

23.0 IRRETRIEVABLE & IRREVERSIBLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

23.1 Introduction

The CEQR Technical Manual (Section 3V-500) states:

This section summarizes the proposed action and its impacts in terms of the loss of environmental resources, both in the immediate future and in the long term. Resources include man-made and natural resources; examples of losses are removal of vegetation without replacement, use of fossil fuels and materials for construction, etc. The extent to which the proposed action forecloses future options or involves trade-offs between short-term environmental gains and long-term losses should also be addressed. In considering the trade-offs of the project, it is also possible to compare short-term losses with long-term benefits.

The chapter summarizes the proposed project and impacts to environmental resources.

23.2 Evaluation

The existing HSS has been at its current location since 1955, and the FDR Drive has been in operation since the 1940s, resulting in an irreversible commitment of land to a non-water dependent use. The Hospital would not provide any water dependent uses, and the proposed project would preclude using the site for any future water dependent facilities.

The air space over the FDR Drive, where the proposed project would be constructed, as well as the area on the East River Esplanade required for the support columns, would result in an irreversible commitment of land.

The building materials used in construction (including concrete, wood, aluminum metal and glass), the energy consumed during construction (in the transportation and operation of construction equipment) and the energy consumed by operation of the building (in the form of steam and electricity) would be irreversibly and irretrievably committed as a result of the proposed project.

Despite the losses identified above, the proposed project would result in a public benefit due to expansion of the specialty services provided by HSS.