the proposed project, there would be no significant adverse land use, zoning, or community character impacts.

## **HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

Under this alternative, the project would be developed with mid- to high-rise residential buildings. As compared with the proposed project, the AOR buildings would be taller and more visible from the historic resources in the vicinity of the project site. However, the AOR residential buildings would be comparable in height with other tall residential buildings to the north and east of the project site, and would not be highly visible from these resources. Therefore, like the proposed project, there would be no significant adverse impacts to known or potential architectural resources within the study area. Under the AOR Alternative, it is assumed that no archaeological testing or monitoring would be conducted as residential buildings would be developed as of right. Therefore, under both the Build and AOR Alternatives, no archaeological testing would occur, and no significant adverse impacts to archaeology are expected.

## **URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES**

Under the AOR Residential Alternative, the urban design and visual character of the project area would be altered, as the site would be developed with mid- to high-rise residential buildings in conformance with the existing zoning. These residential buildings would be of compatible size and scale with many of the high-rise residential buildings to the north and east of the site, including the 25-story Concourse Village buildings and the 16-story Andrew Jackson Houses to the north, as well as the 14-story Melrose Houses to the east. While the residential buildings would be visible from surrounding local streets, the creation of new residential uses on the site would not dominate the urban design character of the neighborhood, which predominantly consists of residential and ground floor retail uses. This alternative would not be expected to alter the existing street pattern or any block shapes.

The residential alternative would not be expected to adversely affect visual resources in the area, such as Cardinal Hayes High School, the Greater Universalist Baptist Church, or the structures within the Grand Concourse Historic District. Although the residential buildings would be visible throughout the study area, they would not obstruct any of the principal views of these resources. Therefore, like the proposed project, the residential alternative would not result in any significant adverse urban design or visual resources impacts.

## **SHADOWS**

The shadow effects from the AOR Residential Alternative would be greater than those associated with the proposed project. The proposed school buildings would cast some shadows on the P.S. 156 and I.S. 151 school yards to the north of the project site during all four analysis days; however, these additional shadows would not result in significant adverse impacts. The

residential buildings would be much taller, ranging from mid-rise, eight- to 10-story buildings to 17-stories or more. These taller buildings would be expected to cast greater shadows of a longer duration on the P.S. 156 and I.S. 151 play areas, and could potentially cast shadows on portions of Franz Sigel Park to the west.

### **TRAFFIC AND PARKING**

Under this alternative, the project site would be developed with residential development consisting of approximately 1,738 dwelling units. As compared to the proposed school project, the AOR Residential Alternative would result in fewer peak hour person and vehicle trips. This is due to the fact that residential use has different trip generation characteristics as compared to school projects. Specifically, the residential alternative would generate an estimated 1,275 and 760 person trips during the school-related weekday AM and PM peak hours, respectively, compared with 2,266 peak hour person trips for the proposed project. In addition, this alternative would generate 257 and 145 vehicle trips in the AM and PM peak hours, respectively, compared to 748 peak hour vehicle trips for the proposed project. Although the residential alternative would generate fewer peak hour trips than the proposed school project, it should be noted that the residential trips would be consistently generated throughout the year as compared to the school trips, which would only be generated during the school year from September to mid-June.

Because the prevailing traffic conditions in the study area are congested, the residential alternative is also expected to result in adverse traffic effects at some of the study area's highly congested intersections. These traffic effects could be less severe than those identified for the proposed project. However, the residential alternative would be developed as of right, and would not include mitigation measures. By comparison, the Build Alternative includes mitigation measures to address traffic impacts, except for the intersection of East 153rd Street and Concourse Village West, which would remain unmitigated during both the AM and PM peak hours.

### **TRANSIT AND PEDESTRIANS**

The residential alternative would result in fewer transit and pedestrian trips than the proposed project. Specifically, the residential alternative would generate an estimated 952 and 567 walk and public transit trips during the school-related weekday AM and PM peak hours, respectively, compared with 1,556 peak hour walk and public transit trips for the proposed project. As with the proposed project, the residential alternative is also expected to result in adverse pedestrian effects at some of the analysis locations. These effects could be less severe than those identified for the proposed project. However, the residential alternative would be developed as of right, and would not include mitigation measures. By comparison, the proposed project includes mitigation measures to address significant adverse transit and pedestrian impacts.

### **AIR QUALITY**

Neither the AOR Alternative nor the Build Alternative would result in any significant adverse impacts on air quality or violations of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). As with the Build Alternative, in the As-of-Right Alternative, impacts of mobile sources would not result in exceedances of carbon monoxide (CO) standards at intersection locations, and emissions from heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) sources would not result in violations of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) or nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>).

**NOISE**

With the AOR Alternative, there would be lower traffic volumes and less associated mobile source noise. There would also be no associated playground noise. Thus, noise levels would be expected to be lower than with the proposed project. As with the Build Alternative the AOR Alternative would not result in any significant adverse noise impacts.

**SOIL AND GROUNDWATER**

Any as of right development proposed for the project site would be developed in accordance with applicable regulations and like the proposed project would result in no significant adverse soil and groundwater impacts.

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

Like with the proposed project, the AOR Alternative would increase demand for water, sanitation and solid-waste services. However, the increased demand would be minimal as compared to city-wide demand and would be met by existing infrastructure and utility systems. Like the proposed project, the AOR Alternative would have no significant adverse infrastructure impacts.

**CONSTRUCTION**

Construction of both the AOR and Build Alternatives would result in temporary disruptions to the surrounding area. However, like the Build Alternative, construction of the AOR Residential Alternative would comply with applicable City regulations (i.e., noise and dust control measures), and no significant adverse impacts would result. \*