

**A. INTRODUCTION**

The Second Avenue Subway tunnel alignment and several proposed spoils removal and staging areas, as well as underground storage tracks would be located within the designated boundaries of New York City's Coastal Zone (see Figures 16-1 and 16-2). The Coastal Zone is defined as the geographic area of New York City's coastal waters and adjacent shorelines that have a direct and significant effect on coastal waters. As discussed more fully below, the project's location in the Coastal Zone necessitates obtaining a Coastal Zone consistency determination from the State and City, for both its construction and operations activities.

Following is an overview of the State and City's Coastal Zone Management Program, which is administered by the New York State Department of State (NYS DOS), in consultation with the New York City Department of City Planning (NYC DCP). Next is a brief description of the proposed Second Avenue Subway construction activities that would occur within the Coastal Zone. The last sections summarize the project's consistency with the State and City policies for waterfront protection and improvement. A full coastal zone consistency assessment, including an analysis demonstrating that the project would not affect any use or resource of the Coastal Zone, is included in Appendix M, "Coastal Zone Consistency." The New York State Department of State's letter of concurrence is included in that appendix.

**B. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

The Federal Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of 1972, established to support and protect the nation's coastal zones, empowers states that have received federal delegation to implement the CZMA and to set forth standard policies for reviewing proposed development projects along coastlines. NYSDOS has created such a program, called the New York State Coastal Management Program (CMP), which is administered at the State level.

The LWRP includes 44 statewide policies for waterfront protection and improvement and 10 additional policies specifically for sites in New York City. Together, these policies are a response to Federal, State, and local concerns about development within the Coastal Zone.

The 44 State and 10 City policies were developed to address the full spectrum of projects that could occur throughout the State and City's Coastal Zones. These include the following coastal issues:

- Public access
- Recreation
- Development
- Flood and erosion hazards
- Water resources
- Fish and wildlife

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- Scenic quality
- Cultural resources
- Air quality
- Energy
- Agriculture

While several of these policies (for example, agriculture) are not relevant to the Second Avenue Subway, NYSDOS, in consultation with NYCDCP, typically requires a comprehensive assessment of a project's potential effects on all policies.

The discussion below and in Appendix M addresses the policies that are relevant to the Second Avenue Subway project and describes the proposed project's consistency with each policy. NYSDOS, in consultation with NYCDCP, will issue a consistency determination for the Second Avenue Subway based on the assessment of the project's consistency with the relevant State and City policies.

In the future, if any additional federal approvals such as permits or licenses would be required (such as those described in Chapter 4 "Public Outreach and Review," of the FEIS), the NYSDOS would again be required to review the proposal for consistency with the New York State Coastal Zone Management program. The current assessment pertains only to the requested federal funding from the FTA.

### **C. CONSTRUCTION AND PERMANENT ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE COASTAL ZONE**

Most of the Second Avenue Subway alignment would not be located within the Coastal Zone. Nevertheless, pursuant to the Coastal Zone Management Act, the entire project must be assessed for consistency with the various policies. Consequently, the text below first provides a summary of the overall project as described throughout this FEIS. Afterwards is a brief summary highlighting those activities occurring directly within the Coastal Zone.

#### **SECOND AVENUE SUBWAY PROJECT OVERVIEW**

The purpose of the Second Avenue Subway is to address the problems and deficiencies in access and mobility associated with an overburdened transit infrastructure that is struggling to accommodate existing customers as well as new customers from the continuing growth on Manhattan's East Side. The Second Avenue Subway is one of a number of transportation projects in the region now under construction or in the planning stage aimed at expanding MTA's public transit system. Major transportation initiatives sponsored by the MTA and other city, state, regional, and federal agencies would improve access to and from Manhattan and enhance the existing transit system. In Lower Manhattan, the Second Avenue Subway would support efforts to replace damaged and destroyed infrastructure, buildings, and transportation systems and to make other transportation improvements. It would also serve demand generated by several public and private economic and land development initiatives that are planned for the East Side such as the proposed Consolidated Edison site development, the new United Nations building, and a number of hospital related developments.

As shown in Figure 16-3, the Second Avenue Subway would be a new, two-track, approximately 8.5-mile rail line extending the length of Manhattan's East Side corridor from 125th Street to Hanover Square, serving East Harlem, the Upper East Side, Midtown, Gramercy Park/Union Square, the East Village/Lower East Side/Chinatown, and Lower Manhattan. These

neighborhoods contain nearly 700,000 residents according to the 2000 Census, two of the largest Central Business Districts (CBDs) in the United States, and approximately 45 percent of all private sector jobs in Manhattan, including many of the world's leading financial, cultural, medical, educational, and communications employers. The added capacity of the Second Avenue Subway would improve service for passengers traveling into and through the East Side corridor on the new service as well as for passengers on the existing Lexington Avenue Line (456), which currently provides the only full north-south rapid transit subway service on the East Side to Lower Manhattan. The new line would make the East Side neighborhoods more accessible not only to those who live there, but to visitors and workers traveling from other parts of New York City as well. A new connection at Metro-North's Harlem-125th Street Station would also improve regional access to the East Side for commuters entering and leaving Manhattan from suburbs located north of Manhattan in both New York State and Connecticut. With completion of the East Side Access Project connecting Long Island Rail Road service to Grand Central Terminal, the Second Avenue Subway would also serve commuters from Long Island arriving at Grand Central who transfer to the Lexington Avenue Line, since the new subway would alleviate crowding on that line.

The Second Avenue Subway is planned to provide two subway services in this corridor. The first would be the full-length Second Avenue route operating between 125th Street and Hanover Square. The second service would operate along Second Avenue from 125th Street to 63rd Street, and then travel west along the existing 63rd Street Line and stop at the existing Lexington Avenue-63rd Street Station; it would then join the existing Broadway Line (currently served by N R Q W) via an existing connection and serve express stations along Seventh Avenue and Broadway before crossing the Manhattan Bridge to Brooklyn. Passengers traveling to Lower Manhattan on this route could transfer to local services for destinations south of Canal Street.

As described in Chapter 3, after the SDEIS was issued, FTA notified the MTA that a fully operable minimum operable segment with access to maintenance and storage facilities would be required, in view of the project's total capital cost and requested New Starts share. To comply with this, construction of the Second Avenue Subway must be phased. The phasing plan described in the FEIS incorporates information obtained through ongoing engineering and achieves the best balance between constructability, operability, and the availability of funding. In addition, the phasing plan responds to public comments on construction schedule and sequencing. The four phases, which could potentially overlap, are as follows:

- Phase 1: 105th Street to 62nd Streets, including a tunnel connection to the 63rd Street/Broadway line;
- Phase 2: 125th Street to 105th Street;
- Phase 3: 62nd Street to Houston Street, including the 63rd Street tunnel connection to Queens for non-passenger service; and
- Phase 4: Houston Street to Hanover Square tail tracks.

This phasing plan permits portions of the project to operate prior to completion of the entire line. Given the project's 8.5-mile length, building and operating the new subway service in phases is the fastest way to provide many passengers with new subway service while also relieving some of the severe overcrowding on the Lexington Avenue Line.

Building the project would require extensive construction along the entire alignment as described in Chapter 3. During the construction period, unavoidable significant adverse impacts

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would be created in areas adjacent to construction activity during each phase, as detailed throughout this FEIS.

Once operational, the project would result in enormous benefits for the residents and businesses of New York City and the New York region. Its key benefits include:

- Bolstering the economy of New York City and the New York region;
- Reducing subway crowding and improving reliability;
- Improving access to the subway; and
- Reducing vehicle use and improving air quality.

### SUMMARY OF SUBWAY ACTIVITIES OCCURRING DIRECTLY WITHIN THE COASTAL ZONE

#### Harlem River Coastal Zone Activities

Three potential subway activities could occur within the Harlem River Coastal Zone: (1) maintenance facilities at the 207th Street shop (during construction of Phase 2), (2) the potential staging area at 128th Street and Second Avenue (during Phase 2), and (3) a three-block length of the underground tracks proposed along Second Avenue from 129th to 126th Street (also during Phase 2).

As described in Chapter 3 of the FEIS, “Description of Construction Methods and Activities,” the Second Avenue Subway would require access to maintenance facilities. One such facility is the existing 207th Street Maintenance Shop at the 207th Street Yard, which is within the Coastal Zone. However, no expansion of the existing NYCT property would be required, nor would changes in use occur on the property. Consequently, the 207th Street Yard would not affect any Coastal Zone policies.

As described in Chapter 3 of the FEIS, along Second Avenue within the Coastal Zone, a potential construction staging area for spoils removal is under consideration inland at Second Avenue and 128th Street. This would be a temporary use that would be removed following construction of Phase 2 of the project. The barge facility at 129th Street assessed in the SDEIS is no longer under consideration because the site is not available.

The only permanent use within the Coastal Zone in this area would be the underground storage tracks that would be constructed along Second Avenue between 129th and 125th Streets. These tracks could be needed to store some of the new trains that would operate along the subway alignment.

#### East River Coastal Zone Activities

Construction activities in the East River Coastal Zone would occur during Phase 4 of the project. In the East River Coastal Zone, possible construction locations include: the Pier 6 barge facility; the potential spoils removal areas along Old Slip or Gouverneur Lane, and at Water Street near Coenties Slip; and the tunnel alignment along Water Street from Coenties Slip north to the Brooklyn Bridge, including the proposed Seaport and Hanover Square Stations. The potential underground storage tracks located south of the Hanover Square Station would also be within the East River Coastal Zone. Like the underground storage tracks that would be constructed along Second Avenue between 129th and 125th Streets, these tracks could be needed to store some of the new trains that would operate along the subway alignment. Constructing these tracks would involve creating a shaft at Water Street near Whitehall Street.

The Pier 6 barge facility would be active for up to 7 years (a reduction from the 10 years described in the SDEIS), and would be used to transport rock and soil (“spoils”) from the excavated tunnels and stations from Manhattan, and to bring necessary construction materials to Manhattan. Using barges to transport excavated material and equipment is under consideration as a means of reducing the distance that the large number of trucks that would be required would need to travel, simultaneously reducing related air pollution and noise. Following construction, the barges and related construction equipment would be removed. One or more of the spoils removal areas would be used to bring spoils out of the tunnels and to transport them to the barges. This could involve constructing conveyors or trucking along Old Slip or Gouverneur Lane. At Water Street and Coenties Slip, a vertical shaft would be needed to bring excavated tunnel spoils to the street surface. A similar shaft would be required at Water Street near Whitehall Street if the underground storage tracks were to be constructed south of the Hanover Square Station.

The tunnel alignment, beginning at the Brooklyn Bridge and extending south to Whitehall Street along Water Street, including the proposed Seaport and Hanover Square Stations, and the potential storage tracks would involve permanent construction within the Coastal Zone.

#### **CONEY ISLAND CREEK COASTAL ZONE**

The expansion of the existing Coney Island Yard for additional train storage and maintenance, which was described in the SDEIS, is no longer under consideration.

#### **D. THE PROJECT’S CONFORMANCE WITH CURRENT LWRP POLICIES**

A detailed assessment of the 44 statewide policies and 10 additional policies for sites in New York City is included in Appendix M. Following is a summary of the conclusions.

Once operational, the Second Avenue Subway project would be consistent with all applicable coastal zone policies. During construction, mitigation measures will be employed so that subway construction activities have no significant adverse impact on wetlands or natural features that protect against flooding and erosion. Any impacts on primary producers, benthic organisms or water quality would be temporary. Furthermore, best management practices and stormwater and erosion control measures would be employed to prevent pollution and contaminated materials from entering the waterways. These and other construction-period requirements would be incorporated into a Construction Environmental Protection Plan (CEPP)—a document that assembles all project commitments and conditions. MTA/NYCT will incorporate the relevant portions of the CEPP into all construction contracts and contractors will be obligated to follow these provisions. Consistent with State Policy 23, which seeks to protect, enhance, and restore historic and archaeological resources, a construction protection plan, which would be incorporated into the CEPP, would be employed to protect such resources from accidental damage during construction. Mitigation measures will also be developed for adverse impacts to archaeological resources, but some adverse impacts to archaeological resources may occur, since some sites may not be mitigated due to issues of safety, access, and research redundancy. Although portions of the alignments and construction areas are located in the 100-year floodplain mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Second Avenue Subway construction would not adversely affect the floodplain’s ability to store flood waters nor would it lead to additional or increased flooding.

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In some cases, the project would result in temporary but unavoidable noncompliance with coastal zone policies during construction. For example, for safety reasons, public access would not be provided to waterfront areas being used for construction activities. Construction activities could also temporarily diminish views to the waterfront or resources that contribute to the overall scenic quality of the coastal area. These impacts would be temporary and views would be restored after construction. \*