

## 24.0 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

### 24.1 Introduction

This chapter analyzes alternatives to the proposed project for HSS. CEQR requires that alternatives to the proposed action be identified and evaluated in an EIS. According to the CEQR Technical Manual, alternatives considered should reduce or eliminate impacts of the proposed action while substantively meeting the goals and objectives of the action. The only significant adverse impact identified in the FEIS is the potential impact to open space resources stemming from an unexpected extended closing of a portion of the Esplanade between E. 71<sup>st</sup> Street and E. 72<sup>nd</sup> Street during construction.

The alternatives analyzed in this EIS include the No-Action Alternative, in which no actions occur on the project site, but includes any As-of-Right development and a Smaller Build/Lower Density Alternative, which reduces the magnitude of activity generated by the proposed action.; In addition, in response to comments made during public review of the DEIS, HSS also analyzed an alternative under which the proposed project would be built at the same density as the proposed action, but with modifications of the design of the proposed new River Building that would provide additional setbacks and even smaller floor plates on the lower floors of the proposed new River Building than the proposed action. (Smaller Floor Plate Alternative).

### 24.2 The No-Action Alternative

Under the No-Action Alternative, the HSS campus would remain as is. The air space above the FDR Drive adjacent to the HSS, from East 71<sup>st</sup> to East 72<sup>nd</sup> Streets, would remain undeveloped in its current condition and various internal reorganization of Hospital space to respond to pressing needs would occur, but they would not substantially change operations at the Hospital. Changes in the surrounding area would include the three additional developments within a ¼ mile radius of the project site, which are identified in Section 2.4.1 There are three known projects in the study area (See Figure 2-1, Other Development Projects), which are described below:

1. New York Presbyterian Hospital just recently modified its general large scale to build a 4-story 18,219 zoning square foot (ZSF) building (Technology Building); a 13-story, 102,184 ZSF building (the SMART Building), as well as 3,982 ZSF to the adjacent “N” Building, which connects to the SMART Building; a 1-story, 37,282 ZSF enlargement to the existing Greenberg Pavilion; and a 2-story, 174,004 ZSF addition to the YY Building. This site is located between York Avenue and FDR Drive, and between East 68<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> Streets.
2. New York Presbyterian Hospital has an As-of-Right dormitory building at the southeast corner of 72<sup>nd</sup> Street and First Avenue.
3. 125 residential units are planned for 400 East 67<sup>th</sup> Street. This site is located on the southeast corner of First Avenue and East 67<sup>th</sup> Street.

The effects of the three additional developments that are anticipated to occur in the vicinity of the project site are included in the analyses of the future without the proposed actions in each of the technical areas of Chapters 2 through 16 of the EIS. The effects of the No Build developments are discuss in each of the tasks below.

#### **24.2.1 Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy**

It is expected that the existing community facility, residential and recreational uses in the study area would remain largely unchanged. It is expected that the existing residential, commercial, and manufacturing zones in the study area would remain largely unchanged. It is expected that the existing public policies in the study area described above would remain largely unchanged. Similarly to the proposed project, the No-Action Alternative would not have any significant impacts on Land Use, Zoning or Public Policy. However, the opportunities for an existing land use to grow its campus in a comprehensive manner and in response to its patients' needs would not take place and the land use policy established by the 1971 Legislation encouraging the eastward expansion of the existing community facilities would not be met.

#### **24.2.2 Socioeconomic Conditions**

Similarly to the proposed project, the No-Action Alternative would not significantly alter the existing socioeconomic conditions in the area.

#### **24.2.3 Community Facilities**

As with the proposed project, the No-Action Alternative would not have any significant adverse impacts on Community Facilities.

#### **24.2.4 Open Space**

Since the No Action Alternative would not generate any additional space at the HSS facility, there would be no additional workers generated. However, the No Action alternative would include the above mentioned additional development sites which would add 278 new workers, bringing the total number of day time workers in the study area to 25,117 workers. The additional daytime worker population would decrease the nonresidential daytime passive open space ratio for workers to 0.1444 acres per 1,000 workers.

#### **24.2.5 Shadows**

Since the No Action Alternative does not include any renovations or expansions no additional shadows would be generated. In addition, the three additional development sites are not expected to generate any shadows that would effect open space resources in the area.

#### **24.2.6 Historical Resources**

Neither the No-Action Alternative or the three additional development sites would cause any impacts to historical or archaeological or architectural resources.

**24.2.7 Urban Design & Visual Resources**

Neither the No-Action Alternative or the three additional development sites would generate any changes to the existing conditions of the building form, setbacks, size, arrangement, block form, other streetscape elements, curb cuts, that would affect visual resources or natural features.

**24.2.8 Neighborhood Character**

Under the No Action Alternative, conditions at the project site and the study area would not change. Therefore, as with the proposed project, the No-Action Alternative would not have significant adverse impacts to the character of the neighborhood. In addition, the additional development site are not anticipated to change the existing neighborhood character of the area.

**24.2.9 Natural Resources**

Under the No Action Alternative the conditions at the project site would not be affected. The additional development sites would not affect any natural resources.

**24.2.10 Hazardous Materials**

Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no construction at the project site and, accordingly there would be no need to undertake a remedial action plan (RAP) and construction health and safety plan (CHASP) to avoid significant adverse environmental impacts. The additional development sites are not anticipated to result in any impacts from hazardous materials.

**24.2.11 Waterfront Revitalization Program**

Neither the No Action Alternative or the additional development sites would not have any significant impacts on the waterfront revitalization program policies.

**24.2.12 Infrastructure**

The No Action Alternative would not have any significant adverse impacts on infrastructure since no additional space is proposed. The three additional development sites would add 139,699 gpd of water and sewage generation.

**24.2.13 Solid Waste**

The No Action Alternative would be not have any significant adverse impacts on solid waste. The three additional development sites would add 62,000lbs per week of community facility solid waste and 20,295lbs per week of residential solid waste.

**24.2.14 Energy**

As with the proposed project, no significant adverse impacts to energy supply are expected from the No Action Alternative, therefore an energy assessment was not required.

**24.2.15 Traffic & Parking**

The No Action Alternative would not generate any additional trips since no new development would occur. The vehicular from the three soft-sites are unlikely to have any significant

accumulative.

#### **24.2.16 Transit & Pedestrians**

The No-Action Alternative would not generate any additional trips since no new development would occur. The transit and pedestrian trips from the three soft-sites are unlikely to have any accumulative impacts.

#### **24.2.17 Air Quality**

##### **24.2.17.1 Mobile Source**

A one and one-half percent annually increase of existing traffic volumes was applied to determine the background traffic growth for the No Action condition. No mobile source impacts are likely as a result of the three soft-sites.

##### **24.2.17.2 Stationary Source**

Under the No Action Alternative, stationary source air emissions predicted to be generated by the proposed action would not occur. No stationary source impacts are likely as a result of the three soft-sites.

#### **24.2.18 Noise**

As with the proposed project, the No Action Alternative would not have any significant noise impacts. Construction noise at the three development site would be temporary.

#### **24.2.19 Construction Impacts**

Construction activities associated with the No Action Alternative would be limited to the construction of three separate buildings on individual schedules. Impacts from those activities would be temporary and thus not significant.

#### **24.2.20 Public Health**

There would no increases in emissions from vehicular traffic or stationary sources above the existing condition levels analyzed in the FEIS. Nor would there be increases in noise or the amount of solid waste generated.

### **24.3 The Smaller/Lower Density Build Alternative**

The amount and placement of HSS's proposed expansion are informed by HSS's programmatic needs to increase its capacity to conduct research, clinical research and patient care. The demand for orthopedic surgery services in the New York City region has been steadily increasing and will continue to increase as the "baby boomer" generation ages. Over the past 5 years, the number of surgeries performed at HSS has increased at an average annual rate of 7% and that increase is expected to continue into the future. The increase in the number of surgeries

performed annual translates into a need for additional operating rooms, patient beds, physicians' offices and support space.

The amount of space and the number of new operating rooms, offices, and patient beds that HSS requires to continue its role as a leading orthopedic hospital have been reviewed by the New York State Department of Health under Article 28 of the Public Health Law. The DOH issued HSS a Certificate of Need, which is a formal statement by DOH that HSS has a need for the proposed expansion. A smaller expansion would therefore, not meet the goals of HSS or the needs of the project.

As noted in Chapter 1, Section 1.5 (Purpose and Need), locating HSS's proposed expansion in locations other than HSS's existing campus would be neither practical nor efficient and would not allow HSS to continue to provide a high level of specialty care to its patients and the medical community. Moreover, HSS does not own or control any property outside of its campus. In addition, as noted below, it is neither feasible nor practical to build additional space in buildings that currently exist on the HSS campus (other than as proposed). The Main Hospital Building cannot structurally support additional floors; nor can the existing Caspary Building. HSS does not control the upper floors of the existing Belaire Building, and cannot expand at that location.

Because a Smaller Build/Lower Density Alternative would, therefore, not enable HSS to meet its project goals, that alternative was rejected.

#### **24.4 Smaller Floor Plate Alternative**

As a result of comments made during the public review of the DEIS, HSS considered an alternative under which it would construct a building with the same floor area as the proposed new River Building in the same location, but with a setback at the lower levels of the building. Under this alternative, the height of the River Building would be increased to offset for the loss of floor area and the smaller floor plates that would result from the change to the lower levels.

Reducing the floor plates of the proposed new River Building any more than they have already been reduced during the course of the planning for the proposed project would create a number of inefficiencies. If the floor plates were reduced below the current levels, the requirements for cores for elevators and other support would not be reduced, thus decreasing the amount of space actually available for program use. In addition, smaller floor plates are less efficient, as they would require more vertical movement by physicians and others providing services to patients and conducting research\*.

Making such changes in the configuration of the River Building would not change the environmental effects of the proposed project in any material way. Because the floor area of the project would remain the same under this alternative, the changes would not result in any reduction in the amount of traffic or the number of pedestrian trips generated by the project. The same number of new employees and visitors would be introduced to the project's study area and the effect of that increase on the availability of open space would not be any different than under the proposed actions. It would still be necessary to close a portion of the esplanade for a period of from 4 to 6 months during construction of the project and the supports for the new building

would still be located in the Esplanade, as would be the case under the proposed action, though, like the proposed action, the supports would be located west of the principal pedestrian path. A taller building would have the potential to cast longer shadows for different periods of time on open space in the study area, including along the Esplanade and the E. 72<sup>nd</sup> Street Overlook, although the incremental shadows would not amount to a significant adverse impact.

The only effect of the proposed project that would be lessened by a Smaller Floor Plate Alternative would be the effect of the project on the views of the Queensboro Bridge from the East 72<sup>nd</sup> Street Overlook caused by the slightly larger floor plate sizes of the lower levels of the proposed project. Under this alternative a small portion of the view south from the E. 72<sup>nd</sup> Street Overlook Park that would be obscured by the proposed project would be visible. However, the degree of change would not be readily perceptible, and, as noted in Chapter 8, Urban Design & Visual Resources, the diminution of views of the Bridge from the East 72<sup>nd</sup> Street Overlook is not a significant impact because of the availability of other views of the bridge from publicly accessible locations in the immediate area.

Accordingly, a Smaller Floor Plate Alternative would not reduce or eliminate any significant adverse impacts and, due to the inefficiencies that would result from such a change in the River Building, it would not substantively meet the goals and objectives of the proposed action.