

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers and evaluates a range of alternatives to the proposed site selection for a public facility, as described in Chapter 1, “Project Description.” According to the *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, alternatives considered should reduce or eliminate impacts of an action while substantively meeting the goals and objectives of the action. The range of alternatives to be considered, which include a No Action Alternative, is determined by the nature of the specific action, its potential impacts, the objectives and capabilities of the project sponsor, and feasibility. In addition to considering alternatives that would avoid or reduce Action-related significant adverse impacts, this chapter considers alternate sites that were considered for the proposed Police Academy.

The analysis first considers the No Action Alternative, in which the proposed acquisition of property, site selection, mapping and other land use actions are not undertaken. A No Impacts Alternative is also assessed, in which there is a change in density or program design in order to avoid the potential impacts associated with the Proposed Action and the resultant Police Academy development. The third alternative considered is an Alternate Site Location Alternative, which evaluates the possibility of locating the proposed Police Academy development elsewhere in the City.

The chapter discusses the likely environmental effects of each of these three alternatives, and compares them to the anticipated effects of the Proposed Action, where applicable.

B. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

The No Action Alternative assumes that the proposed site selection would not be implemented. This alternative is discussed and analyzed as the “Future Without the Proposed Action” (i.e., “No-Build Condition”) in each of the technical areas addressed in Chapters 2 through 16. It is used as a basis for comparison with the environmental conditions with the Proposed Action and conservatively assumes that the Proposed Action does not move forward.

This analysis compares conditions under the No Action Alternative to conditions with the Proposed Action. The No Action Alternative assumes the City would not construct the proposed Police Academy. Under this alternative, it is assumed that the proposed development site would not be developed by the analysis year of 2014. As described throughout this document, it is expected that the NYPD’s vehicle impound operations would be relocated to other City-owned sites and that this portion of the proposed Academy site would remain vacant. The Corona Auto and Truck facility is expected to continue operating at their current location on a month-to-month lease in the No Action condition and the vacant strip of land along College Point Boulevard is expected to remain un-built. The No Action Alternative would not require any discretionary actions. The effects of this alternative are summarized below and compared to those of the Proposed Action, where applicable.

Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy

In the future without the Proposed Action, no major land use changes are anticipated for the Project Site. No new public facility uses would be developed at the site, nor would any new employees be introduced to the site. As mentioned above, Corona Auto and Truck would continue to operate on the northwestern portion of the proposed development site, and the balance of the proposed development

site is expected to remain vacant. The NYPD's vehicle impound operations would have been relocated to other City-owned sites.

Within the surrounding study area, it is expected that the current land use trends and general development patterns would continue, characterized by an increase in the development of as-of-right commercial and manufacturing space and extensions and improvements to area roadways. No major changes to zoning or public policy are anticipated under the No Action Alternative.

The No Action Alternative would not result in some of the benefits expected to result from the Proposed Action, including: improvement of adjacent sidewalks, increased landscaping along the public right of way, and the introduction of a development on underutilized City property. Additionally, this alternative would not result in upgrades to the on-site drainage system and reduction of impervious surfaces through sustainable design approaches. As such, the water quality within the drainage system would not be expected to improve under this alternative.

As discussed in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy," the Proposed Action would require a mayoral override for relief from various zoning controls. Unlike the Proposed Action, the No Action Alternative would not require any zoning overrides.

Open Space

Under the No Action Alternative, no new workers would be introduced to the proposed development site, nor would new open space facilities be added. In the surrounding area, anticipated new manufacturing construction and general background growth would increase the study area's worker and residential populations.

Passive open space ratios under both the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action would remain below the NYCDP guideline ratios for open space adequacy. Under the No Action Alternative, both the passive open space ratio for the quarter-mile study area's worker population and the combined open space ratio for the area's residents and workers would be lower than that with the Proposed Action. The passive open space ratio for the study area's workers would be 1.27 acres per 1,000 workers in the No Action Alternative, compared to 0.61 acres per 1,000 workers with the proposed Academy. The recommended weighted average ratio under the No Action Alternative would be 0.15 acres per 1,000 residents and workers, and the combined passive open space ratio would be 0.99 acres per 1,000 residents and workers (compared to the ratio of 0.55 for the Proposed Action).

Shadows

Without any new buildings or structures on the proposed development site under the No Action Alternative, no new shadows would be cast on the open spaces in the study area. While the Proposed Action would result in increased shadows, no significant adverse shadow impacts are anticipated.

Urban Design

With the No Action Alternative, the proposed development site would remain largely unchanged and dramatically different from the Proposed Action, which would add a new substantial public facility development.

Unlike the Proposed Action, the No Action Alternative would not alter the urban design and general visual character of proposed development site by replacing a largely un-built, underutilized approximately 35-acre site with a development consisting of an approximately 2.4 million gsf police

training facility and 2,000 parking spaces, including an 1,800-space above-grade parking garage. The proposed development would be substantial and on a visible site in College Point, and is expected to be a considerable change to the surrounding area and a prominent addition to the cityscape, both in its immediate environment and from some distance away. The proposed Academy would be modern and visually distinctive structure in the area, as it would differ from the generally low-to mid-rise existing and anticipated buildings in the immediately surrounding area. Furthermore, like the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action would not block significant public view corridors, vistas, or natural or built features.

Neighborhood Character

Under the No Action Alternative, no major changes would occur to the Project Site. No new buildings or uses would be added to the proposed development site, and the site would continue to be a generally underutilized parcel of land.

Within the surrounding study area, the various developments that are planned for construction by the 2014 build year under the No Action Alternative would not be expected to create substantial changes to the character of the area. Most of these anticipated developments are improvements and expansions to existing manufacturing uses that occupy large lots. With the exception of the Linden Place extension, they would not significantly alter any natural features, street patterns, or block forms. While these developments could result in changes to the character of the areas immediately surrounding the Project Site, under the No Action Alternative, the overall neighborhood character of the area encompassing the Project Site would remain substantially the same as it is today.

Hazardous Materials

Under the No Action Alternative, as the proposed development site would continue in its current condition, there would be no exposure pathways for hazardous materials, nor would there be any cleanup at the proposed development site. Compared with the No Action Alternative, a greater amount of ground disturbance would occur under the Proposed Action in areas where soil is contaminated from hazardous materials, as more in-ground disturbance is expected to occur with the Proposed Action. However, development under the Proposed Action would be subject to requirements that include subsurface investigations, remediation, and construction in accordance with applicable city, state and federal requirements and under site-specific Sampling and Remediation Work Plans and Health and Safety Plans.

Waterfront Revitalization Program

Unlike the Proposed Action, the No Action Alternative would not result in any new development within the Coastal Zone boundary, nor would it further the goal of encouraging appropriate development in coastal zone areas.

Infrastructure

Under the No Action Alternative, the proposed development site would remain predominantly un-built and the current NYPD vehicle impound operations would be relocated to other City-owned sites. As such, demands on local infrastructure systems, including water supply and sewage treatment, would remain generally the same as existing conditions. As with the Proposed Action, no significant adverse infrastructure impacts would occur under the No Action Alternative.

Solid Waste and Sanitation Services

Demands on solid waste and recycling services would remain generally the same as existing conditions. As with the Proposed Action, no significant adverse solid waste/sanitation impacts would occur under the No Action Alternative.

Energy

Demands on local utility systems, including energy, would remain generally the same as existing conditions. As with the Proposed Action, no significant adverse energy impacts would occur under the No Action Alternative.

Traffic and Parking

In the No Action Alternative, traffic and parking demand levels in the study area would increase as a result of general background growth and future developments in the study area.

Under the No Action Alternative, five intersections would experience congestion on one or more approaches in the weekday AM peak hour, and eight intersections would experience congestion on one or more approaches in the PM peak hour. This compares with two and four congested intersections during these respective peak periods under existing conditions. Under the No Action Alternative, it is anticipated that demand for on-street and off-street parking would increase due to new developments and general background growth in the study area. In general, it is anticipated that there would be sufficient on-street and off-street parking spaces in the study area.

Unlike the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action would result in significant adverse traffic impacts at three signalized intersections in the AM peak hour and three signalized intersections in the PM peak period (a total of five different intersections). The implementation of the proposed mitigation plan is expected to eliminate some, but not all, of the identified traffic impacts associated with the Proposed Action. No significant adverse impacts to on-street or off-street parking conditions would result from either the Proposed Action or the No Action Alternative.

Transit and Pedestrians

Under the No Action Alternative, the NYPD vehicle impoundment facility would be relocated from the Project Site and, as a result, a slight reduction in transit or pedestrian activity could occur. Neither the No Action Alternative nor the Proposed Action would result in significant adverse subway or bus impacts, or result in significant adverse impacts to pedestrian facilities.

Air Quality

The No Action Alternative would result in less vehicular traffic than the Proposed Action, and would have lower mobile source emissions. No violations of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) are predicted to occur either under the No Action Alternative or with the Proposed Action, and both would be consistent with the New York State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the control of ozone and carbon monoxide (CO). Neither the Proposed Action nor the No Action Alternative would result in significant adverse mobile or stationary source air quality impacts.

Noise

As the No Action Alternative would not result in any new uses on the development site, it would not result in any permanent mobile or stationary noise sources. As with the Proposed Action, the No Action Alternative would not create any significant adverse noise impacts on nearby noise sensitive uses.

The noise levels at the monitoring sites in the vicinity of the development site are moderately high and are fairly typical of similar areas in this area of College Point. With the No Action Alternative, the Leq noise levels at these locations would be slightly higher, with increases of less than 1.0 dBA. Changes of this magnitude would be insignificant and imperceptible as 3 dBA change is the threshold of change that is detectable by the human ear. As the No Action Alternative would not introduce a noise sensitive use in this area, it would not result in significant adverse noise impacts as with the Proposed Action.

Construction

Since there would be no development under the No Action Alternative, it would not generate the temporary construction disruptions attributable to the proposed development. However, the economic benefits attributable to construction expenditures and construction jobs under the Proposed Action would not occur under this alternative.

Public Health

Neither the No Action Alternative nor the Proposed Action would result in significant adverse public health impacts.

Assessment

While the No Action Alternative would not result in any of the impacts associated with the Proposed Action and resulting Police Academy, the benefits expected from the Proposed Action relative to land use, urban design, natural resources, and WRP consistency, would not be realized under this alternative. The No Action Alternative would not improve the City's police training capabilities and would result in continued use of the NYPD's current overcrowded facilities. This alternative would fall short of the objectives of the NYPD to overhaul the police training facilities throughout the City and the current facilities would have to be supplemented to continue to meet the NYPD's increasing training demands.

C. NO IMPACTS ALTERNATIVE

It is the City's practice to include, whenever feasible, a "No Impacts" alternative that avoids, without the need for mitigation, all significant environmental impacts of the Proposed Action. As presented in Chapters 2 through 16, the Proposed Action is anticipated to result in significant adverse impacts in the following two (2) CEQR technical areas: hazardous materials and traffic. Additionally, a zoning override is required for several aspects of the project that would not be permitted on an as-of-right basis.

The proposed project would result in significant adverse impacts at intersections within the study area that may not be fully alleviated with practical mitigation measures. Because of existing congestion at a

number of these intersections, even a minimal increase in traffic would result in unmitigated impacts at some locations. Based on a sensitivity analysis of intersections within the study area, it was determined that the addition of 5 vehicles or less at certain intersection approaches during both the AM and PM peak periods would trigger an impact that cannot be fully mitigated due to high volumes under existing conditions and future No Action conditions. Thus, almost any new development on the project site, including that which would be allowed as-of-right, would result in unmitigated traffic impacts, and no reasonable alternative could be developed to completely avoid such impacts.

As described in detail in Chapter 7, “Hazardous Materials,” recognized environmental conditions have been identified on substantial portions of the proposed development site through soil and groundwater testing. As the site contamination was encountered site-wide, any feasible site development, including as-of-right construction would require additional testing and cleanup. Therefore, any construction resulting in in-ground disturbance would result in a hazardous materials impact that would have to be mitigated in compliance with a DEP-approved protocol.

As discussed in Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy,” several mayoral overrides are required for the proposed Police Academy. To avoid the required overrides, the proposed Academy facility would have to be re-designed to avoid encroachment in the rear yard equivalent areas, would have to be set back so as to avoid the applicable sky exposure plane areas, the floor area of the Police Academy would have to be reduced, the proposed museum and visiting guest and lecturer facilities would not be included in the building program, and the parking garage would have to be expanded to accommodate all of the required parking (the proposed project requires approximately 5,600 parking spaces on-site to accommodate all proposed uses). A parking garage of this size would not be feasible due to site constraints and the high cost of building a garage that size.

Assessment

The No Impacts Alternative would avoid the Proposed Action’s identified significant adverse impacts. However, a No Impacts Alternative is not a feasible alternative in the case of the Police Academy as it would not meet the NYPD’s key objectives for a new Police Academy (namely consolidating entry-level, in-service, and civilian training facilities into one central location). As described above, there are traffic and hazardous materials impacts related to the development of the site that could not be avoided by making minor modifications or reductions to the building program. Any new on-site construction would result in hazardous materials impacts that would require mitigation. Further, as noted above under the description of the No Action Alternative, five intersections would experience congestion on one or more approaches in the weekday AM peak hour, and eight intersections would experience congestion on one or more approaches in the PM peak hour. No practical reduction in the building program would eliminate new traffic impacts at these congested intersections. As such, this alternative would not meet the goals and objectives of the Proposed Action, and accordingly, it is not considered for purposes of further analysis.

C. ALTERNATE SITE LOCATION ALTERNATIVE

This alternative assumes that the proposed public facility, the Police Academy, would be located at an alternative location within the City.

The programmatic requirements for a new Police Academy necessitate a large development site to accommodate approximately 2.4 million gsf of new development and accessory parking for approximately 2,000 vehicles. The proposed development would accommodate a comprehensive Police Academy facility for recruit and in-service training and would consolidate training facilities that

are currently spread across the City into one central location. Given the variety of uses that comprise the Academy program and the sensitive nature of the proposed facility, a large site is required to accommodate the entire building program and the various security measures (including a setback from adjacent roadways). According to preliminary NYPD specifications for the individual program elements, the selected site would need to exceed 30 acres in order to accommodate all training components at optimal layouts.

Since conceptual planning for a new Academy began, several alternative sites have been considered for the proposed Police Academy, many of which are located outside of Queens. The proposed site (the NYPD's College Point Vehicle Impoundment facility) was among seven locations considered by representatives of the City's site selection committee for the proposed Academy. Other sites included (1) Oak Point, a privately-owned parcel in the Bronx; (2) the City-owned former Flushing Airport site (also in Queens Community Board 7); (3) a portion of the Aqueduct Racetrack site in Queens; (4) the City-owned Ridgewood Reservoir site in Queens; (5) the City-owned Rossville Prison site in Staten Island; (6) the City-owned Seaview Hospital site and Farm Colony in Staten Island. These sites consisted of both private and publicly owned property. None of these alternate locations proved viable for the reasons detailed below.¹

Each of these six alternative locations for the proposed Police Academy was found to be unsuitable, as each site failed to meet one or more of the selection criteria for siting the proposed public facility. These criteria include:

- Size of the site and ability to accommodate the entire development program;
- Accessibility by mass transit and vicinity to main arterial roadways;
- Community context; and
- Feasibility.

The following provides a qualitative description of each of the alternative sites listed above:

Alternate Locations Considered

1. Oak Point, Bronx

Oak Point is an approximately 28-acre property located in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx to east of the Bruckner Expressway (I-278). Located on the waterfront at the southern tip of the Bronx in Community District 2, the site is relatively secluded. The Oak Point site would be suitable for development because it is predominantly un-built. However, a portion of the Oak Point property is privately owned and would have to be purchased from the current landowner or condemned.

The zoning for the waterfront site restricts lot coverage to 30 percent. A building on this site would be limited to a maximum 60-foot base height with a maximum width of 100 feet above the 60-foot base. A maximum height of 150 feet is allowed pursuant to current zoning.

The site also has waterfront requirements, including a public esplanade and a 40-foot minimum setback from the shoreline for new buildings. A minimum of 15 percent of the entire lot area must be dedicated as a supplemental public access area. Therefore, much of the available property would not be available for the Academy's programmatic needs.

¹ Readers should understand that there is a limitation on the ability to disclose information on matters that relate to security concerns and analyses leading to the site selection for this public facility.

As the site is located immediately to the south of a rail yard, and the Bruckner Expressway is located immediately adjacent to the rail yard, there is limited access to the site. The Oak Point Site is located midway between the Number 6 subway station at East 149th Street and Southern Boulevard and the Number 6 subway station at Longwood Avenue and Southern Boulevard. Each subway station is over a half-mile from the site. The nearest bus route is the Bx19, which travels along Southern Boulevard in the vicinity of the project site, and is also approximately a half-mile from the Oak Point Site.

Locating the proposed Police Academy at the Oak Point site would prevent the site from being developed for other uses. For example, *Sustainable South Bronx* has voiced a desire to develop an “ecoindustrial park” on a portion of this site that would include a construction and demolition debris recycling plant as well as facilities for wood salvage and re-milling, plastics recycling and manufacturing, and processing glass powder for concrete and masonry blocks. Finally, as the City would have to acquire the land from a private owner, and the available property would not accommodate the entire building program, it would not be feasible to pursue this site for the Police Academy.

2. Former Flushing Airport Site, Queens

The approximately 20-acre former Flushing Airport property is located in the College Point neighborhood of Queens on the eastern side of Linden Place, between 20th Avenue and 26th Avenue. Flushing Airport opened in 1927 and was used until 1984. The frequent flooding problem lead to the closure of this airport in 1984.

The former Flushing Airport site is predominantly un-built. The former airport property is now overgrown, and there are a variety of wetland issues on-site. In fact, a portion of the site is located within a tidal floodplain, designated Zone AE on the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps. Zone AE represents areas that have a 1 percent chance of flooding each year (100-year flood) that has been determined in the Flood Insurance Study by detailed methods of hydraulic analysis. Additionally, a portion of the Flushing Airport site is mapped as a NYSDEC Freshwater Wetland.

In recognition of the various water-related issues on the Flushing Airport site, the City is evaluating the feasibility of setting aside portions of the site as dedicated wetland restoration areas. As described in Chapter 5, “Natural Resources,” NYCEDC has sponsored the Former Flushing Airport Mitigation Plan (Plan) on the approximately 78-acre former Flushing Airport site. The Plan, which is a priority project for the New York City Wetlands Transfer Task Force,² is designed to improve wetland functions and values by enhancing 8.6 acres of existing degraded wetlands and creating 11.8 acres of wetlands at the former Flushing Airport site. The Plan will enhance water quality, improve flood storage, increase wildlife habitat values, and improve overall aesthetic value of the area. The Plan will also create 5.6 acres of scrub/shrub floodplain, 4.7 acres of forested upland and 6.3 acres of grassland.

As described in Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy,” the surrounding area consists primarily of commercial, manufacturing, and open space uses. Residential uses are located to the west of 130th Street and to the east/southeast of the Whitestone Expressway. There is limited local bus and subway service. The Q20A and Q76 bus routes travel along 20th Avenue to the north. The site is accessible by vehicle from 20th Avenue.

The Flushing Airport site has long been a source of contention within the local community. While a variety of diverse projects have been proposed for the site since the airport was officially closed in the

² The NYC Wetlands Task Force inventories City-owned wetlands in the NY metropolitan area and determines the technical, legal, environmental and economical feasibility of transferring these wetlands to the jurisdiction of NYC Department of Parks and Recreation.

mid-1980s, the community has expressed a desire to convert the property to public park. As mentioned in above and described in great detail in Chapter 2, the Flushing Airport Site is surrounded by a mix of commercial, manufacturing, and open space uses, with residential uses located beyond. Therefore, while the Police Academy would be a contextual use within the community, the selection of this site would likely be a source of contention.

With a maximum of 20 acres available, the former Flushing Airport site is not ideal for the proposed Academy, as the entire building program could not be accommodated on-site. In addition, the siting of the proposed Police Academy at the Flushing Airport site would likely result in significant adverse natural resources impacts. Therefore, the NYPD determined that this site would not adequately meet their selection criteria.

3. A Portion of the Aqueduct Racetrack Site, Queens

This approximately 26-acre portion of the Aqueduct Racetrack site is located in the South Ozone Park neighborhood of Queens in Community District 10. The Aqueduct property is located at 110-00 Rockaway Boulevard and is generally bounded by Rockaway Boulevard to the north, 114th Street to the east, and North Conduit Avenue and the Belt Parkway (or Southern State Parkway) to the west and south.

While the land is City-owned, it is leased to the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (“Port Authority”). The parcel, known as Parking Area “C”, is currently used as satellite parking for John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) employees. Some limited Aqueduct Racetrack parking demand is occasionally accommodated on this lot. The property would not be available for recapture by the City until May 2010. Additionally, other City agencies have expressed possible interest in the site for future use.

Site access is available via the “A” subway line, which runs adjacent to the southwest boundary of the site. The North Conduit station is located near the intersection of Aqueduct Road and North Conduit Avenue. Several NYCT bus lines operate within close proximity to the Aqueduct Racetrack site, but only the Q11 and the B15 stop adjacent to the portion of the site that would be available for development. To reduce conflicts with other Aqueduct uses, vehicular access to this site would likely be limited to the North Conduit Avenue entrance, which is located to the south.

The project site is zoned C8-1 which allows a commercial floor area of 1.0. C8 districts typically bridge commercial and manufacturing uses and provide for automotive and other heavy commercial services that often require large amounts of land. As such, development of the Proposed Academy at this site would be contextual.

While the total site area is approximately 26 acres, only 10 acres of the total parcel would be available for non-aviation related use. Even if all 26 acres were made available, the site would be too small to fit all of the programmatic elements of the proposed Academy and as such the site would not be feasible.

4. Ridgewood Reservoir, Queens

Ridgewood Reservoir is a decommissioned 19th century reservoir that is located in southwestern Queens on the Queens-Brooklyn border. Originally built in the late 1850s to provide potable drinking water to the city of Brooklyn, the Ridgewood Reservoir served as part of the City’s water supply until it was decommissioned and then drained in the late 1980s.

This site comprises more than 50-acres and is part of Highland Park and under the jurisdiction of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYCDPR). The reservoir and park comprise more than 141 acres and are roughly bounded on the north by the Jackie Robinson Parkway, on the south by Highland Boulevard and Jamaica Avenue, on the west by Bulwer Place and Warwick Street, and on the east by Cypress Hills National Cemetery. Following its decommissioning, the Ridgewood Reservoir has naturally become forested land and a grassy march, which has attracted a wide variety of fauna. The reservoir's outer basins are filled and completely vegetated, while the middle basin contains a fresh water pond. A bicycle trail along the perimeter of the reservoir has also become part of the 40-mile Brooklyn-Queens Greenway.

The surrounding area consists primarily of cemeteries to the north and east; low-to mid-density residentially zoned areas to the south, and parkland to the west. There is limited local bus and subway service. The B13 bus route travels along Cypress Hill Street to the west, and the Q56 bus route runs on Jamaica Avenue to the south. The B13 bus route provides a connection to the Fresh Pond Road and Forest Avenue station serving the M subway line and the Crescent Street station serving the J and Z subway lines, and the Q56 bus route provides a connection to the Broadway Junction subway station. The site is accessible by vehicle from the Jackie Robinson Parkway and Vermont Place. The city is currently working to revitalize Highland Park and make it a destination park.

This site is mapped parkland and therefore, state-enabling legislation would be required for the alienation of publicly accessible open space to permit the construction of the proposed Police Academy. In addition, the siting of the proposed Police Academy at the Ridgewood Reservoir would likely result in significant adverse natural resources impacts. As this site is predominantly comprised of parkland and low-density residential uses, community opposition was expected to be strong. It is expected that the Police Academy would not be considered a contextual use in this area.

The physical characteristics of the site, including the abundant natural resources, the sharp grade changes, and limited access through parkland would complicate site planning and efficient layout of the various program components. As such, the NYPD determined that the Ridgewood Reservoir site was not a suitable location for the Police Academy.

5. Rossville Prison Site, Staten Island

Located in the Rossville area of Staten Island in Community District 3, the approximately 31-acre site is located on Arthur Kill Road and Bloomingdale Road. It is a City-owned site that is predominantly comprised of industrial uses. In the late-1980s the City considered using this site for a new prison, dubbed the Rossville Prison, which was never constructed; however, the prison label continues to be associated with this parcel.

The site is accessible by public transit; the S55, S74, and S84 buses provide access to the site, along Arthur Kill Road. Additionally, the S55 provides connection to the Pleasant Plains Staten Island Railway (SIR) station, which is located approximately two miles to the south of the site. Vehicle traffic can access the site from Arthur Kill Road via the West Shore Expressway. As the site is located at the southwestern limits of Staten Island, it would not be easily accessible to police recruits and in-service personnel who travel from all five boroughs.

The surrounding area to the north of the West Shore Expressway is sparsely developed, supporting mostly industrial uses. In the vicinity of the Rossville Prison Site, the area to the south of the West Shore Expressway is densely populated with residential uses and Clay Ponds State Preserve is also located in this area. With the industrial character of the immediate area, and a highway separating the site from the residential area to the southeast, the project would be considered contextual in this area.

While this site is predominantly un-built and at approximately 31 acres it is of adequate size for the Police Academy Program, the presence of on-site hazardous materials was a concern for the NYPD. Two other secondary issues were related to other City interest in the site: NYCEDC expressed interest in waterfront development on a portion of the site; and the NYC Department of Sanitation has indicated that it intends to evaluate the feasibility of constructing a new facility on a portion of the site that has frontage on Arthur Kill Road. However, the primary concern with the site was accessibility from other areas of the City. As the Rossville Prison site is located in southwestern Staten Island, the NYPD did not feel as though this site was centrally located or easily accessible to other critical NYPD facilities.

6. Seaview Hospital site and Farm Colony, Staten Island

The Seaview Hospital site and Farm Colony is located in central Staten Island in the Willowbrook neighborhood (Community District 2). The site is generally bounded by Colonial Avenue to the west, Walcott Avenue and Brielle Avenue to the north, Manor Road to the east, and Rockland Avenue and Eastman Avenue to the south.

Approximately 40 acres of the 98-acre Farm Colony site and 280-acre Seaview Hospital site were considered to be available for the Police Academy. A site of 40 acres would accommodate the NYPD's entire development program.

In 1985, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (NYCLPC) designated the Farm Colony – Seaview Hospital Historic District. The site contains 11 historically significant but dilapidated buildings that must be maintained and/or restored. The 25-acre southwestern portion of the Farm Colony site, known as “The Great Swamp,” is now under the jurisdiction of the NYCDPR.

With the exception of two local bus routes, there is limited public transit. The S57 and S54 bus routes travel along Brielle Avenue. The S57 bus route provides a connection to the New Dorp SIR station. The site is located a short distance from the Staten Island Expressway and accessible by vehicle from Manor Road, Brielle Avenue, and Forest Hill Road.

The site is zoned R3-2 and much of the immediately adjacent land is residential, parkland, or institutional (hospital). The close proximity of the site to residential and hospital uses was a potentially contentious issue. Additionally, the local community would like this site to be reactivated in a manner that would provide access to the community.

Impediments to developing this site with the Police Academy were the proximity to a residential area and hospital, likely landmark impacts, extensive on-site wetlands and natural resources, and GreenBelt boundaries. To a lesser degree, a 50 to 80 foot grade change throughout the site poses site-planning challenges. Finally, the City has issued RFPs for portions of the site to encourage re-activation of the site and public access. Altogether these issues, and lack of accessibility to the site from other areas of the City, eliminated this site from consideration.

7. College Point Vehicle Impound Facility, Queens

The approximately 35-acre College Point Vehicle Impound Facility (Tow Pound) property is located in the College Point neighborhood of Queens. The site consists primarily of the NYPD's College Point Tow Pound. Also included are a vehicle service station (the City owns the land and holds a month-to-month lease with the operator of the service station), and a City-owned strip of vacant land that is located between the Tow Pound and College Point Boulevard. On a daily basis, the Tow Pound contains approximately 3,000 vehicles, 1,300 motorcycles and 600 auto parts on a paved asphalt lot.

All of the vehicles, motorcycles and parts are being relocated to other City-owned sites as the City consolidates several vehicle impound facilities and reorganizes its citywide operations.

The proposed development site is bordered by 28th Avenue to the north, Ulmer Street to the east, and College Point Boulevard to the west. Land uses in the immediate area consist predominantly of commercial and manufacturing uses on large lots. Residential uses are located to the west of 130th Street and to the east/southeast of the Whitestone Expressway. As the Academy would be an as-of-right use within the M1-1 and M2-1 zones, the proposed use would be contextual.

Two bus lines provide access from the number 7-subway line in Flushing to the project site. The Q25 bus route travels along 28th Avenue and the Q65 bus route runs along College Point Boulevard. Both bus lines have bus stops within close proximity to this site. The site is also easily accessible from the Whitestone Expressway, a limited access multi-lane highway that connects to the Van Wyck Expressway and the Grand Central Parkway. Additionally, College Point Boulevard is a vital north-south arterial that typically operates with two travel lanes in each direction, providing connection to Flushing.

The Tow Pound site, consisting of 35-acres of paved parking lots in an urban environment, is adequate in terms of its size, availability of utilities and highway access, and compatibility with surrounding land uses. The site is appealing because it is already occupied by a police use; therefore, no other City agencies or private interests would be impacted. Further, while site remediation would be required for the removal of on-site hazardous materials (as is the case with many of the other site alternatives), little demolition or site clearing is required. No parkland or natural areas would be disturbed as the site is already paved.

While many reasons have been listed as justification for selecting the NYPD's College Point Vehicle Impound site for the proposed Academy above the others, City officials cited its size, its likelihood of fitting into the surrounding community, its proximity to public transportation, and its likelihood of being built at this location as reasons for ultimately selecting the College Point Tow Pound site.

Assessment

As described above, none of the six alternate sites met all of the necessary selection criteria, and therefore, they were determined to be unsuitable for the proposed Police Academy. The site requirements necessary to accommodate the large building program and security provisions for the Police Academy require the selection of a site comprising approximately 30 acres of land, at a minimum, to fit the entire Police Academy program. As described above, some of the sites have extremely limited public transit access, or are located too far from major roadways. Other sites contain active uses or alternate uses are proposed for the sites and as such, they could not readily accommodate the proposed Police Academy. Some sites would be extremely difficult to develop and are located within either public parkland, residentially zoned areas, or recognized historic districts.

The selected site meets the logistical and functional criteria necessary to ensure the proper operation of the proposed facility, with minimal disruption to the surrounding area. The 35-acre Tow Pound site is adequately sized to accommodate the entire building program. Aside from the on-site drainage ditch, the Tow Pound is predominantly paved and located within an urban environment. The site is easily accessible from the Whitestone Expressway and two bus lines provide a short connection to the No. 7 subway line in Flushing. As the site is entirely City-owned and tow pound operations are being relocated to other sites throughout the City, the College Point Tow Pound site is readily available to be repurposed as a modern police training facility. The NYPD determined that this site best met the selection criteria and would be the most ideal location of the available options.

D. CONCLUSION

The No Action Alternative would not result in any of the impacts associated with the Proposed Action and resulting Police Academy, nor would it result in any of the benefits expected from the Proposed Action relative to land use, urban design, natural resources, and WRP consistency. The No Action Alternative would not improve the City's police training capabilities and would result in continued use of the NYPD's current overcrowded and dispersed facilities. This alternative would fall short of the objectives of the NYPD to overhaul the police training facilities throughout the City and the current facilities would have to be supplemented to continue to meet the NYPD's increasing training demands.

The No Impacts Alternative would avoid the Proposed Action's identified significant adverse impacts. However, as described above, a No Impacts Alternative is not a feasible alternative in the case of the Police Academy, as it would not be possible to consolidate entry-level, in-service, and civilian training facilities into one central location with no impacts. Traffic and hazardous materials impacts related to the development of the site that could not be avoided by making minor modifications or reductions to the building program. As such, this alternative would not meet the goals and objectives of the Proposed Action, and accordingly, it is not considered for purposes of further analysis.

As discussed above in the analysis of the Alternate Site Location Alternative, the proposed development site is the most suitable of the available site options in terms of its size, access to major arterial roadways and public transportation, compatibility with surrounding land uses, and overall feasibility. As none of the alternate sites listed above met all of the necessary selection criteria, the Alternate Site Location Alternative would fall short of the objectives of the Proposed Action. Moreover, the Alternate Site Location Alternative may result in the same or additional significant adverse impacts as the Proposed Action.