

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**ATTACHMENT A: Summary of Comments and Responses**

**Project:** Second Avenue Subway Phase 2

**Project Sponsor:** Metropolitan Transportation Authority New York City Transit

**Project Location:** New York City, New York

**A.1 INTRODUCTION**

This document summarizes and responds to comments on the July 2018 *Supplemental Environmental Assessment to the Second Avenue Subway Final Environmental Impact Statement: Phase 2* (Supplemental EA). The Supplemental EA was prepared by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), including MTA Capital Construction and New York City Transit (NYCT), and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as lead federal agency in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Public review began with publication and distribution of the Supplemental EA on July 9, 2018. The public comment period was open from July 12, 2018 through August 13, 2018. All relevant comments received that are germane to Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway, including any late-filed comments (i.e., comments received after the close of the comment period), are summarized and responded to in this attachment.

At the start of the public comment period, MTA posted the Supplemental EA on the Project website at [http://web.mta.info/capital/phase2\\_docs.html](http://web.mta.info/capital/phase2_docs.html). In addition, MTA placed full paper copies of the Supplemental EA in local repositories where they could be for viewing in person. The following locations served as viewing repositories for the Supplemental EA:

- Second Avenue Subway Community Information Center, 69 East 125th Street, Manhattan
- FTA Region 2 office, One Bowling Green, Room 429, Manhattan
- Manhattan Community Board (CB) 10 office, 215 West 125th Street, 4th floor
- Manhattan CB 11 office, 1664 Park Avenue, ground floor

MTA sent bilingual (English and Spanish) electronic notices to elected officials, CBs 10 and 11, interested organizations, stakeholders, and members of the public on the Project notification list, informing them that the Supplemental EA was available for review, providing information on how to view the document, the comment period, and how to make comments, and inviting them to the public meeting at which comments could be made. The notices also included an attached bilingual fact sheet summarizing the Phase 2 project and the conclusions of the Supplemental EA.

Advertisements providing information on the Supplemental EA, the viewing repositories, the comment period, and the public meeting appeared in local newspapers during the public comment period. Advertisements were run in local newspapers, including English language newspapers and Spanish language newspapers (with Spanish language advertisements). Advertisements were as follows:

- *AM New York* (daily English language paper), July 12, 2018, p. A10.
- *El Especialito* – El Barrio edition (weekly Spanish language paper), July 13–19, 2018, p. 5.
- *Harlem Community Newspapers* (weekly English language paper), July 12, 2018, p. 5.
- *La Voz Hispanica* (weekly Spanish language paper), July 12–July 18, 2018, p. 11.

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- *Metro NY* (daily English language paper), weekend July 12–15, 2018, p. 11.
- *The New York Amsterdam News* (weekly English language paper), July 12–18, 2018, p. 6.

MTA held a public meeting to provide information and hear verbal comments on the Phase 2 project and Supplemental EA at 6 PM on July 31, 2018, in the auditorium of the Henry J. Carter Specialty Hospital and Nursing Facility at 1752 Park Avenue in Manhattan. The meeting was attended by 96 members of the public, including 11 elected officials or their representatives and five media staff. During the public meeting, MTA provided a presentation of the Phase 2 project and the conclusions of the Supplemental EA. At the conclusion of the presentation, MTA responded to questions seeking clarification about the project; these questions were not incorporated as formal comments. Following the question and answer portion of the meeting, a total of 22 speakers provided formal comments.

In addition to the oral testimony at the public meeting, MTA and FTA accepted written comments submitted at the public meeting, via mail, and via email. MTA and FTA received 23 written submissions, including late-filed comments.

Following completion of the public comment period, MTA attended a meeting of CB 11 on September 18, 2018. At that meeting, MTA made a presentation about the Phase 2 project and answered questions from the community and CB 11 board members.

This document summarizes and responds to the comments made on the Phase 2 project and Supplemental EA, including comments made during the public comment period, late-filed comments, and comments and questions received at the CB 11 meeting on September 18, 2018. Comments submitted that were not relevant to the project are not summarized and responded to in this document. The document is organized as follows:

- **Section A.2** provides a list of commenters on the Supplemental EA, organized as follows:
  - A.2.1: Elected officials or their representatives
  - A.2.2: Public agencies and governmental organizations
  - A.2.3: Non-governmental organizations and businesses
  - A.2.4: Individuals

Following each commenter's name, an abbreviated version of the name is provided in parentheses; this is used in Section A.3 to indicate which comment(s) pertain to each commenter. For each commenter, a list of the comments made is also provided, referenced by the comment numbers used in Section A.3. Please note that a transcript was not prepared for the CB 11 meeting on September 18, 2018, and commenters did not provide their names or affiliations. Therefore, comments made at that meeting are indicated as such without the name of the commenter.

- **Section A.3** provides a summary of the comments and responses to the comments, with the abbreviated name of the associated commenter(s) in parentheses. These summaries convey the substance of the comments made, but do not necessarily quote the comments verbatim. Where more than one commenter expressed similar views, those comments are grouped and addressed together. Comments are organized by subject matter and generally parallel the chapter structure of the Supplemental EA, as follows:
  - A.3.1: General
  - A.3.2: Process and Public Outreach

- A.3.3: Project Schedule and Funding
- A.3.4: Project Overview/Project Design
- A.3.5: Construction Methods
- A.3.6: Transportation
- A.3.7: Social and Economic Conditions
- A.3.8: Public Open Spaces
- A.3.9: Displacement and Relocation
- A.3.10: Visual and Aesthetic Resources
- A.3.11: Historic and Archaeological Resources
- A.3.12: Air Quality
- A.3.13: Noise and Vibration
- A.3.14: Infrastructure and Energy
- A.3.15: Contaminated Materials
- A.3.16: Environmental Justice
- A.3.17: Indirect and Cumulative Effects

## **A.2 LIST OF COMMENTERS**

### **A.2.1 ELECTED OFFICIALS OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES**

#### *A.2.1.1 FEDERAL*

1. Maloney, Carolyn B., U.S. Representative, New York 12th Congressional District, oral testimony read by David Leeds at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*U.S. Representative–Maloney*): Comments 1, 36, 38, 42, 65.

#### *A.2.1.2 STATE*

2. Rodriguez, Robert J., New York State Assemblymember, Assembly District 68, oral testimony read by Anne Kadamani at public meeting on July 31, 2018 and two letters dated August 12, 2018 (*NYS Assembly–Rodriguez*): Comments 1, 12, 14, 26, 27, 38, 45, 46, 47, 50, 51, 52, 58, 60, 62, 64, 65, 68, 74, 75, 85, 86, 87, 92, 100, 101.

#### *A.2.1.3 LOCAL*

3. Ayala, Diana, New York City Council Member, Council District 8, oral testimony at public meeting on July 31, 2018 and letter dated August 13, 2018 (*NYC Council–Ayala*): Comments 1, 60, 65, 74, 77.
4. Brewer, Gale A., Manhattan Borough President, letter dated July 30, 2018 (*Manhattan BP–Brewer*): Comment 2.

### **A.2.2 PUBLIC AGENCIES AND GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

1. Manhattan CB 11, Nilsa Orama, Board Chair, oral testimony at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*CB 11–Orama*): Comments 60, 74.

2. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Grace Musumeci, Chief, Environmental Review Section, letter dated August 7, 2018 (*USEPA–Musumeci*): Comments 90, 91.

**A.2.3 NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND BUSINESSES**

1. Citrus Cuisine, William Randy Rogers, (also a board member of Uptown Grand Central), oral testimony at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*Citrus Cuisine–Rogers*): Comments 1, 27.
2. Civitas, Alexander Adams, AICP, CNU-A, Executive Director, email dated August 17, 2018 (*CIVITAS–Adams*): Comments 1, 26, 27, 35, 79.
3. The Durst Organization, represented by Stephen Lefkowitz of Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP, letter dated August 13, 2018 (*Durst–Lefkowitz*): Comments 49, 68, 69, 88, 89.
4. Laborers International Union for North America, Christopher Fitzsimmons, (also Secretary/Treasurer of New York City Sandhogs), oral testimony at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*LIUNA–Fitzsimmons*): Comments 1, 47.
5. Marcus Garvey Park Alliance, Connie Lee, President, (also founding member of Landmark East Harlem) oral testimony at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*MGPA–Lee*): Comment 70.
6. New York City Transit Riders Council, Cristopher Greif, oral testimony at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*NYCTRC–C. Greif*): Comment 59.
7. New York State Laborers, Vincent Albanese, oral testimony at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*NYS Laborers–Albanese*): Comment 1.
8. SpaHa Soul Restaurant, Artist Thornton, oral testimony at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*SpaHa Soul–Thornton*): Comments 60, 61.
9. Uptown Grand Central, Carey King, Executive Director, letter dated August 13, 2018 (*UGC–King*): Comments 1, 26, 48, 60, 63, 82, 83, 100.
10. WE ACT for Environmental Justice, Cecil Corbin-Mark, Deputy Director, oral testimony at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*WE ACT–Corbin-Mark*): Comments 1, 3, 45, 47, 67, 84, 85.
11. WE ACT for Environmental Justice, Tina Johnson, member, oral testimony at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*WE ACT–Johnson*): Comments 4, 59, 97.
12. WE ACT for Environmental Justice, Michael Velarde, Director of Special Projects, letter and email dated July 24, 2018 and oral testimony at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*WE ACT–Velarde*): Comments 2, 5.

**A.2.4 INDIVIDUALS**

1. Adams, Alexander, comment form submitted at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*Adams*): Comments 13, 16, 26, 31, 35, 37.
2. Castano, Api, comment form submitted at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*Castano*): Comments 35, 36, 38, 75.
3. Collazo, Evelyn, oral testimony at public meeting on July 31, 2018 and email dated September 2, 2018 (*Collazo*): Comments 23, 24.
4. Frankel, Eric J., letter dated August 7, 2018 (*Frankel*): Comment 35.

5. Greif, Debra (member of MTA ADA Committee), oral testimony at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*D. Greif*): Comment 59.
6. Kudish, Paul, email dated August 7, 2018 (*Kudish*): Comments 25, 41.
7. Lomax, Austin, emails dated August 13, 2018 (*Lomax*): Comments 15, 33.
8. Mack, Adriane, CB 11 Board Member (and member of the CB 11 Human Services Committee, comments at CB 11 meeting on September 18, 2018 (*Mack*): Comments 46, 47.
9. Martinez, Delfin, oral testimony at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*Martinez*): Comment 47.
10. Picker, Shaul, oral testimony and comment forms submitted at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*Picker*): Comments 16, 35, 39, 43.
11. Roberts, K.C., oral testimony at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*Roberts*): Comments 1, 40.
12. Sanderson, Joseph, email dated July 19, 2018 (*Sanderson*): Comments 12, 20, 28, 35, 36, 44, 67.
13. Sinisterra, Sebastian G., oral testimony and comment form submitted at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*Sinisterra*): Comments 16, 18, 21, 23, 24, 35, 38, 67.
14. Solomon, Hilda, comment form submitted at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*Solomon*): Comments 47, 58.
15. Unidentified commenter, comment letter submitted at public meeting on July 31, 2018 (*Unidentified*): Comments 13, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, 26, 30, 66.
16. Unidentified commenters at CB 11 meeting, verbal comments and questions made by public at CB 11 meeting on September 18, 2018 (*Unidentified commenter at CB 11 meeting*): Comments 7, 30, 40, 47, 74, 92, 102.
17. Winfield, Marie, letter dated August 13, 2018 (*Winfield*): Comments 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 18, 53, 54, 55, 56, 59, 65, 71, 72, 73, 74, 76, 80, 81, 85, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 102, 103.
18. Wouk, Jordan, oral testimony at public meeting on July 31, 2018 and letter dated August 12, 2018 (*Wouk*): Comments 22, 29, 32, 34, 35, 38, 57, 102.

### **A.3 COMMENT SUMMARIES AND RESPONSES**

#### **A.3.1 GENERAL**

**Comment 1:** A number of commenters expressed support for Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway. Reasons cited include: Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway will provide great benefits to East Harlem and New York City; this project will increase transportation options in East Harlem, making travel more efficient for neighborhood residents and broadening their access to educational and employment opportunities, while reducing congestion on existing subway lines and on local streets in the community; it will bring increased prosperity to the neighborhood; and it will create a critical transfer point to the Metro-North Railroad system. (*Citrus Cuisine–Rogers, CIVITAS–Adams, LIUNA–Fitzsimmons, NYC Council–Ayala, NYS Assembly–Rodriguez, NYS Laborers–*

*Albanese, Roberts, UGC–King, U.S. Representative–Maloney, WE ACT–Corbin-Mark)*

**Response:** The Supplemental EA describes the benefits of Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway. For example, Chapter 3, “Transportation,” describes the transportation benefits of the new subway and Chapter 4, “Social and Economic Conditions,” describes the neighborhood benefits associated with increased transit accessibility.

### **A.3.2 PROCESS AND PUBLIC OUTREACH**

See also the comments related to public outreach in Section A.3.16, “Environmental Justice.”

**Comment 2:** Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway is proposed entirely within the boundaries of Manhattan’s Community District 11, but CB 11 is on summer recess for the entire comment period. The comment period should be extended to provide enough time for CB 11 to provide a meaningful review and input on impacts of the project. The comment period should be extended until October 19, 2018, so that it ends immediately following the regular full board meeting on Tuesday, October 16, 2018. (*Manhattan BP–Brewer*)

A comment period that closes on August 13 does not provide an opportunity for meaningful public engagement and fails to consider the realities of working New Yorkers, particularly during the summer and given the length and technical nature of the document. There has been a dearth of multi-lingual outreach and language access offerings, which therefore has denied a significant portion of the East Harlem community the opportunity for meaningful engagement. MTA should extend the comment period an additional 30 days, until September 14, and should convene an additional in-person comment opportunity with English–Spanish interpretation. (*WE ACT–Velarde*)

**Response:** The 30-day public review period for the Supplemental EA was established in accordance with requirements of the joint NEPA regulations of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and FTA (23 CFR Part 771) and occurred during the preliminary engineering phase of the project. MTA sought to conduct the environmental review according to a schedule that meets federal funding requirements. As outlined below, extensive community outreach was conducted prior to the availability of the Supplemental EA and will also be conducted throughout subsequent phases of design and construction. Therefore, MTA did not extend the 30-day public review period for the Supplemental EA.

MTA recognizes that public participation is integral to the planning process for Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway and that it is of paramount importance that the MTA provide opportunities for the East Harlem community to comment on the Supplemental EA and to engage cooperatively with the MTA throughout

design and construction. MTA has committed to a robust public outreach program, of which the NEPA environmental review is just one element.

MTA's public outreach approach for Phase 2 is described in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 20, "Public Outreach." As described there, prior to the NEPA public review period, MTA attended meetings and made public presentations to both CB 10 and 11, during which project representatives responded to questions from attendees. MTA provided an overview of the project at the meeting of the full board of CB 11 on September 18, 2018. In addition, MTA staffs a Community Information Center (CIC) at 69 East 125th Street in East Harlem five days a week with bilingual English- and Spanish-speaking staff, to interact with community members, answer their questions, and address their concerns, and has proactively held numerous outreach events to engage the public and local representatives. To date, the CIC has welcomed over 5,500 visitors and MTA has engaged an additional 6,000 members of the community at various "pop-up" events, each conducted with bilingual staff. MTA has met numerous times with every elected official representing the communities within the Phase 2 area.

MTA is committed to making the project accessible to the bilingual community. Project literature, newsletters, and email blasts are all translated into Spanish. Exhibits at the CIC are also in both English and Spanish. The Supplemental EA was made available on the Project website and bilingual (English and Spanish) notices of its availability and fact sheets summarizing the Phase 2 project and the conclusions of the Supplemental EA were distributed on July 9, 2018, as described in Section A.1 of this document. In addition, the Executive Summary of the Supplemental EA, which highlights the main conclusions of the document, was translated in Spanish and posted on the Project website as well as made available at the public meeting held on July 31, 2018.

Although the formal comment period for the Supplemental EA was not extended, MTA made every effort to ensure that the East Harlem community has the opportunity to comment and to ensure that community members had the appropriate materials available to be able to do so. To that end, all comments received during the public comment period and all late-filed comments received through the issuance of the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the project were incorporated and responded to in this Summary of Comments and Responses document.

Beyond the NEPA process, the CIC will remain open throughout design and construction of Phase 2 and MTA will continually accept and address feedback, wherever possible. As design advances and construction begins, Community Advisory Committees will be established, as well as Retail Advisory Committees, so that the community can provide input to MTA. In addition, as discussed in Chapter 20 of the Supplemental EA, MTA has assigned a community outreach



director and community liaison for the Phase 2 corridor, and as construction begins, additional community liaisons will be assigned for each station area.

**Comment 3:** MTA noted in the presentation at the public meeting on July 31, 2018 that comments would continue to be accepted, reviewed, and incorporated into the environmental review process even after the deadline of August 13, 2018. An informal extension without an official date is confusing and disingenuous. It does not make sense to say to the community that comments will be accepted without providing a specific date after which they can no longer continue to be accepted. *(WE ACT–Corbin-Mark)*

**Response:** As indicated in the public notices distributed regarding the availability of the Supplemental EA for comment, discussed in Section A.1 above, the comment period was open from July 9 to August 13, 2018. Comment submissions that were received after this date and during preparation of this document have been incorporated to the extent possible. Comments received through issuance of the FONSI were reviewed, considered, and incorporated in this Summary of Comments and Responses document. Responses to comments received during the public review of the Supplemental EA are addressed in this document. Issuance of FTA’s FONSI, to which this document is appended, concludes the NEPA process. Following the NEPA process, the CIC will remain open and MTA will continue to conduct public outreach activities throughout the final design and construction process for Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway. Comments received after issuance of the FONSI will still be reviewed, considered, and addressed as part of the ongoing design process, where appropriate.

**Comment 4:** It’s great to have a comment period so that people’s comments can be heard, but what will be the follow-up to this community engagement process? In addition to reaching out to the community, there has to be some accountability and follow-up to the comment period (e.g., this is the feedback we got and this is what we were able to do and what we were not able to do). *(WE ACT–Johnson)*

**Response:** This document provides a summary of all comments received during the comment period and the responses to those comments.

**Comment 5:** To more fully engage the community, MTA should increase language access, not only in English and Spanish but also in the other languages spoken in the neighborhood. This requires a more methodical, detailed, and robust community outreach strategy than is provided in the Supplemental EA. For example, expanding outreach via radio, newspapers, and other media will help reach a wider audience within the community. MTA should have a regularly scheduled series of public meetings that would allow people to know far in advance when they could attend and have their voices heard. *(WE ACT–Velarde)*

**Response:** According to the most recent U.S. Census data available (American Community Survey, 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates), approximately 15 percent of the households in the Second Avenue Subway Phase 2 corridor have limited English proficiency. An estimated 12 percent of the total households in the corridor have limited English proficiency and speak Spanish at home, 2 percent of the total households in the corridor have limited English proficiency and speak an Asian or Pacific Island language (predominantly Mandarin), and approximately 1 percent of the total households in the corridor have limited English proficiency and speak another language at home. Consequently, MTA believes that bilingual outreach in English and Spanish is appropriate for Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway. As discussed above in Section A.1 of this document, the combined notice of availability for the Supplemental EA and notice of the public meeting was advertised in six local newspapers, including two Spanish publications. The notice announced that additional interpreters, including sign-language interpreters, could be made available upon request. No requests were received. As part of its robust outreach program, MTA will continue to have public meetings and workshops throughout the design and construction of Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway, which will be announced through various outlets, including the Project website, flyers, email blasts, mailings, via the CBs and other community organizations, and news publications.

**Comment 6:** As of August 13, 2018, MTA has not presented at a full board meeting of CB 11, where many engaged community members would be attending, to announce that the environmental review would be taking place. Committee meetings and closed door meetings with elected officials and CB staff is not community outreach. In addition, none of the available materials at the CIC in June 2018 said that there would be an upcoming environmental review process, nor were visitors encouraged to participate in it. This lack of information clearly does not meet the requirements of Executive Order 12898 with regard to the environmental review process. (*Winfield*)

**Response:** As discussed in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 16, “Environmental Justice,” East Harlem is an environmental justice community (i.e., low-income and minority) and Executive Order 12898 requires federal agencies to make concerted efforts to engage environmental justice communities and provide opportunities for their participation in the environmental review process. Consistent with that requirement, MTA recognizes that public participation is integral to the planning process for Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway and has committed to a robust public outreach program. As part of this outreach, MTA presented an overview of the project at a meeting of the full board of CB 11 on September 18, 2018. Please see response to **Comments 2 and 3** regarding the extensive outreach MTA has conducted during the preliminary engineering and NEPA phases of the project and the anticipated outreach that will be conducted in the future. Please also see

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the introduction to this document in Section A.1 for a discussion of how the availability of the Supplemental EA and information on the public comment period and public meeting were advertised. Regarding available materials at the CIC in June 2018, please note that the Supplemental EA was completed in early July 2018 and made available to the public at that time. As soon as it was completed, a date for a public meeting was set and announcements were made and distributed regarding the availability of the document and the upcoming meeting (see the discussion in Section A.1 of this document). In June 2018, MTA was working with FTA on the analyses and the completion date for the document was not yet known; therefore, information on the Supplemental EA and public meeting could not yet be included in printed materials at the CIC.

**Comment 7:** MTA should conduct outreach directly to the residents of Franklin Plaza Apartments, rather than just the co-op board. Residents want to understand what is proposed and ask questions. *(Unidentified commenter at CB 11 meeting)*

**Response:** As the project moves forward, MTA will coordinate directly with residents and businesses of all properties that will be affected by the project, including the residents of Franklin Plaza Houses.

**Comment 8:** Please make public any information about MTA meetings with elected officials in East Harlem. *(Winfield)*

**Response:** Attachment E of the Supplemental EA provides a list of outreach and coordination activities conducted to July 2018, including meetings with elected officials. MTA will continue to conduct both public meetings and meetings with elected officials to receive feedback at all levels.

**Comment 9:** Please note which New York City agencies will continue to participate in the Second Avenue Subway Interagency Taskforce. *(Winfield)*

**Response:** Upon commencement of heavy construction, MTA will coordinate with the City of New York to create a Second Avenue Subway Interagency Task Force, as was done for Phase 1 (see Chapter 20 of the Supplemental EA, “Public Outreach,” pages 20-4 and 20-5). During construction of Phase 1, such a task force met quarterly to review upcoming work and take the appropriate actions in their jurisdiction. MTA will invite all relevant agencies to participate, potentially including the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT), New York City Department of Health, New York City Department of Environmental Protection, New York City Small Business Services, New York City Department of Sanitation, New York City Department of Education, New York City Department of Buildings, the Fire Department of New York, and the New York City Police Department. MTA will provide more information on the Interagency Task Force as the project progresses.

**Comment 10:** Please indicate when the MTA will present at a full Board meeting to CB 11. *(Winfield)*

**Response:** MTA gave public presentations to the Transportation and Public Safety Committee of Community Board 11 on June 6, 2017 and April 18, 2018 (see Chapter 20, “Public Outreach,” in the Supplemental EA, page 20-2). In addition, MTA presented an overview of the project at a meeting of the full board of CB 11 on September 18, 2018. Future meetings will be scheduled by the CBs, other local organizations, and MTA.

**Comment 11:** Please indicate when Second Avenue Subway social media will start providing content on Phase 2 and whether there will be bilingual English–Spanish content. *(Winfield)*

**Response:** MTA advertises its public meetings through numerous media, such as mailings, email blasts, and communication with CBs and community groups. Future meetings will continue to be advertised in this way, and MTA will also use social media as part of its communication strategy for Phase 2 as the project moves forward. In conjunction with publication of the Supplemental EA, Spanish translations were provided for the fact sheet, public notice, and Executive Summary of the Supplemental EA. Notices and future information, including through social media, will continue to be provided in Spanish, as needed, and outreach staff are fluent in both English and Spanish in order to assist attendees at meetings and visitors at the CIC.

### **A.3.3 PROJECT SCHEDULE AND FUNDING**

**Comment 12:** The MTA must pursue a more ambitious timeframe than 2029. This project serves an urgent need, and unambitious scheduling increases negative impacts both caused by construction and caused by the status quo of poor transit service. The Supplemental EA should consider appropriate financing and project delivery mechanisms to expedite construction and mitigate costs, including, where appropriate, seeking authorities or waivers from the appropriate state and federal agencies or legislatures. *(NYS Assembly–Rodriguez, Sanderson)*

**Response:** MTA will continually seek opportunities to reduce the construction schedule, if feasible and if it can be done without compromising safety. The Supplemental EA assumed a construction completion year of 2029 to provide a conservative (i.e., worst-case) time frame, so as not to underestimate the period of time during which the community would experience construction-related effects (see Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” page 2-25). MTA is investigating alternative project delivery and other methods to expedite an opening date potentially as early as 2027, contingent on timely funding. In addition, as described in the Supplemental EA (see page 2-25), MTA is implementing

measures, such as an early utility relocation program before the onset of project construction, to help reduce schedule risk. Identifying unanticipated utility conflicts early in the process will reduce the potential for construction delays.

**Comment 13:** MTA should construct Phase 2 in stages, potentially one station at a time, to make funding easier in the short term. 106th Street Station could be quickly added first using the existing tunnels and different construction techniques. (*Adams, Unidentified*)

**Response:** The 8.5-mile-long Second Avenue Subway is being developed in four phases to allow discrete segments to be constructed and then opened for operation before the entire Project is complete (see Figure 1-1 in the Supplemental EA, Chapter 1, “Project Overview”). Phase 2 of the Project is the East Harlem portion, from the end of the completed Phase 1 tracks at about East 104th Street to 125th Street at about Lenox Avenue. This phase of the Project will have three stations. As currently planned, construction activities will occur along the full East Harlem alignment simultaneously, albeit at differing intensities. Constructing the Phase 2 project one station at a time would be less efficient and would extend the overall duration of construction. In addition, extending the existing line one station at a time would require each new station to function as a terminal station (i.e., a station at the end/beginning of a line) until the next station is constructed. A terminal station requires a complex series of track switches, referred to as an interlocking, in order for trains to access each track in the station. This requires a large open area adjacent to the station to fit the tracks. A terminal station also requires additional space for terminal operations and other facilities for specialized equipment. Therefore, if one station were constructed at a time, both the 106th Street Station and the 116th Street Station would need to be substantially larger and more costly in order to operate the new service in the early phases.

**Comment 14:** MTA should consider implementing a public-private partnership that employs value capture or tax-increment financing (TIF) at 125th Street. Nearby property owners stand to generate much value from the improved infrastructure, and value capture would help fund other infrastructure projects. (*NYS Assembly-Rodriguez*)

**Response:** MTA is always looking for innovative funding mechanisms to raise revenue for transportation projects, including value capture and tax-increment financing. Most recently, the City of New York used tax-increment financing to fund infrastructure improvements at Hudson Yards, including the extension of the No. 7 subway line and construction of the 34 St-Hudson Yards station. MTA welcomes the opportunity to work with its funding partners, including the FTA, State of New York, and City of New York, to apply these types of innovative funding mechanisms in Second Avenue Subway Phase 2.

**Comment 15:** The MTA should pursue co-development with the ancillary facilities, as was done at 34th Street–Hudson Yards. This would provide an opportunity to make money from the project’s real estate interests. (*Lomax, Unidentified*)

**Response:** As discussed in Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” of the Supplemental EA (see page 2-17), there may be an opportunity to include other development in combination with some ancillaries and/or entrances, within the envelope permitted by the zoning. While no such overbuild or other development projects are proposed at this time, ancillary and entrance sites may be considered for private co-development as Phase 2 advances, in conformance with FTA joint development guidelines. At locations where there is redevelopment potential, MTA will coordinate with the developers(s) as needed and any such development or overbuild proposal(s) would be subject to additional NEPA re-evaluation(s) as appropriate.

### A.3.4 PROJECT OVERVIEW/PROJECT DESIGN

#### A.3.4.1 STATION DESIGN

**Comment 16:** The stations for Phase 1 are overbuilt and unnecessarily large; for Phase 2, building smaller caverns or eliminating full mezzanines would reduce project costs. Smaller mezzanines could be provided for each entrance. (*Adams, Picker, Sinisterra, Unidentified*)

We need infrastructure and we can add more aesthetics later. Glass canopy entries, metal walls, tile stairs, floors, etc. LED lighting and some color can be added with paint on the walls or ceiling. (*Unidentified*)

**Response:** A number of factors influence the size of the stations, in addition to visual and aesthetic considerations. Platform areas, mezzanines, and other station spaces are being sized to accommodate anticipated passenger loads for the full, completed Second Avenue Subway (including future Phases 3 and 4) and to meet emergency egress requirements. For this reason, all three stations will include a continuous mezzanine. The shape of the stations is also determined by the construction method used: stations that are constructed by underground mining are taller so as to maintain the structural integrity of the rock cavern. In the Phase 2 project with the Modified Design, the 106th Street and 116th Street Stations will be constructed via cut-and-cover methods, so as to align with the existing tunnel segments, and therefore will not have large caverns like those included in Phase 1. The 125th Street Station will be a mined cavern and will have a continuous mezzanine, which is required to accommodate the anticipated ridership at the station. Figure 2-7 in Chapter 2 of the Supplemental EA, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” illustrates the proposed construction methods for Phase 2.

**Comment 17:** Why do we care about the “piston effect” of air in the stations? This does not affect the commuter and causes overbuilt mechanical systems. Stations do not need to be heated and cooled like an office building—only temperature controlled. (*Unidentified*)

**Response:** The Supplemental EA describes the “piston effect” on page 2-2 of Chapter 2, “Description of the Phase 2 Modified Design,” in the description of the Second Avenue Subway’s new ancillary buildings. On that page, the Supplemental EA states:

The 2004 FEIS said (see FEIS page 2-22) that at each station, new above-ground structures would house the tunnel and station ventilation functions, including fresh air intake, exhaust, emergency smoke exhaust, and relief of air pressure build-up caused by the movement of trains (the “piston” effect).

As noted there, the “piston effect” refers to air pressure created by trains moving in and out of the stations. Without a mechanism to release this pressure, excessively strong winds would result. Stations will be air-tempered, but not air-conditioned like an office building.

**Comment 18:** Space should be reserved in the stations for art from local artists, who can be selected with help from CBs 10 and 11. (*Sinisterra, Winfield*)

**Response:** Art will be included in new stations. All new Second Avenue Subway stations will be constructed under the MTA’s “Arts for Transit” program, the MTA program responsible for art in the subway system. MTA Arts & Design commissions artists through a selection process. Through this process, MTA conducts outreach to eligible artists based in the community being served. The selection process includes a panel with local arts professionals who are familiar with the community. Community representatives as well as the elected officials will be invited to participate in an advisory capacity.

**Comment 19:** Use existing subway standards as a guide for station aesthetics. The new stations have nothing in common with older stations. At least write out the word “street” on the station walls, and use a common font and size like other stations. Have the subway station globes at the entrances. (*Unidentified*)

**Response:** Detailed design for the stations’ appearance has not yet begun. New subway stations will be designed fully in accordance with current MTA and NYCT design guidelines and requirements.

**Comment 20:** An expansion is an opportunity to test technologies such as platform doors, which could reduce cooling needs. (*Sanderson*)

**Response:** MTA is currently investigating the use of platform doors in the subway system and, depending on the results of current investigations, they may be incorporated in the final design for Phase 2. (Subway systems with platform doors have barriers along the edge of the platform separating the trackbed from the platform and doors in that barrier that align with the subway train's doors and open only when a train is in the station.)

**Comment 21:** All station entrances should have public stairs. Relying on elevators and escalators is a safety hazard and maintenance hazard. When one breaks and is under maintenance closure, then the opposite direction must be closed or people redirected to another station. Elevator-only entry stations are a safety hazard, both for emergency responders and for the public if emergency egress is needed. (*Unidentified*)

Smaller stair-only entrances should be added to the stations to increase access points to each station. They can be added on all corners of an intersection, rather than at just a single corner as in the current design. (*Sinisterra*)

The entrances for each station should not all be on the same side of the avenue for convenience of passengers. Ideally there should be a transfer like the older stations to all four corners of intersections. (*Unidentified*)

**Response:** The design goal established in the 2004 FEIS for the Second Avenue Subway was to provide two entrances per station, positioned at both ends of each station to maximize neighborhood access and minimize the distance that subway riders would need to walk to the nearest station (see FEIS page 2-19). All stations are being designed to conform with the life-safety standards established by National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 130, "Standard for Fixed Guideway Transit and Passenger Rail Systems," and with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The station entrances will have sufficient capacity to handle the anticipated ridership for the full, completed Second Avenue Subway. All stations will have any combination of stair, escalator, and elevator access.

The Supplemental EA discusses MTA's approach for the station entrances in the Modified Design in Chapter 2, "Description of the Phase 2 Modified Design" (see pages 2-17 and 2-18). As discussed there, the philosophy for station entrances has been modified from the FEIS Design, which included large entrances and smaller, secondary entrances. The Modified Design instead includes two entrances that are similar in size to better balance passenger flows.

MTA is not considering adding smaller stair-only entrances on sidewalks because adding such entrances would increase construction costs, result in additional construction impacts, and disrupt the pedestrian circulation design of the stations, potentially resulting in overcrowding at the single-stair entrances. In addition, in certain areas, the presence of underground utilities makes additional street-level stairs infeasible.



Please also see the response to **Comment 23**, which explains why entrances to the 106th Street and 116th Street Stations are proposed on only one side of Second Avenue.

**Comment 22:** In Figure 2-2a (“Comparison of 2004 FEIS Design and Modified Design, 116th Street Station”), the notation is in error. The station has been moved 30 feet *south*. In other places the direction is correct. (*Wouk*)

**Response:** The notation cited in the comment is correct, but Figure 2-2a incorrectly illustrates the location of the 116th Street Station platform in the 2004 FEIS Design. The figure shows the station platform extending from the middle of 116th Street to about 60 feet north of 118th Street. However, in the 2004 FEIS Design, the station platform at 116th Street would have extended from about 10 feet south of 116th Street to the middle of 118th Street. In the Modified Design, this platform has been shifted north, as is stated in the text. This error is repeated in Figure 6-3 in Chapter 6, “Displacement and Relocation.” This correction is noted on the Errata Sheet for the EA provided in Attachment B.

**Comment 23:** Why are no station entrances proposed on the west side of Second Avenue for the 106th and 116th Street Stations? There are entrances on both sides of many Second Avenue Subway stops below 96th Street—why not the same consideration for stops above 96th Street? Please include station entrances on the northwest corner of 106th Street and Second Avenue to provide better access to the Franklin Plaza complex, and on the northwest and southwest corners of 116th Street and Second Avenue to provide better access for the residents of East Harlem. (*Collazo, Sinisterra*)

**Response:** For both stations, entrances will be on the east side of Second Avenue because there are utilities on the west side of the avenue that do not exist on the east side. As a result, constructing entrances on the west side of Second Avenue would require significant disruption related to utility work. In addition, entrances on the east side of Second Avenue would avoid the potential for adverse effects to the East Harlem Historic District, a new historic district identified by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation in this area (see the discussion in Chapter 8, “Historic and Archaeological Resources,” of the Supplemental EA, including Figure 8-3 and Table 8-4). The station entrances have been designed to meet anticipated passenger loads while minimizing the impacts associated with property acquisition for off-sidewalk entrances and impacts associated with station construction. Providing more entrances than necessary would require the use of additional private property and/or sidewalk or street space.

**Comment 24:** The new 125th Street Station should have entrances farther east along 125th Street, such as at Second or Third Avenue. Many people live in this area, including the large population at Taino Towers (on the block between 122nd and 123rd Streets and Second and Third Avenues) and the housing development across the street, and they should be given better access to the new subway. An entrance at Park and Lexington Avenues will benefit Metro-North riders but shortchange the residents of East Harlem. Anyone living above 116th Street to 125th Street from Lexington to Second Avenue will have a very long walk or be forced to take a bus ride to get home. (*Collazo, Sinisterra*)

**Response:** MTA is not considering including a station entrance farther east along 125th Street. Including a station entrance at Second or Third Avenue would require a station platform along a relatively sharp curve (see Figure 1-2 in the Supplemental EA Chapter 1, “Project Overview”). This would result in excessive gaps between the platform and the subway cars, which are in conflict with ADA accessibility requirements. Similar to the Union Square Station on the Lexington Avenue (4/5/6) line, gap fillers (such as moveable platforms) would be required, which would add considerable time to operational schedules. Moreover, if a new station were included in Phase 2 at Second Avenue or Third Avenue in addition to the station at Lexington Avenue, the two stations would be adjacent to each other with little to no running track in between, which would result in slower operations along the new Second Avenue Subway (see the response to **Comment 25** regarding station spacing).

Instead, the new 125th Street Station will be located beneath 125th Street between Park Avenue and a point about 100 feet east of Lexington Avenue. Entrances to the new station will be located at either end of the station, so that they will be close to as many residents as possible. This station location will allow a transfer between the new subway and the Lexington Avenue subway line, which MTA anticipates will be heavily used. The new station location for the 125th Street Station will support the identified purpose and need for the Second Avenue Subway, which is to improve mobility on the East Side of Manhattan by both reducing overcrowding on the Lexington Avenue line and improving accessibility to areas that are a considerable distance from existing north-south subway service (see 2004 FEIS page 1-12).

The area mentioned in the comment, Taino Towers, is currently located 1,000 to 1,800 feet from the nearest subway entrance, depending on which building in the full-block complex is the starting point. With the new Second Avenue Subway, all buildings at Taino Towers will be within 1,000 feet of a subway entrance. As shown in Figure 2-2a in the Supplemental EA, in Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” a station entrance to the 116th Street Station will be provided along Second Avenue between 118th Street and 119th Street, which will provide new, closer access to the subway for residents in the eastern portion of Taino Towers.

**Comment 25:** The Second Avenue Subway’s 125th Street Station should be located at Second Avenue rather than at Lexington Avenue, consistent with the original 1969 design. This would save the time and effort that would otherwise be required to construct the tunnel segment beneath 125th Street. A free transfer to the Lexington Avenue line could still be achieved by constructing a subterranean people mover between Lexington and Second Avenues, and a second subterranean people mover between Park and Lexington Avenues could connect both subway lines to the Metro-North station. The time and money saved could be used to engineer a solution to avoid the substructure of the Triborough Bridge approach and to begin work on a continuation of the Second Avenue Subway to the Bronx. At the public meeting, an MTA engineer implied that a station at Second Avenue and 125th Street would be too close to the 116th Street Station, but this would be consistent with other station distances on the Lexington Avenue line. In addition, the other stations for Phase 2 should be repositioned so that they are no less than seven blocks apart. This would provide similar station spacing to the Lexington Avenue line, so that the large investment in the new subway can deliver at least the same level of service as the nearest existing subway, the Lexington Avenue line. (*Kudish*)

**Response:** As noted in response to **Comment 24**, the identified purpose and need for the Second Avenue Subway is to improve mobility on the East Side of Manhattan by both reducing overcrowding on the Lexington Avenue line and improving accessibility to areas that are a considerable distance from existing north-south subway service (see 2004 FEIS page 1-12). The alignment for the Second Avenue Subway was developed through an extensive planning process undertaken beginning with the Major Investment Study/Draft Environmental Impact Statement completed in 1999 and concluding with the 2004 FEIS. The selected alignment for the new subway includes a curve from Second Avenue to 125th Street with the terminal station on 125th Street between Park and Lexington Avenues, which would allow a transfer between the new subway and the Lexington Avenue subway line. Entrances to the new station will be located at either end of the station, so that they would be close to as many residents as possible. This will support the identified purpose and need for the Second Avenue Subway, with a key goal being to improve mobility on the East Side of Manhattan by reducing overcrowding on the Lexington Avenue line (see 2004 FEIS page 1-12). The design of Phase 2 allows for a future extension to the Bronx by providing a bellmouth in the Second Avenue tunnel from which future tunnels can be constructed.

Regarding the distances between stations, station spacing for the full Second Avenue Subway has been developed to achieve a balance between maximum operating speed of the system and convenient access for passengers. Placing the stations closer than 10 blocks apart would mean that the trains would operate at a slower speed—because trains could not reach optimum speeds between stations

and because of added time in each station—and customers traveling the length of the route would have a more time-consuming commute. This would mean that many customers would choose to continue to use the faster Lexington Avenue express service. With the proposed station spacing, average passenger trip time is expected to decrease because passengers located east of Third Avenue will no longer need to walk to Lexington Avenue. Travel time will also be expected to improve for passengers remaining on the Lexington Avenue Line because of reduced overcrowding on that line.

The design suggested in the comment would require additional construction impacts not required for the Modified Design, since it would involve constructing a tunnel beneath 125th Street to create the people-mover as well as constructing a tunnel beneath Second Avenue as far north as 129th Street, to create the storage tracks (tail tracks) that would be needed beyond the 125th Street terminal station if the alignment did not curve westward. While the 2004 FEIS design included tail tracks beneath Second Avenue north of 125th Street, these are no longer included in the Modified Design. Please note that the proposed alignment for Phase 2 with either the 2004 FEIS Design or the Modified Design would not result in conflicts with any approaches to the RFK Bridge (formerly known as the Triborough Bridge).

**Comment 26:** Transition between Metro-North and the subway system should be the primary factor for locating the 125th Street Station. Connectivity of transit systems is critical for ridership and ease of the system. Transfers must be easy. *(Unidentified)*

Harlem deserves a first-class transit hub, similar to the investments that have been made downtown at the PATH World Trade Center hub and at Fulton Center. The potential intermodal connections at East 125th Street between Park and Lexington Avenues are greater than at either of those locations, as they include not only subway interchange but also connectivity with the Metro-North Railroad, Select Bus Service, buses to La Guardia Airport, taxis, and bike share. As currently planned, is the 125th Street Station large enough and designed to maximize this potential, as well as future population growth, as more development in the area takes place? How would a commuter make connections between the travel modes? Are the station platforms, connection tunnels, bus lanes, taxi areas, bike docks, elevators, and associated public spaces configured in such a way to prevent congestion, facilitate seamless connections, and encourage commuters to use this station? How does the MTA plan to manage pedestrian and vehicular traffic between connection points? Where will passenger waiting areas be located at each of the various modes of transportation? *(UGC–King)*

Space at the 125th Street Station should be maximized to improve the flow of pedestrian traffic at and below street level and allow for easy and accessible

transfers between Metro-North, buses, the 4/5/6 line and the new Second Avenue Subway. There are significant opportunities for intermodal connectivity between the Metro-North, buses, taxis, and subway transfers. Ridership transfers between the Metro-North and the subway lines should be optimized for easy accessibility and in line with the flow and volume of increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic along 125th Street. On the lower level, careful consideration should be taken to ensure that connection tunnels and platforms can accommodate the volume of commuters. *(NYS Assembly–Rodriguez)*

Please make sure to connect not only the subway, but also buses, pedestrians, and bikes. The area around the Metro-North and Lexington Avenue stations should be upgraded with improved lighting, bus shelters, Citi Bike stations, crosswalks, and landscaping. Improved crosswalks, bus benches, lighting, and landscaping will facilitate a safe transition between modes of transportation. *(Adams, CIVITAS–Adams)*

**Response:**

As discussed in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design” (see page 2-13), the Second Avenue Subway will include a new 125th Street Station between Lexington and Park Avenues. This station will provide direct transfers to the existing Lexington Avenue (4/5/6) line subway station at 125th Street and an entrance at the intersection of 125th Street and Park Avenue for connecting to the Metro-North Harlem-125th Street Station. This will support the identified purpose and need for the Second Avenue Subway, which is to improve mobility on the East Side of Manhattan by both reducing overcrowding on the Lexington Avenue line and improving accessibility to areas that are a considerable distance from existing north-south subway service (see 2004 FEIS page 1-12).

The 125th Street Station, including its platforms, mezzanines, and other station spaces, is being designed to have sufficient capacity to handle the anticipated ridership for the full, completed Second Avenue Subway in the future, taking into consideration anticipated growth in population and employment in East Harlem and throughout the city. The Modified Design now proposed for the Phase 2 project includes reconfigured connections from those included in the 2004 FEIS Design, to provide additional transfer capacity and to better distribute those transfers along both the Second Avenue Subway mezzanine and the Lexington Avenue line platforms (see the Supplemental EA page 2-13).

In terms of pedestrian traffic between connection points, pedestrians transferring between the Second Avenue Subway and the Lexington Avenue line subway will do so within the system rather than at street level. In this area, the analysis conducted for the Supplemental EA (see Chapter 3, “Transportation,” page 3-8) concludes that widened crosswalks should be installed to provide adequate space for the increased number of pedestrians at the 125th Street and Park Avenue intersection. MTA will coordinate with NYCDOT regarding appropriate

streetscape changes at this location. As also described on page 3-8 of the Supplemental EA, MTA remains committed to ongoing coordination in the planning of station entrances, as described in the 2004 FEIS. In addition, planning for station entrance locations will include mitigation measures to reduce pedestrian crowding, if needed, potentially including widening the painted area designated for crosswalks, relocating street furniture, and creating sidewalk bump-outs to increase pedestrian space.

As described in Chapter 4, “Social and Economic Conditions,” of the Supplemental EA (see page 4-5), NYCDOT, the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), and the New East Harlem Merchants Association are developing a Park Avenue/125th Street Public Realm Project, to improve design and safety elements in the area around the Metro-North Railroad Harlem-125th Street Station. MTA will collaborate with these entities, as appropriate, to ensure the compatibility of the new Second Avenue Subway entrance with this planning initiative.

In terms of increased vehicular traffic and traffic areas cited in the comment, taxi and car-for-hire drop-off areas area also regulated by NYCDOT, but please note that MTA does not anticipate an increase in vehicular traffic as a result of new subway service. MTA anticipates that subway passengers will predominantly walk to the new station. Please see the response to **Comment 49** for additional information on vehicular traffic.

**Comment 27:** Connectivity to Metro-North is a key feature of the expansion to the Second Avenue Subway and should be as seamless as possible. We encourage MTA to connect the two systems via an underground passageway that surfaces into the Park Avenue median (ideally, the existing Metro-North station). (*CIVITAS–Adams*)

Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway should include a connecting station that has an indoor passage that connects Metro-North with the Second Avenue Subway and the Lexington Avenue 4/5/6 subway lines. This could be a vibrant gateway to Harlem for visitors from all over the state, where Harlem culture, businesses, and artists are promoted. (*Citrus Cuisine–Rogers*)

Plans for the new mezzanine level proposed for the 125th Station should incorporate retail. (*NYS Assembly–Rodriguez*)

**Response:** Please see the response to **Comment 26**. Although an underground passage is not included in the design, the new station will include a continuous mezzanine above the platform level between Lexington and Park Avenues. Vertical connections will provide access to the Lexington Avenue line and to the Metro-North Harlem-125th Street Station building at street level via the entrance at 125th Street and Park Avenue. MTA will investigate retail opportunities, including at the mezzanine level, as the design progresses.

**Comment 28:** The Supplemental EA should consider appropriate synergies with Metro-North service at 125th Street. Currently, Metro-North scheduling and pricing operates on the assumption that Metro-North should primarily serve suburban customers. The Second Avenue Subway connection to the Harlem-125th Street Station is an appropriate opportunity to consider scheduling and fare changes to encourage Bronx residents to ride Metro-North. *(Sanderson)*

**Response:** Synergies between Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway and Metro-North Railroad service are considered, as the project will have a new station directly beneath the Metro-North Harlem-125th Street Station with a subway entrance near the Metro-North station entrance, to allow for convenient connections. Metro-North Railroad's service and fare structure are not part of this environmental review process. Please note that MTA reviews these policies regularly.

**Comment 29:** Please include one additional entrance to the Lexington Avenue line toward the south end of the station, such as at 123rd or 124th Street and Lexington Avenue. *(Wouk)*

**Response:** Adding new station entrances at Lexington Avenue at 123rd or 124th Street is not necessary because the new station entrances are currently designed to meet anticipated passenger demand and to minimize construction impacts. As discussed in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 2, "Description of Phase 2 Modified Design" (pages 2-22 and 2-23), as currently planned, the 125th Street Station for the Second Avenue Subway will have three new entrances, which will be sufficient to accommodate demand. Two of these new entrances will be located at Lexington Avenue, one on the east side of the avenue and the other on the west side. Adding additional station entrances, while potentially more convenient for some residents, would require additional, unnecessary construction impacts.

**Comment 30:** Flooding of stations is a concern in East Harlem due to low topography. Station entries should be built up above the sidewalk level. *(Unidentified)*

The 2004 FEIS should be redone to fully address changed conditions in the corridor. For example, flooding is much worse now along Second Avenue. *(Unidentified commenter at CB 11 meeting)*

**Response:** Stations will be built to current MTA flood protection and resiliency design standards, including appropriate design flood elevations. As described in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 1, "Project Overview," Section 1.1, the purpose of the Supplemental EA was to evaluate the proposed design changes for the Phase 2 project from the design proposed as part of the 2004 FEIS and to consider changes to background conditions that have occurred since 2004, including changes to flooding. The Supplemental EA describes the concern of increased flooding in

East Harlem in Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” (pages 2-14 and 2-15) and Chapter 14, “Natural Resources,” (page 14-3).

**Comment 31:** Subway passengers need to know train schedules at the street level to allow people to choose their best commuting option. (*Adams*)

**Response:** Current MTA design guidelines for stations do not include street-level countdown clocks, but these may be considered in the future as guidelines are updated. At this time, several cell phone applications are available for commuter use that show the arrival times of subway trains, and new applications will be available when the Phase 2 stations open for service.

#### A.3.4.2 TAIL TRACKS

**Comment 32:** As I understand it, the 125th Street tail tracks will not be needed unless and until Phase 3 for the T train. Therefore, the tunnels should be built but not provisioned until Phase 3. The schedule for construction of Phase 3 is not known, and the tail tracks may not meet future standards and will need to be reworked during Phase 3. The same is true for the ancillary building for the tail tracks. (*Wouk*)

**Response:** The tail tracks at 125th Street will be necessary for operation of Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway, as they will provide storage and facilitate morning peak service. Similarly, Phase 1 is currently operating with tail tracks in the tunnels immediately north of the 96th Street Station, which will become main line tracks when Phase 2 opens. The 125th Street tail tracks are discussed in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” page 2-14.

**Comment 33:** The MTA should plan to build tail tracks under Second Avenue between 120th and 129th Streets. Although these tracks may not be crucial for Phase 2 service, because these tracks would be used for a potential Bronx extension, they are valuable and should be built regardless. The agency should be doing as much as it reasonably can to provide for future extensions of the line, and tail tracks are a better investment than just bellmouths. (*Lomax*)

**Response:** The FEIS Design described in the 2004 FEIS included tail tracks under Second Avenue between 120th and 129th Streets. However, the MTA has determined that storage tracks along Second Avenue are not necessary for the functionality of the new subway. Providing tail tracks at the terminus of the subway line (i.e., west of the 125th Street Station) will more efficiently facilitate subway operations. The design of Phase 2 allows for a future extension to the Bronx by providing a bellmouth, but including a tunnel at this time would result in undue construction costs and construction-related impacts. The elimination of the Second Avenue tail



tracks with the Modified Design is discussed in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” page 2-12.

**Comment 34:** The Supplemental EA contains no diagrams for either the 2004 FEIS Design or the Modified Design illustrating the tail tracks to the Bronx, the FEIS Design’s storage (tail) tracks under Second Avenue from 122nd to 129th Street, or the shift of the bellmouth structure from 120th-122nd Streets in the 2004 FEIS Design to 118th-120th Streets with the Modified Design. The new design does not show “two inner tracks that would allow for the extension” to the Bronx. The figure should show tracks and interlockings such as those indicated in Figure 2-4a. (*Wouk*)

**Response:** The graphics are intended to be illustrative, rather than detailed design graphics. Not all design modifications discussed in the text were displayed in the graphics, for simplicity. The Supplemental EA discusses the bellmouth that will be included in the Modified Design to allow possible future connections to the Bronx on page 2-12 in Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design.” As discussed there, the bellmouth would provide enough space for two outer tracks that would continue to the 125th Street Station and two inner tracks that would allow for the extension. That does not mean that the two inner tracks or the interlocking would be constructed as part of the Phase 2 project, however. The proposed tracks of the 125th Street curve in the Modified Design are illustrated in the Supplemental EA in Figure 2-3.

Please note that the tail tracks (i.e., storage tracks) under Second Avenue from 122nd to 129th Street that were included in the 2004 FEIS Design, but no longer included in the Modified Design, are the same thing as the tail tracks to the Bronx. Those are illustrated in the 2004 FEIS in Figure 2-4 of that document.

#### *A.3.4.3 ROUTE EXTENSIONS*

**Comment 35:** The Supplemental EA should recognize enhancing east–west connectivity along the 125th Street corridor as a goal, and the project should be constructed so as not to preclude a future extension along 125th Street to the West Side. (*Adams, CIVITAS–Adams, Sanderson*)

The 125th Street tail tracks should be constructed so they can accommodate a future island platform station at Lenox Avenue and the ancillary facility should be designed so that it can be used as an entrance for a future station at this location. (*Picker*)

While the tunnel boring machine is in the ground, MTA should construct the tunnels past the 2/3 line subway station on 125th Street at Lenox Avenue to create the tunnels and tail tracks that would be necessary for a future extension. The

station and tail tracks could be completed later. This allow for the benefits of a future connection without the tunneling cost or impact. (*Frankel*)

A station should be provided at Lenox Avenue. The tail tracks could be on a lower level with the station above. (*Sinisterra*)

MTA should extend the Second Avenue Subway west along 125th Street with connections to the No. 2/3 subway lines at Lenox Avenue; the A/B/C/D lines at St. Nicholas Avenue; and the No. 1 line at Broadway. (*Adams, Castano, Frankel*)

Please add an explanation in the Supplemental EA as to why no connection is provided at Lenox Avenue. (*Wouk*)

**Response:** The Modified Design for Phase 2 has a terminal station at 125th Street and Park Avenue, with tail tracks (storage tracks) extending westward to a point either to the east or west of Lenox Avenue, depending which design option is selected. The tail tracks are needed to provide room for train storage west of the terminal station. Phase 2 is being designed so as not to preclude future expansion to the west along 125th Street but this is not part of the current project, since it would not address or meet the established goals and objectives for the Second Avenue Subway, including relieving severe congestion on the Lexington Avenue line (see 2004 FEIS page 1-12).

**Comment 36:** The Supplemental EA appropriately continues to recognize the importance of not precluding future extensions to other boroughs. That should include potential extensions not only to the Bronx but also to Queens (where plans to extend the Astoria line across Randall’s and Wards Islands to 125th Street were proposed in the 1920s but later abandoned). (*Sanderson*)

MTA should plan to have service extend to the Bronx, which is much needed. (*Castano*)

We are pleased to see that a bellmouth will be provided to allow for a future extension to the Bronx. (*U.S. Representative–Maloney*)

**Response:** While not part of the scope of this Project, the design of Phase 2 will not preclude future extension to the Bronx. As described in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” page 2-12, describes the bellmouth that will be included in the Phase 2 project to facilitate a future extension to the Bronx. An extension to Queens is not contemplated and provision for a future extension to Queens is not possible, because of the new subway’s curve at 125th Street and the extensive bridge infrastructure for the RFK Bridge immediately to the east.

**Comment 37:** The full Q/T subway should connect to the J/Z and/or R/W lines for future connectivity and redundancy of the overall system. (*Adams*)

**Response:** As described in the Supplemental EA, Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway will extend Q subway service to 125th Street. Q service along Broadway currently provides connections to many transit lines, including the J/Z and R/W subway lines.

**A.3.4.4**     *ANCILLARY FACILITIES*

**Comment 38:** The Supplemental EA does not provide details of how the MTA plans to maximize retail space within the ancillary buildings or how much space will be provided. Retail and commercial opportunities should be considered at all ancillaries and entrances. Local small businesses in the community should have preference for new retail space. *(NYS Assembly–Rodriguez)*

Please provide retail or other active uses on the ground floor of the ancillary buildings. *(Castano, Sinisterra, Wouk)*

The entrances and ancillary buildings should be developed in such a way that does not leave dead space on the street. Retail space should be included in the buildings. *(U.S. Representative–Maloney)*

Figure 2-6 should show how retail or other uses would fit into the ancillary buildings at ground level; currently, the figure shows an entrance and a communication shaft/closet for the ancillary at a mined station, and attenuators for the ancillary at a cut-and-cover station. *(Wouk)*

**Response:** As described in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” page 2-17, to meet the Project objectives of maintaining neighborhood character and creating transit facilities that are aesthetically pleasing and compatible with neighborhood character, the proposed ancillary facilities in the Modified Design would accommodate ground floor-retail spaces. Retail uses in these buildings would result in street-level activity and visual interest. These spaces are not shown on Figure 2-6, because it is intended to depict the general profile of the ancillary facilities, rather than identify all internal spaces.

**A.3.4.5**     *OTHER*

**Comment 39:** The tunnel that was built in the 1970s in East Harlem had a third, pit track between 110th and 120th Streets where no station was proposed so that train maintenance could be performed. The 72nd Street Station in the current project was also originally proposed with a third track to allow trains to turn there. Phase 2 should include a third track under Second Avenue at 106th Street or 116th Street to allow NYCT to short turn trains. *(Picker)*

**Response:** A third track would widen the station caverns and require additional excavation, which would result in a lengthier construction period and additional construction

impacts that are not warranted. Trains will be able to reverse direction at the 125th Street terminal station using the tail tracks.

**Comment 40:** Commenters inquired about restrooms, asking if the new stations would include restrooms and stating that more attention should be paid to cleaning up existing public restrooms. (*Roberts, Unidentified commenter at CB 11 meeting*)

**Response:** The new subway stations in Phase 2 will include public restrooms.

**Comment 41:** Phase 3 of the Second Avenue Subway should have a station in the East 60s, potentially at 63rd Street. (*Kudish*)

**Response:** Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway, which is the subject of this document, will extend from 105th Street to 125th Street. As described in the 2004 FEIS (see FEIS Chapter 2, Figure 2-1), Phase 3 of the Project does not include a station on Second Avenue in the East 60s. Access to the new subway is available at Third Avenue and East 63rd Street (at the east end of the 63rd Street–Lexington Avenue Station).

### **A.3.5 CONSTRUCTION METHODS**

**Comment 42:** MTA should make use of the lessons learned during construction of Phase 1: building muck houses to reduce the impact of soil and rock removal on the community, wetting down dirt so dust is kept to a minimum on local streets, creating community advisory committees associated with each station so people have a place to go with complaints, creating e-mail newsletters so people have a place to go to learn about upcoming construction. (*U.S. Representative–Maloney*)

**Response:** As described in Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” of the Supplemental EA (see page 2-27), construction contractors will be required to comply with the noise mitigation requirements outlined in the 2004 FEIS and Record of Decision. As stated in the 2004 FEIS, this may include shielding or enclosing areas where spoils from tunnel operations would be loaded into trucks, or at station locations where spoils removal would take place for long durations during the daytime or at night. The Supplemental EA also describes that MTA will implement a comprehensive air quality mitigation program to reduce fugitive dust (see Chapter 9, “Air Quality,” of the Supplemental EA, page 9-4), including wetting down dirt to minimize dust. As discussed in Chapter 20, “Public Outreach,” of the Supplemental EA (see pages 20-2 and 20-3), MTA will establish Community Advisory Committees and Retail Advisory Committees at each station area to collaborate and receive feedback during construction. MTA will also hold periodic public meetings and workshops to keep the community informed on construction activities. In addition, the Community Information Center (CIC) established at 69 East 125th Street in East Harlem for Phase 2 will

remain open for the duration of construction. Members of the community are welcome to request being added to the project notification list as well.

**Comment 43:** Track-laying machines should be used to expedite installation of tracks and ties and to reduce costs. (*Picker*)

**Response:** Specific methods for efficient and cost-effective track installation will be determined at a later stage of project design.

**Comment 44:** The excavated soil from boring the subway extension should be used in a way to maximize benefits for the community, including potentially to construct flood defenses along the East River, as fill to create additional parkland or land for affordable housing in the East River (compare Battery Park City or the historical use of fill to expand Ellis Island and Governors Island), or some other productive use. (*Sanderson*)

**Response:** The potential for beneficial reuse, including the uses described by the commenter such as the creation of flood defenses and new parkland, depends on the type of materials excavated. The 2004 FEIS describes options for managing spoils (see FEIS page 3-31). It notes that reuse opportunities for uncontaminated materials could include filling abandoned mines, building artificial offshore reefs, reinforcing bulkheads, or use in road paving materials, depending on the consistency of the spoils materials. Any excavated materials that are contaminated or otherwise unsuitable for beneficial reuse will be disposed of according to the appropriate regulatory standards for contaminated and hazardous materials, which are described in Chapter 13, “Contaminated Materials,” of the Supplemental EA. It will be the responsibility of the tunneling contractor to finalize arrangements for spoils disposal.

**Comment 45:** Rat sightings have recently increased in East Harlem due to increased development. The Supplemental EA addresses pest control within construction plans with contractors. MTA should consider a more detailed pest management and control plan in areas identified as having high rodent infestation, including the area between Park Avenue and Second Avenue from East 109th to East 117th Street. These areas should have more intense actions to quell the rodent population. Construction barriers and stored construction equipment can become havens for rodent infestations. MTA should report to the public on rodent and pest control throughout the construction process and actions should be taken to prevent and reduce rodent populations in the newly constructed subway stations. (*NYS Assembly–Rodriguez*)

MTA needs to pay particular attention to rodent control during construction; the authority should employ integrated pest management techniques to reduce toxic

chemical exposures of pesticides in the East Harlem community. (*WE ACT–Corbin-Mark*)

**Response:** MTA will require the construction contractors to implement a rodent control program throughout the construction of Phase 2, using state-of-the-art integrated pest management strategies applied in coordination with the New York City Department of Health. The 2004 FEIS discusses rodent control measures to be implemented (see 2004 FEIS page 3-21). Before the start of construction, the contractor will survey and bait the appropriate areas within the work zone and provide for proper site sanitation, and during construction, the contractor will carry out a maintenance program. All rodenticides must be chemicals registered with the EPA and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the contractor will be required to perform rodent control programs in a manner that avoids hazards to people, domestic animals, and non-target wildlife. MTA will report to the community regarding the rodent control program through its Good Neighbor Initiative (see response to **Comment 60**), and through regular coordination with the project’s construction task forces and committees. In addition, MTA staff at the CIC will respond to comments and concerns raised by the community during construction, including any concerns related to rodents.

**Comment 46:** This year, Governor Cuomo increased Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises (M/WBE) goals for state contracting to 35 percent. The Supplemental EA does not incorporate plans to utilize state-certified M/WBEs. (*NYS Assembly–Rodriguez*)

How many of the three contracts currently in place for Second Avenue Subway Phase 2 (for design, environmental evaluation, and public outreach) are WBE/MBE/DBE? (*Mack*)

**Response:** Procurement methods and M/WBE participation are not relevant to the conclusions of the environmental review and therefore are not discussed in the Supplemental EA. The MTA and its agencies provide disadvantaged-, minority-, and women-owned businesses with equal access to contracting opportunities. The MTA Department of Diversity and Civil Rights, Division of Business Programs administers two programs that encourage and assist such firms wishing to do business with the MTA. The Minority, Women-Owned Business Enterprise, and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business (M/WBE/SDVOB) Program applies New York State guidelines and the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program applies federal guidelines for providing eligible firms with these opportunities. MTA will follow the applicable rules and regulations related to procurements for Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway Project, including applicable requirements for participation by disadvantaged firms.

## Attachment A: Summary of Comments and Responses

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The MTA's current contracts for design, environmental services, and public outreach have a DBE participation goal of 17 percent.

**Comment 47:** The Second Avenue Subway Project offers a great opportunity for local contractors and construction workers to be employed for the next few years as the subway is built. The Supplemental EA includes no local hiring initiative during and after the project's completion. This would allow the subway to generate revenue for the local community in an area with high unemployment. *(NYS Assembly–Rodriguez)*

Phase 2 will provide good jobs for families in the communities it serves and opportunities for training local residents. *(LIUNA–Fitzsimmons)*

What employment opportunities will be available to community residents? Will there be any apprenticeships available for young adults? How will the community be made aware of any such opportunities? There has been no outreach to this effect in the community. *(Mack, Martinez, Solomon, Unidentified commenters at CB 11 meeting)*

MTA should prioritize access to jobs for local community members, and can work with local organizations that run work training programs in the community. Consideration should also be given to employing local NYCHA residents under Section 3. *(WE ACT–Corbin-Mark)*

Why can't MTA require the selected construction contractors to hire local residents? It is not correct to say that federal and state regulations preclude this, because the New York City School Construction Authority has done this before. If regulations preclude this, MTA should identify what specific regulations would prevent MTA from doing so. *(Unidentified commenter at CB 11 meeting)*

How many of the three contracts currently in place for Second Avenue Subway Phase 2 (for design, environmental evaluation, and public outreach) have firms from East Harlem? *(Mack)*

**Response:** Construction contracts for Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway will be awarded based on competitive bids to construction contractors, who will be responsible for hiring construction workers. Please note that federal procurement regulations prohibit geographic preferences on FTA-funded projects, with no special dispensation based on economic circumstances. These regulations are presented in FTA Circular 4220.1F, "Third Party Contracting Guidance," Chapter VI, 2.a.(4)(g). This document provides contracting guidance for recipients of federal assistance awarded by the FTA when using that federal assistance to finance its procurements (third party contracts).

MTA is currently exploring methods working with the various trade unions to facilitate an apprenticeship pipeline from the local communities where MTA's construction projects occur. Since a program for local participation has not yet

been developed, details about how it will work, including how local residents might be notified of opportunities, are unknown.

Regarding MTA's current contracts for Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway, the public outreach team that provides staff and support for the CIC includes East Harlem residents.

### A.3.6 TRANSPORTATION

#### A.3.6.1 CONNECTIONS

**Comment 48:** MTA and NYCDOT should work together to accommodate commuters' needs by organizing the public realm to enable easy access to taxis, for-hire cars, and buses, especially as the new subway line brings additional traffic. To what extent will the Phase 2 design accommodate people being dropped off to access either subway or Metro-North at this location, as well as those emerging from the future buildings on the corners of the intersection? To what extent will it create a safe and well-lit place for pedestrians and transit users to move without risk of being hit by cars or buses? How will the new station's design function to create a "Gateway to Harlem" for rail commuters that can relieve pressure on Grand Central?

The level of service at 125th Street and Park Avenue must be appropriate for area residents and commuters, including seniors. The intersection of 125th Street and Park Avenue is identified in the Supplemental EA as a location where increased pedestrian flow could have adverse effects, and it is already challenging for many. What would the experience of making a connection be for seniors and/or people with disabilities? What are the vertical and horizontal distances that must be traveled, and what is the amount of time necessary to make a transfer between subway lines, then to street-level transit and/or Metro-North? At how many points could a commuter exit onto the already quite crowded East 125th Street? How does the MTA plan to manage commuter safety, especially considering predicted numbers of 12,000 people per hour at the Second Avenue Subway during peak morning rush? (*UGC-King*)

**Response:** The 125th Street Station is being designed to have sufficient capacity to handle the anticipated ridership for the full, completed Second Avenue Subway in the future, taking into consideration anticipated growth in population and employment in East Harlem and throughout the city. Platform areas, mezzanines, and other station spaces are being sized to accommodate anticipated passenger loads for the full, completed Second Avenue Subway (including future Phases 3 and 4) and to meet emergency egress requirements. The Modified Design now proposed for the Phase 2 project includes reconfigured connections from those included in the 2004 FEIS Design, to provide additional transfer capacity and to better distribute those transfers along both the Second Avenue Subway mezzanine



and the Lexington Avenue line platforms (see the Supplemental EA page 2-13). Please see the response to **Comment 26** for additional discussion of the transfers between the new subway, the existing Lexington Avenue line, and Metro-North service, and the location of new entrances to the station. All new subway stations for the Second Avenue Subway will comply with ADA regulations and therefore will provide elevators to street level. Elevators will also connect between the Second Avenue Subway and the Lexington Avenue line at 125th Street.

As discussed in response to **Comment 26**, pedestrians transferring between the two subway lines will do so within the system rather than at street level. Depending on which subway entrance and which staircase to the Metro-North station they use, pedestrians transferring between the subway and Metro-North may need to cross Park Avenue and/or 125th Street. In this area, the analysis conducted for the Supplemental EA (see Chapter 3, "Transportation," page 3-8) concludes that widened crosswalks should be installed to provide adequate space for the increased number of pedestrians at the 125th Street and Park Avenue intersection.

As also described on page 3-8 of the Supplemental EA, MTA remains committed to ongoing coordination in the planning of station entrances, as described in the 2004 FEIS. In particular, as design advances, MTA will discuss specific entrance locations with the community. In addition, planning for station entrance locations will consider on-street pedestrian conditions before any station plans are finalized, and if adverse impacts will result, MTA will implement mitigation measures to reduce pedestrian crowding, potentially including widening the painted area designated for crosswalks, relocating street furniture, and creating sidewalk bump-outs to increase pedestrian space.

MTA will coordinate with NYCDOT regarding appropriate streetscape changes at this location. Any other modifications to the streetscape, such as lighting, landscaping, and Citi Bike stations, are also the purview of NYCDOT. MTA will collaborate with NYCDOT, NYCEDC, and the New East Harlem Merchants Association to ensure compatibility of the new station with the Park Avenue/125th Street Public Realm Project to improve design and safety elements in the area around the Metro-North Railroad Harlem-125th Street Station.

In terms of increased vehicular traffic and traffic areas cited in the comment, taxi and car-for-hire drop-off areas are also regulated by NYCDOT, but please note that MTA does not anticipate an increase in vehicular traffic as a result of new subway service. MTA anticipates that passengers not transferring from/to the Lexington Avenue line will predominantly walk to the new station. Please see the response to **Comment 49** for additional information on vehicular traffic.

A.3.6.2 TRAFFIC AND PARKING

**Comment 49:** The 2004 FEIS is based on outdated vehicular traffic data. The 2004 FEIS relied on traffic impact studies and environmental impact statements conducted six years prior to the 2004 FEIS and concluded that the Project would reduce vehicular traffic compared to the no build alternative. Since that time, ride-hailing and ride-sharing services, which did not exist in 2004, have proliferated. This will likely result in increased pickup/drop-off activity on and around East 125th Street, where the introduction of a new Second Avenue Subway terminal will essentially create an intermodal hub served by two subway lines, commuter rail, and buses. Further, increased pedestrian volumes on crosswalks in proximity to station entrances (including significant adverse impacts at new intersections compared to the 2004 FEIS) may affect vehicular traffic flow. The Supplemental EA states that operation of the Modified Design for Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway would not meaningfully alter traffic, parking, or surface transit conditions in the study area and that therefore a traffic analysis was not warranted and was not prepared. However, the Supplemental EA focuses on whether changes in the alignment and design of the Project would affect conclusions reached in the 2004 FEIS, rather than evaluating whether such changes, in conjunction with changes in background conditions, would adversely affect vehicular and pedestrian traffic and safety in the project area. (*Durst-Lefkowitz*)

**Response:** The 2004 FEIS included a detailed, quantified analysis of the impacts of construction of the Second Avenue Subway on traffic conditions near the construction zone. As noted in the comment, that study used baseline traffic data from earlier traffic impact studies rather than from new counts, because at the time the 2004 FEIS was prepared, traffic conditions in Manhattan were still disrupted as a result of the events of 9/11 (see 2004 FEIS, Volume II, Appendix D.2, page D-14). For the Supplemental EA, MTA prepared an updated, quantified analysis of the impacts of Phase 2 construction on traffic. This analysis is presented in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 3, “Transportation,” Section 3.4.1.2 (page 3-6). As discussed there, MTA prepared a new traffic analysis to evaluate conditions during the construction of Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway with the Modified Design. Whereas the 2004 FEIS looked only at representative worst-case locations near the 125th Street Station area, the new analysis considers locations near all three Phase 2 stations—106th Street, 116th Street, and 125th Street. Traffic counts were conducted in May 2017, and information from the *East Harlem Rezoning Draft Environmental Impact Statement* (April 2017) was used to project future 2024 conditions, which is considered the midpoint of the construction period.

The 2004 FEIS did not include a quantified analysis of traffic impacts once the Second Avenue Subway was complete and in operation. As discussed in the 2004 FEIS (see 2004 FEIS page 5D-30) and summarized in the Supplemental EA (see

page 3-4), the 2004 FEIS predicted that traffic operations would be the same or slightly better with the subway than without it due to improved transit accessibility. This conclusion remains true for the Modified Design. MTA anticipates that the great majority of street-level subway passengers (i.e., those who do not transfer to/from the Lexington Avenue line) will arrive at the new subway stations on foot, as is typical at Manhattan subway stations. Given that most of East Harlem would be within a half-mile of one of the three new subway stations, it is unlikely that many passengers would arrive at the stations by for-hire vehicle or other automobiles. While the introduction of a new Second Avenue Subway terminal on 125th Street will create an intermodal hub served by two subway lines, commuter rail, and buses, as cited in the comment, there is no reason to expect that new vehicle trips will result. Subway passengers will be able to transfer between modes by walking, and any commuter rail passengers who choose to use for-hire vehicles will not be subway passengers, and therefore will do so whether or not the new subway is present.

In terms of pedestrian flows that could affect vehicle movements, please note that Chapter 3 of the Supplemental EA includes a quantified analysis of pedestrian conditions at each of the three new stations. That analysis, presented on page 3-8 in the Supplemental EA, concludes that adverse impacts to pedestrian flows would occur at four crosswalks, two near the 106th Street Station and two near the 125th Street Station. Similar to the impacts identified in the 2004 FEIS, these impacts could be mitigated by widening the painted striped crossing zone to provide more designated space for safe pedestrian crossing.

It is therefore not correct that, as asserted by the commenter, the Supplemental EA does not evaluate whether changes in the design of the project in conjunction with changes in background conditions would adversely affect vehicular and pedestrian traffic and safety in the project area.

**Comment 50:** It is critical that MTA remains committed to traffic monitoring, management, and mitigation with NYCDOT. The Modified Design lacks detail on where buses will be rerouted; rerouting will lead to delays on other East Harlem bus lines, which already run at slow speeds. The plan is not clear on where the existing taxi queue at Park Avenue and 125th Street will be temporarily located during construction. *(NYS Assembly–Rodriguez)*

**Response:** As discussed in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 3, “Transportation” (see page 3-7), MTA will implement a comprehensive area-wide traffic management and mitigation plan during construction of Phase 2. The implementation of this plan will be coordinated with NYCDOT, the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), and MTA Bridges and Tunnels. Although the plan has not yet been developed, this traffic plan will address bus rerouting and taxi

stand relocations. Regarding bus routing during construction, please see the response to **Comment 53**.

**Comment 51:** The Supplemental EA does not fully address the loss in parking spaces during construction of the Second Avenue Subway. The Supplemental EA maintains the analysis provided in the 2004 FEIS, which concluded that while parking would be lost at construction zones there was adequate alternative street parking and access to parking garages and lots. Since the 2004 FEIS there has been an increase in development around East Harlem that has already caused loss of parking in other areas. (*NYS Assembly–Rodriguez*)

**Response:** The Supplemental EA notes that within the construction zones, parking spaces would be removed during construction. This adverse effect to parking is unavoidable. In Chapter 3, “Transportation,” the Supplemental EA describes that the Modified Design would include much less surface construction than the 2004 FEIS Design and therefore there would be less disruption to the street (see page 3-6). As a result, there would be less parking lost than described for the 2004 FEIS Design.

While an updated inventory of parking was not conducted for the Supplemental EA, the Supplemental EA notes that the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) completed in September 2017 by the New York City Department of City Planning includes a quantified analysis of parking conditions in East Harlem near the sites affected by the rezoning.<sup>1</sup> That analysis concludes that with full build-out of the projected development in East Harlem in the future, there will be a shortfall of both off-street and on-street parking spaces in the midday but excess capacity overnight. Page 14-97 of the East Harlem Rezoning FEIS states, “While some drivers destined for the Project Area would potentially have to travel a greater distance (e.g., between ¼ and ½ mile) to find available parking in the midday, this shortfall would not be considered a significant adverse impact based on *CEQR Technical Manual* criteria due to the magnitude of available alternative modes of transportation.” Therefore, taking into account this updated information, the reduction in on-street parking spaces that would result during construction of the Second Avenue Subway would exacerbate this midday shortfall, but given its temporary nature and the availability of other parking, the impact is not significant.

**Comment 52:** In 2018, NYCDOT launched a car sharing pilot program in East Harlem with 20 dedicated parking spaces at 10 locations across the community; four of these

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<sup>1</sup> City Planning Commission, City of New York. East Harlem Rezoning Final Environmental Impact Statement. September 19, 2017. <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/planning/applicants/env-review/east-harlem.page>.

locations are on or near Second Avenue. Relocating the pilot program locations to other areas of East Harlem during construction would adversely affect residential parking. The City of New York should consider suspending the car sharing pilot program in East Harlem during the construction period. *(NYS Assembly–Rodriguez)*

**Response:** During the development of the comprehensive area-wide traffic management and mitigation plan, MTA will coordinate with NYCDOT on the East Harlem car sharing pilot program locations that may be affected during project construction.

**A.3.6.3**     *SURFACE (BUS) TRANSIT*

**Comment 53:** Please indicate the plan for the Second Avenue bus stops during the construction period for both Select Bus Service and local routes. The local M15 bus stop currently does not have benches or a shelter. If these bus stops will need to be relocated, please include plans for a shelter or benches for the local M15 stop. *(Winfield)*

**Response:** During construction, some bus stops may need to be relocated away from the construction zones, but the plans for relocations, including shelters or benches, have not yet been determined. Chapter 3, “Transportation,” of the Supplemental EA describes the effects of the Modified Design on bus service, both during construction and once the project is complete. As described on page 3-7 of that chapter, MTA will maintain bus services along Second Avenue, 125th Street, and other cross streets during construction of Phase 2. Some bus stops near construction work zones may need to be temporarily relocated. These plans will be developed during construction and customers will be informed in advance through sign postings, announcements on MTA’s website, newsletters, email blasts, and MTA’s smart phone applications (currently the MyMTA app).

**Comment 54:** Please describe the study conducted on impacts to M116 crosstown bus and mitigation efforts. The M116 has always had issues with running on schedule and often two buses arrive at the same stop at the same time. This bus route will become more important for those who seek to avoid crossing Second Avenue as a pedestrian during the construction period. Can MTA implement M116 status “clocks” to show the status of bus route and run these buses more frequently? *(Winfield)*

**Response:** Chapter 3, “Transportation,” of the Supplemental EA provides the study that was conducted of the Modified Design’s effects on bus service, including the M116 crosstown service, both during construction and once the project is complete. As described on page 3-7 of that chapter, MTA will maintain bus services along Second Avenue, 125th Street, and other cross streets (including 116th Street) during construction of Phase 2. Improvements to bus services are not within the

scope of this project. However, MTA continually evaluates its bus operations and seeks to improve service and information for its customers.

**Comment 55:** If no improvements to the M116 route are planned, pedestrian conditions along 116th and 117th Streets and Second Avenue will be important for shoppers at the Costco and Target in the East River Plaza mall who have carts and large, bulk items. Please indicate, if any, mitigation efforts for disruption to pedestrian traffic crossing Second Avenue. (*Winfield*)

**Response:** Chapter 3, “Transportation,” of the Supplemental EA describes the effects on pedestrian conditions during construction of Phase 2. As discussed there (see page 3-7), while some modifications to pedestrian routes may be required (such as temporary detours or sidewalk narrowings), sidewalks and crosswalks will be maintained during construction throughout the construction zone.

**Comment 56:** When the East River Plaza mall opened, Target (which is located at the mall) ran shuttles from the Lexington Avenue subway line to the mall. Given that the East River Plaza businesses will stand to benefit from the Second Avenue Subway, is it possible to negotiate with Target or other companies to provide these services again during MTA construction around East 116th Street going crosstown? (*Winfield*)

**Response:** MTA is not currently planning to negotiate with retailers at the East River Plaza mall regarding shuttle services, although the retailers will be free to develop any shuttle services on their own. Chapter 3, “Transportation,” of the Supplemental EA describes the effects on pedestrian conditions during construction of Phase 2. As discussed there (see page 3-7), sidewalks and crosswalks will be maintained during construction throughout the construction zone.

**Comment 57:** By the time Phase 2 is open, there will be a new fare collection system allowing boarding at all doors for any bus. Is it expected that Select Bus Service will continue to have off-board fare collection? Does any of this change what is in the Supplemental EA? (*Wouk*)

**Response:** The fare collection system for New York City buses, including Select Bus Service, would have no effect on the analyses in or conclusions of the Supplemental EA.

**A.3.6.4 PEDESTRIAN CONDITIONS**

**Comment 58:** There should be enhanced safety measures in the vicinity of construction work areas, and an increase in the number of traffic officers and crossing guards to assist seniors, schoolchildren, and people with disabilities, particularly near schools and parks. (*NYS Assembly–Rodriguez, Solomon*)

**Response:** Chapter 3, “Transportation,” of the Supplemental EA describes the effects on pedestrian conditions during construction of Phase 2. As discussed there (see page 3-7), sidewalks and crosswalks will be maintained during construction throughout the construction zone. MTA will implement a comprehensive area-wide traffic management and mitigation plan during Construction of Phase 2. The implementation of this plan will be coordinated with NYCDOT, NYSDOT, MTA Bridges and Tunnels, and the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) and will include any necessary combination of traffic enforcement agents, pedestrian managers (i.e., crossing guards who assist pedestrians), and construction safety personnel. MTA will coordinate with the New York City Department of Education regarding school crossing guards near the construction zone.

**Comment 59:** Accommodations must be made for seniors and customers with disabilities, both during construction and once the project is completed. This includes provision of large, easily visible signage for the visually impaired, positioned so that it is easy to see and not blocked by scaffolding or other signs; ramps for when elevators and escalators break down; and accommodations for people using wheelchairs, walkers, canes, crutches, and so on. (*D. Greif, NYCTRC–C. Greif, WE ACT–Johnson*)

Please provide a detailed plan on responding to accessibility concerns (visual, audio, mobility impaired) in Second Avenue construction zones. (*Winfield*)

**Response:** Construction work will be conducted in compliance with MTA’s Good Neighbor Initiative (described in the response to **Comment 60**), which was developed to improve and enhance the pedestrian condition during construction. The Good Neighbor Initiative will enforce maintaining appropriate widths of sidewalks and crosswalk, and keeping signs and signals visible.

As discussed in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 3, “Transportation” (see page 3-7), MTA will implement a comprehensive area-wide traffic management and mitigation plan during construction of Phase 2. The implementation of this plan will be coordinated with NYCDOT, NYSDOT, and MTA Bridges and Tunnels, as well as NYCDOE as it relates to school access. This plan will require that specific provisions be made in the construction zone for people with disabilities.

Upon completion of construction, Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway will be fully ADA-compliant as required by federal law. As described in Chapter 2 of the 2004 FEIS (see 2004 FEIS page 2-20), all Second Avenue Subway stations will comply with ADA regulations. All stations will have elevators and would meet ADA standards for elevations and grades for wheelchair access. In addition, other required safety provisions will be implemented, including ADA-compliant warning strips at platform edges and adequate-size corridors and doorways. Public address systems will incorporate both visual and audio communications to

be fully compliant with requirements for hearing and visually impaired passengers or employees. ADA-compliant design will also be incorporated into any employee and tenant spaces within the station complex. Newly constructed transfer points between the Second Avenue Subway and existing train lines will also be ADA-accessible, unless technically infeasible, as defined by ADA.

### **A.3.7 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

#### **A.3.7.1 IMPACTS DURING CONSTRUCTION**

**Comment 60:** MTA should create a resilience fund to protect tenants and small businesses faced with risks and uncertainty and unforeseeable difficulties during construction of Phase 2. Although the MTA has existing programs and initiatives to aid both tenants and small businesses, complications can arise. During the construction of Phase 1, residents and businesses were negatively impacted by living and working in an active construction zone because of dust, debris, noise, restricted pedestrian access, and loss in visibility. Often potential customers do not visit businesses that are adjacent to noisy construction activities or behind a large construction fence. The MTA should engage in thoughtful planning, partnerships, and local stakeholder engagement throughout construction to mitigate these concerns. The MTA should develop a more comprehensive economic development plan that incorporates plans to help the business owners during this period. (*CB 11–Orama, NYC Council–Ayala, NYS Assembly–Rodriguez, SpaHa Soul–Thornton*)

The signage provided for small businesses during construction of Phase 1 was inadequate, and more should be done for Phase 2. MTA should prepare a marketing strategy, including advertisements, to protect the businesses. MTA should also establish a fund to help support small businesses that are adversely affected by construction. (*SpaHa Soul–Thornton*)

MTA should more fully communicate the plans to implement improved strategies based on lessons learned during Phase 1, such as increased signage, interagency task force responses, and the Good Neighbor Initiative. The MTA should identify and explore, in collaboration with the community, additional initiatives that can assist in facilitating the process for small and minority- or women-owned businesses (M/WBEs) to protect their investments and subsidize negative externalities. (*UGC–King*)

**Response:** The 2004 FEIS describes impacts to neighborhood character that will result from subway construction (see Chapter 6, “Social and Economic Conditions,” beginning on page 6-26) and identifies the measures that will be taken to minimize those impacts. As described there, access to street-level businesses in construction areas will be maintained; however, pedestrian and vehicular access will be modified or restricted by the construction of sidewalk sheds, removal of awnings and some signage, and removal of parking and travel lanes. Customers could be



discouraged from visiting certain kinds of businesses as a result of the changes in pedestrian and vehicular patterns, reduced store visibility and accessibility, and raised levels of noise, vibrations, and dust. Retail establishments with outdoor activities on the sidewalk are most likely to be adversely affected by construction of the project. These types of businesses will have to remove their sidewalk facilities when their side of the street is under construction. Though temporary, this effect could result in lower sales, and could last for a relatively long duration. It will also make them less visible and attractive to customers. The Supplemental EA concludes that while the Modified Design will be less disruptive during construction on 125th Street than the 2004 FEIS Design, construction activities for Phase 2 will nonetheless be disruptive (see Chapter 4, “Social and Economic Conditions,” beginning on page 4-7).

MTA will employ an extensive community outreach program throughout construction to keep the affected neighborhoods and businesses informed about construction activities taking place. MTA will use the outreach program to work closely with Business Improvement Districts and other related business organizations throughout the construction process to address concerns to the degree practicable. As part of this outreach, MTA will convene a retail advisory committee for Phase 2 consisting of businesses representatives in each affected area.

MTA will work with businesses through its community outreach Good Neighbor Initiative, which has been refined and improved based on the lessons learned during the construction of Phase 1. The Good Neighbor Initiative is MTA Capital Construction’s dedicated effort to mitigate the effects of construction and improve the quality of life during building of the Second Avenue Subway. Working in coordination with an existing team of environmental, safety, and community relations staff, in addition to coordination with relevant City agencies, this team will provide enforcement related to the pedestrian experience along the construction corridor and to improve retail conditions throughout the corridor. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Enforcing site upkeep and housekeeping at the construction sites.
- Enhancing the pedestrian experience by maintaining a safe, unobstructed pathway.
- Improving retail conditions throughout the corridor.
- Providing aesthetic treatments to construction fences and structures.
- Maintaining adequate lighting conditions.
- Listening to the community’s concerns and addressing issues before and as they arise.

Through this initiative, MTA will provide fence wrapping and signage indicating the businesses present in each construction zone, to support continued pedestrian traffic to those businesses. This signage will be developed in conjunction with the

affected business owners and will provide each business's name and contact information. Wayfinding signage for businesses that are visually obscured by work zones will be provided on large, easily visible signs at all entry points to each work zone.

The process of relocating tenants, including businesses, that are physically displaced by federally funded projects, including the Second Avenue Subway, is guided by the federal Uniform Relocation Act (see Chapter 6 of the Supplemental EA, "Displacement and Relocation," page 6-1). However, there is no fund available through MTA for business protection or tax relief. Potentially impacted business owners can consult the New York City Department of Small Business Services for any options available to them. MTA will collaborate with the community on potential additional initiatives.

**Comment 61:** In addition to building owners, MTA should notify the tenants (including business owners) of properties that will be affected by upcoming construction activities. A policy must be laid out for providing advance notice to residents and businesses. (*SpaHa Soul–Thornton*)

**Response:** MTA is committed to ensuring that all tenants of buildings that may be affected by project construction are given advance notice of project construction activities. MTA staff will visit all affected buildings along the project corridor, going door-to-door and leaving notices and information at each building, including residential and commercial building entrances. MTA will also coordinate with the owners and management of the affected buildings, to the extent practicable, to ensure that no tenant is accidentally overlooked. As design advances and construction begins, Community Advisory Committees will be established, as well as Retail Advisory Committees, so that the community can provide input to MTA.

**Comment 62:** There are nearly 15 schools within the construction area that will be affected by increased traffic, narrowed sidewalks, and noise exposure. (*NYS Assembly–Rodriguez*)

**Response:** Chapter 4, "Social and Economic Conditions," of the Supplemental EA addresses potential construction impacts to nearby land uses in East Harlem, including nearby schools. Impacts and associated mitigation for construction impacts are discussed in Chapter 4 (see page 4-8; see also Chapter 16 of the Supplemental EA, "Environmental Justice," page 16-4). Mitigation measures that were developed as part of the 2004 FEIS will be implemented to limit disturbance during construction using barriers, dust suppression, traffic management plans, and community outreach programs. MTA has developed a robust community outreach plan, including interfacing with all schools in the district, that will be used during construction of Phase 2 to keep the community informed and to ascertain concerns of the community (see Chapter 20, "Public Outreach"). In

addition, the Modified Design of Phase 2 will reduce surface construction impacts along 125th Street as compared to those disclosed in the 2004 FEIS. As discussed in response to **Comment 58**, MTA will implement a comprehensive area-wide traffic management and mitigation plan during construction of Phase 2. The implementation of this plan will be coordinated with the New York City Department of Education.

**A.3.7.2 PERMANENT IMPACTS**

**Comment 63:** Is there flexibility in the proposed station design to incorporate public spaces that would benefit the neighborhood by encouraging economic development? Is there any opportunity to incorporate East Harlem businesses into stations, entrances, and ancillary buildings? Will the leases for the retail spaces be affordable? Would the retail spaces be located close to main passageways where commuters will travel? (*UGC–King*)

**Response:** See the response to **Comment 38** regarding provision of retail space in the new ancillary facilities. MTA will investigate retail opportunities for the new subway stations as the design progresses. MTA currently awards leases for retail spaces in subway stations through a competitive bid process. MTA is investigating ways to make this bidding process more attractive to local businesses.

**Comment 64:** East 125th Street between Park and Lexington Avenues has great economic development potential as a retail and commercial hub. The Supplemental EA should include plans to incorporate public–private partnerships with adjacent developers in order to improve and nurture new and future development. While disruptions have been minimized in the Modified Design along 125th Street with the use of mining rather than cut and cover construction, the Supplemental EA does not express how the project will benefit economic development in the retail hub along 125th Street between Park and Third Avenues. (*NYS Assembly–Rodriguez*)

**Response:** Chapter 2 of the Supplemental EA, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” describes the potential for joint development related to the project’s ancillary facilities and entrances on page 2-17. As discussed there, there may be an opportunity to include other development in combination with some ancillaries and/or entrances, within the envelope permitted by the zoning. While no such overbuild or other development projects are proposed at this time, ancillary and entrance sites may be considered for private co-development as Phase 2 advances, in conformance with FTA joint development guidelines. Any such development or overbuild proposal(s) would be subject to additional NEPA re-evaluation(s) as appropriate. As also discussed in the Supplemental EA, at locations where there is redevelopment potential, MTA will coordinate with the developers, as needed.

The Supplemental EA acknowledges that the new subway will enhance the economic vitality of the area by improving transit access to and from East Harlem.

**Comment 65:** Commenters asked about development rights that may remain on properties where ancillary buildings and station entrances would be constructed and some commenters suggested that combining subway facilities with private development could be beneficial:

Please provide information about what will happen to the additional development rights attached to properties that will be used for the development of ancillary facilities. The use of these additional development rights would have an impact on the social and economic conditions analysis. Please disclose plans for additional development rights, including buyer/developer if already known and proposed use. (*Winfield*)

The construction of Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway provides a unique opportunity to provide vital community uses including, but not limited to: affordable housing, community services, and community-oriented retail. East Harlem remains in need of these uses and this expansion serves as a rare opportunity to revitalize the area in a socially responsible manner. Thus, the MTA should consider and incorporate these key community needs into the design and construction of the planned facilities that comprise Phase 2. (*NYC Council–Ayala*)

The Supplemental EA should consider developing entrance and ancillary space into larger developments in order to maximize economic development. The Supplemental EA lacks specifics of how the MTA plans to work with developers to maximize potential economic benefits near proposed entrances and ancillary sites. (*NYS Assembly–Rodriguez*)

Building housing on top of ancillary buildings would be positive if it can be done without delaying the completion of the project. (*U.S. Representative–Maloney*)

**Response:** As discussed in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” on page 2-17, in the event that property required for construction staging is not needed for permanent project operation, excess property would be used or disposed of in accordance with MTA real estate procedures and will adhere to all pertinent federal regulations. Property that is sold would be subject to underlying zoning regulations. As discussed in response to **Comment 102**, the City of New York’s recently enacted East Harlem Rezoning and its East Harlem Housing Plan include extensive protections for affordable housing in the area and mandates the creation of new affordable housing when new private development occurs.

As discussed in response to **Comment 38**, MTA will seek opportunities to include retail spaces in the ancillary facilities. No other uses will be included in the ancillary facilities or entrances unless joint development occurs there. Chapter 2

of the Supplemental EA, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” describes the potential for joint development related to the project’s ancillary facilities and entrances on page 2-17. As discussed there, there may be an opportunity to include other development in combination with some ancillaries and/or entrances, within the envelope permitted by the zoning. While no such overbuild or other development projects are proposed at this time, ancillary and entrance sites may be considered for private co-development as Phase 2 advances, in conformance with FTA joint development guidelines. Any such development or overbuild proposal(s) would be subject to additional NEPA re-evaluation(s) as appropriate. As also discussed in the Supplemental EA, at locations where there is redevelopment potential, MTA will coordinate with the developers, as needed.

**Comment 66:** It should be a concern that the mechanical spaces proposed are much larger than in the 2004 FEIS Design or completed first phase. This leads to more existing neighborhood buildings being bought and demolished for mechanicals and degrades the quality and aesthetics of the neighborhood. If anything, MTA should be build affordable housing on top of these mechanical equipment lots and help pay for the expansion. (*Unidentified*)

**Response:** As discussed in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” pages 2-15 through 2-18, the station entrances and ancillary facilities need to include more equipment and functions above ground in these structures. As design proceeds from advanced preliminary engineering to final design, opportunities to reduce property acquisitions will be identified, if practicable. Regarding the potential to build affordable housing above the ancillary buildings or to combine them within other development, see the response to **Comment 65**.

**Comment 67:** The Supplemental EA should recognize the importance of preserving and creating affordable housing as a goal. The location of ancillaries and entrances should be designed as much as possible to minimize loss of affordable housing, and where possible should contemplate partnership with private or non-profit developers to allow affordable housing to be constructed above entrances or mechanical buildings. Where land is acquired for construction but no longer required after completion, its disposition should be done in such a way as to encourage the maximum amount of affordable housing on the site. (*Sanderson, Sinisterra, WE ACT–Corbin-Mark*)

**Response:** Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” of the Supplemental EA outlines the criteria MTA is using for selecting sites of proposed station entrances and ancillary facilities. As described in Chapter 2 on pages 2-3 through 2-5 and page 2-19, vacant lots are given highest priority for selection, with occupied commercial and residential properties avoided to extent feasible. Regarding disposition of land not required for construction and co-development of entrances

and ancillary facilities within other developments, please see the response to **Comment 65**.

**Comment 68:** Federal regulations indicate that it is appropriate to include in environmental assessments alternatives to the proposed action that might mitigate adverse impacts associated with that action. Alternatives for coordinated project construction with associated private development of commercial space and residences could shorten the time that the surrounding neighborhood, its residents, and its businesses are adversely impacted by construction and accelerate the production of new jobs and economic benefits in the 125th Street/Lexington Avenue/Park Avenue area. The FTA and MTA should prepare a modified Supplemental EA that considers potential alternatives that could mitigate adverse environmental impacts, including displacement and relocation of local residents and businesses. These impacts are described at length in the 2004 FEIS. The modified Supplemental EA should also consider alternatives, including co-development of project elements with private development, that do not devote so large a portion of street frontage to transit entrances and ancillary facilities, which reduce the amount of retail along the streets and detract from the neighborhood character. (*Durst–Lefkowitz*)

If MTA collaborates with developers to incorporate simultaneous construction, this would reduce the adverse impacts of noise and air pollution and decrease the amount of prolonged development after construction is complete. (*NYS Assembly–Rodriguez*)

**Response:** As noted in the comment, the adverse environmental impacts that will occur during construction of the Second Avenue Subway are detailed in the 2004 FEIS. The FTA’s 2004 ROD for the full Second Avenue Subway Project concluded that “the FTA has determined in accordance with 49 U.S.C. 5324(b) that: . . . all reasonable steps have been taken to minimize adverse environmental effects of the Project, and where adverse environmental effects remain, no feasible and prudent alternative to the effect exists. The Supplemental EA finds that the conclusions of the 2004 FEIS remain valid for the Modified Design, taking into consideration both changes to the design since the 2004 FEIS Design and changes in background conditions.

Alternatives that include coordinated project construction with private development would not necessarily shorten the time that the surrounding neighborhood is impacted as the commenter states. There is no basis for the commenter’s statement regarding reducing adverse impacts if MTA collaborates with developers to incorporate simultaneous construction.

As discussed in response to **Comment 65**, there may be an opportunity to include other development in combination with some ancillaries and/or entrances, within the envelope permitted by the zoning. MTA will coordinate with the developers

of adjacent properties where appropriate. In addition, as described in response to **Comment 38**, the ancillary buildings will include ground-floor retail uses to facilitate an active streetscape that is consistent with neighborhood character.

**Comment 69:** The 2004 FEIS underestimated the projected development that would occur in East Harlem by its 2025 analysis year. While the 2004 FEIS projected substantial new residential development in East Harlem by that time, it could not and did not account for two major City rezonings, one in 2008 and one in 2017, that affect this area and encourage dense development around major transportation hubs. Since the enactment of these zoning changes, many of these projected sites (including the former Pathmark property located at East 125th Street and Lexington Avenue, and properties on both sides of Park Avenue between East 124th and 125th streets) have been assembled for development, increasing the likelihood of large-scale development in the area.

The Supplemental EA fails to consider how significant increases in projected development beyond what was predicted in the 2004 FEIS could alter the environmental effects of the Project. Substantial increases in development and population within the East Harlem Study Area may result in different, and perhaps greater, impacts in areas such as vehicular and pedestrian traffic and air quality. While the Supplemental EA takes notice of certain changes in land use, it focuses on how the design of the project has been refined to avoid displacement of newly constructed buildings. The Supplemental EA does not evaluate adequately the environmental implications of the Project in light of increased population and development, nor how such changes could affect the mitigation measures identified under the 2004 FEIS. (*Durst-Lefkowitz*)

**Response:** The cumulative effects of Phase 2 of Second Avenue Subway construction and other development projects now expected to occur in East Harlem are considered throughout each chapter of the Supplemental EA. For example, Chapter 4, “Social and Economic Conditions,” details the substantial growth expected and considers the new subway’s construction and operation in that context. Chapter 4 of the Supplemental EA also presents and evaluates the changes in background conditions, which includes the 2008 and 2017 rezonings. Chapter 3, “Transportation,” of the Supplemental EA includes a quantified analysis of construction impacts on traffic conditions, including updated traffic information that includes the growth in traffic volumes predicted with the build-out of the East Harlem Rezoning. Similarly, the evaluation of pedestrian conditions around the new subway stations once the subway is in operation included updated pedestrian flows that included new background growth. The analyses in the Supplemental EA demonstrate that the extensive mitigation proposed in the 2004 FEIS and required by the Record of Decision will remain appropriate for the Modified Design.

**A.3.8 PUBLIC OPEN SPACES**

**Comment 70:** The open space chapter of the Supplemental EA does not describe several existing open spaces and planned open space projects that are located near the Phase 2 project corridor. This includes the Harlem River Greenway, a new park to be built in East Harlem starting in 2019 very close to the curve at 125th Street; an urban farm managed by Harlem Grown at Wagner Houses; and Marcus Garvey Park, including the restored historic landmark Fire Watchtower, which will be reinstalled in the park later this year. These are really valuable assets to the community that also draw tourists into the neighborhood. *(MGPA-Lee)*

**Response:** Please note that Chapter 5, “Public Open Spaces,” of the Supplemental EA does indicate the location of Marcus Garvey Park one block south of the proposed Phase 2 alignment (see Figure 5-1). The location of the Harlem Grown farm program at Wagner Houses is within the area shown on Figure 5-1 of the Supplemental EA as “Wagner Houses Recreation Areas.” As discussed in Chapter 5 of the Supplemental EA, open space resources in proximity to construction activities may experience temporary adverse impacts during construction, such as increased noise and dust.

The Harlem River Greenway will be created north and east of the Harlem River Drive, along the water’s edge, and will not be affected by the Project. This future open space is not shown in the Supplemental EA, but other existing open spaces in the same area, including Each One Teach One Park, Crack is Wack Playground, and Harlem River Park, are shown on the map (Figure 5-1) and text indicate that the elimination of potential storage tracks along Second Avenue to 129th Street that were previously included in the Project but are not included in the Modified Design would eliminate the adverse impacts to these parks that were discussed in the 2004 FEIS.

**Comment 71:** Thomas Jefferson Park is not labeled on any of the maps in the Supplemental EA. This park includes a pool, skate park, basketball court, soccer field, playground, running track, long jump pit, dog run, art installations, and recreation center. An assessment of this park should be included, including consideration of the impact on seniors accessing the park/pool who will have to cross Second Avenue during construction and if any mitigation is necessary at certain cross streets to ensure continued use of this public space asset during construction by seniors, school and community groups, and other residents. This park truly serves the residents of the East Harlem “environmental justice” community and will be impacted by the construction period. Additionally, please include labels for Thomas Jefferson Park on all relevant maps for the Environmental Assessment. *(Winfield)*

**Response:** Figure 5-1 in the Supplemental EA (in Chapter 5, “Public Open Spaces”) provides an illustration of parks and open spaces within one block of the Second Avenue



Subway alignment in either the 2004 FEIS Design or the Modified Design. Other open spaces, which include Thomas Jefferson Park as well as numerous other parks and recreational areas in East Harlem, are not illustrated on this graphic.

As discussed in Chapter 5 of the Supplemental EA, the 2004 FEIS concluded that open space resources in proximity to construction activities may experience temporary adverse impacts during construction, such as increased noise and dust. The 2004 FEIS stated on page 7-16, “Despite efforts to screen adjacent parks from construction activities, several of the parks located along the alignment would experience increased noise and dust because of adjacent or nearby surface construction activities. Such impacts would be especially disruptive at parks with passive open spaces or with facilities for young children’s play ([including] Wagner Houses Playground in Phase 2 . . .).” The 2004 FEIS also noted that extensive efforts would be made by MTA through its contractors to keep these parks free of construction debris and excessive dust during construction. The Supplemental EA confirmed that such impacts could occur during construction to nearby open spaces. Other open spaces farther from the construction zone, such as Thomas Jefferson Park, would not be adversely affected by the construction activities. Pedestrian access along Second Avenue and on streets crossing Second Avenue would be maintained during construction.

**Comment 72:** The assessment of public open space in the Supplemental EA should include an assessment of publicly accessible open space directly on Second Avenue for a better understanding of the environmental impacts on this environmental justice community. The public open space section currently excludes open spaces on both NYCHA developments, Franklin Plaza, and the East Harlem Walking Trail, according to the map of open space resources (see Figure 5-1). Please add publicly accessible open space to your assessment and any identified mitigation measures, for spaces such as the following:

- East 116th Street: Please assess impacts to the charities run by the Sisters at 116th and Second Avenue and sale of produce at both north/south sections of 116th – this space is also an informal gathering space where people play dominoes, sit in chairs to converse, drop off goodwill items and purchase goodwill items and fresh produce. On the southeast, there is a fresh produce stand in front of the 7-11. Please indicate mitigation efforts for this space.
- NYCHA Jefferson Houses/E. 115th Street: There is a shaded seating area on the southeast corner of East 115th and Second Avenue with benches and a garden within Jefferson Houses. Please indicate impacts on access/use and mitigation efforts.
- Franklin Plaza: There are two playground areas within Franklin Plaza with public access routes from Second Avenue, as well as shaded seating areas on

the corner of East 106th and Second Avenue. Please indicate impacts on access/use and mitigation efforts.

- East Harlem Walking Trail: Significant time and development went into the (re)creation of an East Harlem Walking Trail, spearheaded by the City of New York's Department of Health with input by community stakeholders. The Walking Trail creates a loop using city streets and passes through Thomas Jefferson Park. The trail crosses Second Avenue at two points on its route, on East 106th Street and East 115th Street. Please indicate impacts to the Walking Trail and associated programming and mitigation efforts coordinated with DOH.
- Bike Greenway: Plans for a bike greenway expansion from the West Side have been announced.

In addition, environmental justice communities may often have informal public spaces that should be recognized and assessed as such. This would require a detailed walkthrough of the community at varying times to assess the existing conditions. (*Winfield*)

**Response:**

The Supplemental EA provides a discussion of the impacts to open spaces and recreational areas during construction of the Second Avenue Subway in Chapter 5, "Public Open Spaces." That chapter concludes that parks close to surface construction activities could experience adverse impacts resulting from access limitations or construction disturbances such as increased noise and dust as well as increased visual disturbances related to construction equipment and activities (see page 5-1). In addition, Chapter 4, "Social and Economic Conditions," describes that construction activities of Phase 2 will be disruptive to the community (see page 4-7). Thus, construction activities will be disruptive to the open spaces described in the comment, other than the planned bike greenway. The 2004 FEIS committed to measures to reduce the construction impacts on adjacent parklands. It noted that park space would not be used for construction activities in East Harlem and barrier walls were to be erected between construction areas and adjacent sensitive uses. In addition, the 2004 FEIS described that MTA would construct light screens, employ best management practices to control dust, and use specially quieted construction equipment wherever practicable to separate parks from construction activities. The FEIS also describes that MTA, through its contractors, will monitor noise and dust at parks adjacent to construction and that if unforeseen noise and dust disturbances arise during construction, mitigation measures, such as specially quieted construction equipment and/or Jersey barriers topped with screens, will be employed at parks adjacent to the construction.

Chapter 3, "Transportation," of the Supplemental EA describes the effects on pedestrian conditions during construction of Phase 2. As discussed there (see page 3-7), sidewalks and crosswalks will be maintained during construction throughout

the construction zone. Therefore, access to local parks will be maintained and the East Harlem Walking Trail will not be adversely affected.

Please note that in either the 2004 FEIS Design or the Modified Design, as part of the construction of the new 116th Street Station the area of East 116th Street cited in the comment will become part of a construction zone, requiring this informal gathering place and mobile fresh produce stand to move elsewhere. MTA will coordinate with the appropriate city agencies regarding relocation of the mobile cart. In addition, the shaded seating area on the northeast corner of East 106th Street and Second Avenue has been proposed as the location of a new station entrance since the 2004 FEIS Design and is still proposed for that use with the Modified Design (see Figures 2-1a and 2-1b in Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design” in the Supplemental EA). Regarding the bike greenway, please see the response to **Comment 70**.

**Comment 73:** Please indicate whether mitigation efforts relating to community gardens in the affected area, such as Diamante Garden on East 118th Street, are being discussed directly with GreenThumb and specify mitigation plans. (*Winfield*)

**Response:** Chapter 5, “Public Open Spaces,” of the Supplemental EA chapter concludes that open spaces close to surface construction activities, including community gardens, could experience adverse impacts resulting from access limitations or construction disturbances such as increased noise and dust as well as increased visual disturbances related to construction equipment and activities (see page 5-1). The 2004 FEIS committed to measures to reduce the construction impacts on adjacent parklands. It noted that park space would not be used for construction activities in East Harlem and barrier walls were to be erected between construction areas and adjacent sensitive uses. In addition, the 2004 FEIS described that MTA would construct light screens, employ best management practices to control dust, and use specially quieted construction equipment wherever practicable to separate parks from construction activities. As part of MTA’s Good Neighbor Initiative (see response to **Comment 60**), MTA’s community outreach team will work with appropriate organizations, such as GreenThumb, prior to any construction activity nearby.

### **A.3.9 DISPLACEMENT AND RELOCATION**

**Comment 74:** MTA must protect tenants and small businesses that will be subject to relocation as a result of the new subway. Tenants whose homes will be demolished to accommodate new stations must be relocated to comparable housing at the same rent within East Harlem. The MTA has initiatives in place to assist tenants with securing new housing; however, these efforts must begin before properties are acquired. Any small business that will be subject to relocation for the subway must be provided with assistance relocating their business and business continuity

plans. Additionally, to ensure long-term viability, these businesses should be provided with alternative locations within East Harlem at similar rents and when applicable, rental subsidy. MTA should work with the NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS) to incorporate best practices in this regard. (*NYC Council–Ayala*)

MTA should provide a report detailing the relocation plan that was put in place during Phase 1 so that the community can get a sense of what was done before. (*CB 11–Orama*)

The Supplemental EA should provide more information on efforts to relocate displaced businesses and residents within the East Harlem community. (*NYS Assembly–Rodriguez*)

A commenter asked how MTA will ensure that small businesses run by local residents reopen once construction is complete. (*Unidentified commenter at CB 11 meeting*)

MTA should consider the possibility for coordinating with the City of New York to obtain a priority preference in all citywide affordable housing lotteries for those displaced by the Second Avenue Subway in Phase 2. (*Winfield*)

**Response:**

As discussed in Chapter 6, “Displacement and Relocation,” of the Supplemental EA (see page 6-1), displacement and relocations are subject to requirements of the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 and the New York State Eminent Domain Procedure Law (EDPL). As with Phase 1 of the Second Avenue Subway, MTA will prepare a relocation plan for Phase 2 that details the measures being undertaken to meet these requirements, which will be subject to federal approval. This plan will outline compensation measures and relocation assistance measures. MTA provided information on the relocation plan that was implemented for Phase 1 to CB 11 on August 8, 2018, in response to this request.

MTA’s residential and commercial relocation plans for Phase 2 will be modeled on the successful relocation efforts in Phase 1 of the Second Avenue Subway project. The Phase 2 plans are still under development, but will endeavor to relocate commercial tenants to a space comparable in size, rent, and geographic location to the one they had previously occupied. Final Phase 2 residential and commercial relocation plans are subject to approval by FTA.

As part of the relocation plan for residents, MTA will investigate all opportunities to place displaced residents in affordable housing units. For Phase 1 of the Second Avenue Subway, this plan took into account a number of factors to ensure fair and reasonable compensation for relocated tenants, including the difference between current rents for rent-regulated units and fair market rents for comparable units. The City of New York is responsible for determining eligibility for affordable housing and allocating units through affordable housing lotteries.

Currently, applicants residing in the same Community District as an affordable housing project are given preference.

MTA notified affected property owners prior to release of the Supplemental EA for Phase 2, and will reach out again as final design progresses and necessary property acquisitions are confirmed. Property owners and tenants will be notified well in advance of relocations. Attempts will be made, in coordination with the affected parties, including residents and businesses, to relocate within the neighborhood, unless not desired by the affected party or impractical.

**Comment 75:** When identifying sites for ancillary buildings, please look for empty lots or abandoned buildings first, then consider finding owners willing to sell their property to MTA. Eminent domain acquisition should be a last resort. (*Castano*)

Eminent domain should only be used when necessary and compensation should reflect true market value. The Supplemental EA lacks detail on the fair and just compensation of affected businesses and residents. When exercising eminent domain, the MTA should prepare a comprehensive economic development plan and a property owner impact assessment, both of which are not included in the Supplemental EA. (*NYS Assembly–Rodriguez*)

**Response:** Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” of the Supplemental EA outlines the criteria MTA is using for selecting sites of proposed station entrances and ancillary facilities. As described in Chapter 2 on pages 2-3 through 2-5 and page 2-19, vacant lots are given highest priority for selection, with occupied commercial and residential properties avoided to extent feasible. As discussed in Chapter 6, “Displacement and Relocation,” of the Supplemental EA (see page 6-1), displacements are regulated by the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 and the New York State Eminent Domain Procedure Law (EDPL). MTA will prepare a detailed relocation plan as part of its real estate acquisition and management plan for the project as design progresses, in accordance with regulations that outline compensation and relocation assistance measures that will be in place to comply with these requirements. MTA will make information about the relocation process available to the public when it is developed.

**Comment 76:** The analysis should provide more transparency on why there is such an increase in the need for eminent domain for more properties from 2004 versus 2018. Chapter 6 of the Supplemental EA does not clearly identify the full justifications for the increase in property acquisition, which includes 11 properties (originally 4) for the 106th Street Station, 19 properties and one partial (originally 7) for the 116th Street Station, one permanent acquisition for the 125th Street curve, six (or five, originally one) properties for the 125th Street Station, and additional

properties for the 125th Street tail tracks. Please explain the reason for the extent of the increase in properties for each location listed. (*Winfield*)

**Response:** Chapter 6 of the Supplemental EA, “Displacement and Relocation” summarizes the reasons that more property acquisition is needed for the Modified Design than was anticipated for the 2004 FEIS Design on page 6-8, with a reference to the longer discussion provided in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” which begins on page 2-15.

**Comment 77:** Any impacts to the senior center on 116th Street would be a serious loss to the seniors that live at the Corsi Houses development. At this time it appears that only a small portion of the center will be impacted, a gymnasium, which will be replaced as part of the project. (*NYC Council–Ayala*)

**Response:** MTA has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), which operates the Corsi Houses, to administer a plan that minimizes impacts to the community center and to address any displacement.

**Comment 78:** Residents of Franklin Plaza Apartments commented about the proposed entrance to the 106th Street Station at 108th Street, which will affect a surface parking lot at Franklin Plaza and displace off-street parking spaces. Commenters said that those parking spaces are important for residents of Franklin Plaza. One commenter noted that shareholders have paid for those parking spaces and asked how they would be compensated. One commenter also expressed concern about the potential for vandalism or terrorism at her building because of its proximity to the new subway entrance. Commenters requested that the station entrance be on the west side of Second Avenue rather than the east side.

**Response:** MTA will continue to evaluate station entrance locations as the design advances to try to reduce the footprint of needed property. MTA has been coordinating with Franklin Plaza about the impact to parking spaces. As described in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 6, “Displacement and Relocation,” MTA will acquire property in accordance with the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 and the New York State Eminent Domain Procedure Law, both of which require that MTA compensate property owners for the fair market value of their property. Please see the response to **Comment 23** about why the entrances to the 106th Street Station will be located on the east side of Second Avenue rather than the west side.

As design progresses, MTA will consider all threats and vulnerabilities and will assess appropriate measures to minimize them.

### A.3.10 VISUAL AND AESTHETIC RESOURCES

**Comment 79:** The decision to increase the height of ancillary facilities, in some cases up to 14 stories, presents difficult design challenges to avoid out-of-context towers and blank walls. We encourage MTA’s vision to bring ground-floor retail to activate the street level. Moreover, the above-ground mechanical structures should also be architecturally treated through color, grill patterns, art, spandrel glass, or other architectural enhancements to minimize the negative effects on the surrounding neighborhood. (*CIVITAS-Adams*)

**Response:** Chapter 7, “Visual and Aesthetic Resources,” of the Supplemental EA discusses the effects of the larger ancillary facilities on neighborhood character, urban design, and visual context (see the discussion beginning on page 7-3). As described there, specific façade treatments have not yet been determined for Phase 2, but will similarly be selected to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. MTA will make a presentation to the community on the treatment of facades of the ancillary buildings as design progresses. Additionally, MTA is exploring options to incorporate retail in ancillary facilities to maintain a continuous and active streetscape.

**Comment 80:** Please provide information about what will happen to the additional development rights attached to properties that will be used for the development of ancillary facilities. The use of these additional development rights would have an impact on the visual and aesthetic resources within the East Harlem community. (*Winfield*)

**Response:** See response to **Comment 65**. No other uses, other than ground-floor retail, are planned or proposed at this time. If joint development or additional development is proposed, additional environmental review will be conducted as appropriate.

**Comment 81:** Please correct the misspelling on page 7-4 of the Supplemental EA from “Tito Puento” to “Tito Puente.” (*Winfield*)

**Response:** Comment noted. This correction is noted on the Errata Sheet for the EA provided in Attachment B.

### A.3.11 HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

**Comment 82:** We are interested in the findings of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding the now-abandoned Comfort Station at the Metro-North Harlem-125th Street Station; in recent years, it has become increasingly unsafe and also a harbor for vermin. What opportunities exist in planning to incorporate more of Harlem’s transit history into construction of the 125th Street Station? Are there creative ways to connect to and showcase the still-existing historic platform of the New

York Central & Hudson River Railroad that is located underneath the Metro-North station on the north side of 125th Street and Park Avenue? (*UGC-King*)

**Response:** During preparation of the 2004 FEIS, the SHPO found the Comfort Station to be a contributing component to the historic Metro-North Harlem 125th Street Station. The letter providing the SHPO's determination, dated June 19, 2002, is included in Appendix C of the 2004 FEIS. That letter states, "Although not included in the 1993 eligibility determination of the MTA Metro-North 125th Street Station, the comfort station is clearly a historical component of the complex and contributes to its significance. The Classical Revival design of the comfort station complements that of the passenger station." Since the Modified Design of Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway will not affect the Comfort Station, there are no new determinations from SHPO regarding the comfort station with respect to the project.

At this time, the Modified Design will not incorporate the historic rail platform.

**Comment 83:** We are glad to see that efforts are being made to preserve the historic Apple (formerly Harlem Savings) Bank building on the southwest corner of 125th Street and Lexington Avenue and that both the Lee Building and Corn Exchange Building at 125th Street and Park Avenue will be preserved. (*UGC-King*)

**Response:** Comment noted. The Phase 2 project will not affect these historic buildings.

**Comment 84:** Historic resources like the African Burial Ground and the original underground 125th Street station need to be preserved for future generations. (*WE ACT-Corbin-Mark*)

**Response:** As described in Chapter 8, "Historic and Archaeological Resources," of the Supplemental EA (see page 8-8), the Harlem African Burial Ground is located on the site of the 126th Street Bus Depot between East 126th and 127th Streets and First and Second Avenues. Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway would not result in impacts to this area and the tunneling that will occur in the vicinity of the burial ground would be completed at a depth far below that of possible human burials or other evidence of human occupation. As described in Chapter 8, a generalized area of sensitivity exists around the burial ground that extended between bounded by East 124th Street, Second Avenue, East 127th Street, and a point east of First Avenue. Pursuant to the terms of the Second Avenue Subway Programmatic Agreement and subsequent consultation with the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission and SHPO, any work associated with the construction of Phase 2 that would result in impacts within the area of archaeological sensitivity (e.g., soil borings and test pits) will be archaeologically monitored.



**A.3.12 AIR QUALITY**

**Comment 85:** MTA should conduct air quality monitoring to establish baseline levels before construction begins so that the impacts are known. Information about air quality needs to be regularly communicated to the community, perhaps through the local community boards. Additional monitoring of air quality in cut-and-cover construction zones should be implemented throughout the construction period. In particular, dust needs to be mitigated so it doesn't get into people's homes. (*NYS Assembly—Rodriguez, WE ACT—Corbin-Mark*)

Please indicate the online platform for real-time access to air quality monitoring for the East Harlem community, when it will be in place and the locations of the measurement site. Please indicate whether there will be any air quality measurements indoors along Second Avenue or whether a school-based health clinic in the project's proposed ancillary facility near the Tito Puente Educational Complex is possible. (*Winfield*)

**Response:** MTA will implement a continuous air quality monitoring program during construction of Phase 2. Details of that plan, including where the information will be available, will be developed as the design and construction for Phase 2 progress and will be provided to the CBs. The air quality monitoring program will continuously measure air quality at the perimeter of construction sites to identify when additional measures should be taken to contain dust. The measurements and related information will be regularly communicated to the community. No air quality measurements will be made indoors, since the outdoor monitoring at the perimeter of the construction sites would be more representative of construction activities and provide a more relevant and immediate indicator of air quality conditions than any indoor measurements farther away.

The quantified analyses of air quality during construction that were undertaken for the 2004 FEIS and updated for the Supplemental EA described the extensive mitigation measures that will be conducted to address air quality concerns during construction (see Chapter 9, "Air Quality," in the Supplemental EA, page 9-3). Based on the results of the analysis, the construction activities would not result in the need for a new health clinic in East Harlem. As discussed in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 2, "Description of Phase 2 Modified Design" (see page 2-15), the proposed ancillary buildings would house electrical distribution equipment, station cooling equipment, emergency access for the station below, and vertical fans for emergency smoke management. In addition, MTA will seek opportunities to include retail spaces to enliven the local streetscape.

**Comment 86:** Although a certain level of pollution is inevitable, many people are concerned about the pollutants that would affect air quality. East Harlem has the sixth highest rate of children aged 5-14 to be hospitalized for asthma, twice the citywide rate,

and adult hospitalization is ranked fifth in the city in East Harlem. The mitigation program for Phase 2 will include best practices to reduce dust. The Modified Design will follow a “no visible dust” policy and require that contractors develop a plan to control emissions. The contractors should have additional oversight to ensure that the best practices are used to reduce emissions. Expertise and advisement should be pertinently given to plan development during blasting and tunnel boring periods. *(NYS Assembly—Rodriguez)*

**Response:** As noted in the comment, Chapter 9, “Air Quality,” of the Supplemental EA describes the aggressive mitigation measures MTA will implement during construction of Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway (see page 9-4). This will include a dust mitigation plan aimed at reducing dust emissions to the extent practicable, a program for controlling emissions from blasting, requirements that all diesel engines with a power rating of 50 horsepower or greater meet at least the Tier 3 EPA emissions rating and be retrofit with a diesel particulate filter, requirements that truck fleets working on site and substantial heavy-duty fleets serving the sites be model year 2007 or newer or retrofit with diesel particulate filters, enforcement of no idling laws, and use of temporary power at construction sites where practicable rather than diesel engines.

**Comment 87:** Since the 2004 FEIS, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency revised its standard regarding 1-hour average NO<sub>2</sub>, which was established without guidelines to evaluate project-level emissions. The Supplemental EA warns that these types of emissions could occur. Little information is provided as to the effects of exceeding the 1-hour standard, and how it could potentially affect workers and residents. More information on the guidelines and regulation from the EPA should be provided. *(NYS Assembly—Rodriguez)*

**Response:** Chapter 9. “Air Quality,” of the Supplemental EA describes the new 1-hour average NO<sub>2</sub> standard mentioned in this comment in Section 9.3, “Update of Background Conditions” (page 9-3). It also states that to mitigate potential construction-related NO<sub>2</sub> impacts to the extent practicable, land-based non-road diesel-powered vehicles and construction equipment rated Tier 3 or higher would be used where conforming equipment is available and the use of such equipment is practicable. Additional information on the NO<sub>2</sub> standard is available on EPA’s website. For example, see: <https://www.epa.gov/no2-pollution/basic-information-about-no2#What%20is%20NO2>.

**Comment 88:** Changes in background conditions may lead to new air quality impacts. Projects may result in significant mobile-source air quality impacts when they increase or cause a redistribution of vehicular traffic. The Supplemental EA relies on outdated 2004 FEIS traffic data to conclude that the Project would actually result in air quality improvements. However, there is not enough current data, reflecting the changes in background conditions, to evaluate the accuracy of that claim.

Since completion of the 2004 FEIS, ride-hailing and ride-sharing services, which did not exist in 2004, have proliferated. This will likely result in increased pickup/drop-off activity on and around East 125th Street, where the introduction of a new Second Avenue Subway terminal will essentially create an intermodal hub served by two subway lines, commuter rail, and buses. There is reason to believe that the completed subway will increase traffic in the vicinity, and thus has the potential to impact air quality significantly. (*Durst–Lefkowitz*)

**Response:** As discussed in response to **Comment 49**, MTA does not believe that the completed subway will increase traffic in the vicinity of the new stations. Therefore, the project will not result in adverse effects on air quality when complete.

**Comment 89:** Although the Supplemental EA asserts that proposed changes in means and methods for the construction of Phase 2 would reduce the intensity of air pollutant emissions, the Supplemental EA does not analyze the potential cumulative effects of prolonged construction activity associated with the project and major new developments proposed within the East Harlem study area that have become more likely since the 2004 FEIS. (*Durst–Lefkowitz*)

**Response:** Chapter 19 of the Supplemental EA, “Indirect and Cumulative Effects,” (page 19-3) describes that if other large transportation, infrastructure, or development projects occur in East Harlem simultaneously with construction of the Modified Design, adverse cumulative impacts may result from the combined construction activities. This conclusion is unchanged from the 2004 FEIS. While the projects identified in the 2004 FEIS have largely been completed, new projects are currently planned or under way (as shown in Figure 4-1 in Chapter 4, “Social and Economic Conditions” in the Supplemental EA). As described in the 2004 FEIS, MTA will work with public and private contractors to coordinate and minimize cumulative impacts to the extent practicable.

Moreover, as described in Chapter 12, “Air Quality,” of the Supplemental EA, a comprehensive mitigation program will be in place during construction to address potential air quality impacts that targets fugitive dust and emissions. These mitigation measures will be in place for the extent of construction to minimize dust and emissions for the duration of construction activities.

**Comment 90:** EPA concurs that the majority of conclusions of the 2004 FEIS remain valid for the proposed design, but notes that the project is located in the New York Metropolitan eight-hour ozone moderate nonattainment area and will still need to meet all the project-level transportation conformity requirements (40 CFR 93.109(b)). (*USEPA–Musumeci*)

**Response:** As described in the 2004 FEIS and in Chapter 9, “Air Quality,” of the Supplemental EA, the operation of the project would reduce on-road emissions,

and would therefore improve regional air quality and conform to the purpose of the State Implementation Plan (SIP) and Clean Air Act. This conclusion remains valid for the current eight-hour ozone moderate nonattainment area and relevant SIP and transportation conformity considerations. See the response to **Comment 91** regarding the potential for local impacts during construction.

**Comment 91:** FTA should provide an updated analysis for PM<sub>2.5</sub>, by adding the current background concentrations with the project contribution that was calculated in 2004, and comparing that to the current National Ambient Air Quality Standards for PM<sub>2.5</sub> annual and 24-hour standard. FTA should use an analysis year that is representative of the highest background and construction emissions. This analysis should be accompanied by a construction schedule. (*USEPA–Musumeci*)

**Response:** The analysis of PM<sub>2.5</sub> presented in Chapter 9, “Air Quality,” of the Supplemental EA does consider the combination of the highest background conditions and highest construction emissions, by using an estimate of peak construction emissions layered onto existing air quality values reported at nearby NYSDEC air quality monitoring stations. Air quality typically improves each year, as vehicular emissions controls improve and older vehicles are gradually replaced by newer ones. Therefore, the existing, measured air quality values represent the highest background pollutants for the analysis.

The peak construction emissions considered in the Supplemental EA were based on the quantified analysis of PM<sub>2.5</sub> that was conducted for the 2004 FEIS. According to the 2004 FEIS (see 2004 FEIS Chapter 11, “Air Quality,” pages 11-16 and 11-17), maximum cumulative increases in total average PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels (including diesel exhaust and fugitive dust) adjacent to construction activities were estimated to be 7.5 µg/m<sup>3</sup> on a 24-hour basis and 1.8 µg/m<sup>3</sup> on an annual basis. Of those concentrations, 4.3 µg/m<sup>3</sup> and 1.0 µg/m<sup>3</sup> on 24-hour and annual basis, respectively, were estimated to be from diesel engine exhaust (i.e., excluding fugitive dust). The 2004 FEIS noted that this would occur only in the immediate vicinity of the construction sites, and project contributions would decrease substantially as distance from the construction site increased. As described in the Supplemental EA (pages 9-3 and 9-4), pollutant emissions during construction of Phase 2 would be similar or lower due to changes in construction and due to advances in engine technology beyond what was assumed in the 2004 FEIS. These maximums represent activity similar to the current worst-case assumption. Peak activity and emissions are expected during tunnel boring and station excavation activities, which based on current projections are anticipated to occur from the end of 2020 to the end of 2025.

The PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations measured at the nearest NYSDEC air quality monitoring station, JHS 45, as reported in the 2017 data report, are a 3-year average annual mean of 7.9 µg/m<sup>3</sup> and a 3-year average 98th percentile 24-hour

average of 19.4  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ . Conservatively, adding the above increments to these current background concentrations (rather than using a future year, when background conditions will be lower) would result in a 24-hour average concentration of 26.9  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  and an annual average of 9.7  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ , both lower than the National Ambient Air Quality Standard concentrations—12  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  on an annual average and 35  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  on a 24-hour average basis.

Since the analysis was based on the peak construction emissions, anticipated to occur from the end of 2020 to the end of 2025, and existing background conditions, there is no need to provide a construction schedule to support the analysis.

### **A.3.13 NOISE AND VIBRATION**

**Comment 92:** Although a certain level of noise is inevitable, many people are concerned about the noise pollution that would affect quality of life. During Phase 1, there were complaints of residents who experienced adverse effects due to groundborne noise. More information is needed on the construction timeline and proximity to residents, especially in the night hours. (*NYS Assembly–Rodriguez*)

A commenter expressed concern about vibration at her building on 110th Street between Second and Third Avenues. The building vibrates when buses pass, and the commenter is concerned that vibration during construction or operation of the new subway could damage the building. (*Unidentified commenter at CB 11 meeting*)

**Response:** As described in Chapter 2, “Description of Phase 2 Modified Design,” of the Supplemental EA, heavy construction activities are anticipated at each proposed new station for about three to five years (see page 2-8 of the Supplemental EA). Noise intensities will vary during this time depending on the work being conducted. Chapter 12 of the 2004 FEIS, “Noise and Vibration,” describes the noisy activities that would take place during construction of the subway and the times of day when these activities would occur. While some very noisy activities would not occur between 10 PM and 7 AM, restricting all construction operations to only daytime hours would greatly increase the length of time and cost needed to build the subway. As described in Chapters 3 and 12, most construction activities could take place between 15 and 24 hours a day, 6 days per week; significant airborne noise impacts may occur not only during the day, but also during nighttime and weekend periods. Efforts will be made to restrict the noisiest activities so that they would not occur late at night.

The Supplemental EA notes that the conclusions of the FEIS with respect to construction noise remain valid with the Modified Design. As discussed in Chapter 14, “Noise and Vibration,” page 11-5, mitigation measures will be incorporated into contract documents to minimize construction-related noise to

the extent practicable. These will include such measures as shielding or enclosing areas where spoils from tunnel operations would be loaded into trucks, or at station locations where spoils removal would take place for long durations during the daytime or at night; placing some equipment or operations below grade in shielded locations; changing construction sequencing to reduce noise impacts by combining noisy operations to occur in the same time period or by spreading them out; avoiding nighttime activities; prohibiting late-night blasting; and using alternative construction methods, such as avoiding impact pile installation in sensitive areas, using special low noise emission level equipment, and selecting and specifying quieter demolition methods.

The Supplemental EA also describes the potential for groundborne noise and vibration during construction, which would be similar to what was described in the 2004 FEIS. As discussed in the FEIS, construction would result in varying degrees of ground vibration and groundborne noise, and because of the proximity of sensitive receptors such as residences, the vibration and groundborne noise was likely to be perceptible for nearby residents, although not at high enough levels to result in building structural damage. MTA committed to mitigation measures for construction groundborne noise and vibration including a project-wide vibration monitoring program to minimize vibration levels and respond to community complaints and concerns as they arise.

#### **A.3.14 INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENERGY**

**Comment 93:** Please indicate any analysis done on impacts during heat wave brownouts. Does the Second Avenue Subway construction have energy priority over residential and commercial use in East Harlem during brownouts? (*Winfield*)

**Response:** While brownouts in New York City are not common, if they should occur, the energy provider (Con Edison) will determine when and where these brownouts are needed.

#### **A.3.15 CONTAMINATED MATERIALS**

**Comment 94:** Please indicate notice and handling requirement for contaminated materials near schools, e.g., the Tito Puente Educational Complex on East 109th Street, P.S. 155 on East 117th Street. (*Winfield*)

**Response:** As discussed in Chapter 13, “Contaminated Materials,” of the Supplemental EA (see page 13-1), site-specific Health and Safety Plans (HASPs) will be prepared and incorporated into contract documents. Per these plans, in the event that contaminated soils are identified, they would be handled and disposed of in accordance with all federal and state regulations. Measures typically include monitoring of potential contamination levels, and implementing dust suppression

measures to avoid migration of contaminants off-site. These measures are in place to avoid potential exposure of contaminated materials to workers and the public.

### **A.3.16 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

**Comment 95:** The decision not to extend the deadline for comment at the request of community groups and elected officials is in direct opposition with the mandate to make a concerted effort to engage an environmental justice community and provide opportunities for participation in the environmental review process. (*Winfield*)

**Response:** NEPA requires that Environmental Assessments be available for public review for 30 days. Although the comment period was not extended, FTA and MTA reviewed, considered, and responded to any late-filed comments received through completion of this Summary of Comments and Responses document. Availability of the document was advertised in six news publications, including two Spanish publications. Copies of the Supplemental EA were made available on-line and at four viewing locations, where fact sheets and flyers in both English and Spanish were made available. In addition, the Executive Summary, which highlights the principal conclusions of the Supplemental EA, was translated in Spanish and made available online as well as at the public meeting on July 31, 2018. Copies of the presentation given at the public meeting were translated in Spanish and available for attendees. Spanish interpreters were also on-hand to assist attendees.

Executive Order 12898 and related guidance documents stipulate that meaningful efforts to engage environmental justice communities beyond the basic NEPA requirements should be undertaken. MTA has developed a robust outreach program, in addition to requirements of NEPA, to engage all members of the community. As described in Chapter 20, “Public Outreach,” of the Supplemental EA, in addition to meeting with elected officials and local representatives, MTA has opened the CIC at 69 East 125th Street with bilingual (English- and Spanish-speaking) staff; has given two public presentations to CBs 10 and 11 (June 2017 and April 2018); and has conducted a number of “pop up” outreach events where information booths are set up in areas throughout the neighborhood to interact with members of the community. Appendix E of the Supplemental EA provides a list of more than 60 outreach events that were conducted as of publication of the Supplemental EA. Following completion of the Supplemental EA, MTA held a public meeting on July 31, 2018, to hear comments on the project and the conclusions of the Supplemental EA and MTA provided an overview of the project at the meeting of the full board of CB 11 on September 18, 2018. Public outreach events have been open to all members of the public and have been attended by audiences with a wide range of backgrounds. These outreach activities will continue throughout the final design and construction process of Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway.

**Comment 96:** Please disclose the qualifications of the consultants who prepared the assessment to provide analyses related to environmental justice communities. Please also disclose the demographic breakdown of the consultants who prepared the assessment, as well as specifically for the environmental justice section. (*Winfield*)

**Response:** Information on the consultants who prepared the Supplemental EA is provided in Chapter 21, “List of Preparers.” More specifically, the prime consultant that led preparation of the Supplemental EA was also responsible for preparation of the analyses of environmental justice. This consultant firm has extensive experience in preparing such analyses, including for the 2004 FEIS for the full Second Avenue Subway. The demographic breakdown of the individuals who prepared the analysis is not relevant.

**Comment 97:** Please disclose the demographic breakdown of the audiences in attendance at the community meetings in comparison with the demographics of the East Harlem community. If demographic information has not been requested of attendees so far, please collect data on residence (zip code) and other demographic information on future community outreach. (*Winfield*)

MTA needs to produce a report detailing its community outreach work, including the makeup and demographics of the people who were contacted as part of the community outreach. (*WE ACT–Johnson*)

**Response:** MTA is committed to a robust community outreach program, as discussed in response to **Comments 2 through 11**. Meetings have been, and will continue to be, held in local venues in East Harlem and advertised through numerous media, such as mailings, email blasts, newsletters, and communication with elected representatives, CBs, and community groups. However, MTA will not collect demographic information or other data related to residence at these meetings, other than that which is voluntarily provided for the purposes of future project information notification.

**Comment 98:** Given that the 2004 FEIS identified East Harlem as an environmental justice community, the Supplemental EA should take this mandate from the federal government seriously and provide adequate analyses for the impact on a low-income, majority Latinx and Black community. The analysis should be transparent as to the methodology used to determine whether or not there would be a disproportionate impact to low-income residents of color, especially when it comes to indirect and direct residential displacement. Each section of the Supplemental EA should have an analysis that specifically details the methodology for determining whether there is a disproportionate impact on low-income communities of color. This methodology should be explicitly detailed in Chapter 16. The Supplemental EA should also disclose whether there is a



disproportionate impact on NYCHA residents compared to the rest of the population across all topic areas for the full-length of the project. (*Winfield*)

**Response:** The methodology for the environmental justice analysis is described in Chapter 16, “Environmental Justice,” of the Supplemental EA. As described in the Supplemental EA (see page 16-1), the 2004 FEIS concluded that construction of the full 8.5-mile-long Second Avenue Subway would affect environmental justice communities (East Harlem and Chinatown/Lower East Side) as well as non-environmental justice communities. The 2004 FEIS concluded that overall, no disproportionately high and adverse effects would be borne by minority and low-income populations from construction or operation of the full project. Please note that Phase 1 of the Second Avenue Subway is not within an environmental justice community and adverse impacts did occur during construction of Phase 1. MTA will adapt lessons learned from Phase 1 into Phase 2 to reduce impacts in Phase 2. The Supplemental EA also notes that construction of Phase 2 would occur entirely within an environmental justice community. It also describes (page 16-4) that the mitigation measures that were proposed in the 2004 FEIS would be implemented to limit disturbance during construction using barriers, dust suppression, traffic management plans, and community outreach programs. As with construction of Phase 1, MTA will set forth a robust community outreach plan during construction of Phase 2 to keep the community informed and to ascertain concerns of the community (see Chapter 20, “Public Outreach”). In addition, the Modified Design of Phase 2 will reduce surface construction impacts along 125th Street as compared to those disclosed in the 2004 FEIS. Once operational, the Second Avenue Subway will provide benefits to the community through enhanced transit services.

**Comment 99:** It seems disingenuous to conclude that there are no disproportionate impacts to low-income, majority Black and Latinx communities when the environmental impact analysis does not look at community facilities (schools, day care, pre-K, after-school programs, libraries, senior centers, NYCHA, etc.) at all. Community facilities are the backbone of environmental justice communities, where families do not have disposable income for vacations or second homes. This type of loss to the basic function of both formal and informal community facilities and space in environmental justice communities cannot be compensated by simply replacing trees. Please provide an environmental impact analysis on community facilities in East Harlem, with a focus on local schools, including the Tito Puente Educational Complex corridor, off Second Avenue on East 109th Street and P.S. 155.

More specifically, please provide information on noise impacts on schools as well as a safe routes to schools plan for all of the schools in the neighboring areas, given increased traffic due to construction. At the Tito Puente Educational Complex, during school days there are numerous school buses parked along Second Avenue throughout the day.

Please perform a site visit during these times and indicate the plan for school drop-off, pick-up by both school buses and families during construction, especially for children with mobility issues, or if not available, how this plan will be developed and which stakeholders will be consulted during the development of the plan.

In anticipation of necessary mitigation for schools on this corridor, please discuss the possibility of funding an additional school-based/school district-wide health clinic in the ancillary building near the Tito Puente Educational Complex, as well as additional or repositioning of school guards, reallocation of parking spaces for school buses, or other traffic mitigation measures. (*Winfield*)

**Response:** As described in the Supplemental EA (see page 16-1), the 2004 FEIS concluded that construction of the full 8.5-mile-long Second Avenue Subway would affect environmental justice communities (East Harlem and Chinatown/Lower East Side) as well as non-environmental justice communities. The 2004 FEIS concluded that overall, no disproportionately high and adverse effects would be borne by minority and low-income populations from construction or operation of the full project. Please note that Phase 1 of the Second Avenue Subway is not within an environmental justice community and adverse impacts did occur during construction of Phase 1. MTA will adapt lessons learned from Phase 1 into Phase 2 to reduce impacts in Phase 2.

The comment that the Supplemental EA did not look at community facilities is not correct. Chapter 4, “Social and Economic Conditions,” of the Supplemental EA addresses potential impacts to land use in East Harlem. As described on page 4-1 of that chapter, for the purposes of the Supplemental EA, social and economic conditions are defined as those components of a community that influence its character. These conditions include its population, economic base, land uses and the zoning and public policies that support those land uses, important community and municipal facilities and parks, urban design, street grid and other structural features, and those elements, examined in other chapters in the Supplemental EA, such as traffic, pedestrian conditions, and noise, which also contribute to neighborhood conditions. In addition, Chapter 5, “Public Open Spaces,” of the Supplemental EA addresses potential impacts on parks and recreational areas.

The Supplemental EA confirms the conclusions of the 2004 FEIS regarding construction impacts on social and economic conditions, disclosing that during construction of the new subway, potential temporary significant adverse impacts to land use and economic conditions could occur (see page 4-2 for a summary of the 2004 FEIS conclusions). Please note that the Supplemental EA did not conclude that there would be no impacts to low-income or majority Black and Latinx communities. Certainly, adverse construction impacts will occur during construction of Phase 2 and they will occur within an environmental justice community. However, as described in the Supplemental EA (see page 16-1 in Chapter 16, “Environmental Justice,”), the 2004 FEIS concluded that

construction of the full 8.5-mile-long Second Avenue Subway would affect environmental justice communities (East Harlem and Chinatown/Lower East Side) as well as non-environmental justice communities. It concluded that overall, no disproportionately high and adverse effects would be borne by minority and low-income populations from construction of the full project.

Chapter 16 of the Supplemental EA also describes (page 16-4) that the mitigation measures that were proposed in the 2004 FEIS would be implemented to limit disturbance during construction using barriers, dust suppression, traffic management plans, and community outreach programs. MTA will developed a robust community outreach plan that will be used during construction of Phase 2 to keep the community informed and to ascertain concerns of the community (see Chapter 20, “Public Outreach”). In addition, the Modified Design of Phase 2 will reduce surface construction impacts along 125th Street as compared to those disclosed in the 2004 FEIS.

Regarding construction noise impacts, the Supplemental EA includes an assessment of construction noise in Chapter 11, “Noise and Vibration.” It concludes that the impacts of the 2004 FEIS related to construction noise impacts would be unchanged with the Modified Design for Phase 2. That analysis (presented in the 2004 FEIS in Chapter 12) concluded that adverse construction noise impacts would occur near the construction zone at sensitive locations, including schools. At such locations, the project contractor will be required to implement an extensive mitigation program to reduce and alleviate the project’s airborne noise, vibration, and ground-borne noise impacts to achieve the noise levels specified in the 2004 FEIS.

Regarding traffic disruptions, please see the response to **Comment 50**.

Regarding the request for a health clinic in the new subway ancillary building, see the response to **Comment 85**.

### **A.3.17 INDIRECT AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

**Comment 100:** The Supplemental EA lacks details of how the development of adjacent properties may be prevented or made more difficult during the construction of the Second Avenue Subway. Phase 2 was originally slated to be completed in seven years, three years less than the current schedule. Development projects on adjacent sites may have to delay development until after Phase 2 is complete, leading to prolonged disruptions for years after the completion of Phase 2. If MTA collaborates with developers to incorporate simultaneous construction, this would reduce the adverse impacts of noise and air pollution and decrease the amount of prolonged development after construction is complete. (*NYS Assembly–Rodriguez*)

The Supplemental EA references new developments planned along Second Avenue and East 125th Street and in the surrounding blocks. A high vacancy rate produces negative impacts that affect a community when much of the commercial frontage is empty lots, vacant buildings, or construction sites. Has the MTA had substantive conversations with the developers of these large projects to discuss strategies for shortening the time required for constructing these buildings alongside the new transit, and consider alternative plans? Have all efforts been made to speed construction and keep East 125th Street as active and vibrant as possible? (*UGC–King*)

**Response:** The 2004 FEIS describes the potential indirect effects of the new subway, including the possibility that development on nearby sites may be delayed if developers choose not to develop nearby sites until the subway construction is complete (see the 2004 FEIS, Chapter 19, “Indirect and Cumulative Effects,” page 19-2). This information is summarized in the Supplemental EA in Chapter 1, “Indirect and Cumulative Effects,” page 19-1. As part of the permit process governed by the New York City Department of Buildings, development projects in New York City must coordinate with adjacent development projects to avoid impacts to either development during their construction. Regarding joint development of subway spaces and private development, please see the response to **Comment 65**. Please also see the response to **Comment 68** regarding coordination with developers of adjacent properties.

**Comment 101:** In the vicinity of the completed Phase 1, the new Second Avenue Subway is drawing new customers and business owners from nearby avenues such as Third Avenue and Lexington Avenue, which have seen declines in patronage. The Supplemental EA should provide more information on the adverse impacts on existing and now closed businesses that are located in nearby areas during and post-construction on Third and Lexington Avenues. (*NYS Assembly–Rodriguez*)

**Response:** Chapter 19, “Indirect and Cumulative Effects,” of the Supplemental EA noted that, consistent with the findings of the 2004 FEIS, decreased patronage may result in some areas due to changes in travel patterns, but increased patronage may result in other areas. Changes in economic activity are influenced by a number of factors and cannot be entirely attributed to the new subway. While Phase 1 has alleviated some congestion from the Lexington Avenue (4/5/6) subway line, the Lexington Avenue (4/5/6) subway line remains well-used, which is expected to be the case with Phase 2. This is not expected to have a substantial effect on patronage in other areas.

**Comment 102:** As an environmental justice community, concerns about gentrification and displacement are well warranted. However, this analysis again falls short as there is no methodology included to assess indirect residential displacement. The Regional Plan Association provided an updated version of its report on affordable

housing in East Harlem in August 2016. This report indicates the location of rent-stabilized housing, as well as the regulatory agreements that will expire. Some of these agreements will be expiring around the time that the Second Avenue Subway is scheduled to open. There needs to be clear mitigation efforts to combat the effect that the pending opening of the subway will have on tenant harassment or other illegal activities along the Second Avenue corridor which would have an impact on rent-stabilized tenants. In the recent Inwood neighborhood rezoning, the City announced the Partners-in-Preservation program to aid rent-stabilized tenants against these tactics. There should be similar mitigation efforts specifically directed to the Second Avenue corridor at the locations identified in the RPA report. In addition, the City should work to identify additional subsidies or alternate plans to prevent expiring regulatory agreements from emptying the area of much-needed affordable housing. Please demonstrate an assessment of the Second Avenue Subway on rent-stabilized units and units scheduled to phase out of affordable housing regulatory agreements and indicate mitigation efforts. *(Winfield)*

Phase 2 will accelerate gentrification along the route. There will be redevelopment of existing real estate into larger and more expensive apartment buildings; some of the current residential housing stock is being warehoused so that owners can readily capitalize on the increase in the value of the property. Also, there are discussions to construct infill development in existing housing projects. The pressure on rents will only go up as will population density. These issues should be directly addressed in the Supplemental EA. *(Wouk)*

How will MTA protect rent-stabilized tenants along the Second Avenue Subway corridor who will be subject to intimidation by their landlords? *(Unidentified commenter at CB 11 meeting)*

**Response:** As discussed in Chapter 19, “Indirect and Cumulative Effects,” of the Supplemental EA, the 2004 FEIS recognized that the Second Avenue Subway may attract new development to the area and market rates may increase (see page 19-2). However, the City of New York has recently undertaken planning initiatives in the area to maintain and expand affordable housing, including provisions of the 2017 East Harlem Rezoning and the city’s *Housing New York* plan.

The Second Avenue Subway Phase 2 corridor (i.e., the area within ½ mile of the new subway stations) includes 21 public housing complexes under the jurisdiction of the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) with over 15,000 dwelling units, which will remain affordable housing developments in perpetuity. The City of New York’s housing plan, *Housing New York: A Five Borough, Ten-Year Plan* and the updated *Housing New York 2.0* describe efforts that the City of New York will pursue to protect and expand its affordable housing supply. The housing plan includes a provision for a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) Program,

which states that, “in rezonings that substantially increase potential housing capacity in strong markets, the City will require a portion of the new housing developed to be permanently affordable to low- or moderate-income households in order to ensure diverse and inclusive communities. To ensure the effectiveness of mandatory inclusionary zoning in transitioning neighborhoods, the City will provide flexible options for meeting the requirements.” To that end, the 2017 East Harlem Rezoning included an MIH component in nearly all the rezoning areas along Park, Lexington, Third, and Second Avenues, as shown in Figure 1-3e of Chapter 1, “Project Description” from the East Harlem Rezoning FEIS. (This information is also available in the Zoning Resolution, Appendix H, Manhattan maps 1-7.) The program requires permanently affordable housing set-asides for all developments over 10 units or 12,500 square feet within the MIH designated areas or, as an additional option for developments between 10 and 25 units, or 12,500 to 25,000 square feet, a payment into an Affordable Housing Fund.

In addition, in 2018 New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (NYCHPD) issued the *East Harlem Housing Plan*, which contains a number of strategies to address displacement specifically in East Harlem. This includes strategies to preserve the existing supply of affordable housing in East Harlem and protect tenants from harassment. East Harlem will be included in the “Partners in Preservation” pilot initiative to develop a comprehensive anti-displacement strategy for the neighborhood. NYCHPD is also taking a number of actions to develop new affordable housing in East Harlem, including the expedited construction of over 2,600 units of affordable housing over the next several years.

New York City’s Tenant Harassment Prevention Task Force, New York State Homes and Community Renewal, and the New York State Attorney General provide protections and assistance for tenants being intimidated or harassed by their landlords. In addition, the many protections that are in place in East Harlem to protect affordable housing would reduce this type of pressure on rental tenants.

**Comment 103:** Please indicate any efforts to work with nationwide/international chains at East River Plaza or on East 125th Street that will benefit from the transit infrastructure investment, into creating initiatives that would provide monies for a local development fund to protect small businesses, schools, tenants, affordable housing and homeless families in East Harlem that might experience increased pressures and potential indirect displacement are a result of the new subway. (*Winfield*)

**Response:** No efforts to work with nationwide/international chains at East River Plaza or on East 125th Street to create initiatives are proposed at this time. See the response to **Comment 102** regarding protections for residents in East Harlem. In terms of small businesses, the 2004 FEIS concludes that new subway stations would make

**Attachment A: Summary of Comments and Responses**

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underutilized sites nearby more attractive for ground-floor retail use and such growth would benefit neighborhood character (see 2004 FEIS Chapter 6, “Social and Economic Conditions,” pages 6-49 through 6-51). The 2004 FEIS notes that in East Harlem, this would be consistent with the City of New York’s efforts to promote more commercial use and encourage redevelopment of vacant and underutilized properties. No fund to protect small retailers is proposed.

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