

Chapter 24: 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 materials used in construction; energy in the form of gas and electricity consumed during construction and operation of the proposed project; and the human effort (i.e., time and labor) required to develop, construct, and operate various components of the proposed project.

The resources are considered irretrievably committed because their reuse for some purpose other than the proposed actions would be highly unlikely. Although the proposed project would result in a wider variety of land uses than the currently vacant development site, the land use changes associated with the development of the proposed project may also be considered a resource loss. The proposed project constitutes an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of the development 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 public purpose and benefits of the proposed project. As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," by making use of a vacant site next to the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in Midtown Manhattan, the project would bring a number of benefits to the cultural and historic resources of New York City. The project would result in additional floor area for MoMA to expand its gallery space. In addition, as a condition of the proposed actions, two New York City Landmarks (St. Thomas Church and the University Club) would be renovated to a sound, first-class condition. The work at St. Thomas Church includes the largest stained glass renovation project ever undertaken in the United States. *