

A. INTRODUCTION

The Proposed Project would result in the permanent closing of the Bronx House of Detention, a New York City Department of Correction (NYCDOC) facility, which is in reserve status and is currently closed. In addition, the Proposed Project would introduce new people—employees and shoppers of retail spaces, and hotel guests and employees—to the study area. These new daytime populations would increase demands on the area’s community facilities and services, including police and fire protection services. This chapter considers the potential effects of the Proposed Project on the operations and performance of these community services. Following the methodology of the 2001 *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, this analysis focuses on public community facilities; private facilities and services are not assessed. Potential impacts on open space and recreational facilities are analyzed separately in Chapter 5, “Open Space.”

CEQR methodology calls for detailed assessments in areas where a project may have an impact on the provision of public or publicly funded services available to the community. The *CEQR Technical Manual* provides thresholds that can be used to make an initial determination of whether a detailed study is necessary to determine potential impacts. With respect to public schools, libraries, health care facilities, and day care centers, the Proposed Project would not add any residential units to the area, and therefore would not meet the threshold for analysis. With respect to other community facilities such as jails, police and fire services, homeless shelters, colleges, and religious institutions, CEQR guidelines require a detailed assessment only when a project would have a direct effect on those services (i.e., would physically alter the facility, whether by displacement or other physical change). The Proposed Project would result in the permanent closing of the Bronx House of Detention, an NYCDOC facility. This facility is in reserve status, and is currently closed. An assessment of the effects of the displacement of the correctional facility on NYCDOC operations are presented in this chapter. The Proposed Project would not directly affect any police precinct houses or fire stations. Although a detailed assessment is not required, for the purpose of providing a more comprehensive analysis of the Proposed Project’s effects on community services, this chapter provides a screening-level assessment of police and fire protection services.

Based on the following analysis, community facilities and services in and around the project area are considered to be sufficient to meet any increased demand that would result from the Proposed Project. The New York City Police Department (NYPD) and New York City Fire Department will continue to evaluate the need for personnel and equipment and make any necessary adjustments to adequately serve the area. Given the need for a continued presence in the Bronx and the need to dry-dock the Vernon C. Bain Center in the near future, NYCDOC would need a new site in the Bronx to build a new facility to replace the Bronx House of Detention.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

BRONX HOUSE OF DETENTION

The Bronx House of Detention is located on River Avenue at East 151st Street. The facility can accommodate up to 469 inmates. When in use, the facility primarily handles detainees awaiting, or on, trial in Bronx County. The Bronx House of Detention is currently closed. It was put into reserve status because its age, size, and physical layout make it more expensive to operate than other NYCDOC facilities.

POLICE SERVICES

The project area is served by the 44th Precinct of the NYPD. With headquarters located at 1 East 169th Street, the 44th Precinct serves an area of 1.97 square miles following the boundaries of Community District 4, roughly bounded by Cross Bronx Expressway/George Washington Bridge to the north, Webster and Park Avenues to the east, 149th Street to the south, and the Harlem River to the west. The precinct serves the neighborhoods of West Haven, Concourse Village, Concourse, High Bridge, and Mount Eden, and includes the waterfront, Yankee Stadium, and the Criminal and Supreme Courts. Currently, staffing levels are sufficient to meet the needs of the community.

FIRE PROTECTION

There are presently four New York City Fire Department fire stations located in the Bronx within an approximately 1-mile radius from the project site: Engine Company 71/Ladder Company 55, located at 720 Melrose Avenue; Engine Company 41, located at 330 East 150th Street; Engine Company 60/Ladder Company 17, located at 341 East 143rd Street; and Engine Company 68/Ladder Company 49 located at 1160 Ogden Avenue.

Units responding to a fire are not limited to those closest to it, and several other fire houses are located within a 1-mile radius of the project site in Manhattan. Normally, a total of three engine companies and two ladder companies respond to each call. Engine companies carry hoses, while ladder companies provide search, rescue, and building ventilation functions. In addition, rescue companies are called for fires or emergencies in high-rise buildings. The Fire Department can also call on units in other parts of the City as needed.

C. THE FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

BRONX HOUSE OF DETENTION

In the future without the proposed actions, NYCDOC will have a need to replace a substantial portion (23 percent) of its existing bed capacity based on current jail occupancy projections. Building the new jail capacity will require either the construction of new facilities, so that the oldest and least efficient units can be eliminated, or the reopening of the less efficient facilities that are now in reserve.

Construction on Rikers Island incurs substantial penalty costs due to security needs, access limits, and utility issues. NYCDOC's capital budget includes approximately \$1 billion over the next ten years for capacity replacement. Choices from among alternative approaches to implement this replacement program have not yet been made. The replacement program is an

opportunity to build state-of-the-art, staff-efficient facilities and an opportunity to reduce the unsupportable concentration of capacity on Rikers Island.

POLICE SERVICES

The NYPD typically adjusts its allocation of personnel as the need arises. Staffing needs will continue to be evaluated and personnel will be assigned based on population growth, area coverage, crime levels, and other local factors. It is NYPD policy not to make adjustments in advance of planned or potential development. Each year, the precinct may be assigned new recruits, but there are also losses due to retirements, transfers, and promotions. While no change is expected, adjustments to the size and deployment of the police force based on budgetary factors or other policy decisions may be made by 2009 or 2014 in the future without the Proposed Project.

FIRE PROTECTION

Like NYPD, the Fire Department does not allocate personnel based on proposed or potential developments, but responds to demonstrated need. The Fire Department has no immediate plans to make any changes in stations or equipment in the area. In 2009 and 2014, the Fire Department will continue to evaluate the need for personnel and equipment and make necessary adjustments to adequately serve the area.

D. PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

BRONX HOUSE OF DETENTION

The proposed actions include the disposition of the Bronx House of Detention for redevelopment. This action would reduce NYCDOC's reserve capacity by approximately 30 percent. Fewer beds would be available to be reopened when NYCDOC eventually replaces the 4,800 temporary beds on Rikers Island that are approaching the end of their useful lives. Therefore, the Proposed Project would reduce the options available to NYCDOC as it chooses among several capacity replacement configurations. The Proposed Project would also reduce the number of jail beds available in Bronx County, where 22 percent of the City-wide inmate population is now arraigned. Given the need for a continued presence in the Bronx and the need to dry-dock the Vernon C. Bain Center in the near future, NYCDOC would need a new site in the Bronx to build a new facility to replace the existing Bronx House of Detention and to provide improved access to jail facilities to families of inmates, defense attorneys, and other members of the community. The siting of any new facility will be subject to its own discretionary approval and CEQR review.

POLICE SERVICES

The introduction of new retail and hotel uses to the project site may necessitate the assignment of additional personnel, resources, and equipment to the area. Typically, a commitment of resources would be based on demonstrated need. Overall, the role of NYPD in providing effective, efficient service is not expected to be adversely affected by the Proposed Project.

FIRE PROTECTION

The Proposed Project would be constructed in accordance with all applicable fire and safety codes. Therefore, there would be no direct effects on the physical operations of, or access to, Fire Department facilities.

Overall, the response time of local emergency services is not expected to be significantly affected by the Proposed Project in either 2009 or 2014. The Fire Department would continue to provide adequate fire protection services to the project area and surrounding neighborhoods. *