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Alternatives

As described in the *2014 CEQR Technical Manual*, alternatives selected for consideration in an environmental impact statement are generally those which are feasible and have the potential to reduce, eliminate, or avoid adverse impacts of a proposed action while meeting some or all of the goals and objectives of this action.

Introduction

As described in the Analytic Framework section of **Chapter 1, "Project Description,"** the proposed action would establish a CPC special permit for new hotel development in M1 districts citywide, excluding MX or paired M1/R districts, areas that are airport property or non-residential areas adjacent to airports, and M1 districts with existing hotel special permit provisions. The CPC special permit would be required for transient accommodations, including hotels, motels, and boatels.

Because the proposed action has broad applicability, it is impossible to predict the universe of sites where development would be affected by the proposed action, and the proposed action is analyzed in this EIS as a, "generic action." According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, generic actions are programs and plans that have wide application or affect the range of future alternative policies. Usually these actions

affect the entire city or an area so large that site-specific description or analysis is not appropriate.

Per CEQR guidelines, impacts of alternatives do not need to be assessed at the same level of detail as those of the proposed project. In areas where no significant impact of the proposed project was identified, a qualitative assessment is sufficient. However, where a significant adverse impact of the proposed project has been identified, it is usually appropriate to describe the alternative so that a comparison may be meaningful. The level of analysis provided depends on a preliminary assessment of project impacts as determined by the analysis connected with the appropriate tasks. This chapter considers the following three alternatives to the proposed action:

- › A No-Action Alternative, which is mandated by CEQR and the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), and is intended to provide the lead and involved agencies with an assessment of the expected environmental impacts of no action on their part;
- › An M1-6 Exemption Alternative, which examines an alternative where M1-6 zones are exempt from the proposed action;
- › An Airport Areas Inclusion Alternative, which examines an alternative where airport areas are included in the proposed action. As noted in the Foreword, DCP filed an amended zoning text amendment, referred to as the "Amended Text" (land use application number N180349(A)ZRY); the Amended Text addresses issues raised during the public review process. The Amended Application modifies the geographic applicability of the proposed action such that it would include the M1 districts immediately surrounding John F. Kennedy (JFK) and LaGuardia Airports. The Amended Text is consistent with the Airport Areas Inclusion Alternative.

Principal Conclusions

A summary of the principal conclusions for the No-Action, M1-6 Exemption Alternative, and Airport Areas Inclusion Alternative alternatives are described below.

No-Action Alternative

The No-Action Alternative examines future conditions but assumes the proposed action—the proposed zoning text amendment to establish a CPC Special Permit for new transient hotel development in M1 districts citywide—is not adopted. Under the No-Action Alternative, existing zoning provisions would remain in the area affected by the proposed actions, and new hotels could continue to develop as-of-right within M1 zoning districts.

Under the proposed action, by the 2028 build year, 481 million square feet (11,020 acres) in NYC would be available for as-of-right hotel development. In terms of the overall permitted floor area for hotel development, a theoretical 1.4 billion square feet would be as-of-right and another 105 million by special permit only. For the

No-Action Alternative, the existing zoning framework for as-of-right hotel development would be the same as the No-Action condition under the proposed action.

Although the No-Action Alternative would potentially eliminate the effects of future new hotels that may relocate in other zoning districts where hotel development would continue to be permitted as-of-right over M1 zoning districts, this alternative would not meet the proposed action's objective to allow for more balanced neighborhood growth, and prevent conflicts with viable industrial businesses in core industrial areas while supporting the growth of other kinds of commercial uses.

M1-6 Exemption Alternative

The M1-6 Exemption Alternative considers modifications to the geographic applicability of the proposed action that would continue to allow new hotel developments to be built as-of-right in M1-6 districts. As the result, this Alternative would be less restrictive than the proposed action and it would be expected that there would be more hotel development in M1-6 zones than would be experienced under the proposed action.

The implementation of the M1-6 Exemption Alternative would not reduce the possible effects identified under the proposed action's prototypical analysis. Furthermore, while M1-6 zones tend to be denser and less industrial, which makes potential land use conflicts less pronounced than in other M1 districts, there remains a need to evaluate the appropriateness of hotels in M1-6 zones within the context of their neighborhood. The proposed action would allow for considerations on the appropriateness of a hotel development on a case-by-case basis, ensuring there is a more balanced mixed of uses. Therefore, an alternative that would allow as-of-right hotel developments in M1-6 districts would not be fully consistent with the proposed action's purpose and need to minimize potential land use conflicts and ensure a balanced mix of uses.

Airport Areas Inclusion Alternative

The Airport Areas Inclusion Alternative considers modifications to the geographic applicability of the proposed action that would include the M1 districts immediately surrounding John F. Kennedy (JFK) and LaGuardia Airports, consistent with the Amended Text. As the result, under this alternative, any new hotel development in M1 districts adjacent to JFK and LaGuardia would be subject to the proposed M1 Hotel text amendment and would be required to apply for a CPC Special Permit. As a consequence, this alternative would likely diminish hotel production in the M1 zones immediately surrounding the airports as compared to the proposed action.

Given the importance of the aviation industry to the City this alternative could potentially limit the appeal of the airports as a destination, costing the aviation industry business and resulting in fewer jobs for City residents. Furthermore, the analysis finds that current hotels near airports are actively serving the aviation industry and that this trend will likely continue.

The implementation of the Airport Areas Inclusion Alternative would not reduce the possible effects identified under the proposed action's prototypical analysis.

No-Action Alternative

Description of Alternative

The No-Action Alternative examines future conditions within the Project Area but assumes the absence of the proposed actions. Under the No-Action Alternative, there would be no change to zoning, and new hotels could continue to locate as-of-right within M1 zoning districts. Hotels would continue to be permitted as-of-right in M1 zoning districts, and continue to remain as one of the allowable uses that provide the highest returns to developers and investors. As described in the analysis framework, the proposed action is a generic action, and there are no specific projected or potential development sites.

Under the No-Action Alternative, approximately 481 million square feet (11,020 acres) of land would be available and viable for as-of-right new hotel development, compared with approximately 273 million square feet (6,300) acres under the proposed action. In terms of developable floor area, over 1.4 billion square feet of hotel would be available for as-of-right hotel development in the No-Action condition, compared with 1 billion in the With Action condition (refer to Table 1-8 and Table 1-19 in Chapter 1, "Project Description").

The possible adverse effects related to historic resources, shadows, hazardous materials, and transportation that would occur as exemplified by the prototypical analysis of the proposed actions would not occur with the No-Action Alternative. However, as described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the types of sites in M1 districts that could be developed with new hotels in the No-Action condition are expected to preclude potential siting opportunities for industrial businesses that have had difficulty finding sites or opportunities to expand.

In contrast with the proposed action, this alternative may not allow some existing industrial businesses to remain in place, or new industrial businesses to open, as hotels could continue to be developed as-of-right in M1 zoning districts.

Because hotels are currently permitted as-of-right within M1 districts citywide, the No-Action Alternative would therefore not result in the possible adverse effects in the areas of historic resources, shadows, hazardous materials, and transportation. However, this alternative would not meet the proposed action's objective to allow for more balanced neighborhood growth and prevent conflicts with viable industrial businesses in core industrial areas, while supporting the growth of other kinds of commercial uses.

Shadows

The proposed action has the potential to shift hotel development from M1 zoning districts to other zoning districts where hotels could continue to be developed as -

of-right, and therefore result in taller buildings in these areas. The proposed action has broad applicability with no projected or potential development sites, and it is therefore not possible to conclude where and to what extent incremental shadows may occur. Therefore, adverse shadows cast on sunlight-sensitive resources due to the proposed action could not be ruled out.

Like the proposed action, there are no known projected or potential development sites in the No-Action Alternative. Any new as-of-right hotel development will have to comply with the applicable zoning regulations, including building height, and the No-Action Alternative would therefore not result in significant adverse shadows impacts. There are no provisions within the No-Action Alternative that could preclude incremental shadows cast by as-of-right development on a sunlight sensitive resources.

Historic Resources

The proposed action has the potential to result in adverse effects to archaeological resources as it may result in deeper in-ground disturbance over the No-Action condition. While any possible adverse effects of the proposed action are expected to be limited and unlikely, it is not possible to conclude where and to what extent additional in-ground disturbance might occur. As such, the possibility of adverse effects on archaeological resources cannot be eliminated.

The proposed action is expected to shift new hotel construction from M1 districts to other zoning districts where hotels are permitted as-of-right. In the No-Action Alternative, hotels could continue to develop as-of-right in M1 zoning districts citywide, and therefore no significant adverse impacts to historic resources would occur. However, because it is not possible to conclude where and to what extent in-ground disturbance might occur in the No-Action Alternative, and eligible historic resources not currently protected by local, state, or national designations, historic resources could continue to be disturbed in the No-Action Alternative.

Hazardous Materials

The proposed action itself is not expected to induce development on sites where development would not have otherwise been possible thereby limiting the potential for additional in-ground disturbance. The proposed action is also not anticipated to increase building footprints; however, it could result in deeper excavation compared to the No-Action scenario as the building heights under the With Action condition could be taller. As the result, possible adverse effects related to hazardous materials could be realized under the proposed action.

In the No-Action Alternative, hotels could continue to develop as-of-right in M1 zoning districts citywide, and therefore no significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials would occur. However, because it is not possible to conclude where and to what extent in-ground disturbance might occur in the No-Action Alternative and there are no currently no existing provisions to mitigate hazardous

materials, the potential to disturb hazardous materials could not be ruled on in the No-Action Alternative.

Transportation

The proposed action itself is not expected to induce development on sites where development would not have otherwise been possible, thereby limiting the potential for additional transportation demand. The analysis framework examined the potential for future new hotels to be located on prototypical sites where hotels will continue to be permitted as-of-right in the With-Action condition.

In the No-Action Alternative, there would be no significant adverse transportation impact as the No-Action Alternative would not introduce incremental transportation demands over the No-Action condition. The developments in proximity to the prototypical sites listed in **Appendix A.5** will have been completed and fully occupied, increasing local transportation demand in these areas over the existing conditions.

M1-6 Exemption Alternative

Description of Alternative

The M1-6 Exemption Alternative considers modifications to the geographic applicability of the proposed action that would continue to allow new hotel developments to be built as-of-right in M1-6 districts.

As described in Chapter 2, "Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy," M1 districts generally permit light industrial uses, with relatively high performance standards, as well as most commercial uses. This includes Use Groups 4 through 14, 16, and 17. The densest of these zoning districts is M1-6, which has a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 10 and no accessory parking requirement. As shown in Figure 1 these districts are largely mapped in Manhattan and are typically commercial in character.

Given that the M1-6 Exemption Alternative would continue to allow hotel developments to be built as-of-right in these districts, the alternative would be less restrictive than the proposed action. Under this Alternative, it is expected that there would be more hotel development in M1-6 zones than would be experienced under the proposed action. In fact, it is possible that the distribution of residual 2028 demand could shift from submarket areas within the other boroughs into Manhattan.

The implementation of the M1-6 Exemption Alternative would not reduce the possible effects identified under the proposed action's prototypical analysis. Furthermore, while M1-6 zones tend to be denser and less industrial which makes potential land use conflicts less pronounced than in other M1 districts, there remains a need to evaluate the appropriateness of hotels in M1-6 zones within the context of their neighborhood. The proposed action would allow for considerations on the appropriateness of a hotel development on a case-by-case basis, ensuring there is a

more balanced mixed of uses. Therefore, an alternative that would allow as-of-right hotel developments in M1-6 districts would not be fully consistent with the proposed action's purpose and need to minimize potential land use conflicts as well as to ensure a balanced mix of uses.

Airport Areas Inclusion Alternative

Description of Alternative

The Airport Areas Inclusion Alternative considers modifications to the geographic applicability of the proposed action that would include the M1 districts immediately surrounding John F. Kennedy (JFK) and LaGuardia Airports; this is consistent with DCP's Amended Text. As the result, under this alternative, any new hotel development in M1 districts adjacent to JFK and LaGuardia would be subject to the proposed M1 Hotel text amendment and would be required to apply for a CPC Special Permit.

Currently, the area around JFK Airport is largely industrial, with air cargo being a significant industry not only for the airport, but for the City's economy as a whole. JFK also serves as an important entryway into the City for both domestic and international tourists. Both JFK and LaGuardia Airports act as hub for travelers transferring between planes and as broad regional hubs for travelers who are going to the many destinations served by the airports. The broad reach of the airports requires many hotel rooms as many travelers and airline personnel are in need of overnight accommodations. Today, there is an established cluster of hotels located in the vicinity of both JFK and LaGuardia Airport. There continues to be strong demand to accommodate the increasing number of visitors to the City. It is projected that the number of passengers to the airport will grow by at least 20% at the two airports by 2030. As the result, the-areas around the airport will need to continue to serve overnight visitors with accessory businesses such as auto rental companies and hotels.

Under the action as originally proposed, areas around JFK and LaGuardia Airport would be excluded, and hotel developments would continue to be as-of-right. However, the Airport Areas Inclusion Alternative (and Amended Text) would result in a change and be more restrictive in that it would require new hotel developments in these M1 districts to acquire a CPC Special Permit. The M1 areas surrounding both JFK and LaGuardia Airport are mixed in character with some blocks being residential in character. Hotel development in these areas can create land use conflicts with lower density homeowners. This alternative would allow the CPC to review new hotels in the area to ensure that adjacent residents are not impacted by the development.

Given the length and, at times, difficulty of the CPC Special Permit Process, this Alternative would likely diminish hotel production in the M1 zones immediately surrounding the airports as compared to the proposed action.

The areas adjacent to the City's two airports will continue to have high demand for hotel rooms to accommodate the increasing number of Airport users. Given the importance of the aviation industry to the City this alternative could potentially limit the appeal of the airports as a destination, costing the aviation industry business and resulting in fewer jobs for City residents. Furthermore, the analysis finds that current hotels near airports are actively serving the aviation industry and that this trend will likely continue.

The implementation of the Airport Areas Inclusion Alternative would not reduce the possible effects identified under the proposed action's prototypical analysis.

Conclusion

This chapter examined the following three potential alternatives to the proposed action: a No-Action Alternative, an M1-6 Exemption Alternative, and an Airport Areas Inclusion Alternative.

Although the No-Action Alternative would potentially eliminate the effects of future new hotels that may relocate in other zoning districts where hotel development would continue to be permitted as-of-right over M1 zoning districts, this alternative would not meet the proposed action's objective to allow for more balanced neighborhood growth, and prevent conflicts with viable industrial businesses in core industrial areas while supporting the growth of other kinds of commercial uses.

The implementation of the M1-6 Exemption Alternative would not reduce the possible effects identified under the proposed action's prototypical analysis. The proposed action would allow for considerations on the appropriateness of a hotel development on a case-by-case basis, ensuring there is a more balanced mixed of uses. Therefore, an alternative that would allow as-of-right hotel developments in M1-6 districts would not be fully consistent with the proposed action's purpose and need to minimize potential land use conflicts and ensure a balanced mix of uses.

The implementation of the Airport Areas Inclusion Alternative (Amended Text) would not reduce the possible effects identified under the proposed action's prototypical analysis.