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## Unavoidable Significant Adverse Impacts

Unavoidable significant adverse impacts are those that would occur if a proposed project or action is implemented regardless of the mitigation employed, or if mitigation is impossible.

### Introduction

This chapter summarizes unavoidable significant adverse impacts resulting from the With-Action condition. According to the *2020 CEQR Technical Manual*, unavoidable significant adverse impacts are those that would occur if a proposed project or action is implemented regardless of the mitigation employed, or if mitigation is impossible.

As described in **Chapter 16, Mitigation**, the Proposed Action has the potential to result in significant adverse traffic, transit, and pedestrian impacts. To the extent practicable, mitigation has been proposed for these identified significant adverse impacts. However, in some instances no practicable mitigation has been identified to fully mitigate the significant adverse impacts, and there are no reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Actions that would meet the purpose and need, eliminate potential impacts, and not cause other or similar significant adverse impacts.

### Transportation

#### Traffic

As discussed in **Chapter 9, Transportation** and **Chapter 16, Mitigation**, the Proposed Project would result in significant adverse impacts which could not be fully mitigated with

standard traffic capacity improvement measures at 10 of the 15 intersections during the AM peak hour, 13 intersections during the midday peak hour, and 13 intersections during the PM peak hour. These impacts would result despite the project's modest increase in vehicle trips because of prevailing background traffic conditions and high volumes of pedestrian traffic. Therefore, even a minimal increase in traffic and pedestrians would result in unmitigated impacts at these analysis locations.

The proposed mitigation measures are subject to review and approval by the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT). If certain proposed mitigation measures are deemed infeasible by NYCDOT, practical alternative measures, if any, may be analyzed and presented in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). If no other alternative mitigation measures can be identified, those additionally impacted locations would be unmitigated.

## Transit

As discussed in **Chapter 9, Transportation** and **Chapter 16, Mitigation**, while the Proposed Project would improve pedestrian circulation and increase station circulation capacity overall, the analyses conducted for the Grand Central – 42nd Street subway station elements (stairways, escalators, fare control areas, and passageways) identified significant adverse transit impacts during the AM and PM commuter peak hours that would remain unmitigated. Significant adverse impacts were identified at five stairways along the northbound and southbound Lexington line platform during the AM peak hour and one stairway along the northbound Lexington line platform during the PM peak hour due to the changes in travel patterns with the introduction of the "Short Loop connection." Two escalators (ES208 and ES210) located at the west end of the Flushing platform would have significant adverse impacts during both the AM and PM peak hours.

~~Measures to mitigate the stairway impacts will be evaluated in consultation with NYCT between the Draft EIS and Final EIS. The impacts to the two escalators could potentially be mitigated by increasing the escalator operating speed; the practicability of implementing this measure would also be explored between the Draft EIS and Final EIS. Should measures to mitigate these impacts be determined to be impracticable, these significant impacts would be considered unmitigated in the Final EIS.~~

Measures to mitigate the stairway impacts were evaluated in consultation with NYCT between the Draft EIS and Final EIS. The possibility of constructing a new platform stair between two impacted stairs, P16 and P18, was evaluated. Although it was determined that this new stair could draw enough passengers away from the P16 and P18 stairs to mitigate the impacts at those two stairs, NYCT has advised that it also would adversely affect conditions at the platform level. The new diagonal mezzanine (M1) stair and relocation of the R238 fare control area proposed as part of the Proposed Project have been designed to distribute passengers to the center and northern ends of the platform and alleviate crowding on the southern end. The introduction of this new stair would negate this transit benefit by directing riders to the southern end of the platform and would result in loss of platform area at that location. Therefore, NYCT has advised that the addition of this new stair would not be practicable. No feasible mitigation measures were identified that would address impacts at other impacted stairway locations (P13, P19, and P21). Accordingly, the stairway impacts would remain unmitigated. The impacts to the two escalators could potentially be mitigated

by increasing the escalator operating speed. Replacement of the two escalators as part of MTA's Capital Program is expected to be completed by 2025 and would allow for the increase of the escalator operating speed to 100 feet per minute. However, if in the future it is determined that there is crowding in the immediate switchback landing as passengers transfer between escalators, then NYCT would have to potentially lower the escalator operating speed back to 90 feet per minute, in which case, the impact would remain unmitigated.

## Pedestrians

As discussed in **Chapter 9, Transportation** and **Chapter 16, Mitigation** the Proposed Project would result in significant impacts at two pedestrian elements during the midday that could not be mitigated. At one of these two locations—the southwest corner of the intersection of Lexington Avenue and East 42nd Street—the relocation of a garbage bin would partially mitigate the impact. Implementation of the pedestrian mitigation measures is within the jurisdiction of NYCDOT, except for the relocation of garbage bins; the Applicant will coordinate with the Grand Central Partnership to implement the relocation of the garbage bin and ensure its compliance.

## Construction

### Traffic

As discussed in **Chapter 15, Construction**, construction activities would result in significant adverse impacts which could not be fully mitigated at ~~two~~three of the five intersections analyzed during the AM construction peak hour and four intersections during the PM construction peak hour. Impacts could not be mitigated at the intersections of 42nd Street with Third Avenue and Lexington Avenue, and at the intersection of Lexington Avenue and 43rd Street during the AM and PM peak hours, and at the ~~intersections~~intersection of Lexington Avenue with ~~East 43rd Street and~~ East 45th Street during the PM peak hour.

### Pedestrians

As discussed in **Chapter 15, Construction**, construction activities would result in closure of the Lexington Avenue and East 42nd Street sidewalks fronting the Development Site. An assessment of the proposed walkways level of service during construction was performed and compared to the No-Action condition when the sidewalks would be available, and determined that construction activities would result in pedestrian impacts that could not be mitigated at both sidewalks during the AM and PM peak hours during construction.