

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10007

NOTICE OF COMPLETION

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT for

The Shops at the Armory

Lead Agency: Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development

CEQR Number: 08DME004X

SEQR Classification: Type I

Date Issued: May 14, 2009

Location: Block 3247, Lot 10 and part of Lot 2,
Community District 7
Borough of the Bronx

Pursuant to City Environmental Quality Review, Mayoral Executive Order 91 of 1977, as amended, and the City Environmental Quality Review Rules of Procedure found at Title 62, Chapter 5 of the Rules of the City of New York (CEQR), and the State Environmental Quality Review Act, Article 8 of the State Environmental Conservation Law and its implementing regulations found at Part 617 of 6 NYCRR (SEQRA), a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) has been prepared for the actions described below and is available for public inspection at the offices listed on the last page of this notice. A draft Scope of Work for the EIS was issued and distributed on September 2, 2008 and the formal public review process for the plan was initiated at a public scoping meeting held on October 2, 2008. The scoping hearing was held at Bronx Library Center, 310 East Kingsbridge Road, Bronx, New York, to accept oral comments, and written comments were accepted until October 17, 2008. Subsequent to the initial public scoping meeting, the City remained engaged in dialogue with all stakeholders and reviewed and considered comments received during the process. Comments that were made during the public comment period for the scoping meeting are reflected in the Final Scope of Work which was issued on May 11, 2009.

A public hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) will be held at a later date to be announced, in conjunction with the City Planning Commission's public hearing pursuant to

the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). Advance notice will be given of the time and place of the hearing. Written comments on the DEIS are requested and will be received and considered by the Lead Agency until the tenth calendar day following the close of the public hearing. Subsequent notice will be given as to the time and place of the public hearing and the close of the public comment period.

1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development (ODMED), as Lead Agency, and in coordination with the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and Related Retail Armory, LLC, proposes to rezone, obtain other land use approvals, and implement a development plan for a site located on Block 3247, Lot 10 and part of Lot 2 community district 7, Borough of the Bronx.

The proposed project would support the economic revitalization of the Kingsbridge Heights neighborhood of the Bronx by converting the large, substantially vacant Armory building into productive use. The Kingsbridge Armory project would create new employment opportunities for local residents, and would create economic and fiscal benefits to the City in the form of economic revitalization, increased employment opportunities, and tax revenue, and provide a new shopping opportunity for area residents.

The Shops at the Armory project is a proposed redevelopment of the Armory building—a designated historic landmark which is substantially vacant—with approximately 605,370 square feet of new uses, primarily retail and accessory parking with a cinema, fitness club, restaurant space, and community facility space. A new public open space would be developed adjacent to the Armory building on the project site, at the intersection of West Kingsbridge Road and Reservoir Avenue.

The proposed project would be located in the Kingsbridge Heights neighborhood of the Bronx on Block 3247, Lot 10 and a portion of Lot 2. The project site occupies most of the block bounded by West 195th Street, Reservoir Avenue, West Kingsbridge Road, and Jerome Avenue. The site is largely occupied by the Armory building, which is substantially vacant, apart from the storage of graffiti removal trucks by the Mayor’s Office “Graffiti Free NYC” program. In addition to the Armory building, the project site includes small landscaped areas south and west of the Armory building, a small landscaped area with plantings and some seating on the south side of the Armory near its headhouse, the portion of Reservoir Avenue southwest of the Armory building, and the portion of West 195th Street directly north of the Armory block.

The proposed project would redevelop the Kingsbridge Armory with approximately 605,370 square feet of new development, including approximately 57,485 square feet of entertainment uses (a cinema), 27,000 square feet of community facilities, 33,240 square feet of space for a fitness club, and 377,235 square feet of retail and restaurant space, including both neighborhood and destination retail.¹ In addition, approximately 400 accessory parking spaces, approximately 164,285 square feet, would be provided in the Armory’s basement levels. A new, approximately 30,000-square-foot public open space would be developed adjacent to the Armory building on

¹ Overall development area includes 238,615 square feet of service, mechanical, loading, and common area space.

the project site, at the intersection of West Kingsbridge Road and Reservoir Avenue. To create the public open space, a portion of Reservoir Avenue southwest of the Armory building would be demapped. The proposed project also would reconfigure the existing Barnhill Triangle at the intersection of West Kingsbridge Road and Reservoir Avenue. North of the project block, a portion of the south side of West 195th Street would also be demapped in order to provide additional land area for potential City redevelopment of property on the north side of the Armory at a future date. The project is expected to be complete and operational in 2013.

The proposed project would support the economic revitalization of the Kingsbridge Heights neighborhood of the Bronx by converting the large, substantially vacant Armory building into productive use. The Kingsbridge Armory proposed development would create new employment opportunities for the local residents, and create economic and fiscal benefits to the City in the form of economic revitalization, increased employment opportunities, and tax revenue and provide a new shopping opportunity for area residents. In addition, the project provides for a new approximately 30,000-square-foot public open space as well as a substantial amount of community facility space, which would serve the surrounding neighborhood.

For the purpose of analyzing the potential environmental impacts of the proposed actions described below, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) considers the proposed project to be the reasonable worst-case development scenario.

2. PROPOSED ACTIONS

The proposed project involves the disposition of City-owned property to a private developer. Disposition will require approval through the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) under City Charter Section 197(c) and separate Borough Board and Mayoral approval pursuant to City Charter Section 384(b)(4). In addition, the following discretionary actions will be required:

- A change to the City Map to close a portion of Reservoir Avenue, for the creation of a new public open space, and to close a portion of West 195th Street between Jerome and Reservoir Avenues; and
- A zoning map amendment to rezone the project block from R6 to C4-4.

The project may also seek financing from New York City Industrial Development Agency (IDA) and/or the Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC). Additionally, the project may apply for the Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP) of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). Since the Armory is a New York City Landmark (NYCL), the proposed changes to the building will require a Certificate of Appropriateness (CofA) from the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC).

3. PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

LAND USE, ZONING, AND PUBLIC POLICY

The proposed project would dramatically alter the land use on the project site by redeveloping the substantially vacant Armory with retail, restaurant, entertainment, fitness club, accessory

parking, and community facility uses that would be compatible with and complementary to surrounding land uses. It would introduce new uses to a site that has been substantially vacant and underutilized for many years. In addition, the proposed project would require a zoning map amendment to rezone the project site from R6 to C4-4, and a change to the City Map to close a portion of Reservoir Avenue for the creation of a new public open space as well as a portion of the south side of West 195th Street between Jerome and Reservoir Avenues. The demapping of a portion of Reservoir Avenue for the creation of a publicly accessible open space would provide a valuable public amenity in an area currently underserved by open space resources. The closure of a portion of West 195th Street would provide additional land area for potential City redevelopment of the property on the north side of the Armory as an unrelated development, although no plans currently exist for such redevelopment. Rezoning the project site to C4-4 would be compatible with the commercial overlays found on the blocks adjacent to the project site, and would facilitate the conversion of a largely vacant building into a community amenity by permitting the proposed commercial uses to be constructed on the site.

The proposed project would not entail any changes to public policy on the project site or in the study area, and would be consistent with the public policies that currently govern the site and surrounding area. In addition, by providing a valuable amenity to the community and revitalizing a substantially vacant building, it would not be at variance with the Special Grand Concourse Preservation District found in the eastern portion of the study area

Consideration has been given to the independent development of a new public school on the northern portion of the project block fronting West 195th Street. Such a development proposal, if deemed necessary by the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA), would be an independent initiative requiring a discretionary action separate from the proposed project. This area of the block is outside the current project site and is not part of the proposed project. Therefore, development of the proposed Kingsbridge Armory retail project does not preclude the future development of this area for school use.

Overall, the proposed project would not have any significant adverse impacts on land use, zoning, and public policy.

SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The socioeconomic analysis concluded that the proposed project would not result in significant adverse socioeconomic impacts with respect to any of the five areas of socioeconomic concern outlined in the 2001 *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*. The proposed project:

- Would not directly displace any residential population;
- Would not directly displace any businesses, institutions, or employees, nor would it directly displace businesses or institutions that are unusually important to the local area;
- Would not substantially alter or accelerate residential or commercial trends in the local study area such that significant indirect displacement would result;
- Would not significantly affect conditions in the real estate market; and
- Would not adversely affect economic conditions in a specific industry.

The products offered at the stores within the proposed Shops at the Armory would overlap with products sold at existing retail stores within the 1.5-mile trade area; however, the increased capture rates resulting from the proposed project would be modest. The analysis indicates that it is unlikely the proposed project would lead to indirect business displacement due to competition. Even if indirect displacement were to occur, it would not substantially affect neighborhood character and therefore would not be considered a significant adverse impact under CEQR. Overall, as stated above, changes in socioeconomic conditions as a result of this project would not result in any significant adverse impacts under CEQR.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The proposed project would redevelop the Kingsbridge Armory with approximately 27,000 square feet of new community facility space, among other uses. While the programming of the community facility space has not yet been determined, this use would likely benefit the surrounding residential area. Since the proposed project does not include a residential component and would not directly displace any community facilities, it does not meet the *CEQR Technical Manual's* thresholds for detailed analyses of public schools, libraries, health care facilities, day care centers, and fire and police protection services. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in any significant adverse community facility impacts.

OPEN SPACE

The proposed project would decrease the passive open space ratio for workers by 9.9 percent in the commercial (¼-mile) study area. However, the open space ratio for workers in this area would still exceed the City's recommended guidelines. The proposed project would not change the total passive open space ratio (0.27) for residents and workers from the future without the proposed project. By creating a new approximately 30,000-square-foot open space, the proposed project would result in a notable improvement to the area's open space condition. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a significant adverse impact on open spaces in the study area.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Overall, the proposed renovation and reuse of the Kingsbridge Armory would improve the appearance and condition of this historic architectural resource. The proposed project would stabilize, clean, and reuse the Kingsbridge Armory and return this long underutilized facility to productive use. The creation of the approximately 30,000-square-foot open space would somewhat alter the context of the Armory by replacing a paved sidewalk and portion of Reservoir Avenue, however, the open space would contribute to a more active use in this part of the project site that would enliven both the project site and adjacent areas, including other nearby architectural resources. As the proposed project cannot proceed without LPC's issuance of a CofA, compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards in order to receive federal historic tax credits, and the implementation of protective construction measures established in the Construction Protection Plan (CPP), the proposed project would not result in adverse impacts to the Kingsbridge Armory or architectural resources in the study area.

URBAN DESIGN

The appearance of the Armory, a visual resource, would be improved with the proposed project and views to the Armory from the study area would also be enhanced. The proposed new open space on the project site would improve the context of the Armory. The proposed project would

not obstruct any significant view corridors or views of visual resources in the study area, nor would it limit access to any visual resource, including the Armory, the No. 4 train viaduct, and St. Nicholas of Tolentine Church. Therefore, it is not expected that the proposed project would have significant adverse impacts on the urban design and visual resources on the project site or in the study area.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

The proposed project would dramatically alter the land use on the project site by redeveloping the substantially vacant Armory with retail, restaurant, entertainment, fitness club, and community facility uses, accessory parking, and open space. These new uses would be compatible with and complementary to surrounding land uses and would serve the residents, workers, and visitors of the surrounding communities. The Armory has been underutilized for more than a decade, and its redevelopment would take advantage of its location on West Kingsbridge Road, a busy thoroughfare, and its direct proximity to the Kingsbridge Road station of the No. 4 train line. The changes to the project site's land use and block configuration would be accompanied by increases to traffic, transit, and pedestrian activity. The projected increases to transit and pedestrian activity would not result in any significant adverse transit- or pedestrian-related impacts to neighborhood character, and the increases in vehicular and pedestrian levels due to the proposed project are not expected to adversely affect pedestrian safety conditions at the intersections of West 195th Street and Jerome and Reservoir Avenues. Significant adverse traffic impacts would be mitigated at most of the intersections analyzed, as described below in "Traffic and Parking" and "Mitigation." The proposed project would not have any significant noise-related impacts to neighborhood character. Therefore, overall, the proposed project would not adversely affect neighborhood character.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

There is a potential for adverse impacts associated with excavation for new construction resulting from the known and potential presence of subsurface contamination, and with demolition/renovation, related to materials within the structure. Although these activities could increase pathways for human exposure, significant adverse impacts would be avoided by performing construction activities in accordance with the measures identified below. Additional testing to further delineate and determine the source of contamination found during the Phase II will be performed. A Remedial Action Plan (RAP) and Health and Safety Plan (HASP) would subsequently be prepared and submitted to New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for review and approval. The RAP would include procedures to identify and manage both known contamination (e.g., petroleum storage tanks and lead contaminated soil in the firing ranges) and unexpectedly encountered contamination. Underground storage tanks would be properly registered, if required, with DEC and the New York City Fire Department, and closed and removed in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements. All activities involving disturbance of existing soil would be conducted in accordance with the HASP, which would detail measures to reduce the potential for exposure (e.g., dust control) as well as measures (such as air testing) to ensure that exposure to construction workers and the surrounding community would not occur. As stated above, the project may also apply for the BCP with DEC, in which case DEC would also be involved in the review and approval of the RAP and HASP.

During or prior to renovation, the following measures would be undertaken:

- All underground and aboveground storage tanks would be properly registered, if required, with DEC and the New York City Fire Department, and closed and removed in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.
- All material that needs to be disposed (e.g., both contaminated soil and excess fill, including demolition/renovation debris) would be properly handled and disposed off-site in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.
- The 55-gallon drums and all other remaining chemicals, including the petroleum products, would be properly disposed in accordance with all applicable regulatory requirements.
- Unless there is labeling or test data which indicates that fluorescent lights are not mercury- and/or PCB-containing, disposal would be performed in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.
- Unless the areas to be disturbed are known not to contain asbestos, they would be surveyed for asbestos, and all asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) would be removed and disposed in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.
- Lead-based paint would be managed in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.
- All demolition/renovation debris would be properly handled and disposed in accordance with all applicable federal, state and local regulations.

With the implementation of these measures, no significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials would result from construction activities. Following construction, there would be no potential for the proposed project to have significant adverse impacts.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The proposed project's water demand is not expected to adversely affect the City's water supply or local water pressure. Pursuant to public law, all plumbing fixtures would be of low-flow design. Compared to the average daily water demand in New York City of about 1.1 billion gpd, the proposed usage represents 0.02 percent of the City's total consumption, which is an insignificant increase. The projected sanitary sewage flow from the proposed project would be approximately 195,162 gpd. This generation rate represents approximately 0.07 percent of the State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permitted flow of 275 mgd to the Wards Island WPCP and is considered to be insignificant. Therefore, the proposed project would not exceed the capacity of the local sewer system.

The project site primarily consists of impervious surfaces, with minimal landscaped or other pervious surfaces. This condition would not change in the future with the proposed project. Therefore, there would be no measurable change to stormwater runoff generated by the project. In addition, current building requirements require the reduction in storm flows from new projects. These building requirements would be expected to reduce peak storm flows. Therefore, additional Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) events generated due to an increase in storm flows in the combined system are not anticipated.

Based on the above information, it is concluded that the proposed project would not result in any significant adverse impacts to the existing water supply, sewage treatment, or stormwater discharge systems.

SOLID WASTE

The proposed project would increase the volume of solid waste generation at the site. It also would be required to comply with the City's recycling program. While the proposed project would create new demands on solid waste and sanitation services, the sanitation systems serving the project site would have adequate capacity to meet the projected increases in solid waste generation. The analysis concludes that the proposed project would not result in any significant adverse impacts on these services.

ENERGY

Though the proposed project would increase demands on electricity and gas, the increases in demand would be insignificant relative to the capacity of these systems and the current levels of service within New York City. Electricity and gas would be supplied by Con Edison, which would be used to provide heating, cooling, and lighting to the proposed project. Con Edison could easily supply this energy without disruption to the main distribution system. Thus, there would not be any significant adverse energy impacts from the proposed project.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING

The proposed project is expected to generate approximately 243 vehicle trips in the weekday AM peak hour (153 vehicle trips to the project site and 90 away from the project site), 793 vehicle trips in the weekday midday peak hour (432 vehicle trips to the project site and 361 away from the project site), 868 vehicle trips in the weekday PM peak hour (417 vehicle trips to the project site and 451 away from the project site), and 1,307 vehicle trips in the Saturday midday peak hour (677 vehicle trips to the project site and 630 away from the project site).

Of the 25 study area intersections analyzed, the proposed project would create significant traffic impacts at nine intersections in the weekday AM peak hour, eight in the weekday midday peak hour, 14 in the weekday PM peak hour, and 11 in the Saturday midday peak hour. Impacts would be fully or partially mitigated at most of these intersections.

As part of the proposed project, geometric changes would be implemented at the intersections of West Kingsbridge Road and Reservoir Avenue/Aqueduct Avenue, and along West 195th Street between Reservoir and Jerome Avenues. The intersection of West Kingsbridge Road and Reservoir Avenue/Aqueduct Avenue has been redesigned to improve traffic operations after a series of working meetings with the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT). The intent of the proposed modifications is to better accommodate vehicular traffic flow (especially left turns from West Kingsbridge Road onto northbound Reservoir Avenue) to the project site and to other destinations to the north; and, to improve pedestrian conditions, crossings, and safety. The roadway width along West 195th Street would be narrowed between Reservoir Avenue and Jerome Avenue, and the perpendicular parking along the south curb would be changed to parallel parking to provide additional width along the south curb for potential future development.

The proposed project would provide approximately 400 on-site accessory parking spaces. The project's parking demands would be fully accommodated by the provided parking during the weekday AM, midday and PM peak hours. However, the garage capacity would be exceeded

during the Saturday midday peak hour. The shortfall could be partially relieved by the approximately 175 on-street parking spaces available within a ¼-mile radius of the project site and approximately 400 additional spaces available within a ½-mile radius of the project site.

TRANSIT AND PEDESTRIANS

The proposed project would generate 1,005, 3,437, 3,790, and 6,265 person trips during the weekday AM, midday, and PM and weekend midday peak hours, respectively. These trips would include 403, 1,392, 1,575, and 2,741 auto trips; 32, 109, 130, and 321 taxi trips; 174, 541, 605, and 657 subway trips; 138, 471, 507, and 1,073 bus trips; and 258, 924, 973, and 1,473 walk only trips over the same time periods. The analysis results show that overlaying these trips onto the future baseline transportation network would not result in significant adverse impacts to either subway station control areas and stairways or bus lines. Therefore, the project would not result in any significant adverse transit impacts. The project also would not result in any significant adverse pedestrian impacts.

AIR QUALITY

The maximum predicted pollutant concentrations and concentration increments from mobile sources with the proposed project would be below the corresponding guidance thresholds and ambient air quality standards. The proposed project's accessory parking facility also would not result in any significant adverse air quality impacts. Thus, the proposed project would not have significant adverse impacts from mobile source emissions. Based on a stationary source screening analysis, there would be no potential significant adverse air quality impacts from the proposed heat and hot water systems of the proposed project.

NOISE

The noise analysis concluded that the proposed project would not result in any predicted exceedances of *CEQR Technical Manual*-suggested incremental thresholds at noise receptor locations. In addition, with the proposed design measures, noise levels within the renovated Armory structure would comply with all applicable attenuation requirements. Therefore, the project would not result in any significant adverse noise impacts.

CONSTRUCTION

As with the development of any large site, construction of the proposed project may be disruptive to the surrounding area. Construction of the proposed project would have direct, positive impacts resulting from expenditures on labor, materials, and services, and indirect benefits created by expenditures by material suppliers, construction workers, and others involved in the project. Construction of the proposed project would also contribute to increased tax revenues for the city and state, including those from personal income taxes.

Construction of the proposed project also would have temporary effects in the areas listed below:

- *Historic Resources*. To avoid the potential for adverse physical impacts on the Armory, such as ground-borne construction-period vibrations, falling debris, and damage from heavy machinery, the proposed project would develop and implement a CPP in consultation with LPC (and, as required, OPRHP) prior to construction. The CPP would follow the requirements established in the New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) *Technical Policy and Procedure Notice (TPPN) #10/88*, concerning procedures for the avoidance of damage to adjacent historic structures from nearby construction. It would also follow the

guidelines set forth in section 523 of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, including conforming to LPC's *New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission Guidelines for Construction Adjacent to a Historic Landmark* and *Protection Programs for Landmark Buildings*. As the project will potentially involve discretionary actions by New York State, OPRHP may also review the project and the proposed alterations to the Armory under Section 14.09 of the New York State Historic Preservation Act of 1980.

- *Traffic and Parking.* Construction activities would result in maximum combined auto and truck traffic of 219 and 135 vehicle trips during the 6-7 AM and 3-4 PM peak hours, respectively, for the first quarter of 2011 (the peak for construction activity). Although there would be localized, temporary disruptions, the analysis concludes that there would likely be no significant traffic impacts during the peak construction hour of 6-7 AM. During the 3-4 PM construction peak hour, the magnitude of impacts, if any, would be substantially lower as compared to when the project is open and operational.

During construction, long-term parking lane closures would be required along the west side of Jerome Avenue. Some portions of the western sidewalk of Jerome Avenue and the northern sidewalk of Kingsbridge Road would be narrowed temporarily. No other long-term parking lane and sidewalk closures would be expected to occur on streets bordering the project site during construction. Short-term roadway closures and temporary sidewalk narrowings could occur along the west and south sides of the project site at times during the infrastructure improvement phase. Sidewalk and lane closures will be finalized, as the maintenance and protection of traffic (MPT) plans are developed and reviewed with NYCDOT. A portion of Reservoir Avenue southwest of the Armory building would be de-mapped to create the public open space and the existing Barnhill Triangle at the intersection of West Kingsbridge Road and Reservoir Avenue would be reconfigured. Construction activities associated with the roadway reconfigurations are expected to take approximately five months and could alter travel patterns during that relatively short period. All lane and sidewalk closures during construction would be coordinated with NYCDOT's Office of Construction Mitigation and Coordination (OCMC). Traffic control agents may need to be deployed at times to facilitate traffic flow near the project site.

- *Transit and Pedestrians.* The proposed project would generate trips from workers traveling to and from the site, as well as from the movement of goods and equipment. With approximately 53 percent of the construction workers predicted to commute via auto, the remaining 47 percent are expected to travel to and from the project site via transit. It is estimated that at the peak of construction activity, up to 400 workers could be at the project site during a given day. This would result in approximately 188 construction-related transit trips during the 6-7 AM and 3-4 PM construction peak hours, respectively. Distributed among the No. 4, B and D subway lines and several bus routes including Bx3, Bx9, Bx22, Bx28, and Bx32, only nominal increases in transit demand would be experienced along each of those routes and at each of the transit access locations during hours within and outside of the typical commuter peak periods. Any temporary relocation of bus stops along bus routes that operate adjacent to the project site (Bx9, Bx22, Bx29, and Bx32), would be coordinated with NYCDOT and New York City Transit (NYCT) to ensure proper access is maintained.

With respect to transit operations, a detailed pedestrian analysis to address the projected demand from the travel of construction workers to and from the project site was not warranted as these pedestrian trips would primarily occur outside of peak hours and would be

distributed among numerous sidewalks and crosswalks in the area. There would not be a potential for significant adverse pedestrian impacts attributable to the projected construction worker pedestrian trips. During construction, where temporary sidewalk closures are required, adequate protection or temporary sidewalks and appropriate signage would be provided in accordance with NYCDOT requirements.

Overall, construction of the proposed project is not expected to have extensive or long-term impacts on traffic or parking conditions in the surrounding area.

- *Air Quality.* The quantity of air pollutants emitted during the construction period would likely vary over time. Some level of air pollutants would be released into the atmosphere, but it is not expected that the construction activities would increase those pollutants by amounts that would be considered significant in ambient air.
- *Noise.* The majority of construction activity (i.e., stationary equipment and the loading/unloading of trucks) would occur inside the existing Kingsbridge Armory building. The brick façade of the Kingsbridge Armory would act as a noise barrier and reduce noise levels associated with the proposed construction activity in the adjacent community. While this noise may be considered intrusive, potential increases in noise levels as a result of construction-related activities would be expected to occur for limited duration. Therefore, no long-term, significant adverse noise impacts on the adjacent noise-sensitive uses are expected from the proposed construction activities.
- *Public Health.* During construction of the proposed project, traffic associated with passenger vehicles, as well as heavy-duty trucks, is expected to increase, potentially contributing to increases in particulate matter (PM) levels in the area. However, these emissions are not expected to significantly affect public health and local asthma incidents.

Although there would be localized, temporary disruptions, the analysis concludes that there would not be any significant adverse impacts to the proposed project due to the construction period.

PUBLIC HEALTH

The assessment determined that the proposed project would not result in significant adverse public health impacts related to air quality, noise, hazardous materials, groundwater, or unusual solid waste management practices that could attract vermin or be a source of odors. In addition, the proposed project would not result in any exceedances of accepted federal, state, or local standards. For informational purposes, the public health assessment also considers potential health concerns related to air quality during the construction and operation of the proposed project. The analysis provides an overview of health effects related to asthma, including a general discussion of PM emissions, and a discussion of causes and triggers of asthma, its prevalence in New York City, and the area most likely affected by the proposed project. The proposed project is not proposing any other actions that would result in significant public health concerns, and therefore would not result in significant adverse public health impacts.

GROWTH INDUCING ASPECTS

Kingsbridge Road is a busy commercial thoroughfare, and the proposed uses of the project site would enhance this corridor. The area surrounding the project site has been fully developed for decades, and the level of development is controlled by zoning. As such, the proposed action would not “induce” new growth in the study area. The proposed project and related actions are

specific to the project site only. The proposed actions would not cause significant impacts with respect to direct or indirect displacement of any residential populations, businesses or institutions, and would not have any adverse effects on specific industries. The new employment associated with the proposed uses of the project site would not significantly alter local employment conditions. Therefore, it is concluded that the proposed actions would not result in any significant growth-inducing impacts.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

There are a number of resources, both natural and built, that would be expended in the construction and operation of the proposed project. These resources include the building materials used in the renovation of the Armory structure; energy in the form of gas and electricity consumed during construction and operation; and the human effort (time and labor) required to develop, renovate, construct, and operate various components of the proposed project. They are considered irretrievably committed because their reuse for a purpose other than the proposed project would be highly unlikely. Although the proposed project would result in an increase in public open space and new land uses on the project site, the land use changes associated with the proposed project may also be considered a resource loss. The redevelopment of the Armory and project site constitutes a long-term commitment of resources, thereby rendering the use of the Armory and project site for other land use purposes infeasible, at least in the near term.

These commitments of resources and materials are weighed against the purpose of the proposed project: to support the economic revitalization of the Kingsbridge Heights neighborhood of the Bronx by converting the large, substantially vacant Armory building into productive use. The Armory has been vacant, except for a small amount of parking, for close to 14 years. In addition, the proposed project would create new employment opportunities for local residents; create economic and fiscal benefits to the City in the form of economic revitalization, increased employment opportunities, and tax revenue; provide a new shopping opportunity for area residents; and provide a new, approximately 30,000-square-foot public open space as well as a substantial amount of community facility space, which would serve the surrounding neighborhood.

4. ALTERNATIVES

CEQR requires that alternatives to a proposed action be identified and evaluated in an EIS. Two alternatives to the proposed project were considered: a No Action Alternative, in which the site would remain in its existing condition; and a No Unmitigated Significant Adverse Impacts Alternative, in which the proposed project is modified to avoid any unmitigated significant adverse impacts.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Action Alternative, the Kingsbridge Armory is expected to remain in its current condition as a largely vacant building and the portions of Reservoir Avenue and West 195th Street will not be demapped. The Armory would continue to be underutilized and its condition could deteriorate. The changes to zoning and the City Map, disposition of City-owned property, separate Mayor and Borough Board approvals, and other state or federal actions required for the proposed project would not be undertaken. This is the same scenario that is described throughout

the EIS as “The Future without the Proposed Project.” It is summarized here, with a comparison to the potential impacts of the proposed project.

LAND USE, ZONING AND PUBLIC POLICY

Under the No Action Alternative, instead of being converted into productive use as a retail center with cinema, fitness club, and community facility space, the Armory building would continue to be largely vacant and underutilized. No new uses would be developed on the site, and no new employees or potential visitors would be introduced to the site. The proposed approximately 30,000-square-foot public open space would not be developed at the intersection of West Kingsbridge Road and Reservoir Avenue. The existing zoning classification of the site would remain, and no changes to the City Map would be required. While the resultant land use with the proposed project would be very different from the No Action Alternative, it would not result in a significant adverse impact to land use, zoning, or public policy.

SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

In the No Action Alternative, the project’s substantial economic benefits would not be realized. There would be no direct or generated construction employment and income, or the expected local and state revenue resulting from the construction and operation of the project. Employment resulting from construction expenditures, including jobs from business establishments providing goods and services to contractors, would not occur. Under this alternative, the approximately 1,208 permanent jobs in New York City expected as a result of the proposed actions would not be created. The project’s positive impacts on the local socioeconomic character and local and state revenue would not occur. In the No Action Alternative, retail use would not be developed at the Armory, and thus there would not be competitive pressures on or indirect displacement of grocery stores or other retail uses; however, even with the proposed project, any such potential indirect displacement pressures are not expected to cause a significant negative effect on socioeconomic conditions.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

In the No Action Alternative, no new community facility space would be developed within the Armory. The No Action Alternative would not result in any new demands on police, fire, and emergency services; however, in any case, the demand for such services with the proposed project would not be significant. As with the proposed project, it is expected that the 52nd Precinct would continue to provide adequate police protection to the area within its jurisdiction, including the project site, and fire protection would remain adequate in the project area.

OPEN SPACE

In the No Action Alternative—as with the proposed project—the open space ratio for workers in the Kingsbridge Armory area would exceed the City’s recommended guidelines, and the total passive open space ratio for residents and workers would not change. In the No Action Alternative, however, the proposed approximately 30,000-square-foot public open space would not be developed at the intersection of West Kingsbridge Road and Reservoir Avenue.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

With the No Action Alternative, the Kingsbridge Armory building would continue to be largely vacant and underutilized, and thus it could deteriorate and its condition could worsen. The

Armory would not be cleaned, repaired, or renovated for productive use in this alternative, and the appearance and condition of this architectural resource would not be improved.

URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Under the No Action Alternative, instead of being converted into productive use as a retail center with cinema, fitness club, and community facility space, the Armory building would continue to be largely vacant and underutilized, and thus the condition of this visual resource could worsen. The proposed approximately 30,000-square-foot public open space would not be developed at the intersection of West Kingsbridge Road and Reservoir Avenue. Unlike the No Action Alternative, the proposed project is expected to enhance the vitality of the surrounding streets by returning a long underutilized building to productive use and by introducing active uses and landscaping and increasing public access to the site; in addition, the appearance of the Armory, a visual resource, would be improved with the proposed project and views to the Armory from the study area would also be enhanced.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Under this alternative, the Kingsbridge Armory building would continue to be largely vacant and underutilized, and thus it could deteriorate and its condition could worsen. The portions of Reservoir Avenue and West 195th Street would not be demapped and the proposed approximately 30,000-square-foot public open space would not be developed on the project site. The three small-scale residential and community facility projects that would be developed in the surrounding area would be built but would not substantially change the neighborhood character. The changes in neighborhood character associated with the proposed project would not occur with the No Action Alternative.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Under the No Action Alternative, it is assumed that no remediation would occur on the project site. With the proposed project, a Remedial Action Plan (RAP) and Health and Safety Plan (HASP) would be implemented, as approved by DEP, which would provide for remedial actions and health and safety procedures, as necessary, to be performed before, during, and/or after construction. These remedial actions would be in conformance with federal, state and City regulatory requirements and would address both already identified concerns and any concerns unexpectedly encountered during construction.

INFRASTRUCTURE

With the No Action Alternative, water consumption, sewage and solid waste generation, and stormwater runoff are not expected to change, and no impacts to these systems are expected. As with the No Action Alternative, the project's additional demand on infrastructure services is not expected to affect the City's water supply or local water pressure, or result in infrastructure impacts on the City's sewer system.

SOLID WASTE AND SANITATION SERVICES

Under the No Action Alternative, it is expected that the volumes of solid waste generated at the project site would not change, and no major changes are expected in the City's solid waste management handling practices. With this alternative, the proposed project's increase in solid waste would not occur. However, neither the No Action Alternative nor the proposed project

would result in an adverse impact on the solid waste handling and disposal systems that serve New York City.

ENERGY

Unlike with the proposed project, no new energy demands would be created with the No Action Alternative. Neither this alternative nor the proposed project would result in any adverse impacts to energy systems.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING

The increase in vehicle trips to the project site expected with the proposed project would not occur with the No Action Alternative. Therefore, this alternative would not require the mitigation measures proposed for the proposed project, including signal phasing and timing modifications, parking prohibitions, lane re-striping and intersection channelization improvements, and pavement markings.

TRANSIT AND PEDESTRIANS

The increases in transit and pedestrian trips to the project site expected with the proposed project would not occur with the No Action Alternative. Neither the proposed project nor this alternative would result in significant adverse impacts to subway station control areas or stairways, subway or bus lines, nor would either scenario result in any significant adverse pedestrian impacts.

AIR QUALITY

Unlike with the proposed project, no new mobile or stationary source emissions would be created on the project site with the No Action Alternative. Neither this alternative nor the proposed project would result in any significant adverse mobile or stationary source air quality impacts. Since the project site would not be developed with the No Action Alternative, there would be no project-generated mobile source, parking ventilation, or boiler emissions and therefore no incremental PM_{2.5} impacts.

NOISE

No new sources of noise would be created on the project site with the No Action Alternative. Neither this alternative nor the proposed project would result in any significant adverse noise impacts.

CONSTRUCTION

No construction would occur on the site in the No Action Alternative. The construction activities and temporary impacts associated with the proposed project would not occur. The local area and New York City would not receive the substantial economic benefits attributable to project construction.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Neither the No Action Alternative nor the proposed project is expected to result in significant adverse impacts to public health.

NO UNMITIGATED SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS ALTERNATIVE

Most of the potential impacts identified for the proposed project could be fully mitigated. Several intersections, however, could not be fully mitigated: one intersection in the weekday AM peak

hour, three intersections in the weekday midday peak hour, four intersections in the weekday PM peak hour, and six intersections in the Saturday midday peak hour.

An alternative which eliminates all unmitigated traffic impacts would require reducing the project's commercial program to such a substantial degree that it would not be financially feasible and would be inconsistent with the goals and objectives of the project sponsor to economically redevelop the site.

5. UNAVOIDABLE SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS

A number of the potential impacts identified for the proposed action could be mitigated, however, in some cases project impacts would not be fully mitigated. Unavoidable significant adverse impacts are defined as those that meet the following two criteria: 1) there are no reasonably practicable mitigation measures to eliminate the impacts; and 2) there are no reasonable alternatives to the proposed project that would meet the purpose and need of the action, eliminate the impact, and not cause other or similar significant adverse impacts the proposed actions would result in significant adverse traffic impacts at locations within the traffic study area. The vast majority of the locations that would be significantly impacted could be mitigated using standard traffic improvements such as signal timing changes, parking regulation changes to gain a travel lane at key intersections, intersection channelization, and lane markings and signage.

Under the proposed actions, a maximum of six intersections would experience unmitigatable impacts in the 2013 Build year (but not in all peak hours). Of these, three intersections could be partially mitigated. The three intersections that would remain unmitigated are the intersections of West Kingsbridge Road and University Avenue, and West Fordham Road at its intersections with the Major Deegan Expressway's northbound and southbound ramps. The three intersections where significant traffic impacts could be partially mitigated include the intersections of Kingsbridge Road and Jerome Avenue, Fordham Road and Jerome Avenue, and East Kingsbridge Road and Valentine Avenue/East 194th Street. At these intersections, traffic improvements would be able to mitigate one or more—but not all—approaches that would be significantly impacted. Specific peak hours affected are described in detail in Chapter 19, "Mitigation." At the intersection of Kingsbridge Road and Jerome Avenue, design issues will be further evaluated for the FEIS that could, alternatively, result in full mitigation during all time periods or could potentially create unmitigated impacts should detailed analyses of intersection neckdowns under consideration by NYCDOT indicate that traffic capacity reductions could not be satisfied by additional mitigation measures. This will be fully presented in the FEIS.

6. MITIGATION

In accordance with the *CEQR Technical Manual*, mitigation measures are examined to minimize or eliminate these impacts as described below.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING

The major overall finding is that the vast majority of the 25 intersections analyzed would either not be significantly impacted or could be mitigated with traffic improvement measures, including signal timing changes, parking regulation changes to gain a travel lane at key intersections,

intersection channelization, and lane markings and signage. These measures represent some of the standard traffic capacity improvements that are typically implemented by NYCDOT. In the weekday AM peak hour one of the 25 intersections would remain unmitigated, in the weekday midday peak hour three intersections would remain unmitigated, in the weekday PM peak hour two intersections would remain unmitigated and two others could only be partially mitigated, and in the Saturday midday peak hour two intersections would remain unmitigated and four others could only be partially mitigated. Nearly all of the intersections that could be partially mitigated or would remain unmitigatable are located at a substantial distance from the project site. These include the intersections of Fordham Road with Jerome Avenue, the Major Deegan Expressway northbound and southbound ramps, and the intersection of East Kingsbridge Road and Valentine Avenue/East 194th Street. Fordham Road is characterized by substantial traffic volumes due to commercial activities along it and the heavy background traffic coming off or turning onto the Major Deegan Expressway and crossing between Upper Manhattan and the Bronx at one of only a few crossing locations. At most of these intersections, the addition of even a moderate amount of project-generated traffic is expected to create significant impacts since most of these intersections have at least one, if not several, traffic movements operating at unacceptable LOS E or F under future No Build conditions. The intersections of West Fordham Road and the Major Deegan Expressway northbound and southbound ramps, in particular, are major known congestion points today, at which even minimal traffic additions would not be mitigatable.

All of the traffic capacity improvements fall within the jurisdiction of NYCDOT for implementation. The implementation of these measures would result in the loss of approximately 14 to 28 parking or “standing” spaces during various times of the day and days of the week, including up to 7 metered parking spaces. Kingsbridge Road would lose up to seven spaces (including meters) between Bailey Avenue and Morris Avenue, University Avenue would lose up to 13 spaces between West 192nd Street and Eames Place, and Sedgwick Avenue would lose about seven spaces. No designated truck loading/unloading zones or bus layover space would be affected by the proposed parking modifications for mitigation. If it is determined that on-street parking should be retained at locations where such mitigation was assumed, additional unmitigated traffic impacts would result.

Two issues will be evaluated during the period between certification of the DEIS and FEIS. The first issue is the ability of trucks to complete right turns from southbound Jerome Avenue onto westbound Kingsbridge Road from the southbound curb lane. If these turns can be made from the southbound curb lane instead of from the adjacent lane, Saturday midday impacts would be fully—rather than partially—mitigated. Also, by restricting parking along Jerome Avenue, this intersection could be fully mitigated during all peak hours. The second issue for which NYCDOT has requested consideration be given is the construction of intersection neckdowns at the northwest corner of this intersection to better accommodate the additional pedestrian volumes walking from the elevated subway station to the project site. These neckdowns may cause a reduction in vehicular traffic capacity and result in partially mitigated or unmitigated traffic impacts during one or more of the four traffic peak hours analyzed. The neckdowns may also hamper the ability of southbound trucks to make the right hand turn onto Kingsbridge Road. This analysis will be presented in the FEIS so potential vehicular impact issues and potential pedestrian benefits can be jointly evaluated.

AIR QUALITY

Chapter 15, "Air Quality," presents the maximum predicted CO and PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations for the proposed project, and concludes that the proposed project would not result in significant adverse air quality impacts. Therefore, no air quality mitigation is required.

Since the proposed traffic mitigation measures described above would alter traffic conditions when compared to the proposed project, the localized air quality impacts with mitigation were modeled for the affected intersections. The results of this modeling analysis (performed in accordance with methodologies described in Chapter 15, "Air Quality") indicate that carbon monoxide and particulate matter concentrations would not affect the conclusions in Chapter 15. Therefore, no significant air quality impacts would occur as a result of the proposed traffic mitigation measures.

7. NEW YORK STATE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION LAW

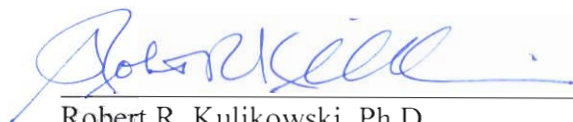
This Notice of Completion for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for The Shops at the Armory project has been prepared in accordance with Article 8 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law.

8. CONTACT OFFICE

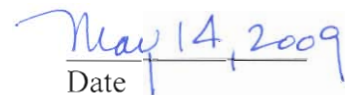
Requests for copies of the DEIS and public comments and questions regarding the DEIS should be forwarded to:

Rob Holbrook, Senior Planner
NYC Economic Development Corporation
110 William Street
New York, NY 10038
rholbrook@nycedc.com

The DEIS is also available on the New York City Office of Environmental Coordination website:
<http://www.nyc.gov/oec>



Robert R. Kulikowski, Ph.D
Assistant to the Mayor
On behalf of the Deputy Mayor
for Economic Development


Date