

Chapter 24: Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

There are a number of resources, both natural and built, that would be expended in the construction and operation of the proposed development pursuant to the proposed actions. These resources include the materials used in construction; energy in the form of fuel and electricity consumed during construction and operation of the reasonable worst-case development scenario (RWCDs); and the human effort (i.e., time and labor) required to develop, construct, and operate various components of the proposed actions.

The resources are considered irretrievably committed because their reuse for some purpose other than the proposed actions would be highly unlikely. The proposed actions constitute an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of the project site as a land resource, thereby rendering land use for other purposes infeasible, at least in the near term.

These commitments of land resources and materials are weighed against the benefits of the proposed actions. The proposed actions would transform several underutilized City-owned properties into a thriving, financially viable, mixed-use development. The proposed actions would provide affordable and market-rate housing units, commercial and retail uses, community facilities and other neighborhood amenities (e.g., parking, a new and expanded facility for the public Essex Street Market, and publicly accessible open space). The mix of uses would bring a greater level of pedestrian activity to the project site, making the neighborhood more inviting and appealing to live in and visit. In addition, the increased pedestrian activity that would result from the proposed actions would increase foot traffic and retail demand, benefitting existing retail stores in the area.

The proposed development includes relocating the existing Essex Street Market to a new, larger facility, which would create entrepreneurship opportunities for additional vendors and would allow for a variety of vendor price points. A new facility would be an opportunity for capital investment in the market to address many of the physical limitations of the existing facility. The new market facility would have an improved internal layout, better connections with the street and expanded common gathering areas for public seating and market events. In addition, the new facility would be energy efficient, be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and have improved storage capabilities, garbage handling, and climate control. The City would give existing vendors the first opportunity to relocate their business to the new market facility on Site 2, when the facility is complete and ready for occupancy.

In addition, the proposed actions would replace underutilized sites with new development that would integrate with, and knit together, surrounding communities.

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